

FIFTY YEARS OF THE  
HISTORY OF THE REPUBLIC  
IN SOUTH AFRICA 1795-1845

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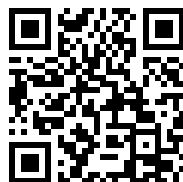
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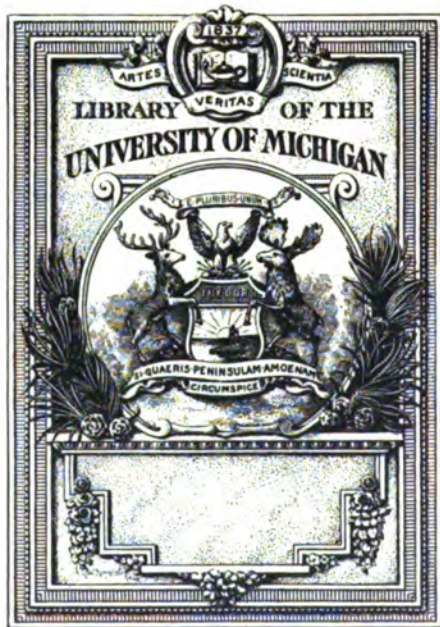
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FIFTY YEARS OF THE HISTORY OF THE  
REPUBLIC IN SOUTH AFRICA

1795-1845



Fifty Years of the History of  
the Republic in South Africa  
(1795-1845) 92829

By J. C. VOIGT, M.D.

*Of the Cape Colony Volunteer Ambulance Service in the Transvaal in 1881*

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

LONDON  
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“ Nicht allein der Triumphator,  
Nicht allein der sieggekrönte  
Günstling jener blinden Göttin,  
Auch der blut'ge Sohn des Unglücks,

“ Auch der heldenmüth'ge Kämpfer,  
Der dem ungeheuren Schicksal  
Unterlag, wird ewig leben  
In der Menschen Angedenken.”

HEINE.





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# ERRATA

## VOL. I.

- P. 85, side-note: *for* "1897" *read* "1781."
- P. 37, side-note: *for* "van de Graff" *read* "van de Graaff."
- P. 64, line 17: *for* "in favour to" *read* "in favour of."
- P. 68, line 9: *for* "new rules of the country" *read* "new rulers of the country."
- P. 74, lines 9 and 10: *for* "in September, 1800, by Sir George Yonge, had been referred to the Home Government" *read* "in September, 1800, had been referred to the Home Government, by Sir George Yonge," etc.
- P. 114, line 18: *for* "Demarara" *read* "Demerara."
- P. 185, line 14: *for* "tribe" *read* "tribe;"
- P. 193, line 8: *for* "Julia" *read* "Julia."
- P. 214, line 24: *for* "unsalable" *read* "unsaleable."
- P. 274, line 21: *for* "Maputa" *read* "Manice (Komati)."
- P. 344 (Index)—Governors of Cape Colony: *for* "in 1714, Willem A. van der Stell, 22" *read* "in 1706, Willem Adriaan van der Stell, 22;" *for* "in 1812, Lord Chas. Somerset, 117" *read* "in 1815, Lord Chas. Somerset, 117."

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**GEOGRAPHICAL AND INTRODUCTORY**





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## GEOGRAPHICAL AND INTRODUCTORY

A LINE drawn from the point of intersection between  $26^{\circ}$  S. lat. and  $22^{\circ}$  E. long. to Cape Point divides the map of South Africa into two unequal portions. The smaller, western, area is triangular in outline. The Atlantic coast line forms the base of this triangle. The larger, eastern, division is a fan-shaped figure. The two sides of this opened-out fan are represented by the line above mentioned (from where  $22^{\circ}$  E. long. intersects  $26^{\circ}$  S. lat. to Cape Point) and by the 26th parallel of South latitude. The outer fringe or border of the fan is the coast line of the Indian Ocean from False Bay to Inyack Island. The western, triangular-shaped, area contains none of the important physical features of the geography of South Africa. All these are found in the large, eastern, fan-shaped, division.

Two equally broad arched figures, formed by three parallel arcs having a common centre at the point of intersection of  $26^{\circ}$  S. lat. and  $22^{\circ}$  E. long., will be useful for the purpose of the graphical delineation and grouping of the main physical features. The outer arc—the outside boundary of the outer arch-shaped figure — falls on Cape Agulhas, Cape St. Lucia, and Inyack Island. It rounds off the somewhat irregular margin of the outspread fan. The Indian Ocean coast

line, the Southern Coast Region, the Great Southern Mountain Ranges of Cape Colony, the Outer Terrace Lands of the East and North-east: these are the respective areas over which the outer arch-shaped figure falls.

Remove the outer arc.

What is left is a shorter fan-shaped figure, of which the second arc forms the rounded fringe or margin. As the coast line of the Indian Ocean is the border of the larger outspread fan, so the great watershed between the upper affluents of the Orange and Vaal, on the one side, and the rivers which flow into the Indian Ocean, on the other, runs along the edge of the shorter fan. All the Outer Terrace Lands lying between the Great Southern and Great Northern Mountain Systems of Cape Colony (the Karroos); the relatively narrow strip of the Outer Terrace Land Region of the East and North-east not included in the outer arch-shaped figure; the great mountain rim of the Roggeveld, Nieuwveld, Koude Berg, Sneeuwberg, Stormberg, and Drakensberg ranges; and a portion of the Region of the Great Inner Tablelands: these are the physical features of the map of South Africa over which the inner arch-shaped figure falls.

If we now remove the second arc also, we get a still smaller and shorter fan-shaped area, with the Region of the Great Inner or Higher Tablelands for a border, and with the Blauwbank-Witwatersrand-Middelburg-Hoogveld water-shed running along one of its sides (the 26th parallel of S. lat.).

The continuous series of mountain ranges known as

the Roggeveld, Nieuwveld, Sneeuwberg, Stormberg, Drakensberg, and Northern Drakensberg, form the southern and eastern rim of the Great Upland Plateau Regions, in which are found the basins of the Orange and Vaal Rivers, as well as the watershed between the Limpopo and its tributaries, on the one side, and the Vaal, on the other.

The Great Mountain Range of South Africa.

Towards the elevated plains and tablelands fringed and bounded by these mountain ranges, the ascent from the shores of the Indian Ocean—from all the coast line between Delagoa and False Bays—is relatively steep along the north-eastern and eastern, more gradual and less precipitous along the southern routes.

From the sea to the summits of the rock ramparts bordering the vast inland plateau plains, the land rises by a succession of escarpments or terraces. Each terrace is a step in the ascent, and is also the edge of a plateau plain which stretches inland as far as the next terrace or escarpment, where again there is the commencement of another plateau—more inland, and at the same time considerably higher above sea level.

The Terraces.

As one travels over the Karroos to the Orange River, what appear to be flat-topped mountains—almost exact reproductions of Table Mountain—are seen in front, to the right and to the left. The rivers are for the greater part of the year without water, the mountains are without summits. It seems as if some huge titanic scythe had swept through the air, to lop off all the peaks, to level all the mountain tops—as if the powers of magic and of the elements had been invoked to dry

up all the springs and the rivers, and to blast all vegetation.

But the mirage on the distant horizon reminds you that you are in Africa, the Continent of Transformations. As you advance, those flat-topped mountains will all disappear; for they are, in reality, level upland plains, on which grass and veritable carpets of flowers will sprout up after the rains have fallen and the thirsty earth has become revived.

Flat-topped  
Mountains.

Each apparent mountain summit and steep slope is the edge of a wide plateau, which stretches out and extends far to the north, to be there bounded by another escarpment or terrace-like face of a more elevated tableland also extending northwards.

Extent and  
Arrangement of  
the Plateaux.

The arrangement and grouping of these plateaux, which form such an important physical feature in the geography of South Africa, differ somewhat in various parts of the country. Leaving out of consideration the extreme northward prolongation of the plateau regions into the highlands of Matabeleland and Gazaland, and dealing only with that part of Africa which lies to the south of the river Limpopo, it may be said that the high tablelands extend from the Tulbagh Kloof and the Hex River Pass to the Roggeveld and Nieuwveld ranges, then north-eastward to the Great Sneeuwberg, where the summit of the Kompas Berg is between 8000 and 9000 feet above sea level, and then still further north-eastward to the Great Zuurberg and the Stormberg ranges. North of these mountains, the tributaries and feeders of the Upper Orange River flow through the highlands which are continuous with the elevated

The Two  
Groups.



plateaux of the Orange Free State. These uplands, again, are prolonged into the Hoogeveld regions to the north of the Vaal.

All the different plateaux can be classified into two main groups or sections: the Outer Terrace Plateaux and the Inner Tablelands. The dividing rampart between these two sections is the series of mountain chains which, in unbroken grandeur of steep crag and rocky summit, stretch for hundreds upon hundreds of miles, from the Highveld of Lydenburg to the western end of the Roggeveld range. The Northern Drakensbergen, the Mountains of De Kaap and New Scotland, the Randberg, the Central and Southern Drakensbergen, the Stormberg range, the Great Sneeuwberg and its numerous spurs, the Nieuwveld Bergen, and the Roggeveld range, constitute the individual sections of the immense rim, which forms the margin of the Inland Plateau Region, and towards which ascend the Terrace Lands.

The Dividing  
Mountain  
Chains.

These, the Outer Tablelands, are much more extensive and better defined in the south—*i.e.*, in the Cape Colony, where the Karroo-plains are separated from the Coast Region by the Great Southern mountain ranges—than in the north-east, where the ascent from the Indian Ocean is steeper, and where the plateaux are much cut up by intersecting mountain ranges and ravines. In Pondoland—now part of Cape Colony,—in Natal, in Zululand, in Swaziland, and in Lydenburg district, there are several of the less defined and less extensive terrace plateaux.

Region of the  
Outer Terrace  
Lands.

The region of the Outer Tablelands, then, may be

described as stretching, in the form of an extensive arc—roughly a semicircle—from the terraces on the eastern slopes of the Northern Drakensberg through Swaziland, Zululand, Natal, Pondoland, and the eastern part of Cape Colony; then curving to the inland of the Southern mountain ranges, and being prolonged over the Great Karroo district to the Bokkeveld Karroo. On its inland aspect the entire area is bounded by the massive mountain ranges already referred to as shutting it off from the interior region of elevated tablelands.

The Interior  
Upland.

These Inner Plateaux extend from the great mountain rampart or rim, across the basin of the Orange River, to the uplands of Basutoland and of the Orange Free State, and from there to the high ground north of the Vaal River. Here is the elevated watershed of the Malmani-Blauwbank - Witwatersrand - Middelburg-De Kaap line. This plateau forms a central broad ridge, running across the Transvaal from west to east. From the highest point of this roof of the High Veld, the land slopes down both north- and south-ward.

With the first settlement of the plateau regions, at the commencement of the 18th century, begins the origin of the South African nationality, as well as the first really successful colonisation of any part of Africa by Europeans.

On the east and west coasts of the Continent, the European nations have planted settlements and built forts for centuries. Nearly all the older of these settlements have disappeared. The ruins of the forts—and the cemeteries—are all that remain.

In North Africa, Mahomedan dominion was supreme

till the French succeeded in obtaining a footing. In the south, during the first half-century of Dutch colonisation, the small coast settlement and its extension, to the neighbouring valleys of Stellenbosch and Drakenstein and to the Koeberg, were the only vestiges of European rule. With the occupation of the first terraces of the plateau beyond the Tulbagh Kloof, in the year 1700, began that gradual northward expansion and extension of the Colony which was to create the Afriander and the South Africa of to-day.

The history of the occupation of the successive terraces in the upward ascent towards the great mountain rampart, and beyond it, is also the history of the origin of the South African Frontiersman and of his Republic.

It took half a century to colonise the Outer terrace plateaux—the Karroos—of the Cape Colony; and another quarter of a century before the European settlements had extended beyond the great mountain rim of the Inland plateau region—at the Sneeuwbergen and over the Zuurberg and Bamboesberg—to the plains of the Orange river.

The sons and grandsons of the pioneers who had first occupied the terrace lands were in possession of a new world, a country at that time completely isolated and cut off from all the rest of the globe. In that new, strange, weird, wild world, where the mountains were without summits, the rivers without water, the trees without umbrageous foliage, and the pasture lands without verdure, the officials of the Dutch East India Company seldom or never appeared. A journey of several months' duration was required in those days

to reach some of the inland plateaux from Cape Town. In that then very distant land, amid surroundings which were more conducive to serious communings with Nature, and to stern resolve, than to the elegant trivialities of progressive civilisation, grew up the race of men who, at the end of the 18th century, created their first Republic, and vowed that South Africa should no longer exist merely for the benefit of the Dutch Chartered Company. There, originated the Nation which now, at the end of the 19th century, is federating and consolidating its Republic, in order to resist the encroachments and the plots of the British Chartered Company and of British Government officials.

To the south of the Orange River stood the cradle of the Republic. In the wide Karroo-plains, and in the wild mountains and highlands immediately to the north of them, we see the country which gave birth to the African peasant Commonwealth.

But a description of this land—of this world of upland plateaux and terraces—will be better understood if supplemented by a brief sketch of the main features of all the country lying south of the Great River, so that the relative importance of the different geographical factors can be clearly perceived and more readily grasped.

For the sake of completeness of outline, some amount of repetition now becomes necessary.

Two great series of mountain ranges run across Cape Colony from west to east. The country between these mountain barriers is the region of the Karroos or outer elevated tablelands and terraces. To the south of the

Systems of  
the Two Great  
Mountain  
Ranges.

first series of mountain ranges is the Southern Coast Region. To the north of the northernmost mountain rampart, or second series of ranges, is the region of Great Upland Plains stretching northwards as far as the basin of the Orange River. In passing northward from the shores of the Indian Ocean to the banks of the Orange River, the traveller crosses (1) the *Southern Coast Region*; (2) the first or *Southern* series of great mountain ranges; (3) the *Karroos* or tablelands; (4) the second or *Northern* series of great mountain ranges; (5) the *Great Plains* to the south of the Orange River.

The *Southern Coast Region* is the relatively narrow belt of plain lying between the Indian Ocean and the first series of mountain ranges. The climate is warm and salubrious. Snow is never seen in any part of this region, except on the summits of mountains, and even there only rarely. The warm ocean currents, and the condensation of vapour along the great mountain slopes, cause more rainfall than in other parts of South Africa. The soil is fertile, and there are numerous rivers.

The first or *Southern* series of mountain ranges, which form the northern boundary of the *Coast Region* and divide it from the *Karoo* or *Upland Plateau country*, stretch from St. Helena Bay, on the Atlantic, to Algoa Bay on the Indian Ocean.\* Commencing with the Piketberg, Riebeecks Kasteel, and Drakenstein Mountains, and the parallel ranges of the Olifants River Bergen (continuous south-eastward with the Great Winterhoek, the Witsenberg, and Hex River

\* The Zuurberg is a further continuation to the Great Fish River.

Mountains) and the Koude Bokkeveld Bergen, the huge rock masses run eastwards, and terminate opposite Algoa Bay in the Winterhoek and the Zwartkop Mountains.

With the exception of those towards the extreme west, all these mountains, throughout their course, run in nearly parallel ranges from west to east, the entire series forming a vast stone rampart shutting off the Coast Region from the inland elevated tablelands which form the Karroos. The southern wall of the rampart is formed by the Drakenstein, Rivier-Zonder-End, Langeberg, Attaquasberg, Outaniquasberg, Langekloof, and Karadauw Mountain Ranges. The northern wall is made up of the Bokkeveld Witteberg, Klein Zwartberg, Toverberg, Zwartberg, Antoniesberg, Groote Rivier Hoogte, and Winterhoek Ranges. Between these two mountain walls stretch the numerous other parallel ranges and plateaux which together form the series. The summits of these different mountains are from 2000 and 3000 feet to 4000, 5000, and even 6000 feet in height—the Zwartkop, near Uitenhage, at the eastern extremity of the series, being 6820 feet high. The western section of the *Southern* mountain ranges forms the watershed between the rivers which flow into the Atlantic Ocean—the Olifants River and the Berg River—and those which run eastwards to the Indian Ocean—the Rivier-Zonder-End and the Breede River, on the one side, and the Touws River and other smaller tributaries of the Gauritz, on the other.

Watersheds.

The Rivers.

Part of the central section of the *Southern* mountain ranges is the watershed between the Touws River (and

its tributaries) and the Buffels, Geelbek, and Kanon Rivers. The three last named unite into one stream, which penetrates the Klein Zwartberg range to join the Touws River and its tributaries, and to form the Grootte River. This flows into the Gauritz.

Between the Toverberg and the Great Zwartberg range, the Gamka flows through a deep mountain gorge, and, further south, joins the Olifants River to form the Gauritz. The Great Zwartberg range forms the dividing watershed between the Gamka, to the north, and the Olifants River, to the south.

Towards the eastern extremity of the series of ranges are the mountains forming the watershed between the Grootte River and the Kouga before these streams unite to form the Gamtoos River, which runs into St. Francis Bay. The Krom River Hoogte mountain range separates the basin of the Kouga from the Kromme River, which flows into Kromme River Bay.

The above is a brief enumeration of the principal rivers which flow to the *Southern Coast Region* of the Cape, and of the great mountain ranges which bound the *Coast Region* on the north, and form for it a great watershed.

Further north, again, beyond these mountains, are the *Outer Terrace Lands*, the series of plateaux known as *Karroos*. They are elevated tablelands, which stretch northward towards another great series of mountain ranges—also running from west to east across the Continent, and almost parallel with those already described, but much higher. The Karroos are vast plains, thousands of feet above sea level. They

The Karroos.

are rainless for a great part of the year. The vegetation consists mainly of stunted scrub and short, coarse, bush and grass, which becomes dried up and withered under the scorching heat of the sun. The few rivers, also, are almost entirely without water during the dry season; but when heavy rains have fallen in the mountains, the dry water-courses suddenly become transformed into rolling torrents, whose swift currents often overflow their banks. Rain in these regions changes the entire appearance of the landscape. The earth, which, but a few days before, was parched, arid, scorched, and without a blade of green grass anywhere, has, as if by magic, become covered with flowers—heaths, lilies, and wild geraniums—of the brightest tints and colours. Grasses have sprung up with astonishing rapidity, and verdure and vegetation is seen everywhere where previously there was desolation. It is Africa, the land of surprises.

Transformation.

To the north of the *Karoo* region lie the next series of massive mountain ranges running from west to east—the Roggeveld, Nieuwveld, Sneeuwberg, Zuurberg, and Stormberg ranges. Some of the highest peaks of these mountains are the Kommandant Berg, 5300 feet; Bulbhonders Bank Berg, 7300 feet; and the Kompas Berg, over 8000 feet.

The Northern Series of Mountain Ranges.

As the traveller who has crossed the Southern Mountain Series and the *Karoo* region approaches these northern ramparts, he sees before him various parts of the range appearing like flat-topped table summits. He has noticed these table-mountains on all sides of him as he was passing across the *Karroos*.



Each flat elevation is in reality a plateau, higher than the one on which the observer is. When its summit is reached, other flat-topped mountains are seen in advance. These again are higher plateaux. The entire surface of the land consists of a series of terraces gradually ascending towards the north.

Further to the west and north-west than the Roggeveld mountains, are the Hantam range, the Spioen Kop, the Lange Berg, and the Kamies Berg.

To the north of the *Great Northern Series* of mountain ranges, stretch the vast upland plateau plains traversed by the southern tributaries of the Orange River, and gradually sloping towards the basin of that stream.

As to the coast line of the Cape Colony—all the Coast Line. Atlantic and Indian Ocean seaboard between the mouths of the Orange River and of the Umtamvuna—although extensive, it is without natural harbours and without navigable river estuaries. Proceeding along the coast from west to east, we have St. Helena Bay, Saldanha Bay, Table Bay, Simon's Bay, and False Bay, St. Sebastian Bay, Mossel Bay, Plettenberg Bay, St. Francis Bay, Algoa Bay, and many other smaller or less well-known gulfs and indentations; but among these there is not a single harbour worthy of the name. Simon's Bay, the best of them all, is an insignificant inlet compared to Delagoa. Not only are the bays and gulfs without sufficient safe anchorage, but the river-mouths are nearly all blocked by shifting bars of sandbanks. The streams themselves, flowing down the terrace lands and plateaux which have been

described, are precipitate in their course—often broken by numerous cataracts and falls—and wanting in that constant volume of water without which inland navigation is impossible.

Such, then, is the land which, when the 17th century was drawing to its close, still remained almost entirely uncolonised and unexplored by Europeans—a small area of the Coast district and one or two adjacent valleys being at that time the only part of the country where settlements had been formed. As inaccessible to Sea-power as they are now—because as unapproachable by navigable waterways—the Inland Plateau regions were then impenetrable wilds, the routes overland to which were unknown, except by a few daring pioneers and hunters. By the beginning of the 18th century, however, some of the gateways to the Terrace Lands—the passes in the Southern mountain ranges—had been discovered and explored. Then came the occupation and colonisation of the first or Southern Plateau Terraces by order of the high and mighty Willem Adriaan van der Stell, Governor and Administrator for the Dutch East India Company. Northward, over the mountains, went the Ship of the Karroo and the Camel of the South. *Festina lente* was the watchword, for the pioneers had come to stay in the new land. Not only had roads to be made for the waggons, but water and grass had to be found for the oxen. The toilers for the glory and the profit of the Dutch East India Company had to discover homes for themselves and their families in a country of arid plateaux and waterless rivers, a world inhabited by beasts of prey and

by hostile savages armed with poisoned arrows. After nearly a century of exploration and colonisation had run its course, when all the Southern, Outer Terrace Plateaux, as well as some of the more Inland High Tablelands, had come under occupation, when a new generation had become old, and the foundations of a new nation had been laid, then the Dutch Company lost its hold on that far-away land. Having abused its powers and become the oppressor of the Colonists, the association of Amsterdam merchants had to give place to the White man's Republic created by the Africander Frontiersmen, who were actuated by the love of freedom and the faith in self-government which they had inherited from their ancestors.

That Republic's first advent in the country south of the Orange River, its suppression by England, its reappearance in the regions further north, its first battles in the long struggle for liberty and national existence: these are the themes dealt with in the succeeding pages.



**PART I**  
**THE FIRST AFRICANDERS**  
**OR**  
**THE REPUBLIC SOUTH OF THE ORANGE RIVER**

**A**



## CHAPTER I

### PIONEERS WHERE TWO OCEANS MEET

EARLY HISTORY OF THE COLONY UNDER THE DUTCH EAST INDIA  
COMPANY: EXPANSION NORTHWARDS AND NORTH-EASTWARDS.

Extent of First Settlement—Foundation of Stellenbosch—Arrival of the Huguenots—Settlement of Drakenstein and the Paarl—Fransche Hoek and the *Val du Chavron*—First Settlement of Graziers and Cattle Farmers beyond the Southern Mountain Range—Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stell—The Pioneers of the Klein Berg River Ravine—Exploration of the Witsenberg and Warm Bokkeveld, the Breede River, and the Rivier Zonder End—Commencement of Settlements in Swellendam and Piketberg—Exploration of Namaqualand—Crossing of the Wittebergen and the Klein Zwartberg Range—Discovery of the Great Karroo Plains—The Tulbagh Kloof the Gateway to the Republic, and Van der Stell its Founder.

Hostilities with the Bushmen—The Campaign of 1774—The First Kaffir War—Country of the Kaffirs—Their probable Origin, as shown by Customs and Language—Divisions of the Kaffir or Abantu Race, and their Distribution in South Africa—The Kosas—Religion and National Characteristics of the Kaffir Race—Evidence of Oriental and Egyptian Influence and of Arab-Ethiopian Origin—Admixture with the Conquered Nations—Warlike Nature of the Kaffir—His Love of Cattle—His Worship of Magic—Christianity *versus* Paganism.

First Record of Collision between White Colonists and Kaffirs in 1684—Astonishment of Kaffirs—The Great Fish River made Boundary between Colony and Kaffirland, in 1778—Kaffir Invasion of Colony in 1779—First Kaffir War—Adriaan van Jaarsveld, the Frontier Commandant—The Laager Formation—Defeat of Kaffirs by Burghers under Van Jaarsveld—First Kaffir War concluded in Two Months.

In the early days of the Dutch East India Company's government, the peninsula of the Cape of Good

Extent of First Settlement.

Foundation of  
Stellenbosch.

Arrival of the  
Huguenots.  
Settlement of  
Drakenstein and  
the Paarl.

Fransche Hoek.

Val du Charron.

Hope represented the entire extent of the European settlement. Then, under Governor Simon van der Stell, the village of Stellenbosch was founded, and the surrounding farms were planted with vines and fruit trees. Next—when the Huguenots came—the valley of Drakenstein was colonised. More vineyards and orchards were planted, and, between the Paarl mountain and the Berg river, the township of the Paarl was built. In the valley at the foot of the Simonsberg, not far from the source of the Berg river, the little settlement of Fransche Hoek was formed by the French emigrants, and their farms in this region and in the Groot Drakenstein to this day bear French names. To the north-east of the Paarl hamlet, also, in a valley beyond that of Drakenstein, the French agriculturists planted their orange groves and their fruit-trees and vines, and grew peaches and figs. The place was then called *Val du Charron*. It is now known as Wellington. These different agricultural settlements flourished, and the supply of fruit and grain soon became plentiful. There was, however, a scarcity of cattle. When the colony was first established, butcher-meat was obtained for ships that called on the way to Batavia and for the garrison at Cape Town, by bartering cattle from the Hottentots on the coast. But now, these tribes had retired to the interior; and under the government of the second Van der Stell (Willem Adriaan van der Stell) it was resolved to extend the settlement beyond the first mountain range, and to place colonists there for the purpose of cattle farming and stock grazing. South-



wards of the Great Winterhoek, where the mountains which divide the coast region from the interior rise to over 7,000 feet in one or two of their highest peaks, is the prolongation of the range towards the Witsenberg mountains. Between these and the Great Winterhoek, a kloof or ravine, through which the Klein Berg river flows, leads to the valley of Tulbagh, surrounded on all sides by great mountain ranges. Here the first graziers' settlement was established. A military station was placed among these mountains, to guard the settlers' stock from the onslaught of the Bushmen, who then infested the district. Soon the young colonists of this adventurous outpost, musket in hand, explored the recesses of the Witsenberg mountains, and crossed into the Warm Bokkeveld, where more grazing farms were selected. Making their way down the Breede river, others went to Swellendam, to which district also yet other explorers, crossing the Drakenstein mountains or proceeding by the coast region, had penetrated, travelling along the banks of that meandering stream to which they gave the somewhat romantic name of *Rivier-Zonder-End*. Other pioneers of those early days went north-westwards into the Piketberg region, and along the Great Olifants river, while some very adventurous spirits even reached as far north as the Copper mountains of Namaqualand. And into the then wild interior, through the Hex River Pass to the Wittebergen and the Klein Zwartberg range, and across these mountains on to the great Karroo plains, went the explorers and hunters and graziers—the young men for whom life in the shadows of Table mountain and in the

First Settlement of Graziers and Cattle Farmers beyond the Southern Mountain Ranges.

The Pioneers of the Klein Berg River Ravine.

Exploration of the Witsenberg and Warm Bokkeveld.

The Breede river.

Rivier Zonder End.

Commencement of settlements in the Swellendam and Piketberg Districts.

Exploration of Namaqualand, of the Wittebergen, and Klein Zwartberg Ranges.

Discovery of the  
Great Karroo  
Plains.

valleys of Stellenbosch and the Paarl had become too tame and monotonous, and to whom the limits of the settlement were already too narrow and restricted. As they breathed the free air of the karroos and of the mountainous interior, these pioneer adventurers became transformed into hardy frontiersmen, skilled in the use of firearms, accustomed to constant outdoor exercise, proof against fatigue, and inured to hardship and danger. The sons of the vine- and fruit-planters of the western districts became the doughty frontiersmen of the eastern, who extended the boundaries of the Colony until Governor Van Plettenberg could fix the limits on the banks of the Fish river, and northwards nearly as far as the Orange river. The northward expansion of the Colony had commenced. The Tulbagh Kloof formed the gateway to the future Republic. Van der Stell, the Dutch East Indian satrap, was creating the race which, before the end of the eighteenth century, would proclaim the first free burgher state in South Africa and defy the officials of the Company's government.

The Tulbagh  
Kloof the gate-  
way to the  
Republic.

As the extension of the Colony northwards and eastwards proceeded, large herds of cattle and sheep were reared in the upland plateau districts. The Bushmen who inhabited the great mountain regions of the interior made constant war on the cattle farmers and graziers; and every year large numbers of stock were killed by the poisoned arrows of the marauders. While the Hottentot tribes, who were still hostile to the settlers, had retired far to the north-west and north, the crafty little savage, whose hand was against every

man, as every man's hand was against him, stuck tenaciously to the caves and rocks of his mountain fastnesses, whence he sallied forth occasionally, with his deadly bow and arrow, to kill and destroy in the valleys below. Commandoes had frequently to take the field against these marauders, and fierce encounters took place between the frontiersmen and the Bushmen, who were gradually drifting further and further to the north. About the year 1770, cattle thefts and massacres of native herdsmen, and even of white colonists, became events of such frequent occurrence that all the farms scattered along the base of the eastern end of the Nieuwveld mountains and the Sneeuwberg and Winterberg ranges were unsafe. The Bushmen were massing their forces in such large numbers in these mountains that all frontiersmen had to be called to arms against the common enemy.

Hostilities  
against the  
Bushmen.

A commandant of the northern border was now chosen by the burghers, and in 1774 a large armed force took the field and traversed the mountain ranges, attacking the Bushmen in their caves, and shooting down all who refused to surrender. More than 500 were killed, and over 230 taken prisoners. After this campaign the progress of the settlement's northward expansion was no longer delayed. The graziers now took their flocks beyond the great mountain ranges, and occupied part of the upland plain country south of the Orange river.

The Campaign  
of 1774.

But soon the colonists had to encounter a much more redoubtable foe than either the Hottentots or the Bushmen had been. The first Kaffir war broke out.

The Kaffirs.

**Their Country**

All the country stretching from the coast immediately to the north of Delagoa Bay to the Great Fish River was then inhabited by this powerful and warlike nation. Indeed the same race dwelt much further north also; for, even to the present day, the Somalis are armed with spears and assegais very similar to those of the Zulus. The natives of German East Africa, also, have almost exactly the same weapons. Then, too, the languages of all the tribes from Cape Guardafui to the Fish River show proofs of such close affinity to each other, while the physical features and physique of the different peoples along the entire eastern coast region have so much in common—always allowing for the influence of the climate and locality—that there is ample support for the theory of many ethnologists, that these different nations in reality all trace their descent from one common stock. All the Kaffir races are supposed to be of Arabian origin. Their language shows evidence of this. Polygamy, circumcision, and many other customs which are prevalent among them, point to their Oriental relationship. In remote antiquity an Arabian tribe, establishing itself in northern Africa, became blended with a negroid race. Subsequently, the new nation probably had to give way before the tide of Mahometan conquest, in its turn conquering the nations to the south, and establishing itself in the conquered territories.

**Their Origin,  
Language, and  
Customs.**

Such is the theory of the origin of the Kaffir races. Their migration from North to South Africa was a gradual movement, extending over successive centuries. By the time all the high tablelands of Central Africa

had been conquered and occupied by the northern invaders, the original Arabian stock had become more and more Africanised, by amalgamation and blending with the remnants of the subdued nations. The traditions which exist among the Kaffirs at the present time have enabled Dr Theal, the accomplished historian of South Africa, to conclude that at least one of the tribes constituting the Bechuana nation—the Barolongs—left the region of the Great Lakes of Central Africa about the year 1400. Travelling southwards, they reached the Malopo River four generations later. In Kaffir tradition a generation signifies the period corresponding to the reign of a chief. Three other chiefs, then, had successively reigned after Morolong, the founder of the nation, before the Barolongs came to the Malopo. Taking Dr Theal's estimate of a quarter-of-a-century as the average duration of each chief's reign, we get the year 1500 as the approximate date, and find that the Barolongs were an entire century in passing from the Central African regions to the river Malopo. Here the invaders found their further southward advance arrested by numerous powerful Bushmen and Hottentot (Koranna) tribes. The struggle for supremacy between the black and the yellowish-brown men must have been fierce and desperate, for two and a half centuries—ten generations more of Barolong chieftains—had passed away before the great Barolong captain, Tao, had advanced the frontiers of his nation as far south as the Vaal river. This brings us to about the year 1750.

The Kaffir gives us the traditional history of his

Kaffir Traditions.

tribe and of his nation. He does not enter very minutely into detail, but he furnishes us with at least approximate dates. The Bushman, in his sketches on the rocks and in the coloured chalk-drawings on the walls of his cave-dwellings, has supplied us with some particulars of battle-scenes between his own people and the Kaffirs. Let us not conclude too hastily that the little man is a braggart and a boaster, when we see him depicting himself as putting the Abantu warriors to flight and capturing their cattle.

While the Barolongs were advancing southwards towards the Malopo, other tribes and sections of the Bechuana nation were occupying the countries now known as Mashonaland and Matabeleland.\*

The Bechuana nation, then, conquered all southern Zambesia (Mashonaland and Matabeleland) as well as the plains of the western Transvaal and of the Orange River country (now the Orange Free State Republic.) Another division of the Kaffir race—that which we now know by the name of Basutos or Bapedi—established themselves in some of the mountains of the Drakensberg range, and in some of the rocky strongholds of the country now known as Basutoland;

\* We have evidence that, before the advent of the Kaffir invaders, Zambesia also was in possession of the Hottentots and of the Bushmen. There are Bushman drawings and sketches in many of the caves of Mashonaland, and the late Mr Theodore Bent has unearthed some interesting relics from the Zimbabwe ruins. One of these relics (figured in the distinguished explorer's work on the "Ruined Cities of Mashonaland") is of great historical value. Round the margin of a large chalice or drinking-cup, made of hard-baked clay, are grouped several representations of hunting scenes. There are zebras and other South African animals, and there is a Bushman hunter with his bow and arrows.

at a later date some mountainous districts in the north and north-east of the Transvaal, also, were occupied by this race.

The numerous clans constituting these two nations—the Bechuanas, and the Bapedi or Basutos—are often spoken of as the Inland Tribes, in contradistinction to those of the coast. The great inner plateau regions, and a large portion of the mountain rampart separating them from the outer terrace lands, were the parts of South Africa conquered and overrun by these men of the plain and of the mountain.

Divisions of Groups.

As to the so-called Coast Tribes of the Kaffirs, they form numerous nations, nearly all of which have played an important *rôle* in the history of South Africa. But for the period with which this work deals, we are concerned mainly with the Zulus (from which people the Matabele are an offshoot), the Pondos, and the Kosas. The two first named will be again referred to subsequently. The Amakosa nation is that branch of the Kaffirs which conquered the country between the Bashee and Great Fish rivers. Their country, now part of Cape Colony, is the Kaffraria, or Kaffirland Proper, of the older English maps. While the Kaffirs of the inland tribes, coming from Central Africa, gradually advanced further and further to the south, crossing and conquering Zambesia, making their way towards the countries which are now known as the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, and Basutoland, and occupying the great inland plateaux and mountain ranges, the coast tribes, on the other hand, having invaded the regions bordering on Delagoa Bay, pushed southwards along

Distribution of the Kaffir Races in South Africa.

the Indian Ocean, conquering the outer terrace lands, and establishing themselves in Zululand, Natal, Pondoland, and Kaffraria Proper. Probably all these countries at one time belonged to the Hottentots, remnants and vestiges of whose language are to be found even at the present day, not only in the tongue spoken by the Kosas of the south, but also in that of the northern invaders—the Zulus. On some of the old Portuguese maps the *Costa da Caffres* stretches only as far south as the neighbourhood of Delagoa Bay; and in all the country between the Bashee and Great Fish rivers there are numerous streams and mountains still called by Hottentot names.

The Amakosa.

The Amakosa Kaffirs were, already before the end of last century, divided into the clans which afterwards became better known to Europeans as the Gaikas, Tslambis, and Galekas. They were, in the main, a fine stalwart race of savages, though not all of such powerful frame and physique as their kinsmen, the Zulus. They were brave and warlike, cruel, licentious, and lazy. Like all the other Kaffir races, they were polygamous. They owned large herds of cattle. The women cultivated the soil, planted the maize and Kaffir-corn crops, and milked the cows. The men were warriors and hunters. Each of the clans or tribes of the Kosas was under its own chief, and they were often at war against each other, or against one or other of the neighbouring nations. Their chief weapon was the light javelin assegai, which they, attacking in extended skirmishing line, hurled at their enemies more frequently than the Zulus, who generally attacked in close



columns, armed with the heavy stabbing assegai or spear. The Kosas, like the Zulus, had shields made of ox-hide. Their encampments or kraals were, like those of the other Kaffir races, circular enclosures of round-roofed, belljar-shaped huts, built entirely of reeds and rushes or straw. These Kaffir huts have an opening only on one side, and so small and low, that any one who wishes to enter has to stoop and crawl in on all fours.

The religion of the Kaffirs is a form of paganism founded on an extraordinary belief in the power of witchcraft. According to Kaffir ideas, any one in command or authority holds such authority by virtue of magic or witchcraft superior to that of his adversaries. The King or Paramount Chief is looked upon as the embodiment and representative of the most powerful witchcraft, and, as such, is far more than merely the head of the nation. The power of magic is to the Kaffir what divinity is to the Christian, and, therefore, the chief himself is as a god. When the king, however, is beaten in war, then his conqueror is at once deemed worthy, not only of allegiance, but also of worship. Superior magic and witchcraft are supposed to have fought on the side of the victor, and he remains honoured, obeyed, and worshipped until in his turn overthrown by another, who, in the eyes of the people, is possessed of still greater powers as a magician. Not only are human beings believed by the Kaffirs to be endowed with power in magic and witchcraft; but animals, such as the crocodile, the serpent, etc., are often worshipped and held sacred on account of this belief. Similarly,

Religion of the  
Kaffirs.

trees, mountains, rocks, and other inanimate objects can become powerful sources of witchcraft and enchantment. The sun and moon, also, are sometimes worshipped, as influencing the affairs of the nation.

Customs and  
National  
Characteristics.

Cannibalism was never quite unknown among the Kaffirs; but it was only practised to a limited extent and perhaps more among the Basutos and Bechuanas than among other Kaffir nations. It was never resorted to, except in time of famine, for any other reason than as part of the popular belief in witchcraft. Portions of the heart, the liver, and other parts of the body of brave enemies who had fallen in battle were, after having been dried and reduced to powder, eaten by the young warriors in order to make them valiant and brave in war. Just in the same way, the heart and other parts of the bodies of slain braves were buried in the roads leading to certain districts, in order to bewitch those localities, and so to bring them under the influence of magic in the interests of the nation, that foemen, advancing along those roads, could be the more easily annihilated. It is a curious fact that circumcision was, and is still, prevalent among all the Kaffir nations. This seems to show that the original cradle of the race must have been somewhere not very far removed from the influences of the ancient Egyptian civilisation and its customs; for it is well known that the rite of circumcision spread from Egypt to Syria, Palestine and Arabia.\*

\* "The inhabitants of Egypt, Colchis, and Ethiopia are the only people who, from time immemorial, have practised circumcision. The Phœnicians and the Syrians of Palestine acknowledge having borrowed the custom from Egypt. These Syrians, who lived near the rivers Thermedon and Parthenus, and their neighbours the Macrones,

The Kaffirs sometimes call themselves Amakafula. This name is evidently a corruption of *Kaffir* (Unbeliever or Infidel), the term applied by the Mahometans to those who are not of their faith. It would seem to point to the occurrence of a severe struggle between the forces of aggressive Mahometanism and the tribes which migrated to South Africa from the North. The pagan magic worshippers suffered expatriation rather than give up the faith of their ancestors. Receding before the sword of Mahomet, and migrating further and further south, the warrior nation crossed the Equator, and then probably descended from the plateau regions of Central Africa to the shores of the Indian Ocean in the neighbourhood of Delagoa Bay, whence, lured onwards by the rich flocks and herds of the Hottentot tribes at that time in possession of South Africa, they advanced still further to the South. Finding these yellow men a race easy of conquest, the Kaffirs soon established themselves in their new home. In their migration from the far north they had to a certain extent amalgamated with the conquered nations. Women, as well as cattle, were the spoils of war; and now, in the south, a certain proportion of Hottentot blood was mixed with the original Arab-Ethiopian pro-

Migration from  
North and  
Central Africa.

confess to having learnt the operation, and that recently, from the Colchians. These are the only nations who practise circumcision, and who use it precisely like the Egyptians." (Beloe's "Herodotus," chapter 4.)

Both Diodorus Siculus and Strabo make similar statements as to the origin of the custom among the Egyptians and Ethiopians.

According to Herodotus, the colony of Colchia on the Black Sea was founded by the Egyptian conqueror, Sesostris, who conquered Asia about eleven centuries before Abraham was born.

Admixture with  
the Conquered  
Nations.

genitor stream. The Kosa warrior, engaged in some protracted warlike expedition, far removed from the chief kraals or encampments of his own race, looked about, among the girls of the conquered people, for a wife. With each accession of new blood to the original Kaffir stock, the resulting race, no doubt, acquired some of the peculiar characteristics of the fresh admixture. It was from the Hottentot, perhaps, more than from any other conquered nation, that the conquerors acquired that great love of cattle, that fondness for flocks and herds, which is now so distinctive a characteristic of all Kaffir races.

Warlike Magic  
Worshippers.

Looking upon war and bloodshed as a noble sport and pastime—just as the most civilised nations do; regarding robbery and marauding as his right and privilege—as does the most cultured European when campaigning in the enemy's country; considering cattle and sheep as wealth, which, when bartered for wives brings eminence, distinction, and ease among his own nation—as the nineteenth-century man and woman appraise money; the Kaffir in South Africa, before his power was broken in war by the White people, was the unrestrained lord and master of the soil. Believing in the traditions of his race, and in the power and might of his chiefs, it was hard—nay, impossible—for him to acknowledge a superior before he had tried his own strength against the foe. When he was beaten the faith of his ancestors—the worship of magic—saved him from annihilation, by at once transferring his allegiance to the conquerors; whilst polygamy, the custom of his forefathers, still increased his numbers in the land. In America, in Australia, in New Zealand,

the aboriginal inhabitants are fast disappearing before the white races, whose advance they have, in vain, attempted to check. The Red Man, the Australasian, the Maori, driven to despair after having been beaten in battle, has listened to the persuasive eloquence of the missionary, abandoned the gods and the faith of his fathers, adopted Christianity, and drunk of the seductive concoctions of the agents of civilisation and the extenders of European empire and dominion. In each case the wild man's day has gone, and his race is disappearing. While his conquerors are multiplying in the land, he has dwindled to a shadow of his former self. The soil which gave him birth will soon be his grave. In South Africa, also, the Hottentot has accepted Christianity and its accompaniments. He, also, will soon be no more. But the Kaffir, the pagan descendant of the Arab, remains true to the beliefs and the traditions of his Oriental and Ethiopian ancestry; still worships the power and the might of witchcraft and of magic; drinks the mead which his wives brew for him; and, with his flocks and herds and his women around him, dwells in philosophic contentment and plenty in the land which his conquerors now rule—his conquerors, the white magicians, whom he worships because they are such powerful wizards, such great chiefs—greater than his own vanquished kings. Can we blame the Kaffir when he says that Christianity and civilisation have destroyed the Hottentot? Are not the North American Indian, the Australian native, and the Maori also becoming extinct? Heathenism and polygamy have saved the Kaffir from extermination.

Heathenism  
versus Chris-  
tianity.

First Record of  
Collision be-  
tween Colonists  
and Kaffirs.

The first record which we possess of the Kosas or southern Kaffir nation coming into collision with the white colonists of the Cape of Good Hope is contained in the narrative (in the colonial archives) of an exploring expedition to the north-eastern frontier of the Hottentot country, by thirty-nine farmers and hunters, in the year 1684. At that time, the entire extent of the Colony was from Groenberg, on the west, to Hottentots Holland, on the east, and inland as far as the valley of the Berg river. There were then no houses of white colonists further off from the Castle than about fifty miles. The exploring party seems to have travelled eastwards along the coast through the country of the Hottentots, to the neighbourhood of the mouth of the Great Fish river, near which stream they came upon a marauding party of Amakosa Kaffirs, armed with assegais and carrying shields made of ox-hide. The savages had never previously seen white men on horseback. Making a fierce onslaught on the pioneer explorers, the Kaffirs were received with a well-directed and well-sustained musketry fire from the heavy flint locks. The fight did not last long; for the Kosas imagined that the white strangers were very powerful magicians—demons, who were able to call down thunder and lightning from the heavens and make use of these agencies in battle.\* As Cortez and his horsemen awed and astounded the Aztecs against whom they fought,

Astonishment of  
Kaffirs.

\* “En de Kaffers, meenende dat het duivels waren die van donder en bliksem gebruik maakten, gingen aan den loop.” (Hofstede: “Geschiedenis van den Oranje Vrijstaat,” p. 13).

[“And the Kaffirs, imagining that they had to do with devils who made use of thunder and lightning, took to their heels.”]

so did these mounted explorers astonish the Kaffirs, who fled precipitately from the field.

Toward the end of last century the Amakosa Kaffirs were in possession of all the country between the Great Fish river and the Kei. Inland their country stretched as far as the Stormberg range. In 1778, when Governor Joachim van Plettenberg of the Dutch East India Company, was making a tour of inspection in the frontier districts, he stopped at the Boschberg, at Willem Prinsloo's farm on the Klein Fish river, where the town of Somerset East is now. Here the various Kaffir chiefs were invited to meet him, in order to agree on a boundary line between the Colony and Kaffirland. The Great Fish river was made the dividing line; but, already in the following year, the Kaffirs had broken this agreement by crossing the river and carrying off cattle and sheep belonging to the Hottentots who dwelt within the colonial borders. Some Hottentots were killed in these raids, and some cattle and sheep belonging to white settlers were also carried off. All the country between the Great Fish and the Bushman's rivers—the land constituting the present districts of Albany and Bathurst—was then overrun by the marauders. Two burgher commandoes were called out, and, in September, 1779, the first Kaffir war was commenced. The Kosa tribes which had crossed the river were the Gaikas and Tslambis. They were defeated in several engagements, and fell back to the east of the frontier. But in the following winter they again invaded the Colony in large numbers, and the Government then appointed a burgher named

Great Fish River  
made Boundary  
between Colony  
and Kaffirland.

Kaffir Invasion  
of the Colony in  
1779.

First Kaffir War.

Adriaan van  
Jaarsveld

Adriaan van Jaarsveld, Commandant of the Eastern Frontier. This border Commandant soon made a name for himself as a military leader of great ability. He

Construction of  
Laagers.

called the frontier farmers together and constructed two large central encampments or laagers to the west of the Great Fish river. These laagers were formed of bullock waggons drawn up in the form of a hollow square. The gaps between the wheels, and between the different waggons, were filled up with huge bundles of the thorny branches of acacias, securely fastened together. Heavy iron chains, also, were used for lashing together the constituent parts of the barricade thus constructed. Inside these squares the families of the white colonists were placed for safety, while the walls of the laagers were guarded by experienced frontier hunters and graziers. The Hottentots found shelter near these laagers. Commandant Van Jaarsveld,

Defeat of  
Kaffirs.

placing himself at the head of a force consisting of only ninety-two frontier farmers and forty Hottentots, attacked the Kaffirs and completely routed them in a pitched battle in the open. The campaign lasted just two months, and ended in all the Kaffirs being driven

End of the War.

back across the Great Fish river.



## CHAPTER II

### FOR LIBERTY

#### STRUGGLE OF THE COLONISTS AGAINST THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY

Frontiersmen *versus* Officials—The Evils of Company Rule—Willem Adriaan van der Stell—His Governorship—His Plantations and Tyranny—Complaints—Adam Tas—Dissatisfaction in Stellenbosch District—Deputation to Holland—Commission of Enquiry appointed by Directors—Punishment of the Governor, the Secunde, the Landdrost, and the Parson—The People of Holland determined to uphold the Liberty of the Subject in South Africa—Good Points of old Dutch Administration—The most Popular of the old Governors—The Black Sheep—Pieter Gijsbert van Noot—His Tyranny—God's Judgment on the Tyrant—Joachim van Plettenberg—The Case of Buytendag—Abuses and Grievances under Van Plettenberg's *Régime*—The Fiscal General Boers—Petition and Delegation to Holland—Important Demands made by the Delegates (Tielman Roos, Jacobus van Reenen, N. G. Heyns, and B. J. Artoys) in 1779—Inhabitants desire Representative Institutions and Free Trade—A Dutch Writer's Opinion of Rule by Company—Committee of Enquiry appointed by Directors of East India Company—Report of Committee—Appeal of Cape Colonists to the States General.

War with England in 1781—Attempt of English Expedition to seize the Cape frustrated by Admiral de Suffren—Losses of Dutch East India Company in the War—Prosperous Times—Governor Cornelis Jacob van de Graaff—Fortifications and Reforms—His Extravagance—His Mercenary Troops—The Magnificent Governor Recalled—Parliamentary Commission appointed in Holland to Enquire into Affairs of Dutch East India Company—M. M. Nederburgh and Frykenius—Political and Financial Condition of the Settlement in 1792.

The Frontiers—Kaffir War of 1789—Gaikas and Tslambis—Invasion of the Colony—The Government Negotiates Terms with the Kaffirs—For Four Years Kosas allowed to remain West of

Fish River—Then a Commando Sent against them, but again withdrawn—The Burghers Dissatisfied—Frontiersmen Refuse to be Ruled any longer by Dutch East India Company—February, 1795, Republic proclaimed in Graaff Reinet—June, 1795, National Assembly and Proclamation of the Republic of Swellendam.

Frontiersmen  
versus  
Officials.

Evils of  
Company Rule.

WHILE the Colony had been spreading out towards the north and towards the east, the new generation of colonists who had grown up on South African soil—the descendants of the original Dutch, French, and German settlers,—had become bound and drawn together by interests and sympathies which they had in common. A spirit of independent nationality, and of resistance to the officials in Cape Town, was arising among the frontiersmen established on those upland plateaux beyond the great mountain ranges. Nor did the Cape Town officials, the Van Noots, the Van der Stells, the Van Plettenbergs, and their coadjutors and clerks, do much to endear themselves, or the rule of the Company which they represented, to the inhabitants of the country districts and the frontiers. The restrictions which these rulers placed on commerce, by arbitrary enactments, designed very often in their own interests, and at other times in the interests of the Company, caused great dissatisfaction throughout the country. Matters were made worse by the repressive measures which were resorted to in order to silence opposition and stamp out discontent. Although they did not love the officials at Cape Town and Batavia, the colonists, in the early days of the settlement, were loyal to the mother-country, Holland, whose free institutions and enlightened government were then an example to the rest of Europe. But

under the rule of Willem Adriaan van der Stell, mis-  
 government and tyranny reached such a climax that  
 the inhabitants could no longer submit. This Ad-  
 ministrator had acquired for his own use a large estate  
 in the district of Stellenbosch, where he had planted  
 an enormous vineyard and large fruit plantations.  
 Thousands of cattle and sheep, also, were now owned  
 by the Governor, and every year he added more to  
 his flocks, which were grazed on Government lands,  
 without the consent, and even without the knowledge,  
 of the Directors of the Company. The Governor's  
 father and brother, also, were engaged in farming on  
 a large scale; and the family of Van der Stell came  
 to monopolise nearly all the trade with ships, and with  
 the officials of the garrison. As the colonists in the  
 small settlement of those days subsisted on what their  
 farming produce brought in when marketed, they found  
 their living taken away by the Governor and his  
 relatives; for not only did these powerful, wealthy  
 men drive the small farmers out of the market, but  
 the prices at which the latter could sell were fixed  
 by the Company's officials, who, moreover, had the  
 power of preventing the settlers from dealing with  
 foreign ships calling in Table Bay. Is it to be wondered  
 at that, under these circumstances, the inhabitants of  
 the Colony sought for redress, and determined to lay  
 their grievances before the authorities in Holland? A  
 farmer named Adam Tas, an influential resident of  
 the district of Stellenbosch, took the lead in drawing  
 up a memorial, in which the case of his fellow burghers  
 was presented to the Directors of the Dutch East India

Willem Adriaan  
van der Stell.

His Plantations  
and Tyranny.

Adam Tas and  
Pieter van der  
Byl.

Memorial to the  
Directors.

Company. With Tas were associated Pieter van der Byl and other prominent and well-known colonists. The petition which they drafted is a memorable document in the history of South Africa. It represented the first attempt on the part of the white inhabitants to defend their common rights and interests as free citizens, and to protest against misgovernment. Sixty-three signatures were appended; and that number represented a very large proportion of the inhabitants in those days. The Governor was accused of corruption, misgovernment, and neglect of duty; and the signatories affirmed that Willem Adriaan van der Stell was acting and ruling in a way detrimental to the interests of the settlement and of the Company. The officer next in rank to the Governor, and the Clergyman of Cape Town, were also accused of misconduct and neglect of duty.

*Dissatisfaction.*

Before this petition was despatched to Amsterdam in 1705, a complaint had already been lodged with the officials of the Company at Batavia. But no redress came from that quarter, and in the beginning of the following year, when the fleet from Batavia, on its way to Holland, called in Table Bay, the Governor received intimation of what had taken place. He immediately had drawn up a testimonial, in which he himself was described as a very paragon of all the excellencies that can be found in a ruler. This precious paper also set forth that the inhabitants of the Colony were contented and well satisfied with his government and his acts. People were then asked to attend at the Castle in Cape Town, and those who came were requested to sign the document. When they showed any reluctance what-

ever in doing so, they were threatened with the displeasure of the Governor and his officials. The worthy Landdrost of Stellenbosch hunted up all those who had not made their appearance at the Castle, and got as many of them as he could to sign the document. But the Governor did more than render himself ridiculous in this way. Finding that many of the colonists refused to sign and could be moved neither by threats nor by cajolery, he proceeded at once to bolder and more openly tyrannical acts. The house of Adam Tas at Stellenbosch was surrounded by a party of armed men, acting under instructions from the Landdrost. The brave burgher was arrested and his papers were seized. He was then removed to prison, and, though bail was at once offered for his appearance whenever called upon for trial, it was not accepted, and he was imprisoned without trial for more than a year. Seven other burghers were also arrested. One of these was banished to Batavia; two were imprisoned; four were sent to Holland. The Governor probably imagined that these four men, on their arrival in the mother-country, would not have influence enough with the Directors of the East India Company to fight their own battle successfully. He seems to have trusted to powerful influences being set to work on his own behalf in Amsterdam. But Van der Stell was mistaken. The people of Holland were themselves too much attached to free institutions, and were too much alive to the importance of countenancing and fostering these in the colonies, to allow his conduct to go unchallenged. One of the exiles had died on board ship; but the other three, when they arrived in

Tyranny of Van  
der Stell.

Europe, at once commenced the fight for their own rights and those of their fellow colonists in South Africa. Boldly and fearlessly they pleaded their cause before the Directors, who at once perceived that the accusations against the officials at the Cape were of too serious a nature to be overlooked, and that public opinion in Holland would not countenance half measures.

Meanwhile, Van der Stell and his supporters were doing all they could to intimidate their opponents and all those who were dissatisfied. When the arrest of Adam Tas and his friends took place, their wives petitioned for a fair and instant trial. They were told that, if they could persuade their husbands to sign the testimonial and help to uphold the authority of the Governor, the prisoners would be released. This clumsy attempt to induce the leaders to abandon the cause of the people failed. The brave women preferred to see their husbands sent to prison and into exile, rather than to hear them called false to their country and untrue to the people. Then armed men were sent into the outlying country districts of Stellenbosch and Groenberg. The courts of Heemraden were abolished, and new judges and magistrates—friends of Van der Stell and his party—were appointed. But the spirit of the people was unbroken, and the women were as determined as the men not to submit to the tyrannical and arbitrary measures which the Castle clique saw fit to enact in defiance of the law. They knew that their delegates were now well on the way to Holland, and that their case was in good hands.

The issue of the investigation now proceeding in

Amsterdam was not left in doubt for long. A com-  
mission which was appointed by the Directors of the  
Dutch East India Company, to investigate the charges  
against Governor Van der Stell and his associates,  
brought out a report that the accusations were of a  
very grave nature. The Governor, the Assistant-  
Governor or Secunde, the Landdrost of Stellenbosch,  
and the Pastor of Cape Town, were at once suspended  
and ordered to come to Holland to stand their trial  
for misconduct, misgovernment, and neglect of duty.  
Theal, the great English historian of South Africa,  
referring to this trial, says: "From the documents  
connected with this case the views of the directors  
and of the colonists concerning the government of the  
country and the rights of its people can be gathered  
with great precision. The Directors desired to have  
a large body of freemen living in comfort, loyal to the  
fatherland, ready and willing to assist in the defence  
of the colony if attacked, enjoying the same rights as  
their equals in Europe, and not differing much from  
each other in rank or position. They issued orders  
that no official, from the highest to the lowest, was to  
own or lease a tract of land larger than a garden, or to  
trade in any way in corn, wine, or cattle. The burghers  
were to be governed in accordance with law and justice.

"On their part, the colonists claimed exactly the  
same rights as if they were still living in the Nether-  
lands. They expressed no wish for a change in the  
form of government, what they desired being merely  
that the control of affairs should be placed in honest  
hands. In their opinion they forfeited nothing by

The Enquiry in  
Holland.

removal to South Africa, and the violence displayed by the Governor towards Adam Tas and his associates was as outrageous as if it had taken place in the city of Amsterdam. They asserted their undoubted right to personal liberty; to exemption from arrest, unless under reasonable suspicion of crime; to admission to bail; to speedy trial before a proper court of justice; to freedom to sell to any one, burgher or foreigner, except under special circumstances, when restriction was needed for the good of the community, whatever their land produced, after the tithes had been paid and the Company's needs had been supplied. And these claims, made in as explicit terms as they could be today by an Englishman living in a crown colony, were not challenged by the Directors or even the partisans of the late Governor, but were accepted by every one as unquestioned." \*

No Sham  
Committee of  
Enquiry.

From South Africa other delegates were now sent over to Holland to give evidence against the officials. There was no sham Committee of Enquiry: no hushing up: no white-washing of scoundrels. The trial ended in all the four accused being found guilty, and dismissed from office. Van der Stell's great estate was confiscated, and the colonists thus came triumphantly out of their first struggle against irresponsible and unrestrained authority.

No Hushing Up.

Punishment of  
Van der Stell  
and his  
Associates.

During a considerable part of the rest of the 18th century the inhabitants of South Africa had little to complain of in the conduct of their Dutch rulers and governors. Many of the successors

\* "Story of the Nations": *South Africa*, pp. 70-71.



of Willem Adriaan van der Stell had profited by his experience, and had come to realise that the people of Holland and the Directors of the Company wished the Cape Colony to be governed in such a way as to make the colonists contented and satisfied, and the settlement prosperous. There were many points in the system of government of those days which no South African community of the present day would tolerate. There were perquisites and commissions to be handed over to government officials by all engaged in commerce and trade, and there were many other objectionable features in the rule of those times. But then, it was the 18th century, and the colonies of other European countries than Holland enjoyed no privileges which the people of the Cape Colony did not possess. Indeed, in many respects, the government of the Dutch East India Company in South Africa was preferable to that of other governments of those days. We have already seen what condign and swift punishment was inflicted on Governor Van der Stell and his fellow-sinners, the Assistant-Governor, the Landdrost, and the Parson, when they attempted, at the beginning of the century, to interfere with the liberty of the subject, and to ignore the rights of free burghers. Not only were the head authorities willing and anxious to defend and to protect the political privileges of the colonists, but they also did a very great deal to improve the country, to make it habitable, and to transform the wilderness into a pleasant land for future generations to dwell and prosper in. The oak trees which they planted are still there, to give shade to the colonist of

Holland upholds  
the Liberty of  
the Subject in  
South Africa.

The Old  
Governors.

to-day. On the slopes of the mountains they placed vineyards and orchards; in the valleys they sowed cornfields. They brought the wild mountain torrents out of the glens and ravines to the adjacent farms, to irrigate and fertilise the soil; they planted groves and forests by the river-banks; they sunk wells where water was needed; they made roads over the mountains; they founded villages and towns. They encouraged thrift and industry. They made laws to prevent vagrancy. They protected the white inhabitants against the incursions of savages, whom they governed with firmness and yet with kindness and justice. There is much to be said in favour of these old Dutch Governors. If there is one feature more than any other in their system of government which stands prominently out to their credit, it is their policy towards the Natives. There was no vacillating uncertainty in this. The settlement was to be regarded as a White man's colony, and no such political rights or privileges as might endanger the supremacy of the European government could be allowed to the aboriginal inhabitants, from whom the land had been bought. But while the principle of the dominance of the white race was thus laid down as the keystone of their policy in Africa, the Dutch rulers took care that no one should deal unjustly or harshly with the natives, and every transgression in this respect on the part of any of the white colonists, was at once severely punished. The natives were allowed to live under their own laws and under their own chiefs. They paid no taxes, and their tribal customs were not interfered with. By

the laws of the Dutch Government they were all free-men, and under no circumstances whatever could any of them be made slaves.

With all their faults, the old Dutch Governors did much for South Africa, and rendered services of which the present generation is still reaping the benefits.

The most popular of the Dutch Company's rulers were Bax van Herentals, who died in 1678, Maurice Pasquess, Marquis de Chavonnes (1714-25), who did a great deal for the cause of education, and Rijk van Tulbagh (1751-71), a kind, homely, fatherly man, who introduced various sumptuary laws, the object of which was to discourage and check luxurious living and improvidence among the colonists. But there were also several black sheep and rogues among those old Governors. Willem Adriaan van der Stell was one; Pieter Gijsbert van Noot was another, and a worse tyrant. He was Governor from 1727 to 1736. His rule was so unpopular and oppressive, that a conspiracy was formed among some of the settlers to get hold of a ship and desert to one of the Portuguese colonies. Their plan was discovered by the authorities, and Van Noot ordered eight of the leaders to be executed. One escaped; the other seven suffered the death penalty. The members of the Council had to witness the execution scene. When six of the unfortunate men had been hanged, the executioner was about to place the rope round the neck of the last victim. Asking for a moment's pause, and turning towards the Castle, the residence of the Governor, the condemned man called out: "Governor Van Noot, within an hour from now I

challenge you before the judgment-seat of Almighty God, there to render an account of my soul and of those of my companions." Then, addressing the executioner, he said: "Now; in God's name." In the next minute his lifeless body was dangling from the scaffold. When the report of the execution was taken to the Governor's chamber, the tyrant was found sitting in his arm-chair, stone dead, and with terribly distorted features. It was God's judgment, said the people; and the children in the streets of Cape Town and Stellenbosch sang:—

"Geen nood, geen nood;  
Van Noot is dood."  
(Naught need we dread,  
Van Noot is dead.)\*

There were popular rejoicings all over the Colony, and the hated ruler's body was interred in secret by the authorities. To this day the place where he was buried has not been discovered.

Joachim van Plettenberg was another oppressor. He was Governor for the East India Company from 1771 to 1785. His way of dealing with those who were discontented was to compel them to go to Batavia as sailors or soldiers. This was quite illegal, for free burghers were liable to military service only within the borders of the Colony, and not abroad. In January, 1779, the burgher Buytendag was arrested on an unproved accusation, which had been made against him

\* The *woordspeling* or pun in the original, which shows a trace of the influence of the old *Rederijkers Kamer* or Guild-of-Rhetoric style of rhyme, is almost altogether lost in the free translation of these lines as above given.

three years previously. Without a trial, he was condemned to leave the country and go to India for military service. This matter of punishment by transportation was by no means the only grievance which the colonists had.\* There were the old

\* "Of the exactions to which the colonists were exposed on the part of the rulers and officials we in our time can hardly form a conception. The Governor had almost unlimited power. Complaints could be made to the Governor-General in India, or, in case of necessity, to the *Heeren* in Holland, but the ships voyaging to and from India touched at the Cape only a few times in the year; even then there was seldom an opportunity of sending a complaint without the knowledge of the influential persons against whom the complaint was lodged; and besides, the Directors were slow in hearing complaints against persons who did not materially injure the interests of the Company, and the petitions were, in some cases, sent back to Africa to the accused, in order that they might offer explanations, but eventually to add to the misery of the accusers.

"Even without any further exertions on the part of the rulers at the Cape, the farmers—burghers they were then termed—were already sufficiently oppressed by laws and regulations from Holland. They were constantly given to understand that they existed for the Company, not the Company for them. They were nominally free; but had to learn that, above all, the Company had to be served. What they had to sell—wine, corn, wool, hides, cattle, field products, everything without distinction, had to be delivered at the Company's storehouses at fixed prices; while again, everything which they required had to be bought at the Company's price. Under heavy penalties, it was forbidden to trade with the natives. This was a Government monopoly. To ships, also, nothing could be sold except under certain circumstances and many very strict conditions. The Government compelled the farmers to sell their produce at the lowest possible price (which price was fixed by Government itself) and sold, also quite arbitrarily, at the highest possible price. And the farmer, who had to deliver his wine at the Government cellars for 12 to 20 Ryksdaalders per leaguer, saw the same wines sold to the ships for 120 Ryksdaalders per leaguer. Besides, he had to give a receipt for 40 Ryksdaalders where he only received 27. The remaining 13 went to the Governor and other special officials. All this was according to the laws of the Company, and the farmers would have considered themselves fortunate had matters gone no further than the carrying out of only these laws.

abuses of the time of Van der Stell. There was corruption and greed among the officials. Although the Governor himself was not one of the sinners in this respect, there were several among his subordinates who were guilty of rapacity and dishonest extortion. The Fiscal-General, Boers, was one of the most unpopular officers. Once more a petition to the authorities in Holland was got up. Tielman Roos, Jacobus van Reenen, N. G. Heyns, and B. J. Artoys were sent as delegates to fight for the interests of the citizens. The petition which these delegates took with them to Holland was a more important document than that which Pieter van der Byl had carried with him nearly three quarters of a century before. It did not merely bring forward the immediate grievances of which complaint was made to the authorities, and ask for redress. It made two important demands, which it claimed in the name of the people of South Africa as just rights and privileges due to them. These demands were for representative institutions in the government, and for free trade. Practically, therefore, the colonists now appealed for the extinction of the Dutch East India Company.

Petition and  
Delegation to  
Holland.

Demand for  
Representative  
Institutions and  
Free Trade.

“But what would then have become of the Governor and his chief officials? The Company paid small salaries, and these gentlemen had not merely to live, but also to be able to put by something. Means to that end were found in extortions of the worst kind, opportunity for which constantly existed. The percentages which had to be paid were raised. Freemen were compelled to work like slaves. *Backsheesh* was the watchword. And whoever refused to pay, or made resistance to the robbery (sometimes accompanied by violence) was silenced by imprisonment or by banishment to India.”

[Cachet: “De Worstelstrijd der Transvalers aan het Volk van Nederland Verhaald,” pp. 23-24].

The deputation to Holland was not at first so successful as had been that which, at the beginning of the century, brought about the fall of the Van der Stell régime. A Committee was appointed by the Directors to examine and report on the grievances and demands of the South African colonists. Four years had passed before the Committee brought out their report. In the meantime Boers, the Fiscal-General, the most unpopular of all the officials, had been advised to resign, and had done so. The Committee's report recommended that a change should be made in the constitution of the High Court, and that it should consist of an equal number of burghers and of officials. The Governor was acquitted of the charges brought against him, which the Committee decided had not been proved. But the colonists were determined not to let the matter rest. They appealed to the authority of the States-General, and sent over more delegates to substantiate their charges against the officials of the East India Company.

The struggle had now entered on its second stage. Originally it was a conflict between the colonists and the local officials of the Company. The appeal was formerly to the highest authorities of the Company itself, to which there was no hostility. But now the case was different. The settlers of South Africa were contending against the rule of the East India Company. They desired representative institutions. They wanted free trade with all the world. They appealed to the

Appeal to the  
States-General.

In 1781 war had broken out between England and

War with  
England in 1807.

Holland. As the Dutch East India Company was then already almost bankrupt, no adequate preparations could be made for the defence of the Colony, which appeared to be quite at the mercy of a large English expedition under Commodore George Johnstone. This commander had got ready a powerful fleet, which carried a military force, with the object of seizing the Cape for England. The British Empire in India was then in active creation and the importance of a South African harbour as a port of call was clearly perceived by British statesmen. But France was also at war with England, and was, therefore, the ally of the Netherlands. When spies had brought to Paris intelligence of what was intended across the English Channel, a French fleet was equipped to fight Johnstone. The result was that, when Commodore Johnstone's expedition reached the island of St. Jago, they were attacked by a portion of the French fleet under De Suffren. In the action that ensued, although the French had a very much inferior force, the British fleet was so severely handled that, before the expedition could be resumed, Johnstone had to put back for repairs, refitting, and reinforcements. De Suffren, meanwhile, proceeded to Table Bay, where he landed a strong military force, threw up earthworks and temporary fortifications, and put the Colony in such a state of defence that, when Commodore Johnstone, after having given his squadron the necessary repairs in English ports, reached the Cape, he found that he was unable to take the place by surprise, and capture it, as he had intended. Off the coast, however, the British fleet took a good many merchant vessels

Attempt of  
English Expedi-  
tion to seize the  
Cape frustrated  
by De Suffren.

Losses in the  
War.



belonging to the homeward bound East Indian flotilla. The pecuniary losses which the Company sustained in this war were very great. It was already heavily in debt, and soon could raise no more money in Europe. A paper issue was then had recourse to, and the financial outlook became by no means hopeful. The inhabitants of South Africa, however, were not losers by the war. The French garrison, and the French and other European ships which called in Table Bay, were good purchasers. Commerce was more brisk, and the Colony more prosperous, than ever before. The political outlook, also, seemed to improve. After the appeal of the South African people to the States-General, the Directors of the East India Company had promised numerous reforms and the appointment of other officials to take the place of the unpopular ones. More delegates were sent to Holland from the Cape, to join those already pleading for the colonial cause. The Company was now hastening towards its fall, but the Directors as well as the Government authorities in Holland were still attempting to put off the evil day. Terms of peace had been ratified between the contending European Powers in the recent war, and the States-General of the Netherlands now authorised the East India Company to appoint an engineer officer named Cornelis Jacob van de Graaff as Governor of the Cape. His special mission was to build fortifications at Cape Town, and to bring about various reforms in the administration of the Colony. As soon as Van de Graaff had assumed the reins of government, he began a career of such reckless extravagance that the annual

Prosperity in  
the Colony.

Governor  
Cornelis Jacob  
van de Graaff.

expenditure was made to exceed the incoming revenue by some £90,000. The Governor himself lived in great style and pomp, while his subordinates and all those around him carried on the old system of extortion and all the old abuses. A large garrison of foreign mercenary troops was kept up by the Company's officers at Cape Town. These soldiers were mostly German and Swiss adventurers, and were not worth much as a fighting force. The wasteful expenditure inaugurated by Colonel Van de Graaff soon brought the Company to the end of its financial resources. As no more funds could be raised by loan, all expenses had to be curtailed very considerably. So the fortification works were all stopped. The soldiers of the garrison were all ordered to Batavia, and the magnificent Governor Van de Graaff and his satellites were recalled. The Netherlands Parliament now appointed a Commission to enquire into the affairs of the Company, and offer suggestions as to what should be done to free it from its difficulties. In June, 1792, two special Commissioners, appointed by the States-General, M. M. Frykenius and Nederburgh, arrived at Cape Town. They came to diminish expenditure, increase revenue, and carry out measures of reform. The total white population was at that time some 15,000. The country was in a state of transition, politically as well as financially.

The Commissioners  
Nederburgh and  
Frykenius.

South Africa  
declares for  
Liberty.

All through the century which was just drawing to a close, the people, as the settlement grew, had been gradually schooled and trained by experience to uphold their rights and defend their liberties against injustice.

The feeble though brave and unfaltering accents of their first appeal had gained strength with the years that had gone, and the strong full tones of their bold demands now announced to the world that South Africa's watchword—as that of America—as that of France—was "Liberty." Their leaders had defied the wrath of autocratic tyrants, had braved the dangers and the hardships of imprisonment and exile; and now, from far beyond the Ocean's vast expanse, from two different Worlds, the Old and the New—from the banks of the Hudson and the Seine—had come the rallying battle-cry, followed by the exulting shouts of triumph of men in arms against the oppressor, for freedom and for national existence. Africa had heard the watchword. The struggle for constitutional liberties and popular institutions, which was now in progress at the Cape, was in conformity with the spirit of the age, and with the events transpiring in other parts of the world.

And Demands  
her Rights.

Has heard the  
Watchword, and  
is Ready for the  
Struggle.

As regards the finances of the country, matters were changing lamentably for the worse. Instead of the thriving commercial prosperity which had characterised the days of the great war with England, when large French garrisons and the fleets of other nations brought wealth and plenty to South African households—and which was not wanting even in the time of the Governorship of Van de Graaff—when there was still a large garrison to purchase the products of the farms and of the country, there was now an absolute stagnation in trade, so that poverty and distress were experienced by many in the community who had formerly

Hard Times.

been well-to-do. It was hardly a time for fresh taxation. Yet that was one of the first steps taken by the High Commissioners, Nederburgh and Frykenius. In order to increase the revenue, not only were some of the existing taxes raised, but new ones were imposed. Thus it soon became evident that South Africa was still to exist for the benefit of the Dutch East India Company.

More Taxes.

The reforms which had been promised were slow in coming, and when they made their appearance it was found that they amounted to very little. Permission was given for the free export of grain, corn, and other products, under certain conditions. These conditions were: that the exportation should be to the Dutch Indies or to Holland, and that the Company should first claim the amount it desired to buy at a price fixed by the authorities. The trade in slaves with the East Coast of Africa and with Madagascar was also made free. Trade with foreign ships in the harbours of the Colony was still subject to nearly all the old restrictions. Indeed, the stringency of these old prohibitory laws, which had recently been much relaxed, was, by the recommendation of the Commissioners, to be again applied in full force. The people of Cape Town and the surrounding districts protested. Many of them, in disgust with Governors and officials, and in order to be as far removed from these gentry as they could, left their homes, and joined relatives and friends, who were settled in the remotest parts of the frontier divisions of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet.

More Restrictions.

The Border Grievances.

The frontiersmen also, those Huguenot-Batavian

nomads, whose ranks—ever since the days when the younger Van der Stell sent the first pioneers away from the coast region into the wild interior, there to graze cattle for the Company, and to fight Hottentots, Bushmen, leopards, and lions for their own preservation—had been constantly increased by the disaffected and discontented ones from the older and more settled parts of the Colony, as Governor after Governor, and Fiscal after Fiscal misgoverned and oppressed the country; the frontiersmen, those progenitors of the Republican Voortrekkers, had their own grievances and vexations. In March, 1789, the Amakosa Kaffirs had again invaded the Eastern part of the district of Graaff Reinet,—that bordering on the Great Fish river. The nation was then disturbed by a war of succession. On the death of their Paramount Chief, his son, Gaika, not being of age, was not at once proclaimed Chief. The head Councillors appointed the boy's uncle, Ndlambe, or Tslambi, as regent during the minority. Some of the Amakosas, however, objected to the regent's rule, and as their party was not strong enough to maintain their position, they crossed the Fish river and began raiding the farms in that district.

Trouble on the Frontiers.

Amakosa Quarrels and Government Economy.

The burghers were at once called together under arms by the Landdrost of Graaff Reinet, who despatched a horse express to Cape Town to ask for assistance. At Cape Town, however, the instructions from the authorities in Holland were to curtail expenses; and, therefore, it was decided that no second Kaffir war could be allowed. A Commission, another cloak for incompetence, was appointed to come to terms with the

Another Commission and more High and Mighty Commissioners.

Kaffirs. The burgher Commando was on the point of attacking the Kosas, who had now fallen back towards the Great Fish river, when the Commissioners, the bogus saviours of the situation, arrived from Cape Town, and ordered the cessation of hostilities. The Kaffirs were allowed to retain all the cattle which they had captured, and were even permitted to establish themselves in the country between the Fish river and the Kowie, on condition that they ceased raiding. Naturally, the farmers grumbled.

After four years, during which time the Kaffirs remained in possession of the land west of the Great Fish river, and raided and stole cattle from the farmers in the neighbourhood, large numbers of Kosas crossed the river to join their kinsmen, who became more troublesome and aggressive every day. Then the Government was forced to act, and a Commando was at last called out from Swellendam district. The campaign was not a success. The burghers had no confidence in their Commandant (appointed by the Government), who had had no previous experience of Kaffir warfare, and who was, moreover, an officer who openly expressed his sympathy with the natives. He soon abandoned all hostilities, contenting himself with the mere promise of the Kaffir chiefs that they would no longer molest the white colonists. In vain the frontiersmen requested that the Government would allow them to select their own Commandant, or would appoint an officer who had the ability and the will to lead them to victory against the invaders, to help them to recover the seventy-thousand head of cattle which the marauders had

The Govern-  
ment's  
Swellendam  
Commandant.

Kaffir Promises  
Accepted.

carried off from the farms, and to bring the war to a conclusion by driving the Kaffirs back across the Great Fish river. The rulers of the country were so demoralized as to consider that the war had already been ended by leaving the Kaffirs in possession of a part of the Colony as well as of all the property which they had stolen from the colonists.

The farmers and frontiersmen went to their homes, cursing the Dutch East India Company and all its officials. In every part of the country there was now discontent and dissatisfaction with the utter incapacity shown by the Government, and with the selfish disregard of the true interests of South Africa by the Company's officers and Directors. In the farm-houses scattered over the great Karroo plains, or half concealed in the wild glens of the great mountain ranges of the Eastern frontier, men whose ancestors had dared much for liberty, pioneers who had themselves grown to manhood's estate in the midst of dangers and hardships of which we, at the present day, have only a faint idea, had heard the tidings of the birth of the great Republic of the Western world, of the French Revolution, and of the victories which the peasant and citizen soldiery of France had gained over some of the mightiest armies of Europe. Alone with nature on the wild African veld, in the shadows of the mountain kloof, by the banks of the swift-flowing river, men were asking themselves: Was it right that their country should be ruled any longer by foreign merchants six thousand miles away?

The brave frontiersmen were not slow to act. Seeing that previous petitions had been of little avail, and

The War  
Concluded.

The Kaffirs in  
Possession.

Curses on the  
East India  
Company.

Before the  
Dawn.

Dreaming of  
Liberty.

Is it right that  
our Country  
should be  
Ruled by  
Outlanders Six  
Thousand Miles  
away?

The Revolution  
in the Frontier  
Districts.

Graaff Reinet  
and Swellendam  
Proclaim the  
Republic.

disdaining any longer to submit to misrule, the inhabitants of the District of Graaff Reinet expelled their Landdrost, who had made himself very unpopular, and proclaimed the Republic. This was in February, 1795. As William of Orange had declared that he was not in rebellion against the King of Spain, so these burghers announced that they were not in insurrection against Holland, but that they refused any longer to be ruled by the Dutch East India Company. Adriaan van Jaarsveld was appointed Commandant of the Republic. Swellendam followed suit. The burghers of that District, in June, 1795, chose a National Assembly, and proclaimed a Republic, while the Landdrost was expelled, as at Graaff Reinet.

The Commissioners, M. M. Nederburgh and Frykenius, had already left Cape Town when these events occurred. They had appointed Abraham Josias Sluysken, Governor. Before they left for Europe, they had received news of the outbreak of civil war in Holland.



## CHAPTER III

### BETRAYED—"IN NAAM VAN ORANJE"

#### THE REVOLUTION IN HOLLAND—SEIZURE OF THE CAPE BY THE ENGLISH

The Revolution of January, 1795, in the Netherlands—British Troops and British Agents driven out of Gelderland and Utrecht by French under Pichegu—Triumph of Patriot Party over Adherents of the Stadhouder, who escapes to England—The Dutch Military Forces at the Cape at this time—Sluysken, De Lille, and Gordon—June, 1795, British Expedition under General Craig and Admiral Elphinstone arrives in Table Bay to take Possession of the Cape for the Prince of Orange—The Cape Colonists favour the Patriot Party—The Officials side with the House of Orange, and, therefore, with the English—Correspondence between Sluysken and General Craig—Treachery of Officials of Dutch East India Company—Cowardice of their Military Leaders—No Opposition to Landing of British Troops at Simonstown—Retreat on Muizenberg Pass—Nearly all Troops Worthless—Burghers and Frontiersmen come forward to Fight against the English—Swellendam and Graaff Reinet Republics send Help—Battle at Muizenberg—De Lille's Services to England—His Reward—"Acts to which no Parallels are found in History"—Capture of Van Baalen's Camp at Wynberg—The Capitulation—Conditions of Surrender—Wise and Conciliatory Policy of General Craig—His Proclamations.

THE contending sections in Holland were the Patriot and Orange parties. The first was in favour of an alliance with France, and demanded popular representative institutions and reforms in the constitution. The Stadhouder, William of Orange, and the party which he led, were the champions of the existing order of things—of the maintenance of the alliance with

The Revolution in Holland.

England, which had been in existence since 1788—of the defence of the laws and institutions of the country against the revolutionary alterations which were then sweeping over Europe. It soon became evident that the Patriot party was too popular and too powerful to be ignored by those in authority; and although, at first, the Government was successful in checking insurrection, the leaders of the popular cause were undaunted. France came forward as the ally of the Party of Reform. England supported the Conservatives. In February, 1793, war was declared at Paris against the Government of William of Orange and against England. British agents worked hard to consolidate and to strengthen the Orange party. British troops had occupied Gelderland and Utrecht, but were driven out of the country in January, 1795, by a French army under General Pichegu. Malmesbury and other agents of the British Government also had to make their escape, and the Stadhouder himself was expelled from his capital, and sought refuge in England.

Defeat of the  
English and  
Orange party.

The Defensive  
Forces at the  
Cape.

Two new corps of defence had been raised in Cape Town immediately after the receipt of the intelligence of the declaration of war by France in 1793. One consisted of clerks and civil service employés. The other was composed of Hottentots and half-breeds, drilled and trained as soldiers. This coloured corps was styled the corps of Pandours. It consisted of some 200 men. Besides these, Sluysken had 628 infantry, the so-called National Battalion, in reality composed of riff-raff representatives of nearly all nationalities under the sun, and commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel De Lille.

There was also a force of 430 engineers. Thus, altogether, the army amounted to between 1200 and 1400 men. But they were a motley crew. The Commander-in-chief was Colonel Robert Jacob Gordon, the explorer of the Orange river.

Meanwhile, in England, a large expedition under Major-General Craig and Admiral Elphinstone was being fitted out to achieve, by taking possession of the Cape for England, what Commodore George Johnstone had failed to accomplish in 1781. The importance of the South African Colony as a half-way station to the Indian Empire was now very clearly perceived by the British, and advantage was taken of the Prince of Orange's exile in England to obtain from him an order instructing the officials at the Cape to hand over the settlement to the British Commanders. In South Africa no news had at this time been received of the success of the Revolution in Holland, and of the important events which had placed the Patriot party in power. The East India Company's officials were nearly all strong partisans of the Orange faction. The inhabitants of the smaller towns and villages, the farmers and country people, as well as the frontiersmen, openly avowed their sympathy with the Patriots. In Graaff Reinet and Swellendam the people had already, without knowing of the recent events in Holland, turned out the officials, and thus brought about a revolution, as had been done in the mother-country.

In June, 1795, the English fleet, conveying General Craig's expedition, anchored in Simon's Bay. The order from the Prince of Orange was at once handed to

Preparations for  
Capture of the  
Cape by an  
English  
Expedition.

The English  
Admiral  
Demands  
Surrender.

The Governor  
Corresponds.

Governor Sluysken and his officers, who asked for time to consider the situation. Sluysken, Colonel Gordon, and Lieutenant-Colonel De Lille, now began a correspondence with the English Commanders. No opposition was made to a landing of British troops at Simon's Bay, and the Dutch troops of the National Battalion received orders to fall back on Muizenberg Pass. From the first the Dutch officers seem to have made up their minds to obey the order of the exiled Stadhouder, whose partisans they were, and to hand over the South African Colony to the English. But they were careful to conceal their intentions, and to pretend that they were in earnest in defending the settlement. The only troops that could be relied on were the Corps of Engineers, some 500 strong, and the small number of Dutch soldiers of the National Battalion. The foreign auxiliaries were worthless and disaffected. The burghers and farmers from the country districts, however, were arming and coming forward to assist in the defence. Even from the newly-established Republics of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet came help for the authorities at Cape Town; for the frontiersmen knew as well as the other colonists that, with the triumph of the Patriot party in Holland, the East India Company had ceased to exist. Looking upon the English as the enemies of France and of the popular cause, the South African farmers and country people were determined to do all that lay in their power to prevent the settlement passing out of the possession of the Batavian Republic.

The Patriots  
Betrayed.

Had Governor Sluysken really intended to defend the country, he would have found his task no light one.

Of the 1200 or 1400 troops at his disposal he could rely on only 500 men as good soldiers. The fighting force which the burghers could muster amounted to about 2000 at the very outside. Major-General Craig now stood opposed to him at the head of 5000 regular troops, for the English fleet had been reinforced on 4th September by a large squadron carrying troops for India, who were now to be utilised in assisting Lord Elphinstone's expedition in Simon's Bay. But neither Sluysken, De Lille, nor Gordon intended to fight. In the correspondence that passed between them and the British officers the latter were requested to land only a small number of unarmed troops. Then followed the evacuation of Simonstown and concentration at Muizenberg. Of course the British troops, meeting with no opposition, effected a landing and occupied Simonstown with a force of 800 men. Now came (on 7th August, 1795) a forward movement on Muizenberg by Major-General Craig with 1600 British troops. The Pass was occupied by the National Battalion, over 600 strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel De Lille, and by a small body of field artillery and some burghers. It was a strong position, which could have been held, but De Lille retreated as soon as the British columns advanced to the attack. Lieutenant Marnitz with the artillery and burghers alone stood their ground, but were soon overpowered and defeated, as their numbers were too small to make any effectual resistance. In retreating, De Lille had taken good care to leave plenty of stores and provisions in his camp for the enemy. For this important service he was afterwards

Sluysken, De  
Lille and  
Gordon.

Muizenberg.

De Lille's  
Treachery.

rewarded by receiving a commission in the British Service.

Many of the burghers, fully 1500 of whom had up to this time been in the field, now returned to their farms, cursing Sluysken and De Lille as traitors and cowards, who had sold the country to the British. The Governor, meanwhile, was as actively engaged as before in corresponding with the enemy. In one of his protests published at this time he gives vent to his righteous indignation in the following words :

Sluysken's  
Bombastic  
Indignation.

"To be compelled by a foreign Power to place ourselves under the protection of a sovereign who is not our own; to force the government by promises, by threats, and by acts of the most violent hostility, to surrender a Colony entrusted to its care to one who finds it convenient to demand such a surrender; to attempt to alienate us from our duty and fealty to the mother-country by an oath of allegiance to his Britannic Majesty, which oath, the Naval Commanders required of us; truly these are acts to which, according to the best of my knowledge, no parallels are found in history."

With more of such bombastic phrases he managed to keep up the farce of defending the Colony, while he and De Lille arranged matters with the English.\*

The above protest was written on the 10th of September, 1795. On the 14th the British forces, 5000 strong, advanced from Muizenberg to Cape Town. General

\* "Gordon, on afterwards discovering that the English intended to retain the Colony of which they had taken possession in the name of the Prince of Orange, committed suicide."—ELIAS RENAUD.

Sir Alured Clarke was in command. The few hundred burghers and engineers now available to oppose him (with the National Battalion, led by Captain Van Baalen in place of De Lille) were stationed at Wynberg. Van Baalen at Wynberg and Out of it. There was a repetition of the affair of Muizenberg. As soon as the English troops approached, the valiant Captain Van Baalen and the cosmopolitan heroes of the National Battalion retreated, leaving the handful of burghers and engineers to stand their ground alone. With them stood one company of infantry. But this small force was, of course, altogether inadequate to hold the position, and the English troops soon captured the camp and all the stores. The burghers who were still in the field now went home indignant. An armistice of twenty-four hours' duration was then concluded, and terms of surrender were arranged on the following day.

On the 16th of September, 1795, General Craig took possession of the Castle of Good Hope, while the Dutch troops laid down their arms. By the conditions of surrender, the officers were permitted either to remain at the Cape or to return to Europe, having only to give their word of honour not again to serve against England during the continuation of the war. Many of them, we may fairly assume, with the examples of De Lille and Van Baalen before us, were ready enough to do this. Fighting was not their *metier*. Fighting not their Metier. As to the common soldiers, they were to be prisoners of war, and their only consolation—for prisoners of war in England in those days needed consolation—was to be that they had capitulated with all the honours of war. Capitulation. The rights and privileges of the people of South Africa, such as

they had been under the East India Company, were guaranteed by the new rulers. The British officers promised that religious observances and the established Church should be allowed to remain as they had been under the Dutch Government, that no fresh taxes should be imposed, and that already-existing taxation should be diminished as much as possible.

Many of the officials at Cape Town took kindly to the new order of things, and readily transferred their allegiance from the Dutch East India Company to the British Government. Not so the inhabitants of other towns and villages, and of the country districts. The burghers still reviled Sluysken and his officers for having sold the country to the English. The farmers and frontiersmen refused to acknowledge the British government and its officials. It must be at once allowed that, under the circumstances, the latter acted with great discretion and tact. "The paper money in circulation," says Theal, "amounted to rather more than a quarter of a million pounds sterling, and was a source of much anxiety to its holders. The British Commanders announced that it would be received at the public offices at its full nominal value. They also abolished a very obnoxious tax on auction accounts, and substituted for the old burgher councillors a popular board termed the burgher senate. Two days after the capitulation they sent a document all over the country, in which a promise was made that every one might buy from whom he would, sell to whom he would, and come and go whenever and wherever he chose, by land or by water. The farmers were invited to send their

Wise and  
Conciliatory  
Policy of  
General Craig.

His Proclama-  
tions.



cattle and produce to Cape Town, where they could sell whatever they wished in the manner most profitable for themselves, and the English would pay for anything purchased in hard coin. They were also invited to send persons to confer with the British Commanders, if there was any matter upon which they wished for information."

## CHAPTER IV

### SUFFERING FOR THE CAUSE

#### THE STRUGGLE OF THE FRONTIERSMEN OF THE REPUBLIC OF GRAAFF REINET AGAINST ENGLAND

Submission of Swellendam—The Oath of Allegiance—Graaff Reinets Defiant—Landdrost Bresler and the Nationalists—The British Flag—Jacobus Joubert and Jan Kruger—Marthinus Prinsloo—Carel Trichard—Adriaan van Jaarsveld—The Resolutions of 22nd March, 1796—British Troops and Hottentot Regiments on the Frontiers—Supplies cut off from Graaff Reinets—Submission of the Nationalists under Van Jaarsveld—Marthinus Prinsloo and his Adherents still hold out—Escape of Pieter Woyer to Batavia—Surrender of Admiral Lucas—England Victorious—Events in Europe—Triumphant French Armies—Critical Position of England in 1796—British Success in South Africa Assured—Stores for Republicans sent to Delagoa Bay and Captured by the English—Promises—Performance—The Earl of Macartney—The Irish Nobleman with Indian Experience—His Policy of Pacification—His Free Trade—Broken Pledges—The Attitude of the Graaff Reinets Justified—The Hottentot Pandours—The Graaff Reinets Rising under Marthinus Prinsloo, Adriaan Van Jaarsveld, Conrad Du Buis, Jan Botha, and Others—Surrender of Prinsloo and Van Jaarsveld to General Vandeleur—Twenty of the Prisoners, including the Leaders, sent to Cape Town for Trial—The Castle of Good Hope—Cruel Treatment of the Vanquished—Imprisoned for more than a Year without a Trial—Fearful Condition of the Prison—The Trial—Sentences of Death, Banishment, and Flogging on the Scaffold—Considerations and Favours of Clemency—The Governor, Sir George Yonge—His Administration—General Dundas Recommends the Prisoners to Mercy—Their Continued Imprisonment—Death of Two of them—The Frightful Sufferings of these Condemned Frontiersmen—Tyrannical Conduct of the Officials—Vindictive and Merciless Attitude of the Home Government—Submission of Graaff Reinets District—Sentence of Outlawry on Du Buis and Fugitive Leaders.

It seemed as if the conquerors held out to the inhabitants of South Africa all the reforms and all that liberty for which there had been strife and contention between the people and the rulers all through the century.

Had General Craig's conciliatory and statesmanlike policy been persevered in, the British Government would at once have been successful in making many friends in South Africa. As it was, the different country districts, with the exception of Graaff Reinet, all submitted. Even in Swellendam they gave up their Republic, and agreed to come under British rule. Their former Landdrost, Faure, was to be restored. There was to be no more East India Company monopoly. There was to be free trade and a free market. Every one could buy from whom he would, sell to whom he would, employ whom he would, and come and go whenever and wherever he chose, by land or water. There was to be no fresh taxation; that already existing was to be done away with where found oppressive; and while the paper money was to continue to hold its value, the English Government would make payment in hard coin. All that had been done during the days of political turmoil and revolution, even if considered wrong by the British authorities, was to be overlooked, and there was to be an amnesty for all leaders. These were the terms offered by General Craig in the name of the English Government. The Nationalists on their part, represented on the 4th of November, 1795, by their Landdrost, Hermanus Steyn; the Heemraden, Pieter Pienaar, Pieter du Pré,

Swellendam  
Surrenders.

Terms.

and Hillegaard Mulder; and the members of the National Assembly, Ernst du Toit, Jacobus Steyn, and Antonie van Vollenhoven, agreed to accept these conditions, and to submit to the British Government. In token of such submission, all their officials had to take the oath prescribed by the English officers:—"I swear to be true and faithful to his Majesty, George III., by God's grace King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc., etc., for so long a time as his Majesty shall remain in possession of this Colony."

Graaff Reinet holds out.

The frontiersmen of Graaff Reinet, however, refused to accept any promises, and announced their intention and determination to defend their newly-declared Republic. The British General sent Frans Bresler, one of De Lille's officers, to be their Magistrate. They were not very friendly towards those who were suspected of complicity in selling the country to the English. Nevertheless, when Bresler arrived at Graaff Reinet, he was hospitably received by the acting Landdrost of the Nationalist Government, Gerotz. Craig's emissary, was, however, refused admission to the court-room of the government buildings and access to the official documents and papers.

The Representatives of the People.

The representatives of the people in the Nationalist Assembly were Jacob Kruger, Jan Durand, Hendrik Krugel, and Christoffel Lotter. These had given instructions that all officials of the little Republic should remain at their posts, and should not in any way acknowledge the British Government's jurisdiction.

On the 22nd February, 1796, the Commandants

Adriaan van Jaarsveld, Andries Burger, Andries Smit, Pieter Kruger, and David van der Merwe, with the representatives above-named, and the Heemraden Schalk Burger, David van der Merwe, Jan Booyesen, and Andries van der Walt, assembled at the *Drostdy* of Graaff Reinet, and asked Bresler to acquaint them with the object of his mission. He replied that he had been appointed Landdrost by the British Government; that he would summon the Heemraden that afternoon; and that he refused to acknowledge the Representatives of the Nationalist Assembly.

That afternoon the British flag was hoisted on the *Drostdy* flagstaff by the newly-appointed English Landdrost. But the people would have none of it. A crowd of determined frontiersmen at once demanded that the flag should be pulled down. Their leader was Jacobus Joubert. Bresler did not give way. Then Jan Kruger, Jacobus Joubert, and Jan Groning stepped forward and pulled the flag down. The crowd now informed Bresler that they had elected Marthinus Prinsloo of the Boschberg to be the "*Beschermer van de Volksstem*" (Protector of the voice of the People); that they had his instructions to forbid any one from submitting to the English by taking the oath of allegiance; that they would no more agree to accept the King of England's Landdrost than they would to accept the King of England himself; and that another assembly of the people would be convened for 22nd March.

The British  
Flag pulled  
down.

Jan Kruger and  
Jacobus  
Joubert.

Assembly  
of 22nd March,  
1796.

On the date appointed Mr Bresler again attempted to reason with the Republicans; but he had no better

arguments than such as were contained in proclamations of General Craig.

The familiar names of later pages of South African history crop up here in plenty. This is significant, as showing the origin of the modern Republic from the old Graaff Reinet Nationalist days. We have already seen that there were a Kruger and a Joubert in those days, to pull the British flag down when it symbolised illegal interference with the rights of the people. We have come across the names of Smit and of Burger, and again of Kruger, among the representatives, Heemraden, and Commandants. They were all at this second assembly of the 22nd of March, at which Marthinus Prinsloo presided. Carel Trichard answered Mr. Bresler's arguments—"They would have none of General Craig's proclamations. That was why they had pulled his flag down." The old Commandant Adriaan Van Jaarsveld then declared that they were all firmly resolved to keep their own Government.

**The Resolutions.**

The resolutions passed at the meeting were: that the oath of allegiance required by the English authorities could not be taken, because the Colony was only temporarily in the possession of England; that the people of Graaff Reinet desired to live at peace with the new rulers at the Cape, and meant no hostility towards the English; that trade should continue between Cape Town and Graaff Reinet as before; and that the British Governor should be requested to place no restrictions on the importation of clothing, food-stuffs, and ammunition into the frontier Republic.

The two last resolutions were proposed by Van Jaarsveld.

The inhabitants of Graaff Reinet had not long to wait in order to learn the intentions of the British Government. Three hundred troops were moved northwards as soon as Bresler had got back to Cape Town to report his failure. It was a long and weary march from Stellenbosch by Tulbagh and then north-eastward overland. But French frigates were then frequently met cruising along the east coast, and so the troops could not be taken to Algoa Bay by sea.

A Hottentot regiment also was raised for service against the frontiersmen. The British Government and its officers, in making use of these savages for a projected expedition against white colonists who had their own women and children to defend, appeared to have quite forgotten Pitt's scathing denunciation of the wickedness of Lord North's administration in having recourse to a similar measure in order to carry on the war in America.

Hottentots and British Troops marched against the Frontiersmen.

Unscrupulous British Policy.

Certainly, the Hottentot soldiery were useful to England on the score of economy. Each man received for payment the munificent sum of sixpence a week!

All supplies being cut off from them (while the soldiers were being got ready to advance northwards), the frontiersmen soon found that they would have to fight the English without a sufficient quantity of either gunpowder or bullets, and even without sufficient food. Under these circumstances, only the most determined among them were in favour of holding out. One party was ready to submit. The district-surgeon, Jan Pieter

Supplies cut off.

Woyer, had been among the most active of those most strongly opposed to the British Government, agents of which now attempted to get him arrested. He, however, managed to escape.

The frontiersmen were still as unwilling as ever to become British subjects. But the troops with artillery, the dragoons, and the Hottentot regiment, were now (September) on the march from Stellenbosch to Roodezand (Tulbagh). Most of the Nationalist leaders perceived that they could have no hope whatever of success in the uneven struggle which was imminent. A nominal submission was, therefore, agreed to in the town of Graaff Reinet itself. Adriaan van Jaarsveld took part in this submission, and the Deputies Opperman and Kruger were sent to Cape Town to arrange terms. Meanwhile, staunch old Marthinus Prinsloo of the Boschberg still held out, and with him stood the entire Fieldcornetcy of Bruintjes Hoogte, all the Zuurveld, and the Zwartkops River. These thinly-peopled country districts, however, could, for the time, be practically ignored by the British authorities. Even here the farmers were already in want of ammunition and of supplies; so that, had troops been moved against them, they would not have been able to offer any effectual resistance. In 1799, when they did rise in insurrection, Marthinus Prinsloo, their leader, could only muster one hundred and thirty men, and had to submit.

Submission.

Marthinus Prinsloo still holds out.

The French Admiral at Batavia sends a Frigate to Algoa Bay.

Pieter Woyer had escaped from Algoa Bay in a Danish ship, and had gone to Batavia, from where the French Admiral sent a frigate to the Bay. This frigate



carried ammunition and provisions for the Republicans at Graaff Reinet, but found Algoa Bay guarded by a British man-of-war of superior strength. A combat ensued between the two ships, and the French frigate was beaten, and driven back, without having accom-

Defeat of the French.

plished its object. A fleet consisting of nine men-of-war under Admiral Lucas, which was despatched from Holland to attempt to recapture the Cape, with two thousand troops and sailors on board, put into Saldanha Bay in August, 1796. There the Dutch Admiral soon found himself placed between a large British land force, on one side, and a British fleet, very much stronger than his own, on the other. He had no choice but to surrender, which he did on 17th August, 1796.

Capture of Admiral Lucas' Squadron in Saldanha Bay.

In every enterprise on the South African coasts fortune seemed to favour the arms of England. The cause of the Netherlands was everywhere represented by mercenary troops or sailors numerically inferior to those of Britain, and by officers, many of whom were incompetent or cowardly.

In Europe, events were moving rapidly. The French Republic was victorious everywhere. On the 12th of April, 1796, Napoleon had inaugurated his first Italian campaign by the victory of Montenotte, the first of that series of great battles in which he was to break the power of Austria and render his own name memorable as that of the first military commander of the period. Upon Montenotte followed Millesimo, Dego, Mondovi, Fombio, Lodi, Lonato, Castiglione, Roveredo, Primolano, Bassano, Citadella, Arcole, Rivoli, Monte Baldo, La

Events in Europe.

Victorious  
French Armies.

Favorita, in 1796 and 1797—every one of these battles a victory for France, and for the General whose name was resounding through Europe,—who was achieving still greater triumphs and winning more imperishable laurels for the Republic than Hoche, Jourdan, Moreau, or any of the leaders who had gained renown and glory in the previous couple of years, when 90,000 prisoners, 90 standards, 116 towns, 230 forts, 3800 pieces of artillery, 70,000 muskets, and 1000 lbs. of powder had been captured from the enemy, and 27 victories inscribed on the roll of fame of the armies fighting under the tricolour flag.\*

Critical Position  
of England in  
1796.

Towards the end of 1796 England's position in Europe was not strong. With Austria beaten; Italy, the Rhine, and Flanders conquered by France; Prussia and Spain no longer hostile to and Holland in alliance with her; with the British fleet withdrawn from the Mediterranean; the British expeditions to assist the Vendéans and Chuans defeated; the English armies driven out of the Netherlands; no wonder that Pitt sought peace and sent Malmesbury to Paris to negotiate terms.

British Success  
in South Africa  
Assured.

However, in South Africa the British position was now secure enough, for England's naval supremacy was already established in the Atlantic Ocean. Another attempt to assist the republican Graaff Reinettters also failed. A ship for Algoa Bay laden with stores and ammunition, sent to them from Batavia, was driven by stress of weather into the harbour of Delagoa Bay, and there captured by the English and Portuguese. The

\* See Sloane's "Life of Napoleon Bonaparte."

insurrection in Graaff Reinet, receiving no further assistance from without, came to an end.

In the other districts of the Colony, General Craig's Promises. proclamation and promises of reform and of free Performance. government had made a good impression. Everything augured well for the new rulers and their relations with the people of South Africa, when news came that the authorities in England had decided to appoint another Governor, and, in May, 1797, the Earl of Earl of Macartney, The Irish Nobleman with Indian Experience. Macartney, an Irish nobleman with Indian experience, arrived and took office. The selection was an unlucky one. South African colonists had already had enough of East Indian officials under the Company's rule. And the new Governor was a martinet as well as an autocrat. He began by requiring the oath of allegiance to the King of England to be taken by all burghers. A good many refused. Soldiers were then sent into the country districts and quartered on the rebellious ones. Those who still refused were banished from the country. Officials were appointed who did not know a word of the language spoken everywhere. Any one who ventured to express a preference for Republican government was treated as guilty of sedition. The old His Policy of Pacification. regulation of the Dutch East India Company, fixing a price at which farmers had to sell their produce and stock to the Government, was revived. Instead of free His Free Trade. trade being allowed, as had been promised by General Craig, no trade whatever was permitted with any part of the East, excepting the British East Indian Company's territory. Everything brought from British ports in British vessels was landed free of duty, but

any merchandise brought by the ships of any other nationality from any European or American ports was taxed outrageously.

Thus the British Government already in the second year of its dominion in South Africa broke many of the promises which it had made at the time of the conquest, and showed that no reliance whatever could be placed on its word. To the Republican Colonists it appeared already a worse government than that of the hated Dutch East India Company. It was not only tyrannical and unjust, but also perfidious and untrustworthy.

The Attitude of the Graaff Reineters Justified.

The people of Graaff Reinet, who had refused to submit to the English in spite of General Craig's promises in 1795, now stood justified in their conduct before their fellow colonists. To back up their opinions, those with most extreme views in favour to independence again got up an insurrection. The town and district had in 1796 been declared a magistracy, and a Hottentot police, led by English officers, was organised for maintaining order and, if necessary, subduing rebellion. This gave great offence, and was looked upon by the burghers as an unconstitutional act, and as a violation of their rights as white inhabitants under the laws of the Colony, which had never sanctioned the employment of coloured militia or military forces against burghers.

The Hottentot Pandours.

Most of the inhabitants of the frontier country refused to take the oath of allegiance to the King of England.

Adriaan van Jaarsveld arrested.

In January, 1799, the old frontier-Commandant Adriaan van Jaarsveld was arrested on a charge of

setting at defiance the authority of the High Court of Justice, before which tribunal he had previously been summoned to appear, to stand his trial for forgery. He was a favourite leader among the farmers. The escort of Hottentot soldiery (under a British officer), which was taking him to Cape Town, was attacked on the way by some thirty or forty frontiersmen (from the Boschberg and Bruintjes Hoogte), led by Marthinus Prinsloo, and the prisoner liberated. Prinsloo was then joined by more burghers from the country districts. With his force strengthened to one hundred and fifty men, he now marched on Graaff Reinet, and formed his laager near the *Drostdy*. Landdrost Bresler sent messages to ask why the town was being threatened by armed men. The answer was that the burghers disapproved of the Hottentot soldiery, and resented the arrest of Adriaan van Jaarsveld. He was, they said, one of their military leaders, and they believed the British Government intended to break the power of the Nationalists by arresting all their Commandants. The charge against Van Jaarsveld was, in the opinion of the insurgents, merely an excuse on the part of the authorities for seizing and holding in their power one whom they thought a dangerous opponent.

Marthinus  
Prinsloo rescues  
him.

Report of what had occurred having been brought to Cape Town, General Vandeleur, with a regiment of dragoons, was despatched overland by way of Swellendam, while two companies of a regiment of foot, as well as a strong Hottentot corps, were sent by sea to Algoa Bay.

General  
Vandeleur.

Meanwhile, Marthinus Prinsloo and his officers were making strenuous efforts to get more burghers from the country districts to join them in the insurrection. But they were unsuccessful. Nearly all the north-west of Graaff Reinet district took the side of the British Government, and even sent a contingent to assist in quelling the revolt. Two frontier hunters, named Jan Botha and Conrad du Buis had come from the country of the Amakosa Kaffirs (where they had for some time been residing) to join Prinsloo. Botha was famed for being a good shot, and du Buis was a man of gigantic frame and great bodily strength. It is said that he had attained great influence over the young Kaffir chief, Gaika, the head of the Kosa nation. Du Buis was a man of amorous disposition. Like Solomon, he had many wives, or rather, mistresses and concubines. The mother of Gaika was one of them.

Conrad du Buis  
and Jan Botha

Failure of the  
Insurrection.

When it became generally known that this man was associated with Marthinus Prinsloo, many influential frontier Commandants and burghers refused to take part in the revolt.

While about thirty of the insurgents were now still stationed near Graaff Reinet, the others had spread themselves over the country districts in order to beat up recruits. A call to arms for all burghers of the district was issued by Prinsloo, Botha, and du Buis, in February, but met with no response. In the following month General Vandeleur reached Graaff Reinet, and relieved the Landdrost and the officials, who had been practically besieged. Prinsloo's force had now retired

from the town. With all the men he could muster—one hundred and thirty—he had taken up a position at Koega, to attempt to oppose the landing of the troops at Algoa Bay. But this force, also, was much too strong for the burghers to resist, and Prinsloo had to retreat. Surrendering soon after, the insurgent leader and a hundred and thirteen followers were made prisoners. They protested that they had understood the terms of capitulation to include a free pardon. General Vandeleur, however, maintained that he took the surrender to be unconditional.

Surrender of Prinsloo and his Followers.

An investigation was then held by the military authorities on the spot. The General decided that twenty of the prisoners, including the leaders, Martinus Prinsloo and Adriaan van Jaarsveld, should be sent to Cape Town for trial. All the others—the ninety-three who had taken no leading part in the insurrection—were set at liberty. But each one had to pay a fine before being thus set free.

Twenty sent to Cape Town as Prisoners.

These were the rank and file of the revolt. Although the official Imperial Chroniclers have it that they were pardoned, the fact is that they were condemned (without proper legal trial) to be fined. But their punishment was trivial compared with that of the others.

The surrender had taken place on the 6th of April, 1799. It was not till August in the following year that Prinsloo and the other eighteen unfortunate political prisoners (one of the original number had died) were brought up for trial. For more than fourteen months they had been locked up in the Castle at Cape Town. During all that time they had had

Imprisonment without Trial.

Scanty Food  
and bad Ventila-  
tion.

prison diet — chiefly rice-water. Day after day these frontiersmen, whose lives had previously been spent in the open air of the upland plateaux, had been shut up in small, close, stuffy cells, almost without ventilation. There were a good many other political prisoners in the Castle in those days. The oath of allegiance and other *trivial* matters of that nature stood in the way of the colonists becoming contented and satisfied under the new rules of the country. There was, therefore, not much vacant accommodation in the *Good Hope* dungeons. So it happened that more than eighty prisoners were locked up in one room every night. Twenty of these (afterwards nineteen) were Marthinus Prinsloo and his companions from the Boschberg. It seems a marvel that all of them, with one exception, survived to come up for trial. "It was rarely that any of their friends could obtain permission to visit them. Many of their relatives, various people in Cape Town, and even the burgher senate, from time to time sent petitions to the government, begging that they might receive less rigorous treatment; but the authorities thought that an example was necessary, and held that, considering the crime with which they were charged, they were being very leniently dealt with."\*

Rigorous  
Gaolers.

The Trial

However, as we know from the great English prison reformer Howard's accounts, and also from the shameful treatment of the French prisoners of war in British hulks and gaols, the cruelties practised by the authorities in this "black hole" of Cape Town were

\* Theal.



the customary lot and destiny of political prisoners in those days.

In August, 1800, the trial of Prinsloo, Van Jaarsveld, and their associates took place. Sentence was pro-<sup>The Sentences.</sup>nounced on 3rd September. The two leaders were condemned to death. Eight of the others, viz. Pieter Frederik Rautenbach, Gerrit Hendrik Rautenbach, Theunis Botha, Barend and Jacobus Bester, Gerrit Scheepers, Gotlieb Koch, and Pieter van Kamer—who were not chief leaders, but merely prominent and active participants in the insurrection—were sentenced to be struck over the head with the flat of the sword, and then banished from the Colony for life.

Four others, Lucas Meyer, Zacharias van Jaarsveld, Jacob Kruger, and Willem Grobbelaar—they also, as were all the others except Marthinus Prinsloo and Adriaan van Jaarsveld, were merely participants but not leaders in the revolt—had to witness the punishment inflicted on their companions, and then to undergo sentence of banishment from the country, Meyer and Van Jaarsveld for life, Kruger and Grobbelaar for ten years. Cornelis Edeman, a country schoolmaster, an individual who was not a fighting man, but whose sympathies with the Republicans of Graaff Reinet had led him, in what turned out to be an unlucky moment for himself, to advise them to rise in insurrection against the British, was condemned to be publicly flogged on the scaffold and afterwards banished from the country for life. Two others, named Willem and Paul Venter, were sentenced to imprisonment for periods of two years and one year respectively. Jan

Kruger and Gerrit Botha were acquitted, as they were deemed by the court to have been already sufficiently punished by a long period of imprisonment.

Such were the sentences, and it cannot be said that they erred on the side of leniency towards the accused. These frontiersmen had had British rule forced on them against their will. They had submitted only because they were powerless to resist. Then, when grievances had accumulated, they had been provoked again to take up arms by seeing the British Hottentot corps permanently stationed on the borders. Even granting that, according to the strict legal interpretation of the word, they were guilty of rebellion, there were extenuating circumstances which called for a large measure of clemency. They had committed no excesses of any kind whatsoever, although in times of revolution, when human passions and excitement run high, excesses are not unusual. Besides, there had been no bloodshed. There had not even been actual armed resistance to the forces of the Government, except when Van Jaarsveld was liberated from the Hottentot escort which was removing him. And then, the British Government was only in temporary occupation of the country. Even the authorised wording of the form of the oath of allegiance (as required of officials and of those suspected of being disaffected towards the Government) showed that the authorities themselves were conscious of the colonists taking that view of the political situation. Both the people and their rulers regarded retrocession to Holland as inevitable. And further, even this very oath of

Extenuating  
circumstances

allegiance, cautiously worded as it was, had been avoided by these frontiersmen of Graaff Reinet and their leaders, although in other parts of the Colony it had been accepted by many as uncompromising and, under the circumstances, unavoidable.

Considerations such as these, no doubt, weighed with the Governor, Sir George Yonge, when reviewing the verdict of the Court. While he made no important alteration in the direction of mitigation, he thought it right to ask for full instructions from the Home Government before confirming the sentences. Willem Venter, who had been condemned to two years' imprisonment, had already been in gaol for nearly fifteen months. Paul Venter had suffered imprisonment for the same length of time, although his sentence was actually only one year. These men were now both liberated. One of them had already been punished in excess of what the Court decreed. So there was not much mitigation in his case. But even he had to give security to appear again whenever called upon to do so. Jan Kruger and Gerrit Botha had been acquitted by the Court; but there was now an opportunity for the Cape Town officials to force these Republicans to become subjects of the King of England. They were not set at liberty before they had been compelled to take the oath of allegiance. Had they refused, they would either have had Hottentot and British dragoons quartered on them in their border homesteads, or been kept locked up in the Castle "black hole," to be there slowly asphyxiated in the pestilential atmosphere. Little better, if any, than the Armenian Christian appears in the eyes of

Proselytising  
Imperial Cape  
Officials.

the modern Turk, the South African Republicans of those days seemed to these proselytising Imperial Cape officials.

Only a  
Hollander.

Whatever reasons there might be for clemency, or for what was then regarded as clemency, in the case of any of the other prisoners, there appeared to the Cape Town officials to be none in that of Cornelis Edeman. He had no influential friends. He was only a poor Hollander schoolmaster. That a schoolmaster in South Africa should be a Republican, and should incite to rebellion, was intolerable to the Castle officials. So the unfortunate Edeman was flogged on the scaffold. As he had been further condemned to be banished from the Colony for life, he might as well be sent to a nice convict country, where his Republican doctrines could do no harm among the rising generation, who might well be supposed to be past praying for. He was, therefore, at once despatched to New South Wales.

The Flogging on  
the Scaffold of  
Edeman.

The Castle of  
Good Hope.

Over the main gate of the Castle at Cape Town is the figure of a lion rampant surmounted by a crown. In the prison cells of this building, the other fourteen frontiersmen were now, after the conclusion of the trial, and pending the consideration of their case in England, once more immured *till March*, 1803, when Lieutenant-General Jan Willem Janssens assumed the Governorship of the Colony for the Batavian Republic, and they were all set free by the new rulers. All but the old Commandant, Adriaan Van Jaarsveld, who, broken down in health by long continued confinement, suffering from the effects of the bad ventilation of

the place, and tired of the hard and scanty prison fare, had gone to the last laager to wait for the final Commando.

As the unfortunate men again looked on the interior of those walls, within which they had already suffered so much and so patiently; as day after day, week after week, month after month, even year after year, passed without either commutation of sentences or information as to the ultimate fate in store for them; what agony of mind must have been endured by the two who had been condemned to death, and the others who had had banishment decreed against them? In moments of feverish delirium did they sometimes imagine imprinted on those walls, as if in mockery of their misfortune, the armorial bearings of the United Provinces which had successfully defied the power of Spain and braved the tyranny of Alva in former days?

Waiting for  
British  
Clemency.

Did they dream of the flag under which De Ruyter was victorious in more than one encounter with British Sea-power, and under whose folds he died the hero's death; of that flag waving once more over those battlements to set them, the African Batavians, free? Or did they see, emblazoned on the ceiling of their miserable prison cell, a lion and unicorn supporting a shield bearing inscribed on it in letters of scarlet the words of the oath of allegiance to King George?

The Scarlet  
Lion.

Who can tell?

To their countrymen in the farm-houses and villages scattered all over the South Africa of those days, from the slopes of Table Mountain to the Great Zuurberg and the Bamboesberg, and from the Berg River to the Great

Fish River; to their compatriots, begging—alas! in vain—for mercy and clemency, in the name of the unhappy wives and children of these no less unhappy victims of England's might; it seemed as if the outer portal of that Castle of Good Hope now stood sentinel for a Power which represented tyranny and oppression in their worst and most unscrupulous forms.

The Inscription  
over the Gates.

As has been mentioned, the sentences passed on the prisoners in September, 1800, by Sir George Yonge, had been referred to the Home Government for confirmation or commutation. But in April, 1801, the Cape Governor himself had to proceed to England to answer certain grave charges (of corruption and misgovernment) which had been brought against him. These charges were not all proved, but *Sir George* had to be disgraced and dismissed from office. Major-General Francis Dundas was Acting Governor when orders came from England that the sentences were to be carried out. Mercy for Republicans was not fashionable. Nevertheless General Dundas, to his honour be it remembered, dared to disobey and take upon himself the responsibility of delaying the execution. He not only postponed the carrying into effect of the death sentence on the leaders and of the sentence of banishment on the others, but went further, and warmly recommended the imprisoned men to mercy. More he could not do; and so they were still kept in gaol in the Castle of Good Hope.

A Precious  
Specimen of a  
Cape Governor.

His Successor,  
the Noble-  
minded General  
Dundas.

Napoleon  
rescues the  
Prisoners.

But Napoleon saved them. In negotiations then proceeding with England, he insisted on the Cape being restored to Holland, and would not consent to any terms of peace with Great Britain unless, among

other conditions, retrocession of South Africa to Holland was agreed to.\* Such retrocession was one of the stipulations of the Peace of Amiens, which was concluded in March, 1802.

When, in the following year, the Batavian flag again floated over the ramparts of the fortifications of Cape Town, the sufferings of the aged Prinsloo and his twelve surviving Republican followers were over, and they were all set free. And, surely, it cannot be maintained that they had not fully expiated their offence. It has yet to be proved that, by taking up arms against the British Government under the circumstances in which South Africa was placed in 1799, the frontiersmen had committed an act which, by the law of nations, rendered them liable to be punished as British subjects in rebellion against their sovereign. They, as well as their leaders, had consistently refused to submit to the British authorities, and there can be no question that they still regarded themselves as free citizens of the Republic of Graaff Reinet. Their claim to be so considered may have been untenable and even absurd; but that was no justification for the course pursued by the Cape Town officials. It is admitted that, when the insurgents surrendered at the Boschberg in April, 1799, they were under the impression that their submission carried with it a free pardon. It may be that there was nothing to justify their entertaining that view of the matter. Let that be granted. Even then, why should the Government of England—holding

\* See Sloane's "Life of Napoleon Bonaparte"; Alison's "History of Europe."

possession of the Cape only temporarily, by force of arms, and against the will of the people—act the part of Shylock, and demand the full pound of flesh?

Vindictiveness.

Can the punishments inflicted be justified even on the plea that they were repressive measures necessary to secure the safety of the British forces in occupation of South Africa?

The continued imprisonment, without trial, of all the accused (including the two who were afterwards acquitted) from June, 1799, to August, 1800, was against both the spirit and the letter of the British Constitution. The rigour and severity of this imprisonment, the wretchedly poor food, the overcrowding and bad ventilation of the cells, were cruelties as unworthy of a civilised Government as the methods of the officials of King Bomba of Naples. The flogging on the scaffold and the transportation to New South Wales of the unfortunate schoolmaster, Cornelis Edeman, was an atrocious severity, even less defensible than those imaginary Russian atrocities which some English writers of fiction delight in depicting and denouncing. The imaginary sufferers in the English anti-Russian romance-pages are Russian subjects. Edeman, the Hollander schoolmaster, was no British subject. His sufferings were certainly not imaginary.

The step taken to compel Jan Kruger and Gerrit Botha by threats to take the oath of allegiance was tyrannical; and doubly so, because these men had already been wronged. They had shared the cruel imprisonment with the others for more than a year;



at the trial nothing had been proved against them and they had been acquitted. This injustice—this more than petty tyranny of being compelled to take the oath of allegiance by threats of having soldiers quartered in their houses—was a measure to which, by this time the inhabitants of South Africa had perhaps become somewhat accustomed. It had been resorted to openly in every part of the Colony ever since the British administration began.

The British  
Government's  
Share of Blame.

Perhaps the worst feature in the whole cruel history of these vindictive and rancorous punishments of the Republican insurgents is the attitude of the Home authorities, of the Government of England itself, in the matter. The sentences had been pronounced on 3rd September, 1800. In April, 1801, the Governor, Sir George Yonge, the chief representative of the British Crown in South Africa, had to proceed to England to be tried for corruption and maladministration. Let us see what a British historian, the highest authority on the annals of Cape Colony, says of this man's character and his government.

The Chief  
Representative  
of the Crown  
tried for  
Corruption and  
Misgovern-  
ment.

"No man who has ever been at the head of the Cape Government has been more generally disliked than Sir George Yonge. In one of his despatches to the Secretary of State he reported that the colonists termed him their father, but, in truth, those who used such language were only a few suppliants for mercy. With the exception of some favourites of his own appointment, he was not on friendly terms with the officers of his government, and he reported of them that the only efficient public servant whom he found

Theal's Opinion  
of Sir George  
Yonge's  
Administration.

here on his arrival was Mr. Hercules Ross. His despatches were read with something like alarm by the Secretary of State; and when complaints of his misgovernment, supported by apparently complete proofs of his corruption, were received at the Colonial Office, the ministry resolved to recall him and make a strict inquiry into his conduct.

Corruption without Parallel even in the worst days of the Rule of the East India Company.

“A scandalous state of things was disclosed in regard to his government. He had violated the terms of the capitulation by imposing licenses for killing game, by doubling the duty on brandy passing the barrier, and by several other taxes; but this was a very small matter. He had alienated some of the public lands pledged as security for the redemption of the paper money, but no one regarded that as a very great offence. What was brought to light that was really disgraceful was a system of corruption without parallel even in the very worst days of the rule of the East India Company. The only way to get a decision from the Governor, or even to communicate with him, was by bribing the favourites about his person. They could procure monopolies, licenses to perform illegal acts, protection from punishment for crime, almost anything, indeed, that one in possession of enormous power could bestow. That they misrepresented matters to the Governor was considered sufficient reason to acquit him of criminal conduct, but not of incapacity for high office. Among other disclosures it was proved that the slave trade with Mozambique was being actively carried on, though that trade was supposed to be almost restricted to

Bribery and Favouritism.

The Slave Trade under Letters of Marque.

the West Coast.\* The method of conducting it was to obtain letters of marque for a privateer, and then to represent slaves brought in by such a vessel as having been captured from the enemy."†

Under the autocratic administration of this somewhat shady representative of the British Empire, this precious Governor, the trial had taken place, and the sentences been pronounced. Was not this fact in itself sufficient to call for a thorough revision of the verdict on the part of the Home authorities? Was it not, taken along with all the extenuating circumstances to which reference has already been made, enough to strongly recommend all the prisoners to mercy? Evidently General Dundas, the new Acting Governor, thought so, for he made such a recommendation, although the Secretary of State had ordered that the law should take its course.

And now, what happened? For more than two years longer, dating from the time of the verdict, these unfortunate prisoners, half-starved and more than half-suffocated in that terrible prison at the Castle, had to suffer. During at least half that time those who had been condemned to death did not know whether their sentences would eventually be commuted, or whether they would still have to endure the death penalty; and those who had been sentenced to banishment were likewise kept in suspense as to their ultimate fate. This

Mental torture  
of the unhappy  
Political  
Prisoners.

\* The object of the British Government in prohibiting trade with the East Coast, was to prevent the French from getting supplies of provisions there.

† Theal: "History of South Africa."

dreadful uncertainty was worse than all the other hardships to which they had to submit. It was nothing less than torture.

One had already died previous to the commencement of the trial. Before the flag of the Batavian Republic brought liberty to the survivors, another had fallen a victim to the cruelty of the authorities. The overcrowded state of the prison, the foul air, the bad food, had done the work of the executioner, and Adriaan van Jaarsveld, the old frontier Commandant, had gone where Hottentot pandours and British gaolers could vex and harass him no more.

Death of Adriaan van Jaarsveld.

That Castle of Good Hope had claimed and obtained the number of victims which the noble-minded General Dundas had refused to hand over to the executioner when ordered to do so by England.

The Crown has obtained its Victims.

The territory of the frontier Republic of Graaff Reiniet had been brought under subjection to the British Crown. But repressive measures were still necessary. The insurgent leaders, Jan Botha and Conrad du Buis, had fled to Kaffirland. There they had been joined by others, among whom were Conrad Bezuidenhout, Stoffel Botha, and Frans Kruger. Already in May, 1799, after Marthinus Prinsloo and the others had surrendered, General Vandeleur had issued a proclamation offering a reward of £200 for each of the fugitives, dead or alive. But no one came forward to earn the reward, and the outlaws were never captured.

The Republic is stamped out and conquered.

The Outlaws in Kaffirland.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CONQUERED REPUBLIC

#### GRAAFF REINET PROVINCE IN SUBJECTION TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

British Troops on the Fish River—Hottentot Marauders Pillage the Frontiers—Fresh Accession of Strength to British Forces—Sufferings of the Frontierspeople—Third Kaffir War—Gaikas and Telambis—Kaffirs Attack General Vandeleur—Commandant Van Rensburg—The Strong British Government and the Kaffirs—Eastern Frontiers overrun by Kaffirs—General Vandeleur Departs—Negotiations—Landdrost Maynier—Agreement with the Kaffirs—Continued Marauding Raids by Kaffirs and Hottentots—The Hottentot Pandours barracked in the New Church at Graaff Reinet by Maynier—Rising of the Burghers of Bruintjes Hoogte, Zwartkops River, and Zuurveld Fieldcornetcies—Fighting at Graaff Reinet on 20th July, 1801—Insurgents Retire to the Mountains in the North—Two Months later all Graaff Reinet District in Arms against the Landdrost and the Hottentots—Hendrik Van Rensburg one of the Leaders of the Insurgents—The *Drostly* Besieged—Three hundred Troops march from Algoa Bay under Major Sherlock—Governor Dundas' Conciliatory Policy—Insurgent Leaders Agree to Submit on Condition of Maynier being Removed from Graaff Reinet and Government Inquiry Instituted—Condition of Frontiers at this Time—Marauding Hottentots and Kaffirs—Commandant Tjaart Van der Walt Defeats the Raiders and falls in Battle in 1802—Burghers Refuse to Fight under British Leaders, and Return Home—British Government again Negotiates and makes Peace with the Kaffirs—Retrocession of the Cape to Holland.

A RELATIVELY large British force was now encamped on the Great Fish river to keep the burghers of Graaff Reinet district in check. It was commanded by General Vandeleur. The Hottentot clans of the Eastern

General  
Vandeleur and  
the Hottentots.

border, perceiving that their tribesmen were being trained to arms by the new rulers of the country, and employed to subdue the disaffected colonists, concluded that they also could make themselves meritorious in the eyes of the British by pillaging and plundering the frontier farms. Thieving expeditions were soon organised by several petty Hottentot vagabond chieftains, and for miles around, on either side of the British General's camp, the smoke columns which arose from burning homesteads and cattle kraals could be seen ascending to the sky. Where the farmers resisted, violence and outrage were resorted to by the Hottentot marauders, who carried off large quantities of stock, provisions, clothing, etc., and then went in a body to the British headquarters to claim their reward.

Vandeleur at once selected a hundred of these heroes as additional recruits for his Hottentot regiment; and thus the British power in South Africa received a fresh accession of strength.

Fresh Accessions of Strength to British Forces.

Sufferings of the People.

The cup of suffering for the unhappy frontierspeople was not yet full. The third Kaffir war broke out in 1799. The Kosa regent, Tslambi, had refused to resign his post when his nephew, the young chief Gaika, became of age. The rival factions flew to arms, and Gaika's party defeated the followers of Tslambi, who was then taken prisoner. Escaping, the old chief and his followers crossed the Fish river, and were joined by all the tribes which had been settled in the country between the Great Fish river and the Kowie since the second Kaffir war. The invading host was now known as the *Tslambis*, to distinguish them from those of the

The Gaikas and Tslambis.

Kosa nation who were adherents of Gaika, and who were called, after their chief, the *Gaikas*. The raiders advanced westwards over the frontier as far as the Sunday's river. Again the smoke columns were ascending from the burning farm-houses, which had been deserted by their owners. Cattle and sheep were carried off in large numbers by the Kaffirs. All the country between the Zuurbergen and the sea, and between the mouths of the Great Fish and Sunday's rivers, was laid waste by the invaders, whose war-cries were heard as far to the west as where Uitenhage is now. While the land was given back to savagery and barbarism, the military representative of Great Britain was marching to Algoa Bay to take ship for Cape Town, and apparently intended to leave the Republican frontiersmen to their fate. However, the Kaffirs were advancing so rapidly that, before General Vandeleur could reach the Bay, he was attacked by them in a wooded glen on the banks of the Sunday's river. One small division of his force was surrounded, and killed almost to a man. The main body formed a camp and beat back repeated assaults of the Tslambis, who attacked them with great fury. In the end it might have gone hard with General Vandeleur had he not received assistance. One of the most prominent leaders of the farmers at that time was Commandant Van Rensburg. With a few followers he had retired northwards when Vandeleur's force was on the Fish river. But now, hearing of the Kaffir invasion and of the critical position of the British General, he led a body of frontier farmers against the Tslambis, and compelled

War with the  
Kaffirs.

Commandant  
Van Rensburg.

them to abandon their attempt of again attacking the English camp.

The Strong  
British Govern-  
ment and the  
Kaffirs.

The farmers now came forward in large numbers and asked to be led against the invading Kaffirs. But General Vandeleur embarked all his troops at Algoa Bay, and sailed for Cape Town, leaving the frontiers entirely undefended, and a large portion of the Colony actually in possession of the Kaffirs. A body of Hottentots, whom (after having in the previous year rewarded, instead of punishing them for robbing and pillaging the farms belonging to the Colonists) he had now attempted, but failed, to disarm, joined the Tslambis. The hordes of savagery, thus reinforced, and left to ravage and destroy at their own sweet will, now penetrated deeper and deeper into the Colony. The invading tide swept onwards into districts where, under the old Dutch Government, a Kosa warrior had never been seen. Across the Sunday's river, westwards into the Winterhoek, and onwards to the Gamtoos river, poured the Kaffir regiments, plundering, burning, and murdering as they went, while General Vandeleur and his gallant officers were sailing to Cape Town. At the end of the winter of 1799 nearly all the cattle belonging to the graziers and farmers of the invaded districts had been swept off. The farm-houses were nearly all burnt to the ground, and about thirty white Colonists had been murdered.

Eastern Frontier  
Districts Over-  
run by Kaffirs.

Some evidence of the existence of a strong British government seemed wanting. So Major - General Dundas, then Acting Governor in the place of the Earl of Macartney, issued instructions for a Burgher



Commando to take the field. In August, he also sent five hundred soldiers to the frontier. But these forces were not allowed to take the field against the enemy at once. The Governor deemed it an opportune moment for negotiating terms of peace, and Landdrost Maynier Negotiations. entered into an arrangement with the Kaffir chiefs, by which they and their followers should cease all raids and marauding expeditions, and should remain in the district to the east of the Bushman's river. By this Agreement with the Kaffirs. agreement a portion of the Colony was virtually ceded to the Kaffirs.

Meanwhile, the unfortunate inhabitants of the frontier district of Graaff Reinet were still suffering loss in property from the incessant incursions and marauding expeditions of the Kaffirs who had been allowed to settle west of the Great Fish river. Of course, neither these savages nor the Hottentots allied with them kept their promise to General Dundas, to cease molesting the farmers of the border. Cattle thefts were still going on, where any cattle could be found. But many of the farmers were reduced to abject poverty, and had no cattle left. The Fieldcornetcy of Bruintjes Hoogte had again been occupied by farmers, but a large part of Zwartkops River and nearly all Zuurberg were still deserted. The existence of the frontier force of Hottentot soldiers under British officers continued to give great offence to the burghers of the whole district. A new church which they had built in Graaff Reinet, after the destruction by fire of the original building, was now, by order of the British authorities, being used as a barrack for the Hottentot Continued Marauding Raids by Kaffirs.

**The Last Straw.** Cape Corps. This was the last straw, and in July, 1801, an insurrection again broke out among the farmers. Those of the Zuurveld district now had no farms left, for the region was in possession of the hostile Kosas and Hottentots. Thus dispossessed of their land, the burghers were ready for revolt. They blamed the British Government for all their troubles and sufferings. Bruintjes Hoogte and Zwartkops River were, as on the previous occasion, ready to take part in the rising, and sent their farmers to help in attacking the Hottentot forces at Graaff Reinet. On 20th July fighting commenced at the *Drostdy* of that town, where the burgher forces were opposed by dragoons and the Hottentot Corps under Landdrost Maynier. None of the other Fieldcornetcies, however, offered any assistance to the insurgents, who were thus compelled, after one day's desultory fighting in and around the town, to retire beyond the mountains to the north, where they formed a strong camp—ready to resume hostilities at a more favourable opportunity.

**The Patient  
Camel's Back  
is Broken.**

**He Refuses to  
bear any more  
Burdens.**

**Fresh  
Insurrection.**

In little more than two months, their Commando again threatened Graaff Reinet. All the district was now in arms, and influential leaders were coming forward to assist in the hostilities against the Hottentots and the British dragoons. Hendrik van Rensburg was one of the chief of these leaders. Soon the British garrison at the *Drostdy* was besieged and cut off from all supplies. A force of some three hundred British troops under Major Sherlock, had, meanwhile, been sent from Cape Town to Algoa Bay, and was now marching on the insurgent camp at Graaff Reinet.

**Fighting at  
Graaff Reinet.**

But the Acting Governor, General Dundas, who had already shown himself to be well disposed and friendly towards the frontiersmen, was receiving numerous petitions and letters, asking that Landdrost Maynier should be recalled, and blaming that officer and his Hottentots for having driven the people of Graaff Reinet to revolt. Major Sherlock was, therefore, instructed to negotiate with the leaders of the revolt, Maynier was recalled, and a free pardon was offered to all who were under arms against the British authorities. These conciliatory measures on the part of General Dundas were the means of averting bloodshed from South Africa and of bringing about, at least for a time, peace between the two white races now contending for the mastery of the distracted frontier regions. The wise and statesman-like attitude taken up by this distinguished representative of the British Crown is in vivid contrast to that of others among his contemporaries. It earned for him the well deserved respect and esteem of all sections of the subject community. It has endeared his memory to the Afrianders of to-day. As one reads the inscription over the vaulted tomb in the Dean Cemetery at Edinburgh, where rest the bones of General Francis Dundas, and of his wife, a daughter of the house of Van Reede tot Oudtshoorn—one of the Dutch South African families of last century; as one recalls his part in the history of a hundred years ago; as one remembers his affection for the people among whom he lived; the most fitting epitaph that suggests itself is: "He dared to plead for peace, and for mercy to the vanquished."

Landdrost  
Maynier  
Recalled.

Conciliatory  
Policy of General  
Dundas.

The hostilities near Graaff Reinet now came to an end, the leaders of the insurrection agreeing to lay down their arms and disband their forces, on condition of Maynier being permanently removed from the Landdrostcy and a government enquiry into the grievances of the inhabitants being instituted.

But although a war between the two white races had been thus averted, the condition of the frontier at this period was hardly one of peace. It was indeed high time that Dutch and English should combine once more against the common foe. Large numbers of marauding Hottentots and Kaffirs were actually in possession of much of the land to the west of the Great Fish river. Nearly all the cattle had been swept away from the border districts by these roving thieves. The country seemed to be entirely at their mercy.

Continued  
Marauding  
Raids of the  
Kaffirs.

Commandant  
Tjaart van der  
Walt.

At last an old frontier Commandant named Tjaart van der Walt, with some determined and resolute burghers to back him up, inflicted a severe defeat upon the Kaffirs, whose looting expeditions had become too bold and frequent to be longer endured. In 1802 the aged Van der Walt, while again leading his fellow-burghers against the Kaffir invaders, was killed in battle, and the frontiersmen in the field, refusing to fight under an English leader, dispersed and went to their homes. In December, 1802, the burghers were recommandeered for campaigning against the Kaffirs; but once more, before the fighting could be commenced, terms of peace were arranged, and the enemy left in undisturbed possession of the territory to the west of the Great Fish river.

His Death.

British Govern-  
ment Again  
Negotiates.

In March, 1802, by the Treaty of Amiens, peace was concluded between the contending European powers. Ceylon, which had also been taken from Holland by an English naval expedition, was, by the terms of this treaty, acquired as a British Colony on condition of the Cape of Good Hope being restored to the Batavian Republic. With an empty treasury; a territory of which a very large portion seemed both less productive and less attractive than many other British Colonial possessions; with a discontented and dissatisfied white population, among whom Republican sympathy was by no means extinct; and with the prospect of a costly Native war looming in the near future, the South African settlement did not then seem to the rulers of Britain such a desirable acquisition as when Sluysken and De Lille had struck their bargain with General Craig and Lord Elphinstone.

Retrosession to  
Holland.

Still, the Cape was valuable to England as a marine outpost on the Ocean highway to India, and would, doubtless, had Napoleon's diplomacy been more pliable and yielding, have been retained as a British Colony. But, in order to obtain peace, the European negotiators on either side had to give and take; and thus Holland received back what had been her own territory.

## CHAPTER VI

### RESTORED TO HOLLAND BY NAPOLEON, AND RE- CONQUERED BY ENGLAND

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BATAVIAN REPUBLIC (1803-1806)

The Retrocession in February, 1803—1st March, Thanksgiving Day and much Rejoicing all over the Colony—Commissioner De Mist—Tour of Inspection—Establishment of High Court of Justice and Legislative Council—The New Governor, Jan Willem Janssens—Free Trade with all Dutch Colonies—All Civil Officials Retain their Appointments—Six Divisions of the Colony—Uitenhage—The Courts of Landdrost and Heemraden—Laws Relating to Militia and to Church Government—Enlightened and Liberal-minded Education Law providing for Equality of all Religious Denominations in the State Schools—The *Tot Nut van't Algemeen*—General Janssens' Tour—Deplorable Condition of Graaff Reinet District—Andries Stockenström, the New Landdrost—The Kaffirs Submit to the New Government—Dr. Van der Kemp—Bethelsdorp—The Hottentot Locations—War with England again begins—Naval Power of Great Britain—Strong British Expedition sent to Seize the Cape—Weak State of the Defences of the Colony—Critical State of Affairs—The Forces Available for Defence—Inferiority of Janssens' Army in Numbers—Battle of Blueberg Beach—The Cowardly Waldeckers—Were they Squared?—Gallant Stand made by General Janssens' small Army—Capitulation of Cape Town—Surrender of Janssens—Departure of the last Dutch Governor—A Sad Leave-taking—Withered Hopes and Unrealised Expectations—Re-establishment of British Rule.

In February, 1803, Commissioner De Mist arrived at Cape Town from Holland, and took over the government of the Colony from Major-General Dundas. With the Commissioner arrived a force of three thousand Dutch troops as garrison.

The 1st of March was observed, in every town and

village of the Colony, as a day of public thanksgiving for the establishment of the government of the Batavian Republic, and there was much rejoicing throughout South Africa; for the rule of the Republic was to the inhabitants a totally different and a much more desirable Government than that of the late Dutch East India Company.

The Commissioner had been appointed by the States-General for the purpose of arranging and organising the new Government. He made a tour of personal inspection through the different districts of the Colony, and established the High Court of Justice, with judges quite independent of the Government in the discharge of their judicial duties. This court was to consist of a president and six members. A legislative council, composed of four members, and presided over by the Governor, was formed. The newly-appointed Governor was Lieutenant-General Jan Willem Janssens.

What was virtually free trade with all possessions of the Netherlands—for there was only a very small revenue duty—was now introduced. All civil officials who had served under the British Government were allowed to retain their offices. The Colony was then divided by De Mist into the six districts of The Cape, Stellenbosch, Tulbagh, Swellendam, Graaff Reinet, and Uitenhage. The town of Uitenhage was founded by him. Every district had its court of Landdrost and Heemraden. This court had jurisdiction over criminal as well as civil cases. De Mist also organised a militia for the Colony. He brought ecclesiastical laws which had been approved by the States-General.

His Tour of Inspection.

His Reforms.

The Six Political Divisions of the Colony.  
Uitenhage.

An education law,—by which State Schools were introduced, and all religious denominations received equal acknowledgment from Government,—was another enlightened and liberal measure introduced by the Commissioner. The Educational College *Tot Nut van't Algemeen*, afterwards the South African College, was founded by De Mist. It was a branch of the society of the same name in Holland. General Janssens also made a tour through the different districts of the country before beginning his residence as Governor at Cape Town. At Graaff Reinet it was found that the British officials had left everything in disorder. “The treasury of the district,” says Lichtenstein, who accompanied the Governor, “was empty, the books in confusion, the public buildings destroyed; all these facts a mournful monument testifying to the crimes which had been committed. The most important posts were filled by ignorant people; disunion and discord prevailed among the inhabitants.”

Deplorable  
Condition of  
Graaff Reinet.

Many of the frontier farmers and hunters had left the district and settled in Kaffirland, in Gaika's country. There they had been joined by deserters from the British army. Governor Janssens appointed Andries Stockenstrom as Landdrost of Graaff Reinet, and did what he could to bring peace and contentment to the district. His task was not easy, for many of the inhabitants not only hated the British Government, but were determined to have nothing to do with Dutch administration either; and would have preferred a Government entirely their own. However, the majority were still loyal to Holland, and gave the

Landdrost  
Andries  
Stockenstrom.



Governor a very hearty reception. On the banks of the Sunday's river, General Janssens had an interview with Tslambi and the other Kaffir chiefs who had seceded from Gaika, and who had been allowed to settle east of the Bushman's river. It was found impracticable to force them to recross the Fish river, though they now acknowledged that stream as the boundary between Kaffirland and the Colony. They feared Gaika's wrath, and begged that they might be allowed to remain in the Colony. Soon afterwards they began quarrelling among themselves. Both on account of this internal division in their own ranks and also because they dreaded the new Government (with its burghers united and ready to attack them) more than the old one, the Tslambis no longer molested the white inhabitants, and the frontier began to recover from the heavy losses which it had suffered under British administration.

Submission of  
the Kaffirs.

At Algoa Bay the Governor found a missionary, Dr. Van der Kemp, who had formerly been a fellow student of his at the University of Leiden, and who had come to South Africa as a delegate of the London Missionary Society in 1799. He had now established a mission station among the Hottentots, and General Janssens assigned a tract of land, which became known as the Location of Bethelsdorp, for the dwellings and gardens and cattle-grazing grounds of the natives, in order that they might not encroach on the properties of the farmers in the neighbourhood. To all the vagrant Hottentot chiefs and tribes, who had in the time of General Vandeleur committed ravages on the frontier

Dr. Van der  
Kemp.

The Locations  
of the Eastern  
Frontier.

farms, the Governor also assigned Locations, outside which they were not allowed.

War with  
England.

In May, 1803, war was again declared between England and Holland. Great Britain at this time occupied a much more favourable position as regards her own Empire abroad than she had done in 1795, for her naval superiority was quite established. The fleets of France were now no longer able to contend with her in Mediterranean waters. The battle of the Nile, in 1798, had decided the struggle for the supremacy of that sea in favour of England. In Northern seas, England had already been ruling since Camperdown, which battle had not only been a great victory for Britain: it had meant the total destruction of the Dutch fleet, and the final disappearance of Holland as a competitor for naval dominion. All the colonies of the Batavian Republic had, ever since then, been in constant peril of attack by powerful British expeditions. Now was a grand opportunity for England to increase her Colonial possessions, and she did not neglect it.

Naval Power of  
Great Britain  
at this time.

At the close of 1805 a fleet of sixty-three British ships, carrying 7000 troops under Major-General David Baird, sailed the waters of the South Atlantic, and on 4th January, 1806, anchored west of Robben Island. A swift sailing ship had brought the tidings of the approach of the British fleet to Cape Town, and General Janssens was already making preparations for defence. But he had very few troops left; for, by instructions from Holland, he had had to send a regiment—his best\*—to Batavia, where the authorities were short of

Strong Force  
Sent to Capture  
the Cape.

\* Theal: "History of South Africa."

men, and also feared an attack by the English. The call to arms brought large numbers of burghers from the country districts; but, when they arrived at Cape Town, it was found that there was not sufficient food for them. There had been two successive seasons of bad crops, and the numerous English cruisers in the Atlantic had prevented cargoes of grain or flour from reaching Table Bay. Thus was her loss of strength as a Sea-power already felt by Holland. General Janssens' position at once became critical. Not only had he an inferior force to that of the British; but, although in his own territory, he was without food for his fighting forces. The enemy, stronger at sea, could in reality starve him to surrender. The Government made every effort possible to obtain supplies of corn, but there was never more grain in Cape Town than sufficient to provide food for two days for the soldiers and the townspeople. How to feed the burghers, who were now coming in from the country districts to assist in the defence, was a difficult problem to solve. The military amounted, all told, to over 2000 men. But a large number of these were Malays and Hottentots. Some were German mercenaries, the so-called Waldeck battalion, some of the officers of which had, there is good reason to suspect, been effectually interviewed by one or two of Pitt's ubiquitous secret agents. The road to India was worth buying as well as fighting for, and the guineas of King George were as useful in squaring some opponents as are the sovereigns of Queen Victoria in the generous hands of one of her Majesty's Privy Councillors. One battalion of a Dutch line regiment,

Critical State of  
Affairs.

Forces available  
for Defence.

some jagers and dragoons, a small Dutch artillery force, and the Malay artillery (counting between them a train of sixteen field guns),\* a couple of hundred burghers (more were arriving from the country districts every day), and the crews of two French ships which had been wrecked at the Cape, made up the remainder of Janssens' force. The total number of Dutch regular troops was less than a thousand. Against this small and heterogeneous force, the English had on their ships in Table Bay some 7000 good troops, including three Highland regiments. Had General Janssens waited before giving battle, he would have had a larger burgher force under his standard, but no provisions for all his army.

Strength of  
British  
Expedition.

On the 6th of January, General Baird, after having sent some of his troops under Beresford to Saldanha Bay, effected a landing with three regiments at Lospers Bay, a small inlet on the western coast, about twenty miles from Cape Town. The heights of the Blauwberg, overlooking the surf, were held by a small body of burgher sharpshooters, who had managed to maintain their ground in spite of the heavy artillery fire from the ships, and whose well directed rifle shots compelled the English boats to advance in a more extended line than they would, perhaps, otherwise have done. As a result, one of the boats was capsized, and thirty-five

Landing at  
Lospers Bay.

\* The batteries and fortifications of Cape Town were well provided with artillery, as is proved by the long list of both light and heavy guns surrendered by Von Propholow (return published in the *British Bulletin* of 12th January, 1806). In the absence, however, of provisions, as well as of an adequate force of trained artillerymen, all this ordnance was absolutely useless.

rank and file of the 93rd regiment were drowned. Two others of the landing party were wounded.

Three more regiments were disembarked on the morning of the 7th.

General Baird was now at the head of an army of 4500 men.\* At dawn, on the morning of the 8th, the burgher scouts reported to General Janssens that the English were advancing. That officer had, on the previous day, moved forwards to meet them, leaving some soldiers under Lieutenant-Colonel Casimir von Propholow to guard Cape Town. The advanced irregular skirmishers of the Dutch left wing having been pushed back from the heights of the Blauwberg Battle of Blauwberg. by the British right flank, the armies approached each other on the level plain, and a spirited artillery fire was begun on both sides. Almost as soon as the guns opened fire, and one or two British cannon balls came near the troops of the Waldeck battalion, all of them, Flight of the Waldeck Battalion. including their officers, retreated as if by pre-arranged agreement. This desertion left General Janssens with his already relatively small force still further reduced in strength. The battle now commenced. One division of the Dutch regular troops also—a part of the 22nd regiment of the line—took to flight in the panic caused by the Waldeckers giving way. The rest of the troops,

\* In his official report of the action to Viscount Castlereagh the British Commander writes: "On the morning of the 8th the army, consisting of the 24th, 59th, 71st, 72nd, 83rd, and 93rd regiments, about 4000 strong, was formed into two brigades, with two howitzers and six light field-pieces, and moved off towards the road which leads to Cape Town."

Theal ("Story of the Nations"; *South Africa*) says: "General Baird had with him about 4000 infantry, besides artillerymen and five or six hundred sailors armed with pikes, and drawing eight field-pieces."

Gallant stand  
made by General  
Janssens' small  
Army.

as well as the crews of the two French ships, the burghers, and all the coloured corps, fought well, but were driven back by superior numbers. General Janssens' regular troops were now less than 800. They consisted of about 160 artillerymen with 16 guns, a battalion of jagers and some dragoons, and one wing only of a battalion of the 22nd regiment of the line. To aid the force of regulars, he had, besides, 224 burghers, 240 French sailors and marines, and coloured auxiliaries (Malays, Hottentots, etc.) to the number of about 350. His entire fighting force, therefore, consisted of barely 1600 men, and fully half of these were irregulars. There stood opposed to him on the battlefield an army of 4500 British troops of the line, and 358 artillerymen with their field-pieces and howitzer guns. As the battle proceeded, the French marines and sailors fought bravely. So did the Dutch artillery. The musketry fire of the burgher force was well directed, and General Janssens himself, as well as his officers, inspired their men by constantly encouraging them at those points where the British fire was most severe; but the struggle was hopeless, and the defending force had to give way before a bayonet charge of three Highland regiments. The retreat was, however, conducted in good order, the well-sustained musketry fire of the small burgher force preventing the enemy from pressing too closely on the defeated army. The losses in killed, wounded, and missing amounted to 337.\* The French naval brigade suffered most heavily.

Defeat of the  
Dutch General.

Casualties.

\* "The loss of the enemy," said General Sir David Baird in his despatch of January 12th to Viscount Castlereagh, "in this engage-

Of the 240 men who had taken the field in the morning, only 130 answered to the roll-call after the battle. On the English side there were 15 killed, 189 wounded, and 8 missing.

On the 9th, General Baird advanced on Cape Town. Janssens had fallen back to the south-east, and occupied the Hottentots' Holland mountain pass. Colonel Von Propholow, having no provisions and no forces at his disposal to offer anything like a vigorous resistance, had to request an armistice, in order to arrange for surrender; and the English General at once took possession of Fort Knokke and several commanding positions outside the town. On the 10th, Cape Town itself <sup>Capitulation of Cape Town.</sup> capitulated. The small number of troops there, as well as the French ships' crews which had taken part in the

ment is reputed to exceed 700 men in killed and wounded; and it is with the most sensible gratification that I contrast it with the enclosed return of our casualties." The reports which were brought to the General in respect to this matter were evidently as unreliable as his own estimate of the numbers opposed to him in the battle. For in another paragraph of the same despatch General Baird states that "The enemy's force apparently consisted of about 5000 men" (as a matter of fact Janssens had only some 2000), "the greater proportion of which was cavalry, and 23 pieces of cannon, yoked to horses," etc., etc. Seven of these cannon, also, existed only in the British Commander's imagination.

"The loss on the English side in the battle of Blueberg was fifteen killed, one hundred and eighty-nine wounded, and eight missing. The roll-call of the Dutch forces, when the fugitives were rallied, shows the killed, wounded, and missing together. When it was made that afternoon three hundred and thirty-seven men did not answer to their names."—THEAL ("Story of the Nations": *South Africa*).

There was sufficient cause for "sensible gratification" to the victors in the results of the victory, altogether apart from reputed and partly imaginary casualty lists which magnified the losses of the vanquished.

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battle of Blauwberg, had to surrender as prisoners of war. All burghers in the town who had fought against the English were to lay down their arms, and be allowed to return to their previous avocations. No British troops were to be quartered in Cape Town.

In General Janssens' camp on the summit of the Hottentots' Holland Pass, many of the burgher officers were still determined not to give up the contest, urging on the Dutch leader that he should march through Swellendam to the Zwartkops river, where he would be reinforced by large numbers of frontiersmen. He, however, advised all the burghers to return to their farms. The scouts were bringing intelligence of a British advance to Stellenbosch, where all property of those in arms against England would, in the event of hostilities being continued, be liable to confiscation. Tulbagh Kloof and the village of Stellenbosch were now seized by the British, who also sent an expedition by sea, to effect a landing in Mossel Bay and then march to the Attaqua Pass and occupy it, in order to cut off Janssens' retreat in that direction. At the same time, General Baird wrote as follows to the defeated leader:—

Stellenbosch  
and Tulbagh  
Kloof occupied  
by the British.

“CAPE TOWN, 11th *January*, 1806.

“SIR,—You have discharged your duty to your country as became a brave man at the head of a gallant though feeble army. I know how to respect the high qualities of such a man, and do not doubt that that humanity which ever characterises an intrepid

M. H. J.



soldier will now operate in your breast to check the fatal consequences of a fruitless contest. The naval and military forces of His Britannic Majesty, which have possessed themselves of the seat of your recent government, are of a magnitude to leave no question of the issue of further hostilities; and, therefore, a temporary and disastrous resistance is all you can possibly oppose to superior numbers. Under these circumstances, nothing can result but the devastation of the country you casually occupy; and such a consequence can never be contemplated without anguish by a generous mind; or be gratifying to the man who feels for the prosperity and tranquillity of the colony lately subject to his administration. But if, unhappily, your resolution is formed to oppose an enemy of such superior force, by protracting a contest which must entail misery and ruin on the industrious and peaceably disposed settlers of this colony, I shall be exonerated from the reproach of my own conscience by this frank overture; and you may justify to yourself and to your countrymen the further effusion of blood and the desolation of the country. You are necessarily so well acquainted with the extent of the calamities in which the interior of the country may be involved, that I shall not enlarge upon your power of causing mischief to be done to all its inhabitants; but I persuade myself that considerations of a more laudable nature will influence your decision on this occasion, and that you will manifest an immediate disposition to promote general tranquillity.

“I have the honour to subscribe, with sentiments of

the highest respect and consideration, Sir, yours,  
etc.,

“(Signed) D. BAIRD.

“*Major-General, Commander-in-Chief.*

“To Lieutenant-General Janssens, etc.”

On the 18th, General Janssens surrendered. As he had neither sufficient forces nor provisions, he could not continue the struggle. The terms of capitulation were: that the troops who had fought at Blauwberg should not become prisoners of war, but should be sent to Holland; that the rest of the Colony should also surrender to the English Commander; and that the colonists should retain all the rights and privileges which they had enjoyed under the Batavian Government.

On the 6th of March, 1806, seven ships left Table Bay, carrying from the shores of South Africa the last Dutch Governor and his 94 officers and 573 men. With them went 31 civil servants, who did not wish to remain under the British Government, and also 106 women and children.

The rule of Holland in South Africa was at an end. To many of those who remained in the Colony, that day was one of sorrow and sadness. During all the previous century, one generation of South Africans after another had struggled against the misgovernment and misrule of the Dutch East India Company. The revolutions which had taken place in Europe—in the old world—had brought changes and removed abuses also in South Africa. With the century, the East

India Company had vanished. The Colony seemed as if resuscitated when, after the short period of British rule, it had again come under the tricolour flag of Holland; when all the liberty and all the privileges for which former generations of South Africans had fought and struggled against the tyrants of the Company, were acquired. A fair era of prosperity and of progress seemed to have dawned when the liberal institutions created by De Mist, and the popular reforms introduced by that distinguished man, came into operation. The first Governor under the rule of the Batavian Republic, who had been fated by destiny to be also the last, had endeared himself to the people by his conscientious care of their interests and their welfare. His ability as a military leader, and his bravery on the field of battle, had increased the feelings of attachment to his person and his name among the burghers who now witnessed his departure. From the decks of the ships, the coasts of the Cape and the slopes of Table Mountain looked, as they always do in March, desolate, scorched, and parched. To many of those on shore it seemed as if those departing vessels bore away from Africa all the patriot's—all the people's—unrealised expectations for their country's happiness and prosperity—all their hopes, withered like the scorched vegetation on those arid coasts; all their national aspirations, shattered, destroyed, and lost on the disastrous battle-field. The bleak and lonely rocks of the mountain typified the forsaken and abandoned cause of the Republic. And—to those who had fought for that lost cause—the frowning crags and battlements of the pre-

Withered Hopes  
and Unrealised  
Expectations.

cipitous summits seemed not altogether unemblematic of the new authority and the new Power; for the free institutions, the liberal and beneficent rule under which the land had prospered since the retrocession to Holland, had now ceased to exist. The foreign conquerors were again in power and dominion. The countrymen of Earl Macartney, and Sir George Yonge, and General Vandeleur were once more in authority.

Re-establishment of British Rule.

The Lion's Head looked austere.

## CHAPTER VII

### UNDER AUTOCRATIC RULERS

#### A BRITISH DESPOTISM

First Measures of New Administration—Abolition of Independence of High Court of Justice, of Legislative Council, and of Trade Regulations, as existing under the Batavian Government—Restrictions on Trade and Commerce—Interference with Religious Liberty—The Earl of Caledon—His Despotic Government—His Laws to Prevent Vagrancy among the Hottentots—An Autocratic but a Wise and Benevolent Ruler—Sir John Cradock—Laws as to Apprenticeship—Fourth Kaffir War—The Black Circuit of 1812—Commencement of Lord Charles Somerset's Governorship.

THE Lion's Head seemed still more forbidding and austere.

Among the first measures of the re-established British rule was the abolition of the independence of the High Court of Justice, as secured by De Mist. The Judges again became the mere creatures of the Governor. "The members of that Court—the president only excepted—were now ordinary Civil Servants, who were appointed by the Governor, and held office during his pleasure. . . . The system under which the Colony was henceforth ruled was virtually a despotism, pure and simple."\*

Abolition of the High Court of Justice.

The Legislative and Executive Council also ceased to exist. All power—all legislative authority—was in the hands of the Governor, whose rule was absolute.

\* Theal : "History of South Africa."

He could alter or modify all sentences passed by the District Courts. He and the Lieutenant-Governor with two Assessors formed a Court of Appeal. The old hateful restrictions as to trade again came in force, as they had existed under the government of Earl Macartney. The Governor had power to fix the price at which farmers could be made to sell to the garrison and to the Government such provisions and farm produce as were wanted. He could also fix the quantity of provisions which the farmer was bound to deliver at the prices fixed by authority.

Restrictions on Trade and Commerce.

Interference with Religious Liberty.

Religious liberty was no longer allowed. A Roman Catholic Chaplain to one of the regiments under the Dutch Government was expelled from the Colony.

By the Ordinance of 25th July, 1804, of the Batavian Commissioner, De Mist, it had been enacted that "*all religious associations in this Colony*" were "*to have equal protection from the laws,*" and that "*no civil privileges belong to any creed.*"

The expulsion of the Roman Catholic Chaplain by the British authorities was, therefore, a distinct violation of the terms of the capitulation. So was the abolition of the independence of the High Court of Justice, of the Courts of Landdrost and Heemraden, and of the Burgher Senate in 1828. So, also, were the substitution of the English language for Dutch in judicial proceedings, and other arbitrary alterations made by the authorities during the time of British absolutism.

The Earl of Caledon.

The first British Governor was the Earl of Caledon. He was a young man, and his task was not a light one ;

for, from what has just been said, it can be seen that the Colonists had no particular reason to be very sympathetically disposed towards their new ruler. He was the representative of an unpopular Government: he was placed in power as an autocrat. But when, in 1811, he left South Africa, he was himself by no means unpopular. Though strict, he was politically upright and honest. He was a very benevolent man. Moreover, he understood the importance of the Native question, and, though his rule was short, he managed to make an earnest and thorough attempt to bring about an alteration for the better in the relations existing between the white Colonists and at least one of the Native races—the Hottentots. These people had, under Dutch government (both in the days of the East India Company's rule, and in the time of the Batavian Republic), been allowed to remain subject to their own chiefs, who were not interfered with in any matter relating to their tribal administration. The tribesmen were subject to no taxes. They were perfectly free; and could not even be tried before the Dutch courts of law, except in instances where the interests of white Colonists or of slaves, as well as their own, were involved. In the case of alleged injury, violence, or injustice suffered by Hottentots, and in the event of any disputes or differences, the Dutch courts had no jurisdiction where both parties—accused and plaintiff—were Hottentots. The Chiefs alone could deal with such cases.

An Autocrat,  
but a Wise and  
Benevolent  
Ruler.

The Hottentots.

In those cases where slaves cohabited with Hottentot women, the children of such unions were free. They

could be apprenticed to the farmers; but only for a limited number of years. In the older and more settled portions of the Colony, and in the time of Governor Janssens on the frontiers as well, the Hottentots had tracts of lands, which were not in occupation by white Colonists, set aside by the Government for their own use. At the same time, those among them who preferred to do so, were allowed to settle as servants or labourers on the farms in all parts of the Colony. Those not in occupation were allowed to travel about, when and where they pleased. All the tribes were then already beginning to die out. They were all, as those few individuals of the nation who survive are now, passionately addicted to drinking raw, fiery spirits, to smoking wild hemp, and to chewing strong tobacco. Various kinds of contagious diseases were prevalent among them in virulent form.

In the early part of the 18th century, small-pox had committed great ravages among the race. The five most powerful tribes of the South, the Hessegua, the Goringhaigua, the Cochoqua, the Chainougua, and the Grigriqua, had almost entirely disappeared, having been literally killed out by the disease. Thousands of dead bodies and empty huts were to be found, in 1713 and 1714, in the localities where previously flourishing kraals belonging to these great tribes had stood. Previous to that of 1713, epidemics of small-pox had occurred among the Hottentots in the years 1663, 1666, and 1674. There was another outbreak in 1767. The mortality among the tribesmen at these different dates was very great. Thousands more had, in the course



of the 18th century, fallen before the assegais of the invading Kosas in the eastern frontier districts.

Now, in the beginning of the 19th century, merely the remnants of the nation were surviving. The Chiefs were, in nearly all cases, drunken and debauched sots, whose authority was completely ignored by their dependents. Thieving and vagrancy were every day becoming more and more characteristic of the race. The Earl of Caledon endeavoured to save this dying nation by his proclamation of November, 1809, which enacted: that chieftainship was abolished; that all Hottentots were placed under Colonial law, instead of being subject to their own tribal enactments; that every Hottentot travelling from one place to another would require a pass from a magistrate or from a burgher; and that all wandering Hottentots not provided with such passes should be arrested for vagrancy.

Abolition of  
Chieftainship  
among the  
Hottentots.

The Earl of Caledon was, in 1811, succeeded as Governor by Sir John Cradock, who, in April, 1812, issued another proclamation, enacting that the children of Hottentot servants or farm labourers, after being maintained and provided for by the employers for a period of eight years, should be apprenticed or indentured for a further period of ten years, in order to prevent their becoming vagrants. This law was also applicable in the case of children of slaves by free Hottentot women.

Sir John  
Cradock.

Pass Regulations  
and Apprentice-  
ship Law.

The Rev. Dr. Philip, the Superintendent of the London Missionary Society's Stations, who arrived in South Africa in 1819, was opposed to both these laws, claimed equal rights for black and white Colonists, and

accused the Earl of Caledon and Sir John Cradock of tyranny and injustice towards the Hottentots. Many other missionaries took the same view of the matter as Dr. Philip.

Several great societies in England, which had been formed for the purpose of protecting the interests, or assumed interests, and rights of the Aborigines, commenced an energetic and persistent agitation in the Press and in the British Parliament against the policy of the Governors in South Africa; and British philanthropists gave their cordial support to this agitation, which, at a later date, was successful in obtaining a reversal of the Earl of Caledon's policy. Between the years 1809 and 1828, however, the Caledon Enactments, strengthened and increased in 1812 by Sir John Cradock's law, remained in force.

The English  
Philanthropists.

To those at a distance these regulations may have seemed unnecessarily severe. To European eyes they may appear harsh, oppressive, and unjust. By those on the spot, and best able to judge of the requirements of the case, they were deemed indispensable. It is not improbable that, had Earl Caledon's policy been persevered in, the Hottentot race would have been saved from annihilation. Taught to appreciate industry and to escape lawlessness, the dying nation might have regained its energy and some of its former vigour, and might have made headway against the vices and the poisons which were destroying it. But the philanthropists of England and of Cape Town willed otherwise, and, when the Caledon Enactments were repealed, no further attempt could be made to stay the downward tendency.

As soon as Sir John Cradock commenced his term of office, he found it necessary again to begin war with the Kaffirs. Ever since the commencement of the English occupation of the Colony, these marauders had been encroaching on the Eastern frontier. They had advanced further and further into the Colony, being apparently astute and clever enough to perceive that, as there were now once more two white races in South Africa, their own position was by no means weakened. As they came further westward, they had carried off all the cattle they could capture, and the farmers, to avoid their flocks falling into the hands of the Kaffirs, had retired before the invaders, until, in 1811, there was only one farm still occupied to the east of Uitenhage.

Andries Stockenstrom, the Landdrost of Graaff Reinet (with eight farmers), was murdered by the Kaffirs, who had invited him to confer with their chiefs.

Major Cuyler, a British officer, acting on instructions from Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, the Commander-in-Chief, had previously attempted to parley with Tslambi, but completely failed to bring about a pacific solution of the difficulties, and, with his small burgher escort, barely escaped being killed by the Chief's followers.

There was, therefore, no alternative but war. The fourth Kaffir war was a skilfully-conducted campaign, and ended in complete victory for the British forces. Fourth Kaffir War. And yet it brought with it fresh hardships for the burgher. Not only was he commandeered for service, as before, but now the state of affairs was more complicated than it had ever been; for the farmers on the frontiers, who had gradually become deprived of

their Hottentot servants, had, in many cases, found substitutes for these in the Kaffirs who were now in the Colony. A sort of half-feudal relationship had sprung up between those frontiersmen who were farm-owners and such Kaffirs as cared to give up their own chiefs and attach themselves to the white men, each one of whom, in the eyes of the Kaffir, was a great chief. The Amakosa who in this way detached themselves from the rest of their nation to dwell among the white people had plots of land allowed to them, on which they, or rather their wives, could plant their *mielie* and Kaffir-corn crops, and where they built their huts. They also had cattle and sheep, which found abundant grazing ground in the vicinity. The owner of the farm claimed no rent—no payment whatever—from any of these squatters. But the men gave their services in helping to plant his crops or in grazing his flocks, while the women assisted in the farm-house, and took the place of domestic servants, in a desultory, haphazard sort of way. Many of these Kaffir retainers were very faithful servants, and in some respects superior to the Hottentots. Having once expatriated themselves from among their own kith and kin, they were becoming more and more accustomed to dependence on the white people, when there came, like a bolt from the blue, the proclamation of the British Government, that all Kaffirs, without any distinction whatsoever, should, by a certain day, leave the Colony, and recross the border for Kaffirland, the territory from which they came. The farmer suddenly again

saw himself threatened with the loss of his servants, while the farm Kaffirs themselves feared to go back among their own nation, who would put them to death as renegades. Noble, in his "South Africa: Past and Present," draws the following picture of the situation of those days. "A farmer said to his Kaffir: 'I have an order from the fieldcornet to send you back to your own country.' 'My own country?' answered the Kaffir. 'This is my own country. Baas, I have been fourteen years in your service. You are my father—your wife is my mother. I have never been in Kaffirland except to fetch back your cattle. I want no other country.' Now the fieldcornet himself came and ordered him to depart. 'No, no!' he exclaimed, 'do not drive me among the Kaffirs. Rather shoot me on the spot. I am not going away!' For some time longer he resisted the cruel command, thereby incurring the danger of the death penalty; and hiding himself by day, he came every evening to his master for some food, until—as there seemed no prospect of the order being recalled—he left the country and did not return."

The Kaffirs who were occupying the invaded districts as far west as the Sunday's river, were about twenty thousand strong. A large burgher Commando was in the field in January, 1812. This Commando, and the Hottentot regiments under Major Cuyler, advanced eastwards, driving the Kaffirs before them, and carefully clearing every thicket and river basin of the enemy. The British troops, under Lieutenant-Colonel

Graham, brought up the rear as a reserve force. In March, 1812, the war was over.

A chain of military posts and forts, garrisoned partly by Hottentot levies and partly by burghers, was then formed in the conquered territory, extending inland as far as the Winterberg range. The principal of these posts were Grahamstown, named after the Commander-in-Chief, and Boschberg, afterwards known as Somerset East, on the Little Fish river.

When, in Europe, Napoleon's Russian Campaign had ended in disaster, and after the great battle of Leipsic had brought no better fortune to the French arms, Holland again underwent a revolution. The kingship of Louis Napoleon, which had been commenced in June, 1806, was at an end. The Prince of Orange now resumed his place at the head of the Government, and, by the terms of the Convention of London (August, 1814), it was agreed that the Cape, Demarara, Essequibo and Berbice should be ceded by the Netherlands to Great Britain.

Meanwhile, in South Africa, a great deal of indignation had been excited among the Colonists by the events of what became known as the "Black Circuit" of 1812. In the previous year the first Circuit Court had come into existence, and given great satisfaction among the inhabitants of the country districts, who found that they were saved much trouble and expense by the court being held near to their own homes, so that, when engaged in litigation, they had not to make such long journeys as had been necessary before the existence of the new Court. When the second Circuit Court was

Another  
Revolution in  
Holland.

Convention of  
London.

The Black  
Circuit.

held, instructions had arrived from the authorities in England to try about sixty cases, in which charges of cruelty or violence were brought against farmers or other burghers. These charges were founded on statements made by the missionaries Van der Kemp and Read, of the Bethelsdorp Mission Station, in a report which they had recently published in England, and which had caused some sensation among the philanthropic societies. The missionaries had given in all the statements for publication, without having taken the trouble to verify their accuracy; and at the trials nearly every charge broke down. Cloete, who was one of the judges on circuit, says of these accusations that the most minute and careful judicial enquiry proved them, in nearly every instance, to be entirely without foundation. More than a thousand witnesses were called in these trials. The accused were all white colonists—men and women residing in different parts of the Colony. Every district was set in commotion; and when accusation after accusation was disproved, people who had previously not been unfavourably disposed towards the missionaries, changed their opinion. To show how paltry, trivial, and even ridiculous, some of the evidence was on which grave charges were brought, the case of an old lady resident on one of the farms on the frontier may be mentioned. She was accused of fiendish cruelty in having tortured a poor Hottentot lad by scalding him by means of boiling water. When the case came to be enquired into, it was found that the Hottentot boy had been found on the Veld, in wintry weather, after a fall of

Bethelsdorp  
Mission.

Paltry and  
Trivial Evidence.

The ill-treated  
Hottentot.

snow (*Kapok*) in the hill country. He was almost perishing with cold and with hunger, and was taken to the farm-house, where they bathed his limbs and warmed him. The kind old lady, no doubt, saved the lad's life, but accidentally scalded one of his feet slightly with hot water. For this crime she had to stand her trial in the Black Circuit.

One or two of the accused parties were found guilty of assault; but the large numbers who were proved to be innocent of the crimes charged against them were indignant—as were their friends and relatives—not only with the missionaries for lending ready credence to every improbable and preposterous narrative which could be construed into an accusation of cruelty and oppression against a white colonist, but also with the Government in England, which did not understand the situation in South Africa, and allowed itself to be hoodwinked and made ridiculous by the philanthropists and the agitating societies. The statements which had been published in England included a letter from Missionary Read of Bethelsdorp, in which document it was said that the writer and Dr. Van der Kemp knew of more than a hundred cases where Hottentots had been murdered by white people. As this referred merely to one district of the Colony—Uitenhage—and as the Government, in its investigation previous to the trials took every care not to overlook a single case where there might be the smallest foundation for bringing a charge, it was somewhat of a surprise to those who supported the missionaries in their campaign against the frontier people to find that only seventeen murder

A Ridiculous  
Government.

The Hundred  
Murders of  
Uitenhage.



cases eventually figured on the lists of the famous Circuit of 1812, and that, when it came to the actual trials, not a single one of those cases could be proved.

The Black Circuit, and the methods of procedure connected with it, were among the first great causes of such serious discontent and dissatisfaction with British rule in the Colony as to make a reconciliation between the rulers and the people impossible.

The country had scarcely settled down from the ferment of excitement and indignation caused by the events of 1812, when Sir John Cradock left, and was succeeded by Lord Charles Somerset, whose administration was inaugurated by the rebellion of Slachtersnek.

## CHAPTER VIII

### VÆ VICTIS

#### THE INSURRECTION AND EXECUTIONS OF SLACHTERSNEK

Review and Recapitulation—The Africander National Party of the Frontiers—The First Foundation of South African Nationality—The Men of the Karroo—The Graaff Reinet Republicans—No more Chartered East India Company's Government—The Restored Batavian Republic—Its Native Policy—The Frontiersmen Satisfied—The British Government—Autocratic Rule—The Frontiersman's Grievances—Sir John Cradock's Land Laws—The Hottentot Pandours—Andries (afterwards Sir Andries) Stockenström—The Wyk Baviaansrivier—Death of Frederik Bezuidenhout—The Open Grave—The Call to Arms—The Conspirators—Mission to Gaika—Arrest of Hendrik Prinsloo—Slachtersnek Camp—Jan Bezuidenhout's Last Stand in the Winterberg—The Trial at Uitenhage—The Execution at Slachtersnek—Væ Victis.

THE struggle for constitutional privileges and political rights which the Colonists carried on against the administrators of the Dutch East India Company in the 18th century, commencing with the agitation against the government of Willem Adriaan van der Stell, in 1705-6, and terminating with the fall of the Company's rule and the proclamation of the Republic at Swellendam and Graaff Reinet in 1795, had laid the first foundation of South African nationality, by welding together and combining in a common cause the Dutch, French, and German Colonists and their descendants.

These different elements in the population, becoming blended and united by intermarriage and by joint occupation of the country, gave up the old European Fatherlands. In the second generation, the inhabitants already all spoke the same language, and, as the northward expansion of the settlement proceeded, the sons of the soil became more and more accustomed to regard the new country as their natural inheritance, and to defend their rights and interests against the autocratic administrative zeal of the officials. There was at that time no true South African National party. The Cape Colonists still desired their country to remain a dependency of the Netherlands. There was, as yet, no agitation nor any political movement whatever in favour of independence from the mother-country.

Up to the time of the Governorship of Willem Adriaan van der Stell, only the southern coast region had been colonised. The frontiers of the Colony did not then extend further inland than the mountain pass to the north of the valley which was called Wagenmakers Vallei (now Wellington). When, in 1700, Van der Stell, as representative of the Dutch East India Company, established the first settlement of graziers and cattle farmers among the Tulbagh mountains, he was unconsciously laying the first foundation of the Republic. The Colonists of the Coast Region had already originated the party of Reform. The Karroos and Inland Plateau Regions were the cradle of South African independence.

First Foundation  
of South  
African  
Nationality.

Emerging from the Tulbagh Pass on to the first terrace of the uplands, the sons of Van Riebeeck's

pioneers and of the Huguenots found a vast new world, stretching far into the limitless north, before them. The Southern mountain buttress, with its wild ravines and giant peaks, now separated them from the Coast Region—and from the world; for they were in a land of boundless solitudes. The pure and bracing air of the uplands strengthened and invigorated their frames. The numerous antelopes and other game which they found abounding on the plains afforded them constant opportunities for acquiring that unerring skill in the use of firearms which was soon to make the South African frontiersmen famous all over the world. Their wants were few. Their dwellings, as well as their habits of life, were primitive. As they lived almost constantly in the open air and in the saddle, and far removed from any centre of civilisation, they never had the opportunity to acquire any of that knowledge which is derived from books and from study. Notwithstanding this, their judgment was sound, and they always showed themselves eager enough to get such information as they could obtain concerning the history and the social conditions of the outside world. They readily adapted themselves to their surroundings, so that they soon came passionately to love the wild free life of the desert, and to despise wealth and luxury. As they went further and further northwards and north-eastwards, explored new regions and climbed terrace after terrace of the gradually ascending interior tableland, they took with them their women and children, their horses, their long-barrelled flint-locked muskets, and their Family Bibles. Towards the end of the 18th century, when the districts of

The Men of the  
Karoo.

Swellendam and Graaff Reinet had been colonised by these hardy pioneers, another generation of frontiersmen had grown up. They were as rough, uncultured, and unlettered as their fathers had been before them; for they were as nomadic and as pastoral in their habits. They were actuated by the same love of liberty. As their fathers had had to fight against the beasts of prey and against the Bushmen, so had they to contend against wild animals, and to defend themselves against the Kaffirs of the Eastern frontier. Their fathers had taught them to hate the imported officials and the taxes of the bureaucratic government of Cape Town. In their campaigns against the Bushmen and Kaffirs they had learnt self-reliance, and had come to trust to their own methods of fighting against the savages. They had confidence in their own leaders—the frontier Commandants. They could not help noticing that many of the great government functionaries were quite inexperienced in warfare with the Natives. The Government's Native policy, also, had then become weak and vacillating. Now, a strong Native policy was part of the frontiersman's creed. The supremacy of the White race meant self-preservation to him. And when, in 1795, the Government officials were ejected and the Republic proclaimed at Swellendam and at Graaff Reinet, the leaders of the frontiersmen had succeeded in forming the first real National party, whose watchwords were: South Africa a White Man's Country; No more Chartered East India Company's Rule; No more Government in the Interests of Foreign Merchants.

The Republicans  
of Graaff Reinet  
and Swellendam.

Revolution was in the air all over the world in those days. It is a strange historical coincidence that, while the Nationalists of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet were turning out the officials of the Dutch East India Company, the Patriot party in Holland also were driving the Stadhouder and his foreign allies out of the country, and proclaiming the Batavian Republic. The inhabitants of Cape Town and the western part of the Colony (then the districts of The Cape and Stellenbosch) did not take part in the revolutionary movement, but remained faithful to the officials; and the same year saw them and all South Africa sold to the English by Sluysken and De Lille. Then the Republics of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet also had to submit. Subsequently, with the restoration of the Government of Holland under the Batavian Republic, the frontier districts remained quiet and contented; for their former grievances had disappeared and the Dutch Chartered Company's misrule no longer existed. The Republican officials were able and competent men. The Native policy of the new Government, also, was calculated to satisfy the people of the frontier districts. When, in 1806, the Cape was again captured by the English, all Colonists—those of the Western agricultural districts as well as those of the frontiers and the East—felt sorrow and regret at the change of government.

The Restored  
Batavian  
Republic.

The first enactments of the British officials, especially those of General Craig, were wise and statesmanlike measures, tending to reconcile the inhabitants to the new state of affairs, and to make the people feel the loss of their nationality as little as was possible under

the circumstances. Many of the first British proclamations, however, contained numerous promises which were never fulfilled. Then came various unpopular laws and administrative acts, quite unsuited to the conditions of the settlement. The Earl of Cradock's alteration of the law with regard to the tenure of land, in particular, was a measure which came to be looked upon as inflicting great hardships and injustice on the poorer class of farmers. These—the less affluent among the Colonists—lived on the frontiers, chiefly in various parts of the old Dutch district of Graaff Reinet. It was here that the inhabitants had already suffered so much during the hostilities with the Kaffirs, and during the time of the revolutionary disturbances. It was here, also, that what was regarded as the unjust rule of the British Government brought more hardships and more suffering on the people.

Autocratic Rule  
of British  
Government.

The Frontiers-  
man's  
Grievances.

Land Laws.

The government of the country had already been so radically changed through the abolition of the old Burgher Council (without whose advice and assistance the Dutch Governors had never ruled) and through the substitution of nominees of the Governor's for the independent Judges of the Dutch High Court of Justice, that the Administrator was no longer merely the representative of the European sovereign State, but also the absolute ruler of South Africa, with practically unlimited autocratic power. The salaries drawn by the British officials were enormous, if one considers that all the money had to be provided by the Colony's revenue. Increased taxation, which again fell most heavily on the poor frontier farmers, was resorted to, in order

to provide Lord Charles Somerset with £10,000 a year.\*

When, in 1814, the European Powers which had been

\* Speaking of the administration of Sir John Cradock (afterwards Lord Howdon), Cloete states that the Governor of the Colony then received from the Colonial revenues,

(as civil Governor alone)		£12,000
the Lieutenant Governor . . . . .	drew	3,000
the Government Secretary . . . . .	"	3,000
the Departmental Secretary (Salary and Emoluments) . . . . .	"	3,000
the Collector of Taxes . . . . .	"	1,200
the Controller of Taxes . . . . .	"	1,000
the Treasurer-General . . . . .	"	1,200
the Auditor-General . . . . .	"	1,000
the Paymaster-General . . . . .	"	1,000

In other words, these nine British officials alone pocketed over £26,000 a year out of the revenue of a small Colony with only some 30,000 white inhabitants, many of whom were living in abject poverty.

Lord Charles Somerset, Sir John Cradock's successor in the governorship, received . . . . . £10,000 a year

his Lieutenant-Governor . . . . .	3,500	"
his Colonial Secretary . . . . .	3,500	"
his Deputy Colonial Secretary . . . . .	1,500	"
his Auditor-General . . . . .	1,050	"
his Colonial Paymaster . . . . .	1,000	"
his Controller of Customs . . . . .	1,000	"
his Collector of Customs . . . . .	1,000	"
his Chief Searcher of Customs . . . . .	700	"
his Collector of Customs at Simonstown . . . . .	700	"
his Private Secretary . . . . .	500	"
his Post-Captain of Table Bay . . . . .	500	"
his English Church Clergyman of Cape Town . . . . .	500	"
his English Church Clergyman of Simons-town . . . . .	350	"

a total of £25,800 per year for these officials, and "this figure represented only somewhat more than one-third of the whole amount expended in Salaries" (THEAL), for there were a host of other officials. Thus the South African colonists had now to find over £70,000 a year for British officials. The Governor of this small Colony, the entire population of which was less than that of a moderate-sized English town, drew more than double the amount of the salary of the Presi-



involved in the Napoleonic wars agreed to terms of peace at Paris, a Convention was also arranged between England and Holland. This Convention, which met in London in August, 1814, settled the terms of cession of Holland's Colonial possessions in South Africa to Great Britain, as stated previously, and the Cape now became a British Colony by legal treaty arrangement.

Most of the causes of discontent and dissatisfaction above referred to were already in existence in the frontier districts, when Lord Charles Somerset came to succeed Sir John Cradock as Governor, in 1814. Another grievance—in the opinion of many of the most determined opponents to British rule, the chief—was the increase in the numerical strength of the Hottentot

dent of the United States. While the officials named in the above list as given by Theal had their salaries fixed in England and paid in sterling coin of the realm—they were without exception men who obtained their positions through influence with the Duke of Beaufort and his family connections—all the other Cape civil servants had to be content with payment in the Colonial paper currency, for which the rate of exchange varied at different times. Many of the most useful and hard-working officials thus received wretchedly poor pay. The Chief Justice had less than £1000, the other Judges under £500 a year each.

The Dutch East India Company had robbed the Colonists by its trade monopolies, its exactions, and its restrictions on commerce. Under the rule of the Batavian Republic all these restrictions and exactions had been removed. The British Government not only reintroduced the hateful official interdicts against free trade, but itself inaugurated a new system of robbery and spoliation by the appropriation of enormous sums of money out of the revenue for the payment of its imported officials. The result was more suffering and more poverty for the farmers and the frontiersmen, who had to be taxed for the benefit of the London and Cape Town office seekers, and who now also had to pay large sums in quit-rent for their holdings of land and for their farms, which under the Dutch government—the East India Company as well as the Batavian Republic—they had held practically free of all taxation.

regiment, and its permanent occupation of military posts on the frontier.

The South African Republicans regarded this force of mercenary ruffians under British officers as being stationed there to overawe them, and to compel them against their will to remain submissive to British authority. They blamed the British Government for training these savages to the use of arms. Such a procedure was, according to their view of the case, calculated to endanger the lives and property of white colonists. The very existence of the Hottentot Pandour regiment appeared to them to be sufficient to condemn British rule in South Africa as detrimental to the interests of the white inhabitants of the country.

At the base of the mountains at the head of the valley of the Baviaans river, on the extreme north eastern frontier, was the homestead of a grazier farmer named Frederik Bezuidenhout. The region was one where there were as yet very few farms occupied by white people, and to which government officials seldom found their way. Bezuidenhout was one of those most bitterly opposed to the British Government, whose jurisdiction he refused to acknowledge when summoned before the Landdrost of Graaff Reinet for striking a Hottentot with whom he had had an altercation. England had no more zealous and more able official in South Africa at that time than Lieutenant Andries Stockenstrom, who was then acting Landdrost at Graaff Reinet. His father had served under the Dutch Government; had, at the transfer of the Colony to Great Britain, retained office under the new rulers; and, when in command of

Andries (afterwards Sir Andries) Stockenstrom.

a small burgher force in the war of 1811-12, had been treacherously murdered by the Kaffirs. At the time when this occurred, young Stockenstrom was an ensign in the Cape regiment. From the camp at Bruintjes Hoogte the son led a small avenging expedition against the Kaffirs. Promoted to the rank of Lieutenant for his gallant conduct in the war, he was soon after appointed Deputy Landdrost of the new district of Cradock, and subsequently Acting Landdrost of Graaff Reinet. It may be said, without injustice to the memory of this distinguished man, that his zeal in the service of the British Crown was not greater than his ambition. He had been born and educated in Cape Town, where young men with brains and abilities even then already lingered in the classic shade of Government House Avenue, alternately worshipping the sacred emblem of the Union Jack and gazing upwards at the highest summit of Table Mountain, dreaming of the distinctions and emoluments of office which would come to them from the glorious Empire-building islands six thousand miles across the ocean's waves. The educated young South Africans who were not sufficiently dazzled by the splendour of official uniforms, and not enough fascinated by the lustre of the British guinea, to become aspirants to place and power under the Crown of England, were, then as now, looked upon as fools. Andries (afterwards Sir Andries) Stockenstrom was not one of these.

Andries  
Stockenstrom.

The old laws of the Dutch East India Company and of the Government of the Batavian Republic, which laws remained in force when the Cape became English,

provided that, in case any burgher refused to appear before the Landdrost or Magistrate when summoned before him to answer any charge or accusation similar to that brought against Bezuidenhout, such burgher or citizen should be arrested by the Fieldcornet of the Ward in which he resided. When it became known that Frederik Bezuidenhout not only refused to appear before the Landdrost, but threatened to resist by force of arms any attempt that might be made to capture him, Fieldcornet Opperman of the Baviaans River Ward received instructions to proceed to the farm and arrest him. Lieutenant Rousseau, who commanded a troop of the Hottentot regiment stationed at a military post on the Fish river, was, at the same time, ordered to render assistance to the Fieldcornet, if necessary. Opperman excused himself from taking action, stating that he was convinced of Bezuidenhout's intention to offer armed resistance, and, on this ground, relegated his duty to the military officer who had been ordered to assist him. Thus it happened that Landdrost Stockenstrom's order was executed, not by the properly and legally constituted authority whose duty it was to deal with the matter—the Fieldcornet, assisted, if needs be, by the fellow-burghers of the accused—but by Hottentot soldiery in the service of the British Crown. Can it surprise us, even at the present day, when Imperialism is fashionable, that the disaffected frontiersmen looked upon Bezuidenhout's offence as trivial and paltry compared with that of the Government and its officials, who did not hesitate to take a step fraught with the greatest danger to the prestige and the ruling

The Fyk  
Baviaans River.

influence of the white Colonists; and who, by their conduct, seemed to endanger the safety and the very existence of South Africa as a white man's Colony?

Marching up the valley of the Baviaans river, the Hottentot soldiers accompanied the Sheriff of the Landdrost's Court to Frederik Bezuidenhout's farm, where they found the accused and one of his coloured servants stationed behind the stone wall of a sheep-kraal, a little distance below the house. On being summoned in the name of the King of England to surrender, Bezuidenhout fired on the soldiery without effect, for no one was hit. Then he and the black man with him sought shelter in the house, and immediately afterwards, before they could be surrounded, slipped out at the back of the building, and retired up the mountain to a rocky *krans*, where there was a large cave. Here, in preparation for the last stand, he had stored water and provisions. The cave also contained a good supply of ammunition and spare muskets, which Bezuidenhout had loaded for the occasion. Driven to bay among the rocks on that lonely mountain side, the desperate man sat down at the entrance to his stronghold. As he grasped his musket to do battle, alone and unaided, for what he regarded as the cause of his country, he must have realised the utter futility of further resistance to Fate; but he scorned the idea of yielding. Perhaps, as he took his station at the entrance to the cave, he dreamed of the future, when, through his death, his people would be brought to rise in arms against those whom he regarded as tyrants and oppressors.

Death of  
Frederik  
Bezuidenhout.

While Bezuidenhout stood ready to defend the front approach of his mountain stronghold, some of the Hottentot soldiery, making a detour round the rocky glen, had scaled the cliff in the rear of the cave. As he raised his shoulders and prepared to take aim at some of Rousseau's Pandours who were advancing up the path, a volley was fired at him by those on the rocks overhead. Pierced by several of their bullets, the brave frontiersman sank to the ground and closed his eyes in death agony. His servant now called on the attacking force to cease firing, as Bezuidenhout had breathed his last, and he himself wished to surrender. The firearms and ammunition which were found in the cave were removed by the Sheriff and his troops. The dead body of Frederik Bezuidenhout was left to the wild beasts. But the shots had been heard on a neighbouring farm, and, as night was falling, Jan Bezuidenhout, elder brother to the deceased, made his way up the *kloof*. His mind was already filled with dark forebodings, which the deep stillness of the mountains and the desolate grandeur of the wild rocks around him only helped to intensify. When, at the entrance to the cave, the pale light of the stars showed him the cold and lifeless body of his brother, need we wonder that the strong man felt so overpowered by the tragic circumstances of the catastrophe, that he cursed the British Crown and all its minions, and swore to avenge what to him appeared an outrage, or perish himself?

It is the day after Frederik Bezuidenhout's death.

The wind moans through the forest trees in the ravines of the Baviaans River Mountains.

By an open grave in the wild frontier country stand The Open Grave Jan Bezuidenhout, Cornelis Faber (his brother-in-law), and some of the burghers of the district. As they lower the body of their fallen comrade into the earth, entrusting what remains of Frederik Bezuidenhout to the soil of South Africa for which he had died, the tidings fly like wildfire through Tarka, Bruintjes Hoogte, Zwagers Hock, and all the surrounding country:— “The Hottentot soldiery, acting under orders from the British authorities, have killed a white man.” It is the call to arms for those frontiersmen who are bold enough The Call to Arms. to dash their heads against the stone wall of England’s might. The small group of mourners by that open grave know well that resistance against the British Government by force of arms is a hopeless task. But they see before them the melancholy result of the work of England’s Hottentot soldiers. From the wild mountain ravines, from the forests of their native land, voices call to them to rise against the oppressor. These voices are the echoes of the impassioned words spoken to them by the brother of the dead man. For Jan Bezuidenhout, standing by that grave, has given expression to the anguish of his soul; he has called on those around him to drive the Hottentot troops out of the country.

The conspirators had a desperate task before them. The Conspirators. They took desperate measures to accomplish their object. A few days after Frederik Bezuidenhout’s funeral they met on one of the lonely farms in the Boschberg, and decided to send Cornelis Faber, Frans Marais, and one or two others, to the Kaffir chief

Mission to  
Gaika.

Gaika, to ask his help against the English and the Hottentots.

The leadership of the insurrectionary movement had now been entrusted to a farmer named Hendrik Prinsloo. This man, then in the prime of life, was the son of Marthinus Prinsloo, the chief officer in the frontier rising of 1799. He had considerable influence in the district, was looked upon as a brave and determined Commandant, and bore a high reputation for sound judgment and sterling character. The other organisers of the insurrection were Prinsloo's brother-in-law Theunis De Klerk, Jan Bezuidenhout, Cornelis Faber, Stefanus Bothma, Abraham Carel Bothma, and Andries Meyer.

It was arranged that Prinsloo should take the field, at the head of what burgher force was available, on 12th November. On the 9th, the revolutionary leaders and their supporters met on the farm of Diederik Mulder, whose brother, Jan C. Mulder, was entrusted with a letter addressed to a farmer named Jacobus Kruger. This landowner, then advanced in years, had great influence in the frontier district. The letter was signed by Prinsloo, in the name of all the others present. It called on Kruger to assist in the revolution, and made him acquainted with the plans of the insurgents to attack the frontier posts and drive out the British Hottentot garrisons.

Meanwhile a spy had already informed the government authorities of Frans Marais and Cornelis Faber's mission to Gaika, and now Diederik Mulder advised his brother Jan to deliver the letter to Fieldcornet



Stefanus Van Wyk of the Tarka, instead of to Kruger.

The halter having thus been placed round the necks of the Africander leaders by those of their own countrymen who elected to play the *role* of traitors in this drama, it remained for the British Government and its adherents to make preparations for erecting the scaffold.

Van Wyk had taken the letter to the Landdrost of Cradock, who had at once issued instructions to the military authorities at Grahamstown and at the Boschberg. On the morning of 12th November, a body of the Cape Hottentot regiment, under English officers, surprised Hendrik Prinsloo on his farm, and arrested him before he could get to his horse, which had been saddled for him while he was preparing to proceed to join his fellow conspirators and take command.

Arrest of  
Hendrik  
Prinsloo.

Meanwhile Faber and Marais had not been successful in obtaining aid from Gaika. By almost every chronicler of the history of those days, their attempt has been adversely criticised and strongly condemned as unjustifiable. But it is difficult to understand on what grounds this universal condemnation is based. The British Government, in its wars against the French in India and in North America, had itself never scrupled to enter into alliances with Native Chiefs, and make use of those savage allies and their followers in the conduct of military operations against the enemy. In South Africa itself, England had employed Hottentot levies in subduing insurrection among the white inhabitants of the frontier districts. At the very time

of the Bezuidenhout rebellion, it had in its service large numbers of Hottentot soldiery. Those barbarians, indeed, formed the majority of the forces in the field, the troops against which the insurrectionary burgher force would have to contend.

Is it strange, is it unnatural, that men about to engage in a struggle for life and death against one of the most powerful of European empires, finding that civilised Power did not scruple to enlist the Hottentot under its banners, should look to Native Chiefs for aid? Transferred and bartered to a foreign Power by Holland, the former mother-country, where would these frontiersmen of South Africa find help in Europe? Why should not they in Africa, as Clive in India, and Wolfe in North America, form an alliance with a Native Chief to assist them in driving their enemies out of the country? Their own women and children would be exposed to the danger and the brutalities of the British Hottentot levies. Gaika's Kaffirs were barbarians, it is true, but "noble savages" compared to those who served under the flag of England. And further, the English garrison posts, against which alone war would have to be waged, consisted entirely of men capable of bearing arms. There were no helpless non-combatants with the troops.

When, in the American War of Independence, the British Government made use of the Indians to fight against the Colonists in arms—"let loose the dogs of war," as Pitt phrased it—there were women and children on the American side. They were the sufferers, and for that reason alone, if for no other, the policy of the

Crown was nothing less than criminal. The same may be said of the action of the British officers in Natal in 1842, after the defeat of Pretorius, when the Kaffirs committed atrocities on the defenceless white inhabitants of that unhappy land. Faber and Bezuidenhout and the other leaders of the insurrection in 1815, in invoking the aid of Gaika, were not summoning a barbarian force against women and children, but to fight against men, only some of whom were civilised.

Still, the mission to Gaika, though from a humanitarian point of view defensible as perfectly justifiable under the circumstances, was a mistake when regarded from its political aspect. It is known that Hendrik Prinsloo himself did not approve of any alliance whatsoever with the Kaffirs, and many of his followers, no doubt, thought with him. A peculiarly characteristic feature of the white inhabitants of South Africa, and especially of the older Colonists and their descendants, has always been their pride of race—their belief in the dominant power of the white race. The very cause of the insurrection was dissatisfaction with England for invading the rights and privileges of the white inhabitants, and for employing native soldiery in the execution of the civil law against a free white burgher. The heinousness of this offence in the eyes of the people should have deterred the leaders from seeking any assistance, or even the semblance of assistance, from the Kaffirs or from any other Native race. To the popular mind the great sin of the British Government lay in the levying of Hottentot soldiery for use against the white inhabitants of South Africa. The

strength of the people's cause should have been kept intact by the leaders. In seeking an alliance with the Kaffirs, Faber, and Bezuidenhout, and the others, were dooming their attempted revolution to failure.

There seems no doubt whatever that the insurrection would have received far more general support from the farmers of the frontier districts if Kaffir help had not been sought. As it was, the passions of the moment, and the feeling of bitter resentment against England were—perhaps—allowed to outweigh the calm deliberative statesmanship which should have ruled at the *Krygsraad*, and the first step to failure was taken when the mission was sent to Gaika.

The Mission to  
Gaika.

The narrator of to-day, unless he means to be ungenerous and unjust to the memory of the dead, must write "perhaps."

The chronicles of the events of those days are but scanty. It is difficult from them to arrive at exact conclusions, and to form a proper estimate of the motives which guided the principal actors in the drama. It may be that, thoroughly understanding the nature of the Kaffir race; knowing their readiness to take part—in order to serve their own ends—with one or other of the contending forces, and play off one party against another; and fearing that, unless advances were instantly made, Gaika's followers might afterwards be found arrayed against them; the leaders of the insurrection determined at once to secure at least the friendly neutrality of the powerful Native Chief. In the event of defeat at the hands of the Government troops, the country to the East of the Great Fish river,

where some of the frontier farmers had already established a few scattered homesteads, would—if the Kaffirs were not hostile—form a more convenient rallying ground, on which to make another stand, than that to the North, towards which the road went through a few mountain Passes.

With these Passes in possession of the British troops, retreat in that direction was completely cut off.

To secure the friendship of Gaika, was, perhaps, necessary and unavoidable under the circumstances. But when the fact became known that the leaders of the insurrection had sent a mission to the chief, large numbers of frontiersmen, who would otherwise have fought against the English and the Hottentots, refused to join in the attempt, while many burghers even ranged themselves on the side of the Government, prepared to go against their own countrymen, for whose conduct they could see no excuse.

Willem Krugel, the acting Fieldcornet of the Wyk Baviaans River, had, with some burghers of his Ward, promptly obeyed the Government order to take the field, in order to guard the frontier against a possible Kaffir invasion. But Jan Bezuidenhout, Theunis De Klerk, and Nicolaas Prinsloo, the brother of the insurgent burgher Commandant, came to the camp occupied by the farmers, informed them of Hendrik Prinsloo's capture by the Hottentot corps, and, at once, Krugel and all the frontiersmen with him joined the insurgents, and proceeded to Captain Andrews' military post on the farm of Van Aarde, to demand that the prisoner should be set at liberty.

Insurrection,  
Willem Krugel  
Supports  
Bezuidenhout.

Slachtersnek.

Jan Bezuidenhout was now proclaimed leader. Inclusive of Krugel's detachment, he had a total of only fifty men.\* With these he took up a position at Slachtersnek, not far from the Boschberg. The crest of the ridge overlooks the valley of the Little Fish river. Had it been occupied in force by burgher Commandoes it would have been a strong position. But Hendrik Prinsloo was a captive: none of the other leaders had great influence: none of them inspired their followers with much confidence. The fatal mistake which had been made when negotiations were opened with Gaika was now apparent. Reinforcements did not reach the insurgent camp; for the frontiersmen refused to fight under leaders who looked to the Kaffirs for help. While Bezuidenhout's horsemen were riding from one farm to another in the Tarka district to ask in vain for forces with which to oppose the English, the Government troops were concentrating at the Boschberg. Dragoons and infantry were on the way from Grahamstown. Captain Andrews and Major Fraser had already a strong body of the Hottentot corps on the spot. But worse than all, for the insurgents' cause, were the thirty or forty burghers, who, under Commandant Willem Nel, had joined the British Standard.

Hopeless  
Struggle.

Perceiving that the struggle would be hopeless, and anxious, if possible, to prevent more of his countrymen from swelling the ranks of the enemy, Jan Bezuidenhout had requested an interview with Nel, in order to attempt to gain him over, and had appealed to him to summon

\* Theal. Cloete, however, gives the number of insurgents, at the time when Prinsloo's liberty was demanded, as three or four hundred,

all the burghers of Uitenhage district, and to support the cause for which the majority would decide. Commandant Nel. Commandant Nel, however, refused to take any such step, and strongly insisted on the duty of every citizen to support the rulers of the country. He then called on the insurgent rank and file to accept pardon, which he said he was authorised to offer them if they submitted at once. Bezuidenhout's followers were insufficient in numbers to attempt to drive the British troops out of the country. And even among their small body there were waverers. Krugel and his men had only joined for the purpose of liberating Hendrik Prinsloo; and they already perceived that they were powerless to do that. De Klerk and one or two more abused Nel, and advocated his arrest as a traitor and a spy. But others opposed this, and he was allowed to leave. Some accounts say that Bezuidenhout, when he perceived that many of his men were hesitating whether they should persist in their attempt at revolution or accept the offer of the Government, uncovered his head, raised his right hand heavenwards, and exclaimed: "I swear by God The Oath. Almighty, never to rest till I have driven the oppressors of my nation from this land;" and that those around him, carried away by his example, ceased to waver, and took the same oath. Others state that Krugel, acting under orders from Bezuidenhout, made this solemn vow in the presence of his men, many of whom repeated the words and took the oath after him.

But although its handful of supporters were determined and daring enough, the Republican cause became more hopeless still when Cornelis Faber and Frans

Marais rode into the camp, on the 18th of November, with Abraham Bothma and Andries Klopper. The first two brought tidings of the total failure of their second mission to Gaika. The others had returned from the districts of Zwagershoek and Bruintjes Hoogte (where they had been sent to get recruits), without bringing with them a single burgher to help Bezuidenhout. They also had failed in their mission. At the moment when the disastrous intelligence brought by all these horsemen was made known in the revolutionary ranks on Slachtersnek, Lieutenant-Colonel Cuyler, Major Fraser, and Commandant Nel were advancing against the position at the head of a column consisting of dragoons and burghers numbering nearly twice as many as Bezuidenhout's band.

The Nek.

The crest of the hills at the top of the *nek* runs around the position somewhat in the shape of a horse-shoe, but with a projecting ridge towards the left. On this ridge was the small left flank of the insurgent forces. The men stationed here were those of Krugel's Commando, from which half a dozen burghers had already deserted in the previous night. As the British troops came up the road, Krugel, Nicolaas Prinsloo, and sixteen others advanced towards them, and surrendered to Commandant Nel. The small force remaining under the command of Bezuidenhout now dispersed in all directions, and allowed the Nek to be occupied by British troops.

The Insurgents  
Dispersed.

Fifteen of those who had fled from Slachtersnek, including Theunis De Klerk, gave themselves up to the authorities soon after.



Jan Bezuidenhout, Cornelis Faber, Andries Meyer, Stefanus and Abraham Bothma escaped on horseback, rode to their farms, and managed to get their waggons across the river and well into Kaffirland before the course which they had taken was discovered. Their families travelled with them. They made for the Winterberg range. But Nel, with about twenty burghers, and Major Fraser, with a hundred men of the Hottentot corps, were in pursuit. Andries Meyer and Abraham Bothma were first overtaken and captured. Then the pursuing force came up with the others. It was on 29th November when the waggons of Jan Bezuidenhout, Cornelis Faber, and Stefanus Bothma approached a ravine in the Winterberg mountains, and halted by a small stream, where the oxen were unyoked, and the camp fire was lit. Concealed close by was a detachment of the Hottentot corps under a British Lieutenant. As Faber and Stefanus Bothma came to the stream to fetch water, they were fired on by the soldiers. Bothma was unarmed; but Faber returned their fire, and was then wounded in the shoulder. As he fell from his horse, he was captured. Bothma, also, was taken prisoner.

And now Jan Bezuidenhout, who, with his wife and At Bay. son, had attempted to reach a wooded *kloof*, from which they had found their way cut off by a detachment of the Hottentots, made his last stand. Disdaining to surrender, although the troops under Lieutenant M'Innes already surrounded him, he fired on the Hottentots when they called on him to yield. His son, a lad of fourteen, fought with him. While a perfect storm

Death of Jan  
Bezuidenhout.

of bullets swept the ground on all sides of them, Bezuidenhout's wife, Martha Faber, a sister of Cornelis Faber, loaded their guns and handed them spare muskets to continue the fight. The Hottentot skirmishers kept good cover and aimed well. Soon Jan Bezuidenhout sank to the earth, struck in the chest by two bullets. "Let us die together," exclaimed his wife, as she sprang forward to defend the mortally-wounded man, towards whom the Hottentots were now making a rush. Seizing her husband's gun, she fired one more shot at the enemy before she was herself struck by a bullet and made prisoner. Her son, also, was wounded and captured.

It is said that Commandant Nel, with his detachment of burghers, came on the scene just in time to prevent this heroic woman being killed by an infuriated Hottentot soldier.

When the English officers had again collected all their men, after the fight was over, the film of death was already on the eyes of the Africander leader. Thus, in those wild Winterberg mountains, the same range in the western spurs of which his brother Frederik had fallen to the bullets of the British Hottentot regiment, died Jan Bezuidenhout, the frontiersman, who, whatever were his faults and failings, was, it must be admitted, not wanting in filial and brotherly affection, love of country, and bravery.

South African Imperialist writers, apologists for the Government and the system of government which hounded those men to their death, have spared no hard

and cruel words in their version of the events which constituted the drama in which the two brothers formed the central figures. The very School Primers on South African history, compiled and edited by these official apologists, have, for a great part of this century, taught the officially trained youth of Cape Colony that the Bezuidenhouts were "rebels" and "outlaws."

And yet, many of the present generation of Africans, nurtured though they are in English ideas and English modes of thought, revere and honour the memory of those rough and sturdy frontiersmen, who scorned to yield to those upon whom they looked as oppressors. They, the doughty champions of the Veld, at least knew how to die like men when their time came. What can be said of those mock heroes of the present-day South African Imperialism—those mighty administrators who sat at the right hand of princes in public places—those great leaders who deceived and hoodwinked their followers, led them to slaughter, and then, in the hour of danger, saved their own skins by surrender?

No poet laureate sings the praise of Jan Bezuidenhout, narrates his glorious death, or celebrates in heroic verse the valour of Martha Faber and her son. The eternal rocks and crags of the Winterberg are their monument. It will last throughout the ages; it is even possible that the names of those simple peasant folk will still be remembered when Raiders, Imperial Poet Laureate, Chartered Music Hall mock heroes, and all the other "tin gods" of London and Cape Town, are forgotten and in oblivion.

The rebellion was at an end: now followed the "justice" of the government of Lord Charles Somerset and of King George.

The result of the trial was a foregone conclusion. The officials of the day knew what was expected of them — no half measures. The old High Court of Justice (of the Batavian Republic) which Commissioner De Mist had established, had been so remodelled by the English authorities as to make its members no longer independent of the Executive Government. The Judges were now the creatures of the Governor, by whom they were appointed, to whom they were responsible, and by whom they could be dismissed.

A Special Commission of this precious tribunal sat at Uitenhage. The Judges were Pieter Diemel and W. Hiddingh. The Court Prosecutor was Lieutenant-Colonel Cuyler, the military leader who had crushed the insurrection, and who was at the same time Landdrost or Civil Magistrate of Uitenhage district. The Secretary was Beelaerts van Blokland.

On the 16th of December—a date afterwards memorable in the history of the Africander world as the anniversary of the great defeat of Dingaan's army at the Bloed River, of the proclamation of the restoration of the South African Republic at Heidelberg, and of the outbreak of the War of Independence at Potchefstroom—thirty-nine prisoners appeared before their judges. The evidence as to the oath on Slachtersnek was that Willem Krugel had sworn it in the name of himself and his followers. Not only the constitution of the Court made the issue of the trial easy to predict, but

all the prisoners admitted the facts of the evidence brought up against them.

The sentences were pronounced on 22nd January, <sup>The Sentences</sup> 1816. They were as follow:—Hendrik Prinsloo, Cornelis Faber, Theunis de Klerk, Stefanus Bothma, Abraham Carel Bothma, and Willem Frederik Krugel, were condemned to death. They were to be hanged at Slachtersnek, where the oath against the British Government had been sworn.

Martha Bezuidenhout was condemned to banishment for life from the districts of Graaft Reinet, Uitenhage, and George; *i.e.*, from the Eastern half of the Colony.

All the others, thirty-two in number, were sentenced to witness the execution. In the case of one of them, namely Frans Marais, it was further specified that he should, while the punishment was inflicted, remain tied to the foot of the gallows by a rope round his neck.

Sixteen out of these thirty-two were condemned to undergo further punishment of different degrees of severity. Frans Marais, who had formerly been a soldier in the army of the Batavian Republic, was banished from the Colony for life. Five others, David Malan, Nicolaas and Pieter Prinsloo (brother and nephew of Hendrik Prinsloo), Andries Meyer, and Adriaan Engelbrecht, were, like Martha Bezuidenhout, banished for life from the districts of Graaff Reinet, Uitenhage, and George. Ten more were condemned to imprisonment or fines. Their names were Hendrik Liebenberg, Abraham and Christoffel Botha, Andries van Dyk, Theunis Mulder, Pieter Delpont, Barend de Lange, Gerrit Bezuidenhout, Adriaan and Leendert Labuschagne.

The other sixteen, whose only sentence was to witness the execution of the leaders, were Joachim Johannes Prinsloo, Nicolaas Prinsloo, Willem Jacobus Prinsloo, Jan Prinsloo, Pieter Laurens Erasmus, Andries Hendrik Klopper, Hendrik Petrus Klopper, Jacobus Marthinus Klopper, Thomas Andries Dreyer, Johannes Broukhorst, Willem Adriaan Nel, Frans Johannes van Dyk, Johannes Frederik Botha, Philip Rudolf Botha, Hendrik van der Nest, Cornelis van der Nest.

The date fixed for the execution—9th March, 1816—was drawing near. There had as yet been no mitigation of any of the sentences. But large numbers of colonists were not without hope that the authorities would grant a reprieve, at least to those who were condemned to death.

Technically, it is true, the insurrectionary leaders had been guilty of rebellion; for the country was under British administration, and the armed movement had been directed against the Government. And yet it can hardly be said that the rising was a rebellion in the true sense of the term. The British Government had come into possession of South Africa by conquest, and by subsequent agreement with Holland. The consent of the inhabitants of the country had not been asked to that agreement. They had protested against it and the resulting transfer of their country to a foreign rule.

Their protest, as embodied in a written petition to the Government of Holland, signed by the majority of the burghers in the Colony, had been ignored by the contracting Powers. "What right has Holland," asked the Africanders of those days, and not quite

*Not a Rebellion  
in the true Sense  
of the Word.*

unreasonably, "what right has Holland to barter our allegiance? By what right does England make us subjects against our will? Is not this land, which our fathers have founded, ours to dwell in under a Government, and under laws and institutions, of our own choice?"

But further, the so-called rebellion had been a frontier movement. The frontiersmen had, as we have seen, established their Republics before the British first came to South Africa. They had staunchly and persistently refused to come under British rule. They had always scorned to take the oath of allegiance to the English Government. Under the old Dutch rule, the Northern and North-eastern borders of the Colony were not accurately defined. The pioneer frontiersmen who had first founded and settled the district of Tarka, and other outlying regions, had found themselves made British subjects against their will when these tracts of country were annexed to the Colony. "George of England," they said, "is no more our king than is Gaika of Kaffirland."

The rising of Slachtersnek cannot be called a rebellion in the commonly accepted sense of the word. But, granting for the sake of argument that it was, why did not England show mercy to the vanquished? Many of them had already suffered a great deal. Some of them were wounded. One of them was a woman, deserving more of pity and of respectful admiration than of punishment. The two brothers who had originated the insurrection were both dead.

*Considerations  
in favour of  
Mercy.*

What could England have lost by sparing the lives of those condemned to be executed? She could have gained the esteem, and the gratitude even, of those disaffected with her rule in South Africa. By the exercise of only a little generosity towards men who were helpless and in her power, she could have consolidated her Empire in that part of the world.

"The sentences," says Theal, "were in accordance with the letter of the law; but it was generally supposed that the Governor would use his power of mitigation to prevent the penalty of death being inflicted, as no blood had actually been shed by any of the prisoners. Banishment would have been equally effective as a warning to others, and it seemed to most people, then as now, that something was due to the burghers who aided the Government, and who were afterwards horrified at the thought that they had helped to pursue their deluded countrymen to death. There was an opportunity for the English Government to secure the affections of these people by granting to them the lives—though not the liberty—of the chief culprits."

That opportunity was lost through the vindictiveness of the rule of Lord Charles Somerset, and the insatiable thirst for vengeance displayed by the Government of King George. The victims were deemed guilty of rebellion "against their king, a sovereign so eminently distinguished in always tempering justice with mercy." These are the very words used by the authorities, and preserved in the annals of those days.

We have seen the justice. Where was the mercy? We shall see.



It is the morning of the fateful 9th March, 1816. On the heights of Slachtersnek, where the oath of fidelity to the soil of South Africa had been taken, stands the scaffold for those who have sworn it. The English Lieutenant-Colonel, Cuyler—the officer who had been in chief command in subduing the insurrection—had also been the prosecuting magistrate at the trial in Uitenhage. He is now the superintendent of the executioners. Three hundred British troops guard the gallows.

Calm, and resigned to their fate, the five condemned men approach. (Krugel's sentence has, in consideration of his having meritoriously distinguished himself in the last war with the Kaffirs, and also because he and the burghers under his command had taken no actual part in any armed resistance, been altered to banishment for life. A royal, an Imperial Mercy, truly!) Hendrik Prinsloo, Cornelis Faber, Stefanus Bothma, Abraham Bothma, and Theunis de Klerk advance to meet their cruel destiny. Around the scaffold stand their friends and relatives, and, ranged in a separate small circle, are the thirty-two men sentenced to witness the execution of their leaders. Tied to the gallows-pole by a rope round his throat is Frans Marais. As the leaders of the insurrection step forward, they request that, before dying, they may be allowed to join in singing a hymn with their relatives and former companions-in-arms. Their request is granted (more Imperial Mercy, surely!); then, with firm tread, they ascend the scaffold.

Sobbing, and with tearful eyes, the friends of the

condemned men see the executioner arrange the cords round the necks of his victims. Then louder sobs are heard. Mothers and wives, who have come to be with their loved ones even in this awful moment of sorrow, to be near them to the last—weeping and sobbing women—cover their faces with their hands, and shriek aloud to Heaven in their agony and distress. But, calm as when they faced the foemen's ranks, the doomed men submit to their fate. The executioner is now completing his task, and their bodies hang suspended in mid-air. Only for a moment. In the next, the scaffold, clumsily arranged, and not strong enough to bear the weight, gives way, and tumbles to the ground.

"Heaven intervenes for them! Let them live! Give them back to us!" cry the bystanders, as they rush towards the foot of the gallows, where the senseless bodies of the unhappy victims are lying on the ground. The soldiers who are ranged in line on the place of execution are unable, or have not the heart, to keep back the crowd of sympathisers. Men and women, on their knees before Colonel Cuyler, beg for mercy for their brothers, for their husbands, for their sons. Slowly consciousness returns to the five unhappy men. "Mercy?" Ask it not of a British officer. He must obey his instructions.

Again the scaffold is erected, and again the executioners do their work—this time more thoroughly.

Pitiful wailing cries burst from the lips of the women who are there to witness the cruel scene; but the men condemned to look on and see their leaders

done to death utter loud and angry murmurs, even in the very presence of the majesty of the law, as the spirits of the five sufferers leave the poor tortured bodies.

The execution is over. British justice has triumphed. Colonel Cuyler is now again approached by the friends and relatives of Hendrik Prinsloo and the four men who had died with him. "Give us their bodies," is the humble request. "We desire to let them have honourable and Christian burial." No: not even that small mercy. The sentence has been that the bodies should hang at the scaffold, and then be buried at the place of execution. This is done. "God save the King"—the *"sovereign so eminently distinguished for tempering justice with mercy."*

The Vengeance  
of George of  
England.

Even the poor dead bodies of the executed leaders are to be disgraced \* to satisfy the vengeance of George

\* The place where the scaffold had been erected was part of the farm of an old man named Van Aarde. After the execution, he went to Colonel Cuyler, and asked him to let the gallows be removed from the ground. The Colonel refused to comply with this request. The old farmer indignantly protested that he would have the hateful thing removed himself, that he would not allow it to remain near the grave of the Africander leaders, and, early on the following morning, Mr. Van Aarde's sons proceeded to cut down the scaffold and remove it. When the young men, in the grey dawn of that March morning, came to the spot where the grave was, they were surprised to find a hand and arm projecting from the ground and raised towards the sky. It was the hand of Theunis de Klerk. Probably the work of burial had been performed as clumsily and roughly by the executioners as the execution itself. A very thin layer of loose soil only had been used to cover this arm, in which, when *rigor mortis* set in, the muscles had stiffened and contracted to such an extent as to cause the elevation of the entire limb which was now witnessed. A similar raising of the upper limb has frequently been noticed on a battlefield, especially in the early hours of the morning after the battle, when the bodies have had time

of England, and of the brother of the Duke of Beaufort. "Down with rebellion!" shout the place-hunters, and the sycophants of Cape Town.

"God Save the King!" "Aye, God save him!" say the frontier farmers, with lowering brows, and with their gaze fixed on the North, where the Republic is to arise. "Even the King will need God's help."

The men and women who stood and wept by that scaffold never forgot their dead companions. Memories of Slachtersnek have done more to give birth to the Republic, and, in after days, to consolidate it, than perhaps anything else in the history of South Africa. They have made England's dominion over all South Africa impossible. The spirit of Hendrik Prinsloo did not die.

Says Cachet: "Presently the soldiers return to their camp, and the Governor receives the intelligence that the extreme demands of the law have been complied with. The Government can now be at its ease. The rising is suppressed. Justice has run its course. The farmers also return home; sorrowing friends, weeping to become quite cold. Arms are then seen raised aloft, and fixed and rigid in that position, although on the previous evening those same limbs were lying passively by the side or on the breast of the corpse. But the young Van Aardes were not acquainted with these phenomena. Speechless with horror, they returned home after they had removed the scaffold, and when they were at last able to report what they had found, they had no doubt whatever in their own minds that Thennis de Klerk had been buried alive. To this day the tradition that such was really the case exists among the population of many parts of the Transvaal, to which country most of the exiles of Slachtersnek ultimately found their way.

relatives. Of another insurrection there can be no question. But neither man, woman, nor child leaves the place of woe without a wound in the very soul, and without swearing an unuttered oath: 'We shall never forget Slachtersnek.'

## CHAPTER IX

### DRIVEN INTO THE WILDERNESS

#### THE FRONTIERSMEN IN SUBJECTION

*Pax Britannica*—1819—The Fifth Kaffir War—Tsalambis and Gaikas—Makana—Invasion of the Colony—Grahamstown Attacked—Kaffirs Repulsed—Invasion of Kaffirland by combined Force of Burghers and British Troops, in July, 1819—Defeat of Tsalambis—Makana taken Prisoner—The New Frontier—The Chumie-Keiskamma Line—The All British Policy—Suppression of Dutch Language in Official Documents and in Courts of Law—Abolition of the Courts of Landdrost and Heemraden and of Burgher Senate—English made Compulsory in Petitions and Memorials to Government—English Emigrants in the Land of Good Hope—Their Treatment by the Government—Agitation in England against Lord Charles Somerset—The Commission of Enquiry—Their Recommendations—Reforms—The Council of Advice—The Supreme Court and Trial by Jury—Judges now Independent of the Local Government—Appointed by the Crown—Governor still Autocratic Ruler—Can Legislate without having a Majority in Council of Advice—Language of the Supreme Court is the Official Language, which the People do not understand—Jury Box with Reserved Seats—No Africanders need Apply—Repeal of Vagrancy Laws—Reduction of the Value of Paper Currency in Circulation—Resignation of Lord Charles Somerset—The Kat River Settlement—Conquered Territory, which had been refused to European Farmers, given to the Hottentots by Government—Position of Frontier Farmers under British Government at this Time—Their Grievances—Preparations for Trek to the North—1833—The Larger "Africa" of the Voortrekkers—Away to the Wilds of the North—The First Trek—The Trichards and Van Rensburgs.

*Pax Britannica.* THE last champions of the Republic of 1795 having thus been destroyed, Lord Charles Somerset and his

officials endeavoured to bring security to the Eastern frontiers of the Colony by putting a stop to the incessant inroads and raids of the Kaffir marauding parties which were about. All the Zuurveld was now almost entirely uninhabited by white colonists, whose stock were not safe in this region. Other parts of the Border did not afford much more security for cattle. Large numbers of farms were either unoccupied or in possession of the Kaffir invaders. From 1816 to 1818, although there was nominally peace, commandoes were frequently in the field to recover stolen cattle and to carry out Government orders for the punishment of the Kaffirs.

The fifth Kaffir War broke out in 1819. Tslambi, <sup>Kaffir War of 1819.</sup> who, with his followers, had been driven out of the Colony during the last hostilities, had now acquired the upper hand over his opponents under Gaika. It was deemed advisable by the colonial authorities to go to war in order to break the power of Tslambi and to help Gaika. The old warrior was supported by a famous witch doctor named Makana, and by Hintsu, the Paramount Kaffir chief beyond the Kei river. In December, 1818, a British force crossed the Fish river into Kaffirland, and, joined by Gaika's followers, drove the Tslambis eastwards. The wily veteran who commanded the Kaffirs did not risk a battle in the open ground. Leading his regiments, numbering some 20,000 men, further and further eastwards into the bush and inaccessible districts of Kaffirland, he allowed their cattle to be carried off, and their kraals to be burned, without making a stand in force. Gaika's

followers committed many atrocities, and Colonel Brereton, the British officer in command, was so disgusted with the barbarous conduct of his allies, that he gave orders for the soldiers and burghers to return to Grahamstown, taking it for granted that the war was over, and that Tslambi's power was broken. The burgher force was disbanded, and the frontiersmen returned to their farms. There was no more scouting going on, and the whereabouts of the enemy was not known. Tslambi and his captains, however, were not asleep. Before the burgher forces could be again called out and adequate preparation made for defence, he had crushed Gaika, and once more invaded the country to the west of the Great Fish river, capturing nearly all the cattle in the district lying between that stream and the Sunday's river, killing about forty of the Colonists on the scattered farms, and compelling hundreds of the inhabitants, men, women, and children, to seek shelter and safety in laagers and at the nearest military posts, while the deserted farm-houses were plundered and burned down. When all the Frontier region was again in flame and smoke, Grahamstown was attacked. On 22nd April, at early dawn, Makana, with 10,000 fierce Kosa warriors, made a rush on this post, which, very fortunately, was garrisoned by over 300 men, who were able to give a good account of themselves by directing a well-sustained musketry and artillery fire on the assaulting columns. The Kaffirs fought well, rushing in and attempting to come to close quarters with the stabbing assegai, but they were repulsed with great

Makana's  
Assault on  
Grahamstown.



slaughter, and Grahamstown was safe. In July, the burgher force and the British troops again invaded Kaffirland, defeated the Tslambis, burned their chief kraals, and captured large flocks of cattle. Makana was taken prisoner and sent to Robben Island, where he was afterwards drowned. When the war closed, Lord Charles Somerset decided on a new frontier for the Colony. By agreement with Gaika, who was then the new Chief in Kaffirland, the rivers Keiskamma and Chumie, further to the east than the Fish river, were made the boundary. The frontier, from the source of the Chumie in the Amatola Mountains to the sea, was now formed by the river Chumie itself up to the point of that stream's junction with the Keiskamma, from which point to the sea the boundary line was represented by the river Keiskamma.

The Chumie-  
Keiskamma  
Frontier.

But the district between the new frontier and the Great Fish river, was, by order of the Governor, left uninhabited. No farmers were allowed to settle in it, and it was occupied by a military force, whose duty it was to patrol the country and keep out the Kaffirs. For this purpose one fort was built on the Keiskamma, and another on the Kat River. These military posts were called Fort Willshire and Fort Beaufort.

In 1820, large numbers of English, Scotch, and Irish emigrants came to South Africa and landed in Algoa Bay, settling mainly at where we now have Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, and the surrounding country districts. Those sturdy British Settlers encountered many obstacles and suffered many hardships. They bore all their afflictions with great fortitude, and many

British  
Emigrants.

of them soon proved that they loved the new land which they had made their home.

Despotism at  
Work.

In 1825, the use of the Dutch language in official documents was suppressed by the British Government. In 1828, it was enacted that all proceedings in the Courts of Law should be in English. The Courts of Landdrost and Heemraden were abolished, and Magistrates' Courts, presided over by the District Civil Commissioners, were established. The Burgher Senate, also, was done away with. Though a properly constituted High Court of Justice,\* similar to the one which they had had under the Government of Holland (with the Judges quite independent of the Governor) was now granted to the Colonists, this concession was counterbalanced by the Government's arbitrary and repressive enactments as to the Dutch language.

It was announced that all petitions and documents addressed to the Government would, in future, have to be written in English, or have a translation into English sent up with the original. In cases where this was not done, the petitions would be sent back.

All these different measures of the Administration of Lord Charles Somerset and of Major-General Richard Bourke, it is quite plain, had for their object the stamping out of the spirit of independent nationality in the conquered country—the Britonising, if possible, of South Africa. As such weapons, they had the cordial approval and support of the Home Government. Whenever a blow could be struck at Dutch-Africaner and Republican sympathy, it was delivered with full force,

\* The Supreme Court.

and the Parliament of Great Britain did not waste its time in criticising too minutely the acts of its African Pro-consuls. But some of the very means that were used for the extension of British power brought at least partial alleviation for the vanquished. Thus, when English Colonists came to South Africa, they found that in Cape Town they could obtain permission to have a newspaper only on condition of the publisher binding himself to abstain altogether from criticising any of the acts of the Government.

At Algoa Bay, soon after their arrival in 1820, the settlers were prohibited from assembling together in public meeting to discuss politics or the administration of the affairs of the Colony.

When the newspaper man ventured to exercise what he, no doubt, esteemed his right as a freeborn Briton, his printing press was closed.

When the emigrants at Algoa Bay again requested to be allowed to hold their meeting, they were threatened by the Governor with prosecution for illegal assembly. A Notary who drew up a petition to the King was, with his Client, tried for libel, which the authorities held to be contained in the petition. The document itself was not forwarded to England. This Notary was soon after sentenced to seven years' transportation to New South Wales for writing an offensive letter to the Governor. The liberty of the subject was interfered with in various ways; for the Governor's rule was despotic, and his authority unlimited. The Judges were appointed by him, and liable to be dismissed at any time. Petitions to the authorities in London had

to be sent through him. If these petitions contained anything that was deemed objectionable by the Governor, he was not bound to forward them; and he could, if he found it desirable to do so, summon the authors of the documents before his tribunals in the Colony.

The Land of Good Hope not the Home of the Free.

The Cape, though already an integral part of the British Empire, was not exactly "*The Home of the Free.*"

But very soon some of the aggrieved and discontented English emigrants, who had by this time, perhaps, come to the conclusion that even Russia was a more desirable country to live in than the "*Land of Good Hope,*" had returned to London with the avowed object of

A Commission of Enquiry.

seeking redress. Their united representations, aided by the efforts of the Opposition party in Parliament, now forced the Government to appoint a Commission of Enquiry. The main result of this enquiry was the establishment of the Supreme Court of the Colony and the Council of Advice. The Parliamentary Acts necessary for the creation of these two institutions were passed in the first year (1827) of Mr Canning's Ministry, when Earl Bathurst had ceased to be Secretary of State.

The Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court then took the place of the High Court of Justice. The Judges were made quite independent of the Governor. They held Office from the Crown, and were entirely removed from all control of the Administrator. They were responsible only to the Secretary of State. With this Court was introduced Trial by Jury.

The Council of Advice.

The Council of Advice was an executive and legislative body consisting of six members. As constituted in 1827, the Chamber was so formed that two of these

members were to be influential Colonists appointed by the Governor with the consent of the British Secretary of State. As formed in 1825, when first called into existence at the recommendation of the Commissioners, this Council had been composed of six officials with no representative Colonists. The function of the Council of Advice was to consider with the Governor, who presided at the meetings, all proclamations, Government orders, and ordinances. The Governor was not bound to obey the decision of his Council. If he failed to get a majority of votes for any measure, he was perfectly at liberty still to make such measure a law for the Colony. His word, therefore—his will—was still law. Nothing could be discussed at Council meetings unless brought forward by the Governor. He could dismiss any member if he found it desirable to do so. With two members he could form a quorum. The Council Meetings were held with closed doors.

It will be seen that, even after the introduction of both these great reforms—for the Supreme Court and the Council of Advice did, under the circumstances, represent important reforms—the British Government of South Africa was still a Despotism. The Governor was still the autocratic ruler. He appointed the Colonists who were members of the Council of Advice. He could, whenever he desired, dispense with the advice which the majority of his Council gave him, and adopt that of the minority, if their views suited his own.

The Supreme Court was a return to the Institution given to the country by De Mist, but with this important

His Muscovy  
Excellency.

A Mock Trial  
by Jury.

difference, that the new High Court of Justice did not officially acknowledge any other language than English, which the majority of the Colonists did not understand. Trial by Jury, also, at first lost more than half its value as a safeguard to the liberty of the subject, by the question being left undecided for some time, whether one of the qualifications of jurymen was a knowledge of the English language.

In the Circuit Court at Worcester, in 1828, one of the Judges of the Crown showed what was his interpretation of his duties and responsibilities, and emphasised his own idea of fair dealing, impartiality, and the exalted dignity attaching to his high office, by removing criminal cases for trial to Cape Town, because an English-speaking jury could not be found at Worcester, which was in a Dutch district. The question whether a knowledge of English was a necessary qualification in a jurymen actually remained undecided until 1831, and the great majority of the white inhabitants of the country were liable to be excluded from the jury till that time.

Thus even the vaunted British bulwark of freedom was a rampart against oppression, only in those districts of the Colony which were fortunate enough to possess such a proportion of English-speaking citizens among their population as to make it possible for the Circuit Court readily to find nine "good men and true" (the Cape of Good Hope Jury consisted of nine instead of twelve members) who could understand the language of the new rulers. Where such a knowledge of English was not met with amongst the inhabitants,

the Circuit Court was really of no particular service; for the cases could be removed to Cape Town for trial. That, as a matter of fact, criminal cases were thus removed, we have seen in the case of Worcester.

Only one-eighth of the population of the Colony at that time were English. Seven-eighths were Dutch-speaking. It seemed, therefore, to the Nationalists of those days as if, even among the great men who were Judges of the new Supreme Court, there were active agents of the pan-Anglicising movement and the anti-Dutch crusade set on foot by the British Government.

The Jury-box contained only reserved seats, and was labelled "No Africanders need apply."

A Jury Box  
with Reserve  
Seats.  
No Africanders  
need apply.

The year 1828 was further memorable for the repeal of the Earl of Caledon's and Sir John Cradock's laws in relation to the Hottentots. This repeal was the work of those who thought they were the best friends of the Aborigines—the societies in England, and Dr. Philip and his friends in Cape Town. The chiefs could not be restored to power. If that had been possible, the so-called philanthropists, who were then all-powerful, would have done it. The Pass law, however, and the law with regard to apprenticeship, were repealed. As a result, the country soon swarmed with vagrant Hottentots. The farmers again found themselves deprived of their labourers, and agricultural pursuits could not be carried on as before.

A Premium on  
Vagrancy.

To make matters worse, the Government had issued an order reducing the paper money in circulation to three-eighths of its nominal value, the total of which

Reduction in  
Value of Paper  
Currency.

had been £700,000. Not only was the value thus reduced, in direct contradiction to the promises of previous Government officials, but it was further enacted that silver money was legal tender at the reduced rate of exchange. This cruel law meant ruin to a great many families.

A Pillar of the  
Empire gone  
Wrong.

In 1826, Lord Charles Somerset had had to proceed to England to answer certain charges—of abuse of his power and authority as Governor, and of acts of tyranny and oppression towards Colonists. He, however, resigned his post before the investigation could be commenced.

Kat River  
Hottentot  
Settlement.

In 1829, Sir Lowry Cole, one of the succeeding Governors, formed the Kat River Settlement. Some two or three thousand Hottentots were given lands, which they were allowed to cultivate and occupy. The locality chosen for this Hottentot Colony was on the Kaffir frontiers, in the belt of land where no European farmers were permitted to settle.

The Cause and  
the Grievances  
of the  
Frontiersmen.

The position of the frontier farmers under the British Government had now become more than intolerable. Impoverished by the successive wars with the Kaffirs, in which they had been commandeered for service, and after each of which they had found themselves and their own trusted leaders without a voice in the arrangement of the terms of peace, which were invariably unsatisfactory and insecure; deprived of their servants and farm-hands by the unwise legislation prepared for South Africa by political busy-bodies and missionary agitators in England; with vagrants and vagabonds infesting the country, and even pro-



tected and placed in possession of lands by Government, in localities where White Colonists were not allowed to settle; deprived of those representative institutions, those safeguards of liberty and justice, and of that measure of liberal government which they had enjoyed under the last Dutch Administration; with a foreign language imposed on them against their will, and they themselves, therefore, without even the opportunity of memorialising or petitioning the Government of the day for redress of grievances; with Trial by Jury made a mockery and a farce, through the arrogance and stupidity of some of the Judges who had been placed in office; with their lives and those of their families never safe, by reason of the constant attacks and raids of the Kaffirs; with their property taken from them, not only by thieving Hottentots and Kaffirs, but by the British Government itself, when it reduced the value of the paper money in actual circulation; and—more than all—having seen the day when those who rose against their oppressors were brought to the scaffold on the heights of Slachtersnek: is it to be wondered at that the inhabitants of the frontier districts began to look for a home elsewhere, and to prepare for that great enterprise which was to inaugurate the foundation of three more States, to carry the northern boundaries of South Africa beyond the Orange and across the Vaal to the Limpopo river, and to spread the stream of white colonisation eastward over the Drakensbergen as far as the shores of the Indian Ocean?

The emigration to the North began in 1833, when

the Trichards and Van Rensburgs, with their followers, started from Somerset and Albany districts, and left for the Orange River. A very large proportion of the burghers of Graaff Reinet and the adjacent districts were then already convinced that the cause of all their sufferings and difficulties was—to go to the root of the matter—the *existence of the British Government in the Country.*

The years which had passed since 1815, and the events which had followed Slachtersnek, had strengthened their conviction that it was their duty to seek for their children a refuge from what they regarded as the oppressor's flag. They looked upon the South Africa of those days as misruled and lost, and they resolved to found another state, a land under their own free flag, a larger Africa. The old Voortrekkers, to this day, speak of *Africa*, and never of *South Africa*.

Carel Johannes Trichard was the leader of the first party of emigrants. His farm was in the Fieldcornetcy of Brintjes Hoogte, in the district of Somerset.

In December, 1833, he and his wife and daughter; his son Carel, with wife and two children; and his younger sons, Louis, Pieter, and Jeremia, started for the Orange River. With them travelled five other frontier families from the districts of Somerset, Albany, and Uitenhage, viz.: J. Albrecht, Hendrik Botha, J. Pretorius, G. Scheepers, and H. Strydom, with their wives and children. Besides these different households, there was also a youth named Daniel Pfeiffer.

Proceeding northwards through the present districts of Cradock and Colesberg, they were, before they came

Search for the  
larger Africa.





to the river, joined by another party of emigrants, under Commandant Jan van Rensburg. These were the burghers G. Bronkhorst, sen., G. Bronkhorst, jun., S. Bronkhorst, Piet Viljoen, M. Prins, N. Prins, H. Aukamp, J. de Wet, F. van Wyk, and their wives and children. The combined parties numbered about one hundred individuals — men, women, and children. Early in 1834, they crossed the Orange river, and, in February of the same year, they were on the banks of the Vaal.



**PART II**  
**RECORDS AND CHRONICLES**  
**OF THE**  
**VOORTREKKERS**







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## CHAPTER X

### THE WILDERNESS OF THE GREAT NORTH

Condition of the Countries North of the Orange and Vaal Rivers, and East of the Drakensberg Range, at the time of the Great Trek or Emigration from Cape Colony—Northern Boundary of Cape Colony—Physical Outlines of the Trans-Orange and -Vaal Regions—Climate and Productions—Wild Animals, etc.—Natal—Physical Features—Mountains—Rivers—Animal and Plant Life, etc.—Zululand—Boundaries—Rivers—Physical Characteristics of the Country—Native Population of the Regions to the North of the Orange and Vaal Rivers, and in Natal and Zululand, at the time of the Great Trek—The Bushmen and Hottentots—The Griquas—The Barolongs and Bechuanas—The Basutos—The Northern Bapedi—The Swazis—The Kaffirs of Natal—The Zulus—Classification of Kaffir Nations—Origin of Zulu Nation—Chaka—His Declaration of Policy—Amalgamation—Nation Building—Considerations as to the Usual Estimate of Chaka's Character—Invasion of Natal—The Raiders—The Mantatees—Europeans in Natal—White Chiefs—The Kolo Tribe—Extent of Chaka's Empire—Umsiligaa's—Origin of Matabele Nation—The Slaughter in the Western Transvaal—Attitude of the Zulu Chief towards White People—Chaka's Mission to the Cape Colony—Invasion of Pondoland—Expedition to Delagoa Bay—Dingaan's Conspiracy—Assassination of Chaka—Murder of Umthlangana by Dingaan—Civil War—The Slayer of the Umhlovu—The New Kraal—Dingaan's Rule—The Heralds of the New King—English Settlement in Natal—The White Chiefs—England refuses Sovereign Responsibility.

WHEN the waggons of the first party of Emigrant Farmers under Van Rensburg and Trichard crossed the Orange river, they passed what was then the northern boundary of the British dominions in South Africa. Further to the west than where these pioneers travelled, the British

Northern  
Boundary of  
Cape Colony

frontier extended, along the Orange river, only up to a point marked on modern maps as Ramah. To the west of that point, the river then flowed through independent territory; and it was not till 1848 that the north-western parts of Cape Colony were enlarged so as to reach up to the banks of the stream.

Trans-Orange  
and -Vaal  
Regions.

North of the Orange, between that river and the Vaal, stretch the great plains, 4000 and 5000 feet above sea level (some even higher), which now form the territory of the Orange Free State. These are bounded on the east by the Drakensberg range. Beyond that great mountain rampart lies Natal. In the south-east, the Caledon River, a tributary of the Orange, forms the boundary of another mountainous region—Basutoland.

Climate, Soil,  
etc.

The climate of all this country of plateau-plains is dry and healthy. The soil would be fertile if it were better supplied with water; but rivers are not numerous, and the rainfall is scanty. Most of the plains are covered with coarse, long grass, and there are no natural forests. Far more diversity exists in the physical features, climate, and soil of the country north of the Vaal—as far as the Limpopo river.

Physical  
Features.

Rising higher above the sea level as you go northwards, the southern Transvaal land slopes upwards towards the watershed between the Vaal and its tributaries, on the one side, and the Limpopo with its feeders, on the other. This watershed is the Witwatersrand, and here the country is more than 5000 feet above sea level.

North of this ridge, the slope is again downwards, as far as the foot of the Magaliesberg mountains, where

Pretoria is fully 1000 feet lower than Johannesburg on the Rand.

The region of the *Hooge Veld*, or high plateau-lands covered with pasturage, is continued west and south-west of the Witwatersrand towards Marico and Potchefstroom, while eastwards and north-eastwards it runs, through Middelburg district, on towards the Drakensberg and De Kaap. All the southern half of the Transvaal, therefore, possesses a healthy bracing climate. As compared with the plateau-plains south of the Vaal river, these uplands are well watered. There are some rivers whose streams show no marked diminution in their volume of water in the dry season. During May, June, July, and August, as a rule, very little rain falls. Heavy thunderstorms, accompanied by torrents of rain, often occur in the hot weather of December, January, and February.

The soil is fertile, though, of course, not so rich as in the northern half of the country.

In the west, the basin of the Mariqua river and the valleys of Rustenburg are among the most beautiful and productive parts of South Africa. The fertility of the soil here is amazing. Vegetation is luxuriant, and the northern part of Rustenburg has a tropical climate and soil. From the Magaliesberg the country slopes to the north. Numerous tributaries of the Limpopo (which runs all the way along the northern border, with, in some parts of its course, great forests on both banks) fertilise the soil. But the climate is unhealthy, and fever is prevalent.

In the Waterberg region, wild forests alternate with

rugged mountains, from the slopes of which great rivers flow down towards the fertile valleys.

Mountains of  
Zoutpansberg.

The northern Zoutpansberg region is traversed by three great mountain ranges running from west to east. The sides of these mountains are covered with immense forests, and the deep valleys in many places are densely clothed with tropical vegetation. The soil is rich and productive, and large rivers flow towards the Limpopo and the Indian Ocean through the clefts and gorges of the mountain ranges in the north and east.

Zoutpansberg.

The eastern and south-eastern Zoutpansberg regions, also, have numerous wild and lofty mountain ranges and deep gorges, clothed with forest trees. The mountains are prolonged southwards into those which traverse the Lydenburg district. The principal rivers are the Letaba and Klein Letaba with their tributaries, and the Great Olifants river, with its tributary, the Silati. The waters of these streams flow eastwards and join the Limpopo.

Lydenburg.

Through Lydenburg district, from north to south, run the great Northern Drakensberg ranges, which are prolonged into the mountains of De Kaap, and then extend southwards through New Scotland to the Randberg and the Southern Drakensberg. All the central and southern portions of this large watershed are bounded on the west by the Hooge Veld. But the Eastern Transvaal and the adjacent countries have another watershed besides this one of the Drakensberg and Hooge Veld. Much further east, on the Portuguese and Cis-Pongolaland (western Amatongaland) frontiers'

Eastern  
Watersheds.

are the Lebombo mountains. This range runs, from north to south, parallel with the Drakensberg. The valleys lying between these two great watersheds are those of the southern Zoutpansberg and of the Lydenburg lowlands, of De Kaap, and of Swaziland. These valleys are bounded on the north by the Olifants river. Rising on the High Veld south-west of Lake Chrissie, this large river flows, first, to the north, past New Scotland, and across the Middelburg plateaux; then, further northwards still, through part of Lydenburg as far as the slopes of the Woodbush ranges; and then sweeps eastwards through the gorges in the northern Drakensberg, and onwards across the southern Zoutpansberg valleys (receiving the Silati, Letaba, and other tributaries), through the Lebombo mountains to the Limpopo. On the south, the country between the watersheds is bounded by the Pongola. The sources of this river are on the southern Drakensberg watershed. Flowing eastwards and north-eastwards, the Pongola forms the boundary line between Swaziland and Zululand, and joins the Maputa. Of the other streams originating on the Drakensberg Hooge Veld watershed and penetrating the Lebombo range in their eastward course to the Indian Ocean (through Delagoa Bay), the chief are the Maputa or Usutu (with its sources a little to the east of Lake Chrissie, and receiving on its eastward course the Pongola), and the Komati, which springs from the high watershed a little north of Lake Chrissie, flows northwards, then north-eastwards, then eastwards, and, finally, southwards to Delagoa Bay, receiving as tributaries the Crocodile

Eastern  
Rivers.

(with the Kaap river) and the Sabie. The Tembe has its sources in the Lebombo mountains, and flows north-eastwards into Delagoa Bay. The White and Black Swaziland Umveloosi rise in the mountains of Swaziland, flow north-eastwards, penetrate the Lebombo mountain chain, receive the Matala tributary, and then also pour their waters into the Bay of Delagoa.

Lydenburg is, in many parts of its territory, a land of high mountains, dense forests, deep valleys, and great rivers. But, like all the north-eastern part of the Transvaal, it is not a very healthy country. Malaria, of the hæmorrhagic type, is met with in a fatal form in some of the valleys of this district, as well as in the Zoutpansberg lowlands.

Different  
Climates of  
Transvaal.

The Transvaal, a country not as large as France, has within its borders nearly all the climates of the world. While the snowflakes are falling on the High Veld, and the cold is so intense that the traveller finds the heaviest European winter clothing acceptable, the hunters seek the shade of the forest-groves on the banks of the Limpopo, where gaudy-coloured paroquets, brightly-tinted humming-birds, scaly-coated alligators, swiftly-gliding lizards, and the vegetation of the tropics, testify to the influence and the enduring presence of noonday heat and fierce African sunlight. The Kaffir herdsman on the Middelburg plateau, or on the Gatsrand, sits, shivering, and wrapped in his thick skin kaross, by the blaze of his camp fire, to keep warmth in his bones while the snowstorm is raging around him. His northern kinsman, naked and perspiring, treads the winding jungle path in the limitless



forest of the Zoutpansberg. The dense foliage of the trees shuts out the fierce rays of the blazing sun, so that, for days in succession, as he walks in the shadows and almost in darkness, he receives some protection from the tropical heat which glows in the skies overhead.

The mineral wealth of the country is famous all the world over. Its plant life is as abundant, and the vegetable products of its soil are as various and as manifold, at the present day, as they were in 1834. But many of its animals have become extinct. The trumpeting of the herds of elephants, which inhabited the forest glades, no longer resound through the land. The African mammoth has vanished before the rifle of the hunter. So have—excepting in some limited areas—the lions, which were formerly met with in nearly every part of the country. The giraffe, also, is gone. So is the rhinoceros. From the deep pools of the rivers the hippopotamus has disappeared. On the plains one no longer sees the thousands of spring-bok which were there in 1834. The wildebeest, the quagga, and the zebra, are now rare specimens of zoology, only to be met with in some few secluded spots. So are the eland and koodoo. All other antelopes are getting scarce. The game is rapidly dying out. Where, at the time when the Emigrants first entered the country, all the varieties above-named wandered about in such numbers that they could not be counted, the shrill whistle of the railway engine and the din and noise of mining machinery now rouse the echoes of this great land of wonders.

Minerals,  
Plants, and  
Animals.

Natal.

East of the high ranges of the Drakensberg, the land descends by a series of plateaux and terraces to the Indian Ocean, towards which flow the rivers:—the Tugela (with its tributaries), the Umvoti, the Umgeni, the Umlazi, the Umkomanzi, the Umzimkulu, and the Umzimvubu. The last mentioned, though not now classed with the rivers of Natal, was the frontier stream at the time of the Great Trek. The main watershed of Natal is the giant Kathlamba or Drakensberg range, which skirts its western frontiers. From the northern end of this great mountain range, where the summits are some six and seven thousand feet high, springs the Umzinyati or Buffalo river, one of the main tributaries of the Tugela. The sources of the Tugela itself are on the Mont-aux-Sources, in the central part of the range, at an elevation of ten thousand feet. Further south among the Drakensberg summits is the Giant's Cup, over eight thousand eight hundred feet above the level of the sea. On the north and east side of the peaks in this neighbourhood are the sources of the Klein Tugela, Bushman's river, and Mooi, tributary streams of the Tugela. The Umkomanzi river, which flows eastwards to the Indian Ocean, also has its origin east of the Giant's Cup. Still further south on the Kathlamba watershed are the head waters of the Umzimkulu and the Umzimvubu.

Watersheds.

In the triangular-shaped area of country lying between the great western frontier watershed, the Upper Tugela, and the Buffalo or Umzinyati, is a range of mountains running almost due east, at right angles to the Drakensbergen. This is the Biggarsberg. It forms

the watershed between the basins of the Buffalo and Upper Tugela rivers. From its northern slopes flow the Ingagan and its tributaries, and the Zand Spruit. On its southern side are the feeders of the Sunday's River.

Besides this Biggarsberg range, Natal has other secondary watersheds. One of the most important of these is that mountain terrace which runs north-eastwards from the Giant's Castle summit of Kathlamba to near the village of Greytown. It is the watershed between the Indian Ocean and the Upper Tugela basin. Along its eastern slopes descend the rivers Umvoti, Umgeni, Umlazi, and Umkomanzi. Some of the summits on this mountainous ground, such as the Spion Kop, are over six thousand feet in height.

Mountains and Rivers.

Nearly all the country lying between the Drakensberg range and the coast region is mountainous. The series of terraces slope gradually downward towards the east. The view from the Drakensberg passes is that of an apparently unbroken expanse of hill tops and intervening valleys grouped close together. As the coast is approached, more level country is met with.

When the Emigrants first came to Natal, there were dense forests along the principal rivers near the points where they flow into the Indian Ocean. Large game, and especially elephants, were abundant in this bush country to the east.

The Pongola river, on the north, the Tugela, on the south, formed the boundaries of Zululand proper in those days. As to the southern frontier, it was then

Zululand.

Old Frontier  
Line.

represented by the river Tugela throughout the entire course of that stream. Not merely along the Lower Tugela (from the point of junction of the Buffalo with the Tugela), but all the way from the source of the river to the sea, along the banks of the Upper Tugela as well as the Lower, ran the boundary line of that time; so that the triangular shaped portion of the present Colony of Natal which lies between the Drakensberg, the Upper Tugela, and the Buffalo, was then part of Zululand proper.

The two other principal rivers of Zululand are the White and Black Umveloosi, which, flowing eastward towards the Indian Ocean, unite into one stream, before mingling their waters with those of the great St. Lucia Bay.

Rivers and  
Mountains.

Much of the country lying between the Tugela and the White Umveloosi is level, grassy plain, but the northern portion of Zululand, between the Black Umveloosi and the Pongola, is mountainous, broken country. There are numerous caves in the mountains, and part of this region is well wooded. While the coasts of Zululand are low and sandy, the western frontiers are bounded by a barrier of lofty mountains. The spurs and extensions of the northward prolongation of the Kathlamba range make the scenery here wild and picturesque.

Native  
Population of  
the Countries to  
the North of the  
Orange and  
Vaal Rivers, and  
in Natal, at the  
time of the  
Great Emigra-  
tion from Cape  
Colony.

What is now the Orange Free State Republic, that is, the country lying between the Orange and Vaal Rivers, was, at the time with which we are dealing, very thinly populated. Of the original Bushmen and Hottentot inhabitants there were only remnants left. The few

miserable survivors of the Bushmen race that remained were to be found only dwelling among rocks and in holes in the ground, hiding from their exterminators and destroyers, the Griquas or Bastards.

A remnant of the Hottentot tribes formerly in occupation of the country were the Korannas, located along the Vaal river, in the north-western corner of the territory. These people claimed their name from Kora, the Hottentot chief from whom Van Riebeeck had bartered the first land which was obtained for a settlement on Table Bay by the Dutch East India Company.

The Griquas or Bastards dwelt along the lower or The Griquas. western part of the Orange river, that is, in the south and south-west of the present Orange Free State. They were the descendants of the Cherigriquois or Grigriquois (one of the original Hottentot tribes of the south) and of the mixed offspring of Europeans and Hottentots. The region of the Orange river along which their principal kraals were situated was that stretching from Bethulie to Ramah. The small tribes in this district were under the rule of a chief named Adam Kok, who had established his capital at Philippolis, in 1827. This name was given to the new kraal in honour of the Rev. Dr. Philip, the celebrated apostle of the Aborigines Protection Society. Immediately before founding this township of Philippolis, Adam Kok and his ruffians had murdered all the Bushmen dwelling around a mission-station which had previously been established at the place by the Rev. Abraham Faure of Cape Town.

To the north-east, between the Caledon and the sources of the Vet River, there were also clans of Bastards under Carolus Baatje, Pieter Davids, and Gerrit Taaibosch.

**The Barolongs.** Close to these Griquas were the Barolongs, a mere remnant of a Kaffir tribe, whose headquarters were at Thaba 'N Chu. Their chief was Moroko. Matchawe, Tawane, and Gontse were other Barolong chiefs, ruling over small remnants of their nation which had migrated from the north.

**Basutos.** Near the site of the present town of Winburg was a Basuto (Bataung) tribe under the chieftainship of Makwana. They claimed all the country between the Vet and Vaal rivers as their original property; but they were living in great dread of the Matabele, who were frequently making incursions into the district to the south of the Vaal.

In Basutoland, the chief, Moshesh, was then beginning to build up his power on the mountain stronghold of Thaba Bosigo, although his nation was not yet of much importance.

Sikonyella was another Basuto chief. His tribe was a relatively powerful clan located on the head waters of the Caledon river. Further down the stream was Molitsani's kraal at Imperani.

To the north of the Vaal river, all other tribes dwelt in awe and fear of the great Matabele nation. But all these other tribes were mere remnants. The Amatabele occupied the western part of what is now the South African Republic. From Thaba 'N Chu to Mosega (Umsiligaas' southernmost kraal), the country was

entirely uninhabited. Large portions of the modern The Wilderness. districts of Marico, Potchefstroom, Heidelberg, and Pretoria were desolate and without living inhabitants. Skeletons and huge heaps of bones, bleached white by the fierce African sun, lay among the ruined kraals, where the merciless Matabele warriors had passed over the land on their way to the west, and where, in many parts, they had been preceded by Mantatee raiders.

In the Zoutpansberg district were various small Northern Bapedi. Bapedi (Basuto) and other Kaffir tribes, none of them powerful.

North of the Pongola, the Swazis were maintaining Swazis. their independence against the Zulus. To the east of the Drakensbergen, Natal was as desolate and unpeopled as the southern and central Transvaal. It had been Kaffirs of Natal. ravaged and devastated by the armies of Chaka and Dingaan, and by the hordes of savage nations which the regiments of the former had driven southward across the Tugela. Only about five or six thousand of the former inhabitants of the country were left alive. They were in hiding in the woods and mountains.

From Zululand had come the devastating tide of conquest which had swept southward over Natal and westward over the Drakensberg, across the Orange River Plains and Transvaal. All the history of the soil on which the three Republics arose is so intimately associated with that of Zululand, that it will be as well Zululand in the Days of Chaka. here to take a glance at the country which lies to the north of the river Tugela, briefly to sketch the origin of the Zulu nation as a military Power, and to trace the

main outlines of the career of invasion and conquest on which the founder of that Power launched his armies.

The various tribes and nationalities which collectively form the great Kaffir or Abantu race are, for purposes of classification and convenient description, divided into the following five main groups or nations:—The Zulus, the Pondos, the Kosas, the Basutos, and the Bechuanas.\*

Classification  
of Kaffir  
Nations.

Origin of the  
Zulu Nation.

About the year 1780, the first-named of these great divisions was a very insignificant little tribe, which dwelt along the White Umveloosi river. Around this region—the cradle of the race—as far as the Pongola, on the north, and the Tugela, to the south, were then located the other Kaffir tribes which were afterwards, by amalgamation and conquest, incorporated with the nucleus clan to form one nation. The chief who had ruled over the tribe was called Ensensengakona or Senzangaka, and one of his wives was Umandie, the daughter of Dingiswayo, the chief of the Amatetwa, whose country lay to the north, along the Pongola river. Ensensengakona and his people were subject and tributary to Dingiswayo. According to a cruel custom prevalent among many of the Kaffir tribes, some of his sons were ordered to be put to death, so that they

\* This classification, though it will serve in a work which, as this does, concerns itself mainly with the history of an European, and not of a Native section of the population of South Africa, does not pretend to be either complete or strictly scientific. The groups or nations of Kaffirs above named are those with which the story of the Emigrants and their Republic is most intimately associated. The Matabele are practically the same nation as the Zulus. The Swazis belong to the same group. The Bacas and the Natal Kaffirs form a group by themselves.



should not become his rivals in after years. But Ummandie concealed her son, whom she named Chaka <sup>Chaka.</sup> (the Avenger, or the Firebrand), and placed him under the protection of her father in the country of her own people on the banks of the Pongola. Here the young chief grew up, became a soldier, and soon a distinguished leader or *Induna* in the army of his grandfather. Dingiswayo had been taught, probably by European advisers, the division of his army into regiments. It was Chaka who devised the Zulu battle formation of the circle columns, and who introduced the heavy, long-bladed, stabbing assegai as the principal weapon of his soldiers. When Ensensengakona died, Chaka was brought back by the Indunas, to reign over the tribe and the death of his grandfather, Dingiswayo, soon after, gave him the succession to the rule of the Amatetwa nation, which he then amalgamated with the Zulus. A shipwrecked white sailor, who was picked up on the coast, told him of the career of Napoleon, and it is said that the stranded mariner's narrative inspired the savage chief with martial ardour to emulate the European conqueror's achievements on the battlefield. \*

Chaka began to reign about 1812. He was ambitious, and had the talent for organising. The military system which he founded made the Zulu name dreaded and his armies invincible in all the country round about. To the north, as far as Delagoa Bay, southward, as far as Pondoland, and eastward, into and beyond the Drakensbergen, went the conquering Impis of the new nation. And as Chaka conquered other nations, he

Chaka's own  
Declaration of  
Policy.

\* Cornwallis Harris.

**Amalgamation.** amalgamated them with his own. He declared that his policy was "to subdue, but not to destroy." This must be taken to mean not to destroy entirely. The men capable of bearing arms, the old men, as well as the older women, were killed. Young women and children were spared. African conquerors before the time of Chaka had perhaps never incorporated their own people with the vanquished tribes to the same extent as the Zulus now did. Chaka understood how to effect this. He has been termed the Attila of Africa. There is no gainsaying the fact that, according to civilised ideas, he was a cruel and merciless exterminator; but not more so than other African potentates before and after his time. It seems more than probable, indeed, that he was an improvement on the usual type. In the declaration of his policy as above quoted can be seen at least the consciousness in his own mind that he was more merciful than others had been. By his conquests he made the Zulu nation. For every succeeding victory over a neighbouring tribe meant an accession of strength to the conquerors. The younger women of the conquered tribes were taken as wives by those Zulu warriors who had attained the age at which they were permitted to marry (after having distinguished themselves in battle), and by the chiefs. The boys were trained in the military schools, and became warriors with rights and privileges equal to those of their conquerors, whose language and nationality they now adopted. Every man in the new nation was a soldier. The right to marry—to take wives from among the maidens of the tribes subdued by the armies in the

field—and promotion to high military posts, and to places of honour in the councils of the nation, were the King's rewards for deeds of valour and daring on the battlefield. The captured girls, as they grew up, became the wives of distinguished chiefs. Every captive, therefore, whether male or female, instead of sinking to the degradation of a slave, became an integral factor of the state, and soon an enthusiastic fellow-citizen, sharing in the glory and partaking of the ambition of the great Zulu nation which was created by Chaka. He could not stamp out cruelty: he could not teach mercy among his followers, even had he been inclined to do so. The fierce savagery of the Kaffir races which he welded into one was the necessary accompaniment of bravery in the elementary state of civilisation which he found around him. The forces which he had at his disposal were all fashioned and framed for the development of militarism, and for the encouragement of the study of the arts of war. Chaka had the genius necessary to use these forces in the elaboration of a scheme of administration and of a military system, which, for the age and the surroundings in which he lived, came as near being perfect as the circumstances permitted. He was not only the cruel despot, the tyrant, the destroyer, but also the organiser and nation-builder *par excellence*. He was, perhaps, just as much the Alexander as he was the Attila of the world in which he existed. The terror of his invincible name among the tribes which attempted to make a stand against his armies was so great, that, as the vanquished nations betook themselves to flight through the mountain defiles to the west, and into the

Chaka the  
Nation Builder.

forest fastnesses to the south-west, they carried with them panic-stricken reports of the vast numbers of victims who were being slain by the Zulu assegais. The missionary chronicles say that it is estimated that no less than a million human beings fell in Chaka's wars in the space of ten years. The data on which this estimate is based are not very evident. The numbers of the slain must necessarily have been very large. The conquered nations brought into the field armies less skilfully led, less skilfully disciplined, and less efficiently armed than the invaders. The Zulu battle formation of the circle columns was not only an invincible antagonist, but also a veritable death-trap, from which escape was almost impossible. In the earlier struggle for dominion between the contending armies, the slaughter must have been great, even among the Zulus themselves; for where large numbers were opposed to them, Chaka's generals, in executing the manœuvres which were necessary to draw their forces in a circle round the enemy, were probably successful only because they commanded troops who despised danger and were not afraid to sacrifice themselves in large numbers. A new nation's enthusiasm, and the spirit of discipline and faith in their leaders, made the Zulu armies capable of facing enormous odds, and of willingly submitting to great losses in men, in order to ensure a crushing victory over the enemy, who found that they had to encounter not only new tactics in warfare, but also men inspired by a fanatical rage for conquest to deeds of incredible heroism and valour.

Considerations  
as to the Usual  
Estimate of  
Chaka's  
Character.

It was, as already stated, part of Chaka's policy and

system of nation-building to provide for the losses which his armies sustained in battle by sparing those among the vanquished who could be absorbed and amalgamated with the conquering people. Even Mephistopheles himself is not, perhaps, quite as black as the chronicles of the monks have painted him. And, who knows? Perhaps he is without the cruel horns. The character of Chaka, as depicted by some South African missionary writers, is possibly overdrawn. Enough has already been said to show that it is necessary for us, before we take upon ourselves to sit in judgment on this savage, to remember that he was a savage, and to measure him by standards other than those of the civilised 19th century. It is difficult at this time to sift evidence as to events which happened in what was a remote corner of the world, so remote indeed that there were no witnesses except those who, quite naturally, were prejudiced against the conqueror. The picture of Chaka, as we find it in some of the missionary records, is drawn from descriptions given by his enemies, and is certainly not altogether reliable. For instance, it has been repeated by one writer after another that Chaka put to death his own mother, Umnandie (the daughter of Dingiswayo) who had saved his life by concealing him in infancy, when his father, Senzangaka, wished to kill him. But the Rev. Mr. Döhne, who has, perhaps, had as much experience among the Zulus as any other missionary, and who knows Zulu history well, states that this is untrue; that, on the contrary, Chaka always showed great esteem and affection for his

mother; that she died a natural death; that her son was overcome with grief at losing her, and that thousands of Zulus put themselves to death, to prove their affection for their Chief, and their sympathy with him in the loss which he had sustained. The chroniclers have it that these thousands of Zulus were put to death by Chaka, because they did not mourn for the mother, whom, according to the usual missionary version, he had himself murdered. Thousands of cows, also, say these missionary writers, were killed by order of the Chief, so that their calves should die when left without sustenance. This refinement of cruelty was supposed to be meant to teach even the dumb animals what it was "to lose a mother."

To deny that Chaka was cruel would be to deny that he was a brave Abantu warrior; for bravery and cruelty go together among the Kaffir races. That he was altogether merciless is untrue. The very history of the origin of the Zulu nation—by amalgamation and absorption of those who were spared in war—disproves the assertion. It is also disproved by the direct evidence of Europeans who settled in Natal.

Chaka's  
Invasion of  
Natal.

In the years 1819, 1820, and 1821, Chaka's armies had overrun that country. There had previously been a dense population in Natal. The tribes there were destroyed and exterminated, not by Chaka, but by invading nations to the north of the Tugela. These nations had been routed by the Zulu armies, and all their fighting forces now swept over the country, slaughtering the inhabitants and driving those who survived beyond the mountain passes to the west, and over the river

Umzimvubu to the south. It was the object of these devastating Kaffir nations to place a desert between themselves and the legions of the great Zulu conqueror, whose power they dreaded. They slaughtered without mercy. The tribes escaping utter extermination were swept off before the invading hordes, which, after The Raiders. vanquishing all before them in Natal, poured through the Drakensberg passes, and burst on the numerous other Kaffir tribes then inhabiting the country which is now the Harrismith district of the Free State. Here, also, and on the head waters of the Caledon river, there was fearful slaughter. As the invaders advanced further westward, they probably received considerable reinforcements from the ranks of tribes which they had already subdued; for all Kaffirs are hero- and magic-worshippers, and in the eyes of the Abantu, every conqueror, however cruel, is a hero and a magician. In 1822, the invading torrent had reached the north-western part of Basutoland and the upper waters of the Caledon river basin. All that country, also, the lands from there northwards to the Vaal, and the regions beyond that river, were then densely populated by other Kaffir tribes, who were driven northward by the invaders. As tribe after tribe was deprived of its own territory, it became in its turn an invading host, which attacked its neighbours to the north, and dislodged them from their country. Thus a great stream of marauders and raiders swept onwards to the north. Tribe after tribe was pushed northward by the destructive avalanche of fierce warriors, and, as the different tribes were set in motion, they slaughtered

and drove before them others in the country further to the north. In the basin of the Vaal river all the migrating and invading tribes became amalgamated under a chieftainess of one of the clans.

The Mantatees.

This woman was called Ma 'Ntatisi. The new nation was called after her, Mantatees, or Matatees (afterwards corrupted into Makatees). North of the Vaal, the Mantatees massacred and destroyed all the tribes which they found in occupation of the country. It is supposed that twenty-eight or thirty different Kaffir tribes were exterminated by the invaders before their great defeat by Makaba's Bangwaketsi. One remnant of Ma 'Ntatisi's nation, the Makololo, went northwards into the Zambesi basin. Others were scattered over various parts of the Transvaal, as small marauding clans; and still others found their way to Basutoland and some parts of the Orange River country.

Those refugee tribes from Natal who went southwards and crossed the Umzinvubu, settled in the country to the north-east of the Kei, and became known as the Fingoes. When Chaka's armies entered Natal, that land was already desolated, and its former inhabitants had been driven away or destroyed.

Now, as to the evidence of those Europeans who were settled in Natal, concerning Chaka's dealings with the natives there. In 1824, Messrs. Fynn and Farewell had sailed from Cape Town in the brig *Antelope*. Their destination was Natal; their purpose to form an establishment to carry on trade with the Natives. In the previous year, Mr. Farewell had already visited the Bay of Natal, and had traded



northwards along the coast, as far as the St. Lucia Bay. He had formerly been a lieutenant in the British Navy. In the trading expedition of 1823, there had been associated with him Mr. King, an ex-midshipman, and Mr. Thomson, a Cape Town merchant.

Some two dozen individuals took part in the second venture. They owned, in addition to the brig *Antelope*, a small vessel called the *Julia*. In September, 1824, nine of them withdrew from the enterprise, and left Natal in one of the ships, which was lost soon afterwards. In July, Farewell, Fynn, Pietersen, and others, visited the Zulu King at his kraal, Dukusa, in the Umvoti district. Fynn, who was the son of an innkeeper in Cape Town, remained at the kraal for some time after the others returned to the Bay. An attempt having been made to assassinate the Chief while he was taking part in the national war-dance, Fynn offered his services in dressing the wound. Farewell sent him some ointment and lotion, and his rough surgery was successful in effecting a complete cure. Chaka was very grateful. When Farewell, Henry Ogle, and three others, came to his kraal to congratulate him on his escape, they were very well received. A strip of territory, extending twenty-five miles to the north-east, and ten miles to the south-west of the harbour, and with its inland boundary a hundred miles from the sea, was granted to them. In this district, they were to have full liberty to establish a settlement, and to exercise the jurisdiction of chiefs tributary to Chaka. Fynn was one of those White Chiefs. who exercised such jurisdiction, and he relates ("Travels

and Adventures in Eastern Africa," by Nathaniel Isaacs), how, finding about four or five hundred natives —the remnants of the Kolo tribe, who formerly owned all the country between the rivers Umzinkulu and Umtentu—wandering about the territory in which their nation were once rulers and now reduced to want and destitution, he put their case before the King, and was allowed to collect them together, Chaka himself not only sending grain and cattle to feed the outcasts, but also restoring to them in their own land their former Chief, Umbambe, who had been a soldier in the Zulu army. This narrative proves that the Alexander of Zululand was not only a military genius, but that there was in his character at least a certain element of generosity—that he, sometimes, showed mercy to the vanquished.

When Lieutenant Farewell, Mr. Fynn, and the other adventurers from Cape Town established themselves in Natal, the power of Chaka was at its height. In the short space of twelve years, he had succeeded in blending together a great many tribes into one vast and powerful nation, holding sway over an immense tract of country. His southern frontier was now at the Umzinkulu river. Northwards, he ruled as far as Delagoa Bay, and the western border of his territory was at the Drakensberg range. During his career of conquest, he had, however, made many enemies. Some of his Indunas were almost as ambitious as the great Chief himself. One of these generals, Umsiligaas or Moselikatse—carrying an entire army with him in revolt, and himself com-

The Kolo Tribe.

Extent of  
Chaka's Empire

Umsiligaas.

mencing a policy of conquest and some slight degree of amalgamation with the conquered tribes to form a new nation—had succeeded in founding a separate empire far to the westward of the mountains.

He was the son of Machobane, a Chief whose head kraal, Umtsila, had been situated three days' journey to the northward of Chaka's capital. When the future conqueror of the Transvaal regions was a mere lad, his father was defeated in war, by a neighbouring Kaffir Chief, and his town destroyed. The young Chief fled southwards. Chaka received him hospitably, was kind to him, and placed him in the Zulu army, where he soon distinguished himself, and became a great Induna. Leading the conquering regiments of his Chief, Umsiligaas now undertook several expeditions against tribes dwelling at some distance from the central parts of Zululand. In one of these forays, he took a large number of cattle. Instead of sending all the booty to the King, he retained some of it for himself and his officers. Through this offence against the laws of the nation, Umsiligaas incurred the penalty of death; for his conduct was tantamount to rebellion and defiance of the King, who now sent an army to destroy him. Warned of his danger and supported by his own impi, Umsiligaas advanced far beyond the mountains into the Transvaal, slaughtering the tribes which were found in occupation of the country as he went westwards. All the regions between the Vaal river, in the south, and the point of junction of the Mariqua and the Limpopo, in the north, were then densely peopled by the Bakonas, Makoras, Matchaquans, Bahurutsi, and other tribes, the

Origin of the  
Matabele  
Nation.

remnants of which afterwards took to the mountains and joined the northern Bapedi. Further to the north and to the east, the country had already been swept by the invading tide of the Mantatees in 1822, and thousands upon thousands of Kaffirs belonging to various tribes—some twenty-five or thirty in all—had been slaughtered, till all those clans had nearly entirely disappeared. The crops and the kraals had been burnt, and no mercy had been shown to the unfortunate inhabitants. The few who were left soon disappeared before the fierce Matabele\* hosts, who then passed on towards the thickly populated Marico district, which they converted into a very charnel house of slaughter, butchering all the native tribes above mentioned, and making the country as desolate as that which had been overrun by the Mantatees. About the year 1827, if we except the eight or ten thousand Matabele warriors (and their women and children) in what are now the Marico and part of Rustenburg and Pretoria districts, all the Transvaal was almost entirely without inhabitants; for even the Zoutpansberg district was so thinly populated as to be practically unoccupied and desolate. The different nations on the confines of Chaka's dominions harboured many political refugees and many enemies of the Chief. The mountain recesses and forest depths within his vast territories sheltered and concealed others, who were ready to watch their opportunity for insurrection or revolt. In 1824, as we have already seen, an attempt was made to assassinate the Zulu king.

The Slaughter  
in the Western  
Transvaal.

\* Amandabele, Amatabele, or Matabili. All these were names used to designate this off-shoot from the Zulu nation.

It failed, but Chaka began to perceive that his conquests and his successes had been so numerous, and had followed each other so rapidly, as to make his position somewhat insecure. The vast nation which he had created in such a short space of time was composed of such heterogeneous elements, that it became necessary for him to be constantly organising warlike expeditions, in order to satisfy the people's craving for conquest and dominion, the common bond which united all who owned his sceptre's sway. In the early years of his reign, war had always been called for, in order that, by fresh conquests and the subsequent absorbing process, the numbers of the nation might be increased: now, he found war necessary, to give employment to the turbulent spirits and the mighty ambitions which would, in time of peace, threaten to engage in factious intrigues, and, perhaps, in conspiracy.

In the tract of country in which Chaka had allowed the white traders to establish a settlement, and in the surrounding parts of Natal, there were then some five thousand natives, the remnants of conquered tribes, Kaffirs who were living there by permission of the King, and who owned the chieftainship of Mr. Fynn and the other European settlers. These White Chiefs all acknowledged the sovereignty of the Zulu Chief, and paid tribute to him in the shape of occasional presents in money, for which they received gifts of grain or cattle in return. The King never showed any hostility to the White people. On the contrary, he was always pleased to see them, and grateful for Farewell and Fynn's surgical skill and kindness to him when

Attitude of the  
Zulu Chief  
towards White  
People.

wounded by the assassin. But he did not allow free trade with the Natives in his dominions. His permission had to be obtained for every commercial transaction between the White people and any of his subjects.

In 1828, Mr. King, the ex-midshipman, who had in the meantime been on a voyage to England, and had returned to Natal in a small ship (*The Mary*) in company with Mr. Nathaniel Isaacs (an Israelite traveller, who subsequently wrote a very readable book on Natal and its productions), asked permission of the King to take some of the Indunas, or Councillors, and proceed with them to the Cape Colony on a mission to the Government. Chaka readily gave his consent, and the expedition started and went by sea to Algoa Bay. The Colonial authorities, however, refused to receive Mr. King as Chaka's Ambassador, and the Indunas could not state their Chief's intentions in sending the embassy. They were taken back in a British warship. Chaka then despatched a party of Zulu Chiefs, with John Caue as guide and interpreter, to convey the King's compliments to the Governor, and to thank the Colonial Officials for their courtesy to the previous mission. These messengers travelled overland, and did not reach Cape Town till November, 1828. Meanwhile, in July, 1828, Chaka himself, with an invading army, marched southward towards the country of the Tembu and Kosa tribes, the modern Pondoland, *i.e.*, the country to the south of the Umzimvubu river. He had previously determined to conquer that territory, and his conciliatory messages to the Governor at Cape Town were

Chaka's Mission  
to the Colony.

Invasion of  
Pondoland.

intended to reassure the authorities there that no hostile designs were entertained against any of the tribes within the Colonial boundaries. Or, perhaps, the Zulu monarch wished to temporise—as Kaffirs do—and find out what attitude the Governor would take up in the matter.

Stationing one regiment, of which he himself took command, on the Umzimkulu, Chaka ordered his generals with the main army to cross the Umzimvubu and overrun the country to the south. This was done without any opposition whatever. The invading army marched as far southward as the Bashee; then the Chief recalled them, as he had ascertained from Mr. Fynn that the Colonial authorities would protect the Tembus and Amakosas. The regiments were now ordered northwards, where hostilities were intended against one of the tribes on the Delagoa Bay. There the hitherto invincible Zulu army suffered great disasters. The deadly climate carried off large numbers—thousands, it is said. The remnants of the impi were retreating southwards through an inhospitable country, suffering from famine and sickness, when, on 23rd September, 1828, Chaka was assassinated at Dukusa by his half-brother Dingaan. This Chief, the son of Ensensengakona by the head wife or queen, was, according to Kaffir court etiquette, the rightful successor to the sovereignty, being, although younger in years than Chaka, his superior in rank. Notwithstanding this risky relationship, Dingaan's life had been spared by his brother, who had had the rival completely in his power. This forbearance on the part of the despot is another

Expedition to  
Delagoa Bay.

Dingaan's  
Conspiracy.

Assassination of  
Chaka.

fact to disprove the assertions of the missionaries as to Chaka's relentless cruelty. Umthlangana, another half-brother,\* had also been left alive, and had now joined Dingaan's conspiracy with Umbopa, Chaka's trusted servant. Suspecting no harm, the Chief saw his brothers approach. When Dingaan struck him, he fell, and was then killed by Umbopa. According to Zulu custom, his body was left exposed where he had been slain. Next day, however, fear and awe took possession of some of the conspirators. They saw before them the dead body of their late Chief, untouched by the wild dogs of the plain—the animals which they had expected to devour it. Their superstitious nature made them see in this fact a proof of the divinity of their sovereign's spirit, even when his body was cold in death. They had struck down the founder of their nation. They had killed a god. To appease the divinity, they buried the corpse at the spot where the murder had been committed, and Chaka the Conqueror's grave is now in one of the "*erven*" of the village of Stanger on the Umvoti.

Dingaan did not at once receive the support of the

\* Ensensengakona was, we are told, such a monster, that he was in the habit of having his children put to death, Chaka being fortunate enough to escape that fate through the loving tenderness and care of his mother, Umnandie. By no means altogether confirmatory of the first part of this missionary narrative is the fact that we meet with half-brothers of Chaka on several successive pages of Zulu history. None of these chiefs, who apparently all managed to grow up to manhood in spite of the cruel father's murderous decrees, can truthfully be said to have proved by their career in after-life that their nation and the world would have been the poorer for their death had they been strangled in infancy. The entire brood was viperine.



entire nation. A powerful section, led by some of Chaka's old Indunas and another son of Sensengakona, defied the usurper on the battlefield. A sanguinary civil war was the result. Umthlangana, that brother of Dingaan's who had assisted him in the conspiracy against Chaka, was, in his turn, murdered by the new King. In the internecine strife which now ravaged the Zulu dominions, the most faithful adherents of the murdered King were the strongest supporters of Dingaan's living rivals. The struggle was fierce while it lasted; but the party in power with the new ruler had the advantage in numbers. Entire kraals were exterminated, no quarter was given by Dingaan's partisans. Those of their opponents who disdained to seek safety in flight were massacred in large numbers after having been surrounded in the field. But many retired beyond the Drakensberg mountains, to join Umsiligaas, while a large army crossed the Umzimvubu and made havoc among the Tembus and Kosas. These invaders of Pondoland were under the leadership of a chief named Keto. They called themselves the Anakwabi.

Murder of  
Umthlangana  
by Dinguan

Civil War.

Dingaan was now master of the situation, and no one who had opposed him was spared.

"The favourites of Tshaka," says Theal, "were the ablest men in the country, for that chief appreciated talent in his officers, and even had sufficient magnanimity to spare the men of rank in clans that sought incorporation with the Zulu tribe. Most of these were murdered by order of Dingan. Tshaka delighted in a display of force, Dingan in gaining his ends by treachery. The devastations of the latter were trifling

in comparison with those of the former, only because there was so little left within his reach to destroy."

Dukusa no longer suited Dingaan as a residence. He there heard the voice and saw the face of his great brother—the Father of the Nation—whom he had murdered. He selected the basin of the White Umveloosi for his residence, and on that river he now built his chief kraal. Chaka used to be called *Umhlovu* (the Elephant) by his soldiers, who had idolised him as the type of manly strength and power—the Strongest of the Strong; and his head kraal at Dukusa was often spoken of as *Umkungunhlovu* (the Circle around the Elephant). When this name is now used by historians, it invariably refers to Dingaan's regimental town and residence on the White Umveloosi. But this place was named after Chaka's old capital. Dingaan was a crafty, treacherous chief. His great ambition was to be considered as mighty and as strong as his brother Chaka. In adopting for his new residence the name by which the royal kraal at Dukusa had been known among the Zulus of the old stock, he at the same time paid himself a compliment. He was now the *Umhlovu*. The appellation of the new town on the White Umveloosi river announced to the nation: "Let it be known to all. The mighty Elephant is dead. The Elephant who has killed him is stronger and mightier than he was."

The Slayer of  
the *Umhlovu*.

The New Kraal.

*Umkungunhlovu* was built on the right bank of the White Umveloosi, on a wide stretch of plain sloping gradually downward towards the river from the surrounding hills. There are a good many mountains,

some of considerable altitude, in the immediate neighbourhood.

On the crest of the range of hills at the back of the town, and presenting a steep precipice towards one side, was the eminence called Chlooma Amaboota. This was the place of execution, and the scene of Dingaan's triumphs over his enemies, or those whom he supposed to be his enemies. Chaka, the Conqueror, had crushed all the surrounding nations by the great military power which he had created. He was a cruel, savage despot; but his character was not without its redeeming features. As to Dingaan, he knew neither mercy, magnanimity, nor generosity. Gaining his own accession to power by the murder of him who had first created and then consolidated the Zulu people, he deliberately set himself to undo the work of his brother by destroying all that was good in the new nation. All the faithful adherents of Chaka were doomed: execution followed on execution. The murderer gathered around him councillors and advisers similar to himself in habits and customs. Incompetent favourites and men of bad character were appointed to positions of trust. Tambusa and Salela, the two chief Indunas under the new régime, were brave enough on the battlefield, but both of them were possessed of as maniacal a frenzy for treacherous massacres and cruel murders as Dingaan himself. Until the Chief's downfall, not a day passed at Umkungunhlovu without an execution. William Wood, who, according to Theal, lived there "for some time when nothing unusual was taking place," says they were as frequent as fourteen per

Dingaan's Rule.

week. Dr. Andrew Smith went there on a visit in 1834, and, in his account of his journey, writes: "As characteristic of his (Dingaan's) system of proceeding, I may only mention that when I was at his kraal I saw portions of the bodies of eleven of his own wives, whom he had only a few days previously put to death, merely for having uttered words that happened to annoy him."

Dingaan had usurped the name as well as the power of the great "*Umhlovu*" whom he had murdered. His cruel nature was that of the hyæna. Chaka had gained his chief glories amid the applause of his legions on the battlefield. The vultures of the Chlooma Amaboota were the witnesses and the heralds of the new King's triumphs.

The Heralds of  
the New King.

The condition of the Orange River Plains, of the Transvaal, and of Natal, at the time of the commencement of the Great Emigration has now been roughly sketched. With a total area larger than that of France and England put together, these lands were then indeed the wilds of Africa, for they were relatively uninhabited. The conquering and scourging Zulu, Mantatee, and Matabele armies had converted these once densely populated regions into desolate solitudes.

All the fair land of Natal, with its hills and valleys, its fertile river basins, its extensive forests, and its grass-covered meadows, contained a population of only some five, six, or, at most, seven thousand natives. The broad plains and plateaux of the Orange River and Southern Transvaal territories were uninhabited except by some marauding and pillaging bands of Griqua half-breeds, some miserable half-starved remnants of Bushmen and

Hottentot (Koranna) tribes, and perhaps a couple of thousands of Barologs. In the Western Transvaal, the bones and skeletons of the thousands that had been slaughtered by the Matabele impis still lay in heaps, bleached white by sun and rain, piled up near the charred ruins of the huts and kraals, to mark the localities where nations had dwelt in former days; and the glens and forest glades contained many silent relics of the dead. Game and wild animals of every description roamed about in all directions; but the land here also remained unpeopled and uncultivated, except at the spots where the conquerors had built their great military kraals.

The Vast Solitudes of the North.

Even far north, in the Waterberg, Zoutpansberg, and Lydenburg districts, the deep and fertile valleys were as silent as the immense forests and the wild mountain ravines. The thunder of the mighty waterfalls was answered only by the echoes in the mysterious depths of the giant mountains. The voice of man was never heard. The placid waters of the great lake mirrored only the vast solitudes and the deep blue heavens overhead. Nowhere on the banks of the magnificent rivers were any kraals or native towns to be seen. The sands showed not even a single human footprint. Everywhere were solitude and desolation.

England neither possessed nor claimed any territory to the north of the Orange river. In Natal, a small colony of merchants and traders from Cape Town had, in 1824 and 1825, settled by permission of the Zulu King. The territory in which they lived was that on the Bay of Natal. It had a seaboard of twenty-five or

thirty-five miles in length, and extended inland to a distance of one hundred miles. But the country was not ceded to them. It still remained the King's ground. They had not even the right to buy anything from the Natives, or to sell anything, without the King's permission. They could live in the district assigned to them, and were given the rank of Chiefs subject to the Zulu King, whose permission to engage in any particular commercial transaction could generally be easily obtained by propitiatory presents.

The original number of these white adventurers was six. They were Lieutenant Farewell (formerly of the British Navy), Mr. Fynn, the son of a Cape Town inn-keeper, Mr. Henry Ogle, and three others. In Chaka's time they were all Chiefs. Subsequently, when their numbers had been increased to about thirty, they seem to have become somewhat tired of their savage rank and dignity, and smitten with what is still the fashionable craze among influential Britishers in South Africa—that of empire-building. They convened a public meeting and passed resolutions, calling on the Secretary of State for the Colonies to annex Natal to the British Empire, to make it a separate Colony with a Legislative Assembly elected by the people (presumably the entire white population of thirty Chiefs), and a Government and Council appointed by the Crown. This was in June, 1835. In the previous year the good folks of Cape Town, jealous as ever of their own commercial supremacy, and even then anxious to possess every possible harbour that might help to secure for them and their merchant speculators the trade of all the interior and of the regions

beyond it as far as Cairo, had also called a public meeting and passed resolutions : that Natal and its Bay should be annexed to the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and that the British Government should be requested to take steps for bringing about such an extension of the Empire in South Africa. Earl Glenelg, the then Colonial Secretary, was, however, not to be tempted. To the petition from the settlers on the Bay of Natal he replied, that " His Majesty's Government was deeply convinced of the inexpediency of engaging in any scheme of colonisation, or of acquiring any further enlargement of territory in Southern Africa."\* The representations of the Cape Town merchants were also answered by a refusal of the Home Government to sanction any annexation measure. The ground of this refusal was stated to be the expense that would be involved in any such scheme of extension of the British dominions as was suggested.

The Orange river, therefore, still marked the northern limit of England's possessions, and the Natal Chiefs, as well as their rivals, the Cape Town shop-keepers, were disappointed.

\* The date of this despatch of Lord Glenelg was 29th March, 1836. It was written, therefore, after the northward Emigration movement had commenced.

## CHAPTER XI

### WHY TO THE WILDERNESS ?

Causes of the Trek Movement—Emancipation of the Slaves not one of these—Attitude of England on the Slave Question—England's Encouragement of the Slave Trade—Proposal of Colonists to gradually Abolish Slavery—Complete Emaucipation decided on by the British Government—Inadequate Compensation—Western Districts Suffer—Eastern Frontier Districts Relatively Unaffected—Kaffir Wars—Vacillating Native Policy—Downing Street Messiahs—See-Saw—The Pioneers of the Karroo—Frontiersmen the Founders of the Republic.

The Great Trek.

THE exodus of the white inhabitants of the eastern frontier districts of Cape Colony to the countries beyond the Orange River began in 1833. In the two following years the movement was not continued, being temporarily interrupted, first, by the repeated Kaffir raids and inroads into the Colony and the generally disturbed condition of the frontiers preceding the actual outbreak of hostilities, and then, by the sixth Kaffir war. In 1836, when the contents of the famous Glenelg Despatch and the disastrous terms of peace with the Kaffirs had become known, the Great Trek was resumed, and continued on a much larger scale than previously.

What were the causes which led to this extensive emigration, to this departure of thousands of men, women, and children, who were abandoning British citizenship, home, and country, in order to encounter



all the unknown dangers of the mysterious, desolate wilderness of the north?

The abolition of slavery by the British Government has been mentioned by English writers as one of the chief, if not the chief, of these causes. Cloete, the British Commissioner to Natal, in his "Lectures on the Emigration of the Dutch Farmers," names the *Hottentot question*, the *Slave question*, and the *Kaffir question*, as the three great grievances which led to the emigration from the Colony. The works of Noble, Wilmot and Chase, Moffat, Livingstone, and others, have each done their part to make the British public believe that the liberation of the slaves by England was the chief of these grievances. One British writer after another has repeated this statement, as if it were an indisputable axiom of South African history.

Let us examine the legend, and see what amount of historic truth there is in it. To do this, we must first review the position of the South African slave question in earlier days.

Up to the year 1795, *i.e.*, while the Cape Colony was under the government of the Dutch East India Company, slaves were introduced from the West Coast of Africa. The laws of the country allowed none of the aboriginal inhabitants of South Africa—the Bushmen, the Hottentots, or the Kaffirs—to be made slaves. The Hottentots and all the other native races remained free, and their children were free. Moreover, the children of Hottentot and other native women were free, even in cases where the fathers were slaves. Not only were such children free, but the white owner of the father

LAW AS TO  
Slavery under  
the Dutch  
Government.

All South  
African Natives  
free.

had to provide for them, and to protect them, till they were old enough to look after their own interests. They could be apprenticed, but after a certain number of years they were as free as their mothers to go where they pleased and to do as they liked.\*

The position of the slaves at the Cape had always been far more favourable than in most other parts of the world. In many respects their tasks were less arduous, and their lot not more unhappy, than that of the British labourer in his own country.

Condition of  
Slaves in South  
Africa.

Indeed, some of the English Governors at the Cape have stated that the Dutch laws gave ample protection against ill-treatment and cruelty, and that the slaves in South Africa had more comfort than labourers in great Britain. (Theal: "History of South Africa")—"No portion of this community is better off, or happier, perhaps, than the domestic slave in South Africa." These words occur in a despatch from Lord Charles Somerset (Governor at Cape Town from 1814 to 1826) to Earl Bathurst, Secretary of State.

British  
Encouragement  
of Slave Trade.

In 1795, the Cape Colony was lost by the Dutch East India Company, and became a British possession. It remained so until 1802. And what do we find as to slaves? "From 1796 to 1802 more were imported than at any period of equal length before or since. The trade was then legal and profitable, and English

\* In America, and in other colonies which were British possessions during the time that the Cape belonged to Holland, the children of slave fathers by free women do not seem to have enjoyed the same liberty as Dutch law secured for the offspring of Hottentot women by slaves.

energy was directed to make the most of it." (THEAL: "History of South Africa," vol. iii. p. 407.)

Under the second Dutch Government, when the Cape was ruled by the Batavian Republic instead of the East India Company (1803-6), it was intended to introduce a law, which was already being prepared, providing that every child born in South Africa of slave parents should be free. This measure would have come into operation in a few years had the Colony not been captured by the English. Further, under the Batavian Republic no more slaves were allowed to be imported. Slavery, therefore, would have died out, and no other legislation would have been necessary.

Prohibition of  
Slave Trade  
under Batavian  
Republic.

In 1806, the Colony again became British. What happened? The prohibition of the traffic in slaves, which had been in force under the Dutch Government, was annulled, and an enterprising Cape Town merchant, Mr. Alexander Tennant, obtained permission to import 500 negroes from Mozambique. (Theal, vol. iii. p. 132.)

Importation of  
Slaves  
revived by  
England in 1806.

In 1826, the slave-owners themselves proposed that a law should be made, by which, after a certain date to be fixed by Government, all female slave children should receive their freedom. It was intended that, under the provisions of this law, when the children thus made free grew up and in their turn had children, these should all be free, boys as well as girls, even in those cases where the father was a slave (as under the conditions of the old Dutch law then still in force). As the British Government had by that time also stopped all further importation of slaves, the institution of slavery, had the proposal been accepted, would thus have been

General  
Abolition of  
Slavery Pro-  
posed by Cape  
Colonists.

gradually extinguished all over the country, and there would have been no direct money-loss to the owners.

British  
Legislation.

In Cape Town, and other towns and villages, a society was founded for the same purpose. Funds were collected among the Colonists as well as in Europe, and with those funds the Society purchased the freedom of young girls. The slow and gradual working of these methods of liberation did not, however, satisfy the philanthropists in England, who were meanwhile themselves doing nothing else for the slaves than passing, year after year, by way of preparation for the final act of emancipation, a mass of legislative enactments providing restrictions and penalties for the owners. These measures began in 1816. Many of them may have been necessary for other parts of the world: to South Africa some of them were totally inapplicable. The Colonists began to protest and to complain of the unwise and unnecessary interference of British legislators, who knew very little of Africa and of the conditions under which its Colonists found themselves placed. The Orders in Council of 1830 and 1831 laid down rules as to the food, clothes, hours of labour, recreation, etc., that should be provided for slaves. Vexatious and unnecessary restrictions were also imposed on the employers of slave labour.

Protest of  
Slave-Owners.

The Colonists had now become more and more dissatisfied and irritated at the attitude assumed by the English Government. At a public meeting held in Cape Town (17th September, 1832) about 2000 slave-owners came together and passed resolutions against further injudicious meddling and interference on the part of

the authorities. The Governor was informed by a deputation from this meeting that the owners of slaves found many of the new laws unjust, and could not obey the enactments contained in the recently issued Orders in Council.

When the news of the passing of the Emancipation Act arrived, even the slave-owners themselves felt glad that the matter had at last been settled. Emancipation was what every one desired, what the Government of the Batavian Republic had intended, and what the Colonists themselves had long since proposed and even commenced to work for. The only question at issue was as to the method of bringing it about. The British Government had now decided on emancipation *in toto*, and had voted £20,000,000 as compensation to all the owners of slaves in the different Colonies. There were about 35,000 or 36,000 slaves in the Cape Colony, and their money value was put at over £3,000,000 by appraisers appointed by the Government itself. Of the total number of 36,000 slaves, 56 per cent. were owned in The Cape and Stellenbosch (then including Paarl and Malmesbury) districts, 28 per cent. were in Worcester, Swellendam, and George districts, and 16 per cent. only in Beaufort and the eastern frontier districts of Graaff Reinet, Somerset, Albany, and Uitenhage. (THEAL.)

The slaves all over the Colony were emancipated on 1st December, 1834. But the money compensation for the owners did not arrive from England. Returns from all the different parts of the British Empire were as yet incomplete in London. There was about a

year's delay. This in itself, under the circumstances, and in the condition of South Africa at that time, was a great hardship to those whose financial interests were at stake. With the frontier districts already ruined by the frequently recurring Kaffir wars, against which the British Government had utterly failed to provide adequate protection and security, and by the repeal of the vagrancy laws; with the great losses which the Colonists had already sustained through the Government's dishonest repudiation of a very large amount of the existing paper currency in 1828; with England's broken promises and violated pledges in the minds of the ruled to testify to the unscrupulous diplomacy and unpardonable bad faith of the rulers; with nearly all the inhabitants dissatisfied with a Government and distrustful of an authority which, ever since the days when it had first seized the country, had done nothing for its people but introduce unpopular and what they regarded as unjust laws: there was then very little progress, and prosperity was absent from the affairs of all but a very few individuals. The fortunate ones were the overpaid officials. Many landowners were starving; for there were no labourers, and landed property was unsalable. Families in the older and more settled districts of the Colony, who had, in the days of the Dutch Government, been living in affluent circumstances, were already being reduced to poverty. Many of those Colonists, who had, till recently, been slave-owners, had been compelled to mortgage the money value of the slaves to banks and money-lenders. The mortgage

bonds contained stringent clauses stipulating that all other property owned was liable to be taken in security for the money. In entering into these risky transactions, the borrowers had relied on the good faith and the credit of the British Government to make good to them the full value of their liberated slaves as that value had been appraised. The protracted delay was unfair as well as inconsiderate.

It soon appeared that the authorities in England deemed fair dealing entirely unnecessary in the case, and that those who had been slave-owners required no consideration at the hands of the righteous philanthropist. Tidings came, in 1835, that one and a quarter millions was the full amount to be allotted by way of compensation to South African claimants. This meant in effect a confiscation of quite one and three-quarter millions of money, and those on whom the entire loss fell were the former slave-owners. But the above statement does not give the full amount of their loss. There was more delay—more procrastination. The mails took months to travel to South Africa in those days, and more months, therefore, passed before all the conditions under which the so-called compensation would be paid became known. It now appeared that the superior wisdom of Downing Street had decided that no money whatever should be forwarded to South Africa; that it would be better that all claims should be settled in London, where a Board of Commissioners, before whom they would have to be proved, should be in session; that expenses and Government fees arising from the method of settle-

British Fair  
Dealing.

Compensation.

ment would be deducted from the amounts to be paid; and, finally, that these amounts would be handed over, not in coin of the realm, but in Stock and Bank of England notes. All these conditions, but especially the last-named proviso, meant still further loss to the Colonists who had owned slaves. The great majority of them had no agents in London, and could not in those days readily make arrangements to procure them. As the notes were not payable at the Cape, they had to be disposed of at a considerable discount. Speculating agents came to South Africa in large numbers, and bought up an immense number of claims at very much reduced prices, for there was now a money panic.

Very few people succeeded in getting a quarter of the value of their slaves. A very large number got only about a fifth or a sixth, and many got even less than these figures. Some were so disgusted with the action of the Government, and others understood so little of the methods by which they would have to obtain a settlement, that they presented no claims whatever.\*

Such were the measures, these were the steps, by

\* "It would be difficult," says Theal, "to picture too darkly the misery caused by this confiscation of two millions worth of the property of a small and not over flourishing community. Some families never recovered from the blow. Aged men and women who had not before known want went down to the grave penniless, and in hundreds of the best households of the country the pinch of poverty was sorely felt. Emancipation in itself was assuredly a righteous act, for there can be nothing more abominable than one man holding another as property; but a vast amount of distress might have been prevented by effecting it in the manner that the colonists proposed."



which the Philanthropists of England gained for themselves the glory and renown of having been the emancipators of the slaves in Southern Africa. Charity and Benevolence.

Bestowing charity at the expense of others, and then, not merely claiming all the credit that results from the act of benevolence, but also libelling those who have been robbed and wronged, may be an easy way of attaining to the satisfaction of the self-righteous; is there, however, anything to be proud of, and to boast of, in such a national policy?

Even if, for the sake of argument, it be granted that the Great Emigration from the Cape Colony to the north, and the establishment of the Emigrant Republics, were caused by the emancipation of the slaves; who, that has before him the facts in the history of that great measure of reform, shall say that there was no just cause for dissatisfaction with the rule and the methods of the Crown?

But was the liberation of the slaves in reality a cause—even one of the causes—of the Trek from the Colony?

Of the total number of 36,000 slaves liberated, about 30,240, representing a money value of over £2,500,000, had been owned in the Western Agricultural districts of The Cape, Stellenbosch, Worcester, George, and Swellendam. Only about 5,760, in other words, a number equal in money value to less than £500,000, had belonged to the district of Beaufort and to the Eastern Frontier districts of Graaff Reinet, Somerset, Albany and Uitenhage. Practically, therefore, more than five-sixths of all the slaves in South Africa lived in the

Western districts of the Colony, and less than one-sixth in the Eastern Frontier districts. If it were true, then, that the emancipation of the slaves was one of the chief grievances which the Emigrant Farmers had against the British Government, and that this measure was one of the chief causes of the Great Trek and of the establishment of the Republics north of the Orange river, we should naturally expect to find that the largest number of the Emigrants came from those Western districts of the Colony which were the chief sufferers by the Emancipation Act. Was this so? On the contrary. The wine- and corn-growing districts of The Cape and Stellenbosch (including Paarl and Malmesbury) had owned some 20,160 out of the 36,000 slaves, and yet *their inhabitants took practically no part whatever in the northward emigration movement.* From the other Western districts of Worcester, George, and Swellendam, where there had been over 10,000 slaves, only some 200 of the inhabitants left for the north between the years 1833 and 1840, the period during which the emigration from the Colony lasted. Of the total of 10,000 Trekkers or Emigrants who crossed the Orange river during all those years, less than 2 per cent (Theal) came from the whole of the Western districts put together. From the Eastern Frontier districts of Graaff Reinet, Albany, Somerset, and Uitenhage, and from the district of Beaufort, over 9800 out of the total 10,000 left the Colony during the same period.

In other words, the Colonists of the West, who suffered heavily through the Emancipation Act, took no part, or next to none, in the Great Emigration. The movement

Colonists of the West take no part in the Trek.

originated in the East. The Eastern Frontier Colonists were practically the only people concerned in it, and they lost next to nothing through the Emancipation Act, for the simple reason that they owned very few slaves. They were not agriculturists and planters, like their kinsmen, the wine farmers and corn growers of the Western districts. They were all cattle graziers and sheep farmers. Their herdsmen and waggon drivers, their farm hands and servants, were free Hottentots and Kaffirs. Even the very small number of slaves (less than 6000, or under one-sixth of the total number in the Colony) which had belonged to the Eastern districts and been emancipated with the others, did not represent property of the country residents—of those who took part in the emigration movement—but had been owned by the other inhabitants of these districts, by the residents in the towns and villages. At any rate, only a very small number, if any at all, of these slaves could have belonged to the farmers who left the Colony for the north. In their ordinary avocations of stock-raisers, sheep-breeders, and cattle-ranchers, they required no slaves, and had never employed any.

Eastern  
Frontiersmen  
not Slave  
Holders.

Among any one hundred white inhabitants of the country in, say Albany or Somerset, or any other Eastern frontier district, barely a single one could be found who had owned slaves. We have exactly that number of one-hundred in the combined parties of the Trichards and Hans van Rensburg, typical eastern frontiersmen, who left the Colony in 1833—that is, before the date of emancipation. Where were their slaves? It is known that they did not take any with

them, nor had they sold any before starting for the north. They possessed none.

As we find that all the one-hundred individuals who comprised the first Trek, which left before the emancipation, did not own a single slave, it is fair to assume that all the 10,000\* Emigrants who left the Colony between the years 1833 and 1840 had not owned more than a hundred slaves at the very outside. In other words, it may be assumed that the money value affected by the act of emancipation, reckoning each slave at the officially appraised figure of £80, comes to about £8000, or fourteen shillings per head when divided equally between the 10,000 Emigrants.

We are asked to believe that the thousands who left their old homes in the Colony to undertake a toilsome and arduous journey; to fight against wild beasts; to encounter the fierce Matabele and the savage Zulu; to brave all the dangers, to endure all the hardships and privations, of the northern wilderness; suffered and endured, and dared what they did, because of a grievance which to each individual amounted to less than the price of a second-rate pair of boots. Is there an instance in history of a new nation having been produced by a fourteen-shilling grievance?

The truth is that the northern emigration, which we are told was caused by the emancipation of the slaves, began in 1833, when the Trichard and Van Rensburg Trek started from Somerset East and Albany districts. The date of the emancipation of the slaves in South Africa is December, 1834.

\* This is the figure given by most writers on the subject of the Great Emigration northwards.

Are we not justified in refusing to admit the assumed cause when we find it preceded by what we are told is its effect? Alleged Cause comes before Effect.

The British official chroniclers have found it convenient and expedient to represent to Europe and to the world that the Republic, the ever vigorous and vigilant opponent of British Empire-building, the only powerful obstacle to British supremacy in South Africa, owes its origin and its birth to sentiments and agencies the reverse of those which make for liberty and for progress—to the slave-driver and his sympathisers, who opposed England because she was the champion of emancipation and of enlightened philanthropy. Missionary writers, following the lead of the illustrious Dr. Livingstone, have preached the same fable.

Most of these anti-“Boer” champions have been careful to state only half the case; and, in addition to that, they have distorted facts, to suit their own pet theory.

The impartial historian, however, must look for other causes than the emancipation of the slaves to explain the origin of the Republic in South Africa. The chief of these causes are not far to seek. In the Eastern Frontier districts, in which the emigration movement originated, repeated Kaffir wars had brought ruin and desolation to the inhabitants. The British Government had been unable to afford adequate protection. It had even aggravated the sufferings and hardships of the Colonists by repealing the vagrant laws which its own officers and administrators had deemed necessary. Its Some Causes of the Emigration.

military commanders were inexperienced and incapable. Its Native policy was then, what it has ever been and still is, one of see-saw and vacillation, to suit the exigencies of party government, and to forward the ambitious schemes of successive Colonial Secretaries who attempted then, as they are still attempting, to rule South Africa from Downing Street. Every one of these gentlemen was regarded, and, on his accession to power, hailed and proclaimed by his own party, as the political messiah of South Africa, who knew exactly what was best for that country and for all the Colonies. His successor invariably inaugurated a new policy, and instituted measures diametrically opposed to those of the rival political party. Then the new man and his new methods were, in their turn, hailed by the official trumpet-blowers in London and Cape Town as the saviours of the country.

Downing Street  
Messiahs.

Want of continuity and of consistency in the Native policy meant the certainty of more wars with the Kaffirs. Incompetent British commanders would ensure disaster to some of the forces in the field. The burghers would be called out, to leave their usual occupations, and to serve without remuneration, on commando. The British administrators would, in order to please the vacillating Colonial Secretaries in Downing Street, agree to so-called terms of peace, which would bring war at a future date.

British Miscell.

This was the opinion of the Eastern Frontiersman, and at every farm and homestead in the West his countrymen agreed with him.

The  
Frontiersmen.

Why should the Frontiersman remain in the Colony,

where all of his nation were subjects instead of citizens, where his language was suppressed in the law courts and in the public service, where his people had no voice and representation in the Government? As a hunter and pioneer he had explored the northern regions beyond the Orange river and east of Drakensberg. Why should he not settle there and found a country and a Government of his own? The spirit of nationality and independence was strong in him; and his passionate love for the soil of Africa, for its boundless plains, its flat-topped mountains and torrent rivers—for the land where his Huguenot ancestors found a refuge and a shelter when persecuted and driven from Europe for conscience' sake—was part of his religion. He spoke of Africa, not of South Africa—for his face Their Africa. was always turned to the unknown north—as his Fatherland. His ancestors, French-Huguenot, Dutch, and German, had taught him to love the new land. The autocratic Satrap of the Dutch East India Company, Governor Adriaan van der Stell, had placed them on the Plateaux and Karroos lying between the two great southern mountain ranges, in order that they might graze cattle and sheep for the argosies of the Netherlands Chartered Company. Together they had encountered the hardships of the desert. They had wandered northwards. They had fought against wild animals, Bushmen, and Kaffirs, until they had forgotten Europe and all its associations. Cut off from the rest of the world by their geographical isolation, and surrounded by dangers with all of which they had learned to cope successfully when left entirely

to their own resources, the frontier people already formed a new Nation.

The New Nation.

These Pioneers of the Karroo and of the Plateau regions were the first of the Africanders. They and their descendants have made the South Africa of to-day. It was the Frontiersman who created the Republic.

In the Colony, his old home, the land which his forefathers had developed and made habitable, the history of the Borderer for nearly an entire century (from 1700 to 1795) had been a constant struggle against the injustice and the misrule of the East India Company and their Cape Town officials. Then, tired of remonstrance, weary of protest, and firmly resolved to manage his own affairs and himself to rule his own country in future, he had created his Republic and brought about the downfall of the Government of the Chartered Company of Amsterdam merchants in South Africa. Then the British Government had appeared on the scene, called on the Frontiersman to give up his Republic, and ordered him to submit to the Government of King George. He had refused to do so. He had resisted in 1796, and only yielded when he found the British power too strong for him. But he had tried his strength again in 1799. Again he had had to submit. His leaders had been captured and imprisoned and punished by England. He had again taken up arms in 1801. Again he had submitted. Then the Republican Government had been restored to the Frontiersman. For a short while only, his country with the rest of South Africa had enjoyed the free

Summary of their Grievances.



and liberal institutions of the Batavian Commonwealth. Then British dominion and a Government of despotism had been imposed on all South Africa by force of arms. Once more the Frontiersman had risen in insurrection, in 1815. Then had followed the terrible punishment of Slachtersnek. In the land of his fathers, the frontier-pioneer had seen some of his leaders brought to the scaffold. Others had been sent into banishment. Once again the border-land was in subjection to a foreign rule.

With the vacillating Native policy of England, the almost constant Kaffir wars, and the insecurity of life and property in the Eastern parts of the Colony, came the policy of the suppression of the independence of the High Court of Justice, the abolition of the Burgher Senate, of the Courts of Landdrost and Heemraden, and of the official rights of the Dutch language in petitions and memorials to the Government and in the Law Courts of the land. Most of these measures affected West and East alike. Then there was also the repeal of the Vagrancy laws. There was the important alteration in the Land laws, under Sir John Cradock's Governorship. There were the confiscation of part of the paper currency in circulation, the events of the notorious Black Circuit, and the bitter hostility of the so-called philanthropic societies which then influenced public opinion in England.

Such is a brief review of the main causes of the Emigration to the North. As his forefathers had struggled against the rule of the Dutch East India Company for a century, so the Frontier

Colonist had now struggled against British rule and all the oppressive and unjust legislation that went with it. The struggle had already lasted more than a quarter of a century. The old home was no longer habitable; it was time, therefore, to seek a new one.

All the causes which have been referred to as giving rise to the Emigration movement may be grouped under one heading, for all the grievances of the Emigrants arose from one cause: they desired self-government, and under British administration, this was denied them. In their own words: "We ascribe all these evils to this one cause, viz., the want of a representative Government, refused to us by the executive authority of that same nation which regards this very privilege as one of its most sacred rights of citizenship, and that for which every true Briton is prepared to give his life." \*

Desire for Self-Government.

The Great Trek was the protest of the eastern Frontiersman against foreign autocratic despotism. As the creation of the Republics of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet, in 1795, had emphasised his resistance and shown his hostility to the misrule of the Dutch East India Company, so the declaration of independence North of the Orange river, and the re-establishment of a self-governing Republic, now proved the Frontiersman's determination to be free from all foreign control.

\* "Al deze euvelen schrijven wy toe aan deze eenige oorzaak, namelyk, het gebrek aan een vertegenwoordigend Gouvernement, dat ons geweigerd is geworden door het uitvoerend gouvernement van datzelfde volk, hetwelk het zelfde voorrecht beschouwt als een zijner heiligste burgerregten, en waarvoor elk ware Brit zijn leven laten wil." (Extract from the protest of the Volksraad of Natal against British occupation, Pietermaritzburg, Natal, 21st February, 1842. "Stuart's Hollandsche Afrikanen," p. 155).

The Emigrants were the champions of self-government and of free representative institutions in South Africa, against despotic rule from abroad. They showed continuity of policy in their aspirations, and consistent attachment to the ideals of their fathers; for the cause was exactly the same as that of 1795. To ignore this, and to say, as do the official British chroniclers, that the Great Emigration northwards and the re-establishment of the Republic were caused by England's emancipation of the slaves, is about as absurd, and as historically untrue, as it would be to affirm that the origin of the American War of Independence and of the great Commonwealth of the United States was the attempt on the part of the British Government to suppress a lawless mob in Boston, and to put down anarchy by force of arms.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE OLD HOME LAND

Date of Commencement of the Great Trek—Boundaries of the Cape Colony in 1836—Political Divisions—The Eastern Frontier—White Population—Numbers, etc.—Language—Distribution in the Colony of the Different Elements of the Population.

THE Great Emigration from the eastern frontier districts of the Colony is often stated by writers on the subject to have commenced in 1836. This is not, strictly speaking, quite accurate; for the *Voortrekkers* from Somerset East and Albany districts who, under the leadership of Carel Trichard and Hans van Rensburg, left in 1833, really began the movement.

But it became far more general in 1836. Previous to that year, although preparations for expatriation and for colonisation of the unoccupied north and north-east were in progress, various causes contributed to interrupt and even to arrest the exodus and keep it in abeyance. Chief among these were the great Kaffir invasion of 1834, and the hostilities with the Kosa nation which followed, and in which nearly every white Colonist capable of bearing arms was engaged. The losses sustained by the eastern frontier districts during the war; the very unsatisfactory terms of peace which the Colonial authorities were instructed to arrange with the Kaffirs; and, last but not least, the Glenelg Despatch—all these were

further inducements to the farmers and frontiersmen to leave their old homes, and to found settlements where they could build up an independent state under their own laws and institutions. The year 1836 may, therefore, be accepted as the date of the northward Emigration becoming a general and well established movement.

The boundaries of the British Colony in South Africa Boundaries. were in that year as follow:—

*On the West*—The Atlantic Ocean.

*On the South*—The Indian Ocean.

*On the East*—The Great Fish River, from the sea to the junction of the Kat River; then, along the Kat River, to a rocky ridge near Fort Beaufort; from there, along the watershed between the Kat and Chumie Rivers, to the Winterberg; then, along the Winterberg westwards to the upper waters of the Zwarte Kei; thence, along the Zwarte Kei and Klaas Smits Rivers to the Stormberg range; from there, along the Stormberg Spruit to its junction with the Orange River.

*On the North*—The northern boundary ran from the junction of the Stormberg Spruit with the Orange River, westwards along the Orange as far as a point now marked on the maps as Ramah; thence in a straight line running south-westward to the Pramberg; from the Pramberg along another straight line drawn westward to the point of junction of the Riet and Zak Rivers; and from this point along a line drawn north-westward to where the Buffalo River flows into the Atlantic.

These were the limits. It will be seen from this

statement that the Orange River formed the northern boundary of the Colony only in a relatively small part of its course. All the country lying to the south of the Orange and between it and the boundary line above mentioned—from Ramah to Pramberg, and from there to the Atlantic Ocean—was quite as much independent of British rule and of all white authority as were those then almost unknown lands lying to the north of the Orange River. All eastward of the Great Fish River, also—as far inland as where the Kat flows into the Great Fish,—was independent territory under the rule of Kaffir Chiefs.

Political  
Divisions.

In 1806, when the second British Administration began, the country was divided into the six districts of The Cape, Stellenbosch, Tulbagh, Swellendam, Graaff Reinet, and Uitenhage. These divisions had been formed in the previous year by the Dutch Commissioner De Mist. Every one represented a far larger area than the district now bearing the same name. Thus The Cape division of 1806 represented, not only the territory which we now call by that name, but also the Piketberg district. Stellenbosch, as it existed in the time of De Mist, included the present districts of Malmesbury and Paarl, as well as Stellenbosch. Tulbagh represented, not merely the present district of that name, but a large portion of the north-western, western, and central parts of the Colony.

Swellendam was the southern coast region—from Cape Agulhas to the mouth of the Gamtoos river, and inland as far as the Zwartberg range of mountains and its continuations east and west. Graaff Reinet was all

that was then the north-east, and a large part of the centre. Its boundaries were: *south*, the Zwartberg range; *west*, the Gamka River and a line drawn from the Nieuwveld Mountains to Plettenberg's Beacon (near the present town of Colesberg); *north*, a line drawn from Plettenberg's Beacon eastward and south-eastward over the Zuurberg and Bamboesberg to the Stormberg; *east*, a line drawn from the Stormberg southwards to the junction of the Baviaans and Great Fish Rivers, then westwards to the northern spurs of the Bruintjes Hoogte mountains, and from there continued south-westward to the Gamtoos River. This district, therefore, represented a very large area, and included, besides the present divisions of Graaff Reinet, Cradock, Middelburg, and Aberdeen, considerable portions—where not all—of the following territorial divisions: Willowmore, Prince Albert, Beaufort West, Murraysburg, Richmond, Hanover, Molteno, Somerset East.

Uitenhage was all the south-east, the country lying between the Great Fish and Gamtoos Rivers, and extending inland to the Graaff Reinet border above mentioned. Other districts were formed in the early years of British administration by sub-divisions of those already in existence and by addition of new territory. Thus George, Clanwilliam, and afterwards Cradock and Albany, came into existence.

When the Great Emigration began, the political divisions of the Colony were the following:—Districts of Cape, Stellenbosch, Worcester, Swellendam, Graaff Reinet, Somerset, Albany, and Uitenhage.

The sub-districts of Clanwilliam, George, Beaufort, Cradock, and Colesberg had not yet been raised to the dignity of separate fiscal divisions of the Colony.

Alterations of  
the Eastern  
Frontier Line.

When the Kaffir war of 1819 had been brought to a successful termination, the country lying eastward of the Great Fish River and westward of the Keiskamma and Chumie was annexed to the Colony. But all this territory, as well as the Province of Queen Adelaide subsequently formed by the annexation of the country between the Keiskamma and the Kei (after the Kaffir war of 1834) was, in 1835, again given up to the Kaffirs by the British Government. Thus, when the emigration northwards was resumed in 1836, the eastern border of the Colony was again where it had been at the termination of the Government of the Batavian Republic in 1806, and even under the last Governor of the Dutch East India Company in the last decade of the 18th century—at the Great Fish River. Further north, the Kat River now formed the new boundary. Under the government of the Dutch East India Company, the Great Fish River had been the boundary from the sea up to the point of junction of the Tarka with the main stream. The north-eastern frontier line had been along the Tarka and over Bamboesberg to a point near the present town of Colesberg. Under the British Government, therefore, a large part of the then sub-districts of Cradock and Fort Beaufort and of the district of Somerset—in other words all the country lying between the Tarka, on the west, and the Zwarte Kei and Klaas Smits Rivers, on the east—was added to the Colony.

Eastern  
Frontier.



No census of the Colony was taken between the years 1806 and 1865. In the first-mentioned year, the entire white population of South Africa was, according to the British census returns of the time, about 21,000. But an official statement published by the Batavian Government authorities in 1805 gave the number as between 25,000 and 26,000, not including the soldiers of the garrison. It is possible that the British census returns were incomplete; for many of the inhabitants were then disinclined to recognise the British Government, and in some of the outlying districts it would be difficult for the officials to get in full returns. On the other hand, it is not unlikely that some of the inhabitants had left for Batavia and for Holland, when the Government was changed.

The White  
Population.

At the census of 1865, the population had increased to 200,000. In 1836, the entire white population was probably some 70,000 or 80,000.

Numbers, etc.

A very great number of the emigrants who came to South Africa in the time of the Dutch East India Company were Germans, chiefly from the Rhine Provinces. In the time of Governor Simon van der Stell, shortly after the arrival of the Huguenots, *one-eighth of the white population was French.*

With the Huguenots also had come many emigrants from Piedmont and Savoy. All these different sections of the population being Protestant, they had intermarried, and the result, in 1836, was a mixed race, which could no longer correctly be called Dutch. Of the assumed population of 70,000 or 80,000, probably less than *one-fourth* were still of pure Dutch descent.

## Language.

As to the language spoken by this new nationality—for undoubtedly we are dealing with a new nationality already in 1836—it has been described as Dutch very much simplified, and with its grammatical angularities rounded off to suit the climate and the race. The description may stand for what it is worth. It is a question for philologists to decide whether the so-called Cape-Dutch bears the same relation to the present language of Holland as Canadian-French does to that of France. Certain it is, that in the South African tongue there are numerous words, phrases, and idioms altogether unknown in the Netherlands. The very considerable number of words and phrases derived from French sources show the influence which the large Huguenot Colony had in modelling the new language. To the present day the double negative, exactly corresponding to the French *ne-pas*, can be heard in everyday conversation in all parts of South Africa. A good many words and phrases, also, are of German origin; while, in recent times, the English vocabulary has been largely drawn upon. The absence of those arbitrary rules for gender which we have in both Dutch and German, and, consequently, the similarity to the English language in there being only one form for the definite article, instead of three (masculine, feminine, and neuter) as in the Dutch and German of to-day and the Anglo-Saxon of the time of the Norman conquest, is another point worth noticing. As the semi-Saxon tongue, the language spoken in England after the Conquest, substituted simpler, non-inflectional forms for the classical but cumbersome intricacies of the old Anglo-

Saxon—so that, for instance, the distinct masculine, feminine, and neuter (*se, seo, þæt*), of the definite article had, by the commencement of the period of Old English, become changed into the single form *the* for all three genders, singular and plural—so also the Africander vernacular has reduced the parent language to its analytical forms, *die* taking the place of *de, de, het*. The tulips and hyacinths of Haarlem are beautiful, but one does not expect to see them grow on the Karroo plains.

Probably some famous English stipendiary legal functionary under the Government of William the Conqueror, some Chief Justice of conquered Anglo-Saxonland, discoursing learnedly on the language question of that day, would look upon the semi-Saxon tongue then spoken by his countrymen as merely a *patois*, a barbarous corruption of the old classical Anglo-Saxon—as a language without a literature, and therefore without any status. No doubt the great man would prophesy, just as great men do nowadays. A fashionable audience would applaud his prediction as to the ultimate predominance of their favourite Norman-French tongue throughout the land of the vanquished barbarians, who were so foolishly enamoured of their miserable jargon as to persist in speaking it and calling it their own language.

In spite of the hostile prophecy, the despised *patois*, without a grammar, without a literature, flourished and grew till it became the language in which Shakespeare wrote for the world, for all nations, and for all time.

A people's language, however humble, is sacred.

The despised *patois* of the Saxons, uncouth and uncultured as it seemed to their conquerors, lived in the hearts of the people. Their bards were already actuated by that spirit which found expression in the words of a British poet centuries after: "Let me write the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws."

Language.

Time—centuries—will show what becomes of the prophecies spoken in the University Senate Hall and the drawing-rooms of Cape Town. Will the despised *Africander patois* perish and die? Ask on the plains of the Great Karroo, on the peaks of the Drakensberg and Lebombo, by the thundering falls of the Zambesi, in the dense forests of Angola. Stand on the rocks where the Cape of Storms confronts the swirling waters of two mighty oceans. Go to the summit of the Amajuba mountain and think. Let the great men and the high officials of Cape Town prophesy. The desert, the rivers, the forests, the ocean, the mountains, will still be there when future generations take our place in the land of the *Africander*. Then will come the answer to our question. For the *Africander*, also, will still be there, in the land of his fathers.

In 1836, the language spoken all over South Africa was already what it is now—as different from the language of Holland as Dutch itself is from German. While the descendants of the Huguenots were resident chiefly in the district of Stellenbosch—more especially in the Drakenstein Valley of the Paarl, in the Wagenmakers Valley or *Val du Charron* (afterwards called Wellington), and in the Dal Josafat—the frontier districts of Graaff Reinet, Somerset East, and Albany, as well as

Distribution of  
Population.

the district of Swellendam, were inhabited by a large number of Colonists of Dutch and German origin, although even here there were only a few families who could trace unmixed descent from Holland ancestry.

While most of the white inhabitants of the Western country districts of the Cape were then, as they are now, agriculturists — wine- fruit- and corn-growers— those of the Eastern frontier divisions were nearly all graziers, cattle farmers, and hunters.

The first of the Voortrekkers, under the leadership of Trichard and Van Rensburg, after having crossed the Orange river early in 1834, remained for a short time a little distance north of that stream. Here they hired pasturage for their cattle from the Bushmen and Griquas, whom they found in occupation of the soil. The English traveller, Bain, who is quoted by Hofstede in his "Geschiedenis van den Oranje Vrijstaat," visited the region in 1834. He says that he found farmers there at that time, and that they gave the Bastards some cattle in exchange for the use of pasture lands and water rights.

The Pioneers then moved further northwards. It was February, 1834, before they reached the Vaal river. In December, 1835, they had got to Zoutpansberg. In 1836 followed the massacre of the Rensburg laager (*see* p. 271) and Trichard's Trek to Delagoa Bay.

## CHAPTER XIII

### INSULT ADDED TO INJURY

The Emancipation of the Slaves—Dishonest Confiscation instead of Compensation—The Sixth Kaffir War—Invasion of Colony by Makoma and Tyali, in 1834—Great Destruction of Life and Property—The British Government Powerless to Protect its Subjects—Dutch as well as English Colonists slain—Women and Children spared by the Kaffirs—Grahamstown, Fort Beaufort, Uitenhage, and Somerset East on 31st December, 1834—January, 1835—Lieutenant-Colonel Harry Smith—Martial-law on the Frontier—Small Burgher Force and some British Settlers leave Grahamstown and Capture Eno's and Tyali's Kraals—The Hottentot Fighting Force—The Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, takes the Field—Reinforcements of British Troops—Hintsa—Colonel Somerset drives Eno's Followers from the Country between the Sunday's and Bushman's Rivers towards the Great Fish River—Larger Burgher Forces from Graaff Reinet, Uitenhage, Albany, Somerset, George, and Beaufort—Kaffirs driven out of the Bush Country along the Great Fish River—They Attack the Post on the Kat River and are Repulsed—Further Fighting in the Great Fish River Bush Country—Large European Force invades Kaffirland, in 1835—Campaign in the Amatola Mountains—Crossing of the Kei—Hintsa and the Captured Cattle—Death of the Galeka Chief—Kreli—Terms of Peace—The Fingoes and Tembus—The New Boundary Line at the Kei River—The Province of Queen Adelaide—New North Eastern Frontier Line of the Kraai and Orange Rivers—Division of the Conquered Territory among Fingoes and Kaffirs—Frontiersmen, who, unlike the Regular Troops and Hottentot Levies, had had to serve without Pay, and who had been Robbed of their Cattle, get next to Nothing—His own Cattle, Recaptured from the Kaffirs by the Frontiersman himself, not Restored to him, but Sold by British Government to defray War Expenses—Attitude of the *Philanthropists* of Cape Town and England—Preparations for Continuing the Trek to the North—Exploring Party under Uys, Maritz, and Rudolph—To Natal and back through Disturbed Kaffirland—Arbitrary Arrest, by Colonel

Smith, of the Wife of Pieter Uys in Uitenhage—The Glenelg Despatch—The Secretary of State for the Colonies himself now the Calumniator of the Frontiersmen — Lieutenant-Governor Stockenstrom of Slachtersnek—Alteration of Frontier Line—Large part of Colony given up to Kaffirs—Great Fish River again made the Boundary.

MEANWHILE, events of the greatest importance to the student of South African history were transpiring in Cape Colony. These were:

The emancipation of the slaves.

The Sixth Kaffir War.

The arrival and publication of the Glenelg Despatch.

In the beginning of the year 1834, Sir Benjamin D'Urban arrived from England to commence his term of office as Governor. One of the first duties of the new ruler was to carry out his instructions relating to the liberation of the slaves. In 1833, the English Parliament had passed a measure providing that on the 1st of December, 1834, all slaves in British Colonies should receive their freedom, and that the owners should have compensation for the loss which they would sustain. The Act of Emancipation, regarded as a legislative enactment, was a noble achievement. It was a humane and enlightened measure, and represented the triumph of the great party, which, under Wilberforce, had struggled and fought for reform and for justice to the oppressed. Unfortunately, however, the method in which liberation was brought about in South Africa was vile and shamefully dishonest. That this statement is fully justified can be proved by referring to the history of the way in which

The Emancipation of the Slaves.

Dishonest Confiscation instead of Compensation.

the Compensation Clauses of the Act were dealt with at the Cape. It cannot be maintained that the British Government and its agents acted honourably and fulfilled their obligations in the matter. The full narrative of the emancipation movement in South Africa, and of the part played in that movement by Great Britain, has already been given on pages 209 to 217 of this work. It is, therefore, unnecessary here to repeat any of the details.

The Sixth Kaffir War.

The arrangements which had been made with Gaika, in 1820—by which the Chumie and Keiskamma were to form the boundary between Kaffirland and the Colony, while all the country between the two rivers just named, on the one side, and the Great Fish River, on the other, was to remain unoccupied by either Colonists or subjects of the Kaffir Chief—did not last long. Perhaps Gaika's view of the matter was that the British had not kept faith with him when the Kat River Settlement was formed by Sir Lowry Cole in 1829, and Hottentots were permitted to occupy a large tract of country from which the Kaffirs were excluded. Certain it is, that the frontier farmers looked upon this Hottentot settlement with great displeasure, and saw a new grievance in the occupation of some of the most fertile land (which they themselves had helped to conquer for Great Britain, but in which they and their sons were not allowed to establish farms) by vagabonds and vagrants. The old Colonists of the Eastern border regarded the Kat River Settlement as an insult and an injustice to their own race and nationality. They were also of opinion that it



added a fresh danger to the others already threatening those districts of the country. Knowing the history of previous Native wars, and remembering that many of the Kosas were not of pure Kaffir origin, but partly of Hottentot descent, the Frontiersmen dreaded a possible combination (such as had already occurred in 1799) of Kaffirs and Hottentots against the White settlers. The subsequent events of 1851 proved that their fears were not groundless.

Cattle thefts by Kaffirs, incursions into the territory west of the new border, and beyond that territory into the Colony itself, had become quite common soon after the last war. Makoma and Tyali, two sons of Gaika, had then been allowed, with their followers, to settle in the country between the Great Fish and Keiskamma, in order to keep in check the robbers, who were all supposed to be adherents of Tslambi, and to prevent them continuing their depredations. But it soon became apparent that those friendly guardians of the public peace were not to be trusted.

In fact, Tyali and Makoma, and all their host, were great thieves themselves, and had to be expelled from the territory in order to safeguard the neighbouring farmers against further robbery. The Kaffirs resented this expulsion. Tslambi died in 1828, and Gaika in the following year. The two factions now combined, under Makoma and Tyali, in hostility against the Colony. Thefts, robberies, and inroads on Colonial territory, became more frequent than ever. At last, in December, 1834, a collision occurred between some of the frontier police and the

marauders. One of Tyali's brothers was wounded. This was taken by the Kaffirs as a declaration of war, and, on 21st December, the Colony was attacked by the Kosas under Makoma and Tyali. The invading forces, some thirteen or fourteen thousand strong, entered, in almost a continuous line, from the Winterberg range to the sea. The British Commandant of the Frontier, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Somerset, was at Fort Beaufort, and could do nothing to defend the Colony except hold that post, Fort Adelaide (a strong new fortalice, for which the Kat River fort was abandoned), and Grahamstown. The military forces at his disposal were the 75th Regiment of Infantry (533 officers and men); a body of artillery and engineers numbering (officers and men) 55; and the Cape Mounted Rifles (247 officers and men); making a total of 835 officers and men.

Besides these, two battalions of infantry and a company of artillery were garrisoning Cape Town and Simonstown. Had the burghers been called out, as on previous occasions, the frontier could have been made safe against invasion. But either no danger had been apprehended, or the British Government dreaded the philanthropists and the friends of the Kaffirs in London and in Cape Town more than it recognised its responsibility to protect the lives and property of its White subjects on the frontiers. It adopted the so-called ostrich policy of hiding its head in the sand. One after the other, important posts, which could have been held by a handful of men against all the hosts of Kaffirland — Fort Willshire

the Gwanga Post, the Kat River Fort, and Bathurst—were abandoned to the enemy, who were now, in their thousands, far west of the Fish river, advancing further and further into the Colony, slaughtering and murdering the unprotected and undefended inhabitants, burning their houses and carrying off their flocks. Not only the older Colonists of Dutch descent suffered from this invasion. Many of the British settlers who had arrived in 1820 perished, or lost all they had and were reduced to poverty. One striking fact must not be omitted from the narrative of this great Kaffir inroad into the Colony. Women and children were not put to death by the Kosas. Perhaps missionary teaching had had some influence in bringing about this redeeming feature in the blood-stained pages of the history of those dreadful days.

On the 31st of December, 1834, all the country as far west as the vicinity of Uitenhage, with the exception of the three posts named as still occupied by the British forces, was in possession of the Kaffir hosts. All the district of Albany, a considerable part of the Uitenhage district, and even a portion of the district of Somerset, were lost. Smoking ruins, only, indicated where farm-houses had stood. Grahamstown, Fort Beaufort, Uitenhage, and Somerset East, were filled with fugitives. In the first-named town the streets were barricaded, and about two thousand men, women, and children, whose houses and property had been destroyed on the farms of Albany, were seeking food, shelter, and protection. All the country between the Keiskamma and the Great Fish rivers, also, was once more occupied

Frontier  
Districts Over-  
run by the  
Kaffirs.

by the Kaffirs; for the advanced military posts had been abandoned, and there was no force of troops in that territory to maintain the authority of the Government. Never before, in the history of South Africa, had its rulers proved so powerless to protect the inhabitants and to defend the frontiers.

As soon as the invasion of the Colony began, a horse-express had started from Grahamstown to take the tidings to Government House. The messenger reached Cape Town on the 28th of December, and, two days later, other express riders arrived with details of the disaster that had befallen the frontier districts. The Governor acted with promptitude and despatch. He found an able and energetic officer in Lieutenant-Colonel Harry Smith, who had seen service at Waterloo and in the Peninsular War. Leaving Cape Town on the 1st of January, Colonel Smith reached Grahamstown on the 6th, and took command of the forces on the frontier, where every district was already under martial law. On the 9th of January a small force, consisting of 166 burghers and British settlers, with 40 Cape Mounted Riflemen, was ready at Grahams-town. The burghers had come in from Uitenhage; the British settlers were among those who had been driven from the surrounding farms by the Kaffirs. On the following day, this force rode out of Grahams-town, to attack the Kosas. The head kraal of the Chief, Eno, one of the leaders in the war, was captured and destroyed. The burgher force then went on to Fort Willshire, and up the Chumie Valley to Tyali's kraal, which was taken and burned down. The com-

Colonel Smith's  
Ride to  
Grahamstown.

Energetic  
Action of Sir  
Benjamin  
D'Urban and  
Colonel Smith.

mando now returned to Grahamstown. Meanwhile, Colonel Smith had organised and equipped a force of over a thousand Hottentots. These men were fugitives from different parts of Albany and the adjacent districts, who had sought refuge in Grahamstown. They made a fairly good fighting force. On the 14th of January, the Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, landed at Algoa Bay, and on the 20th he reached Grahams-town, having, as Colonel Smith had done, travelled through the country which had been devastated by the invaders. Four hundred and fifty men of the 72nd Highlanders, with their officers, and a battalion of the 98th foot, had in the meantime been shipped from Cape Town to Algoa Bay, and now reinforced the troops already on the frontiers. The Kaffirs sent all the cattle which they had captured over the Kei River, where Hints, the Galeka Chief, ruled, and then prepared to make a stand against the European forces in the field. The sons of Gaika, with their followers, held the Amatola mountains. The warriors of Eno and other Chiefs still occupied the country between the Bushman and Sunday's rivers. Here they were attacked by Colonel Somerset, who succeeded in driving them towards the Fish river, where they again rallied. The burghers of Graaff Reinet, Uitenhage, Albany, and Somerset, were now in the field, and those from George and Beaufort were arriving. From the 12th to the 15th February, there was severe fighting in the forests and jungles of the Great Fish River. The burghers of George, Graaff Reinet, Uitenhage, and Albany, with detachments of the 72nd and

Hints.

The Burghers in the Field.

75th regiments, the Cape Mounted Rifles, and the Port Elizabeth corps, having crossed the river under Colonels Smith, Somerset, and England, drove the Kaffirs out of the bush country along its banks, reducing one after the other of their forest strongholds, and recapturing cattle and sheep which the marauders had taken from the farms. Then followed an attack by the Kosas on the Kat River Fort, which, as well as Fort Willshire, had again been occupied. This assault was repulsed; but the post on one of the main fords of the Fish river was also attacked, and here the British officer in command, not having a sufficient force to hold the position, had to retire. The burghers of George and Uitenhage, under their Commandant, Jacobus Ignatius Rademeyer, then recaptured the ford; but, soon after, the Commandant and forty men of his patrol were surprised and surrounded in a neighbouring glen. They fought their way out, but lost heavily in doing so. Adam Boshoff, Jan Bernard, Jan Meyer, Andries Van Zyl, and Hermanus Wessels were killed, and eight others wounded. Then there was further fighting along the Great Fish river; for it was found that the Kaffirs had got back to the thickets and woods bordering on the river basin, and had to be again dislodged from these natural strongholds. Once more driven out of the forest regions of the Great Fish river, for which they had fought so fiercely, the Kosa tribes retired to the Amatola mountains and the Upper Chumie, where they determined to make an obstinate resistance.

Fighting in the  
Great Fish  
River Basin.

In the  
Amatola  
Mountains.

There were now over 1500 burghers under arms.

Their Commandant was Stephanus van Wyk. This force, with about 750 men of the Hottentot levies, 360 Cape Mounted Rifles, and some 400 Regulars (72nd Highlanders and artillery with six field-pieces), under Lieutenant-Colonel Somerset, Lieutenant-Colonel Peddie, and Major Cox, in March, 1835, stood ready to invade Kaffirland, while an army of nearly 2000 more, consisting of burghers, Cape Mounted Rifles, Hottentot levies, and other Irregulars, with 485 officers and men of the 75th regiment and of the engineers and artillery, were stationed along the frontier, at various military posts in the ceded territory, and on the Fish river. This defensive reserve force was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel England. Sir Benjamin D'Urban himself, at the head of the invading columns which now moved forward into Kaffirland, crossed the Keiskamma at Fort Willshire, and advanced up the glens and valleys of the Amatola mountains, defeating the Kosas in several engagements and skirmishes, and capturing some 14,000 or 15,000 cattle. Then he led a strong army across the Kei into the country of the Galekas, where Hintsa, the Paramount Chief of all the Kosa tribes, was retaining the cattle which Makoma, Tyali, and Eno had previously sent into his territory, after having captured them in the Colony. The Governor now sent forward a messenger to the Chief's kraal, asking that the captured cattle should be given up within five days, and that Hintsa should promise to prevent his men from assisting the other savages against the Colony. The crafty Kaffir, while not openly refusing to comply with these demands, evaded them, and

Sir Benjamin  
D'Urban's  
Column.

Invasion of  
Kaffirland.

Crossing the  
Kei.

In Transkei and  
Galekaland.

temporised until war had been declared against him; then, fearing that his position was becoming dangerous, he was compelled to come to terms. In an interview with the Governor, he readily undertook to accede to the terms of the ultimatum, agreeing at the same time himself to remain as a hostage till the herds of captured cattle had been delivered up. These were not forthcoming; then Hintsä attempted to escape, and was shot by Mr. R. Southey, at whom he was on the point of hurling an assegai.

Death of Hintsä.

In the rear of the Governor and the columns with him in the Transkei country, the war was still dragging on in the Amatola district: the coast region, through which one of Sir Benjamin D'Urban's columns had passed on its way to the east of the Kei river, seemed subdued.

The Governor then entered into an agreement with Krelä, the son of Hintsä, as the new Paramount Chief of all the Kosas, and terms of peace were arranged. These were: (1) That the frontiers of the Colony should be extended to the Kei, to the east of which river all the hostile tribes of Eno, Tyali, Makoma, and the other Chiefs, would have to retire and remain; (2) that the cattle stolen from the Colony would have to be delivered up by Krelä.

Terms of Peace with Krelä.

While the different military operations had been in progress, Sir Benjamin D'Urban had been approached by the Chiefs of the Fingoes and Tembus, two Kaffir nations then also dwelling in the country north-east of the Kei river, but much less powerful than the Kosa tribes. The Fingoes had come from Natal about



1822. They were a people who had been expelled from their original home by the wars and devastations of Chaka. They had not, as is commonly said, been driven out of Natal by the Zulus; but by the other nations who fled before Chaka's armies from beyond the Tugela and from Natal itself. The two tribes had become conscious of the power of the White people. Neither of them had ever been well treated by the Kosas, and they now both desired to enter into alliance with the British Government. Sir Benjamin D'Urban placed the Fingo tribe in the country between the Keiskamma and the Great Fish river. It was the Governor's object by this policy to protect the Colony against further Kosa incursions. Those Kosa tribes which had been friendly during the war were now located in the old ceded territory—the country between the Keiskamma and the Kei rivers. All Kaffirs who had fought against the Colony had to go east of the Kei. The new province added to the Cape after the war, *i.e.*, all the country between the Keiskamma and the Kei, was named Queen Adelaide.

The Fingoes  
and Tembus.

The New  
Frontier.

Expulsion of  
Kaffirs.

It was, however, found such a difficult matter to get the tribes under Makoma, Tyali, and the other Chiefs in alliance with them, to give up all their old home and retire so far east as the Transkei, that they were ultimately allowed to remain in the country to the east of the Chumie river, between that stream and the Kei. The terms of peace as finally modified were agreed to by the Kaffir leaders, who affixed their marks to the paper on the 17th of September, 1835.

The Eastern boundary line of the Colony was now

Extension of  
Colony North-  
Eastwards.

the Kei river, from its eastern source in the Stormberg mountains to the sea. On 14th October, Sir Benjamin D'Urban still further extended the limits of the Crown possessions by issuing a proclamation which fixed the North-eastern boundary line as follows: From the Stormberg source of the Kei to the head waters of the Kraai, on the northern side of the mountain range; then, along the Kraai to its junction with the Orange river, near where the town of Aliwal North is now; and then, along the Orange river, westwards, as far as the point of junction of the Stormberg Spruit with the Orange. This proclamation added to the Colony a large tract of land which had been, however, already occupied and used for some time as pasture grounds by the graziers and frontiersmen. The annexation was an important step, for it brought the North-eastern British frontier up to the Orange river. Nearly two years previously, the first party of Emigrant Farmers under Trichard and Van Rensburg had already crossed the river further west, and entered the great plains to the north.

The Burghers.

But, although so much new territory had now been annexed, the farmers and frontiersmen, whose commandoes had saved the country from the savages, got very little of the ground for their own use. By the agreements which the British Government had entered into, the Fingoes, who had done nothing for the Colony and its inhabitants, obtained some of the best lands between the Fish river and the Keiskamma, a country to which the burghers of the East, considering all they had suffered and endured, and all the sacrifices which

they had made, certainly had a prior right. The largest proportion, also, of the best and most fertile lands in the province of Queen Adelaide was divided between those Kaffirs who had fought against the Colony and those who had been neutral or doubtful allies. The comparatively narrow strip of land between the Buffalo and Nahoon rivers was all that was given to the White Colonists who had taken part in the last and in previous wars, and who had not even received payment for their services, as the regular troops and the Hottentot levies had.

Colonel Graham, the British Commander-in-Chief in the fourth Kaffir war, has left on record his appreciation of the conduct and services of the frontier burghers on the field of battle and in the ranks. Never in his life, he wrote, had he seen more orderly, more willing, and more obedient men than the farmers: wherever they had been in action they had fought bravely, and their services had always been given with promptitude and alacrity.\* Similar evidence was given by Colonel (afterwards Sir Harry) Smith, one of the chief British officers in the sixth Kaffir war, and by Sir Benjamin D'Urban himself.†

Official Testimony in their Favour.

\* See Noble's "South Africa, Past and Present," p. 32.

† "Faithful subjects who have been visited with calamities rarely paralleled, to them as overwhelming as those of hurricane or earthquake, as unexpected and unavoidable as they were undeserved by any act of the sufferers" (*Despatch from Sir Benjamin D'Urban to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 8th June, 1836*).

"A brave, patient, industrious, orderly, and religious people, the cultivators, the defenders, and the tax contributors of the country." (*Despatch from Sir Benjamin D'Urban to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 29th July, 1837*).

**Their Losses.**

The official estimate of the losses sustained by the frontier inhabitants through the Kaffir invasion was as follows:—456 farm-houses burnt down and totally destroyed; 350 others partially plundered and robbed; 60 waggons captured and destroyed by the Kaffirs; 5715 horses, 111,930 horned cattle, and 161,930 sheep, captured and irrevocably lost.

This represents a total loss of more than £300,000, not taking into account the losses incurred by persons who contributed to the equipment of the several commandoes in the different districts.\* All this property was indeed irrevocably lost to the frontier farmers. Some thousands of cattle, it is true, had been re-captured from the Kaffirs. These cattle were branded and, therefore, easily recognisable by their former owners, who now came forward to claim their property, which they had themselves recovered from the enemy. It was, however, decreed by the authorities that all this booty should be sold by public auction, in order to recoup the treasury for the expenses of the war. At the same time ample compensation was promised in the name of the Government.\* Like many other promises made by the British Government in South Africa, this was destined to be broken, for to this day it has not been fulfilled. Such was the reward of the Africander farmer, who had served in the field without remuneration and without recompense, and whose uniform good conduct and valour had been praised and extolled by the highest officials in the

\* "Lectures on the Emigration of the Dutch Farmers," etc., by the Hon. H. Cloete, LL.D., Br. Commissioner to Natal.

land. After having recovered some of his own property, of which he had been robbed by the Kaffir, the frontiersman found this property again taken from him by the exactions of a Government whose mistaken policy and misrule were ruining the country—a Government which, at a time when all men still remembered its broken promises and violated pledges, thought fit to make yet another promise, to add yet another pledge, destined to be as perfidiously disregarded and ignored as were those of 1795 and 1806.

Reward for  
Faithful  
Services.

The Kaffirs had robbed openly and in the light of day. Their hostility was, at least, undisguised and unconcealed. The British Government not only plundered the inhabitants, it also deceived them.

As if this scurvy treatment by the authorities was not enough of injustice and injury to the Colonists, they had further to endure the insults and abuse of the so-called philanthropic party in England and Cape Town. At the very time when the whole Eastern frontier was overwhelmed by a disaster unparalleled in the annals of the country; when savages were in possession of the land; when hundreds of peaceful dwelling-houses had been given over to the flames by the enemy; when the dying agony of murdered men, the wailing of sorrow-stricken women, and the doleful cries of fatherless and homeless white children, should have moved every one to pity for the unfortunate sufferers; even then, there were men in London and in Cape Town

Further In-  
justice to  
Frontier  
Colonists.

who were doing their best to make the civilised world believe that the Kaffir was in the right, that the Colonists were cruel and oppressive in their treatment of the Natives, and that the name of "Boer" was synonymous with "monster," and typical of all that was base. All the ridiculous and unreliable stories of the time of the notorious *Black Circuit* were also revived—chiefly by the Rev. Dr. Philip and Mr. John Fairbairn of the Cape Town *Commercial Advertiser*.

Exploring Party  
under Leader-  
ship of Pieter  
Uys.

The majority of the inhabitants of the frontier districts had, at that time, by no means abandoned the idea of migrating to the North and North-east. Trichard and Van Rensburg, with over thirty waggons, were then north of the Vaal river, and in 1834—before the outbreak of the great Kaffir war—an exploring party of fourteen waggons had travelled eastwards. They passed through the wild country of the Kosa tribes west and east of the Kei, through Galekaland, Tembuland, and Pondoland, to Natal. The leaders of this party were Pieter and Jacobus Uys (the sons of the veteran Jacobus Johannes Uys of Uitenhage), Stephanus Maritz, and Hans de Lange. They were sent by a large number of influential frontier burghers, representing Somerset East, Albany, Graaff Reinet, and Uitenhage, to report on the advisability and feasibility of effecting a settlement in Natal, where they spent some time in elephant hunting and exploring. While there, they had heard of the outbreak of hostilities with the Kaffirs, and therefore returned to the Colony. The wife of Jacobus Uys accompanied her husband in

this expedition, which was not without danger ; for the countries which they had to cross in returning were then in a very disturbed state. Hintsá, the wily and crafty Paramount Chief of the Galekas, east of the Kei river, was receiving and guarding the large droves of cattle and sheep which the other Kosa tribes had captured and sent on from the Colony. At the same time, his warriors were arming and getting ready to join in the fray as soon as the smoke signals on the hill-tops of the country would convey the intelligence that the Colonial forces had met with a reverse. Had those signals appeared, then the Fingoes, and the Tembus, and all the other cattle-thieves further east than the Galekas, instead of siding, as they afterwards did, or pretended to do, with the White people, would have come forward to help to rob and pillage, in order not to miss their own share of the spoil. There was danger at every step of the returning explorers. Pieter Úys, however, took his followers, through the territories of all the disturbed nations, safely back to Uitenhage. Here he was informed that, during his absence, his wife had been arrested on his farm by order of Colonel Smith, the excuse for the outrage being that her husband had gone to the enemy's country. This arbitrary, and, under the circumstances, uncalled-for act on the part of the authorities had excited wide-spread indignation among the farmers in the district, where no family was more respected and esteemed than that of Uys. It added one more to the many grievances which the people of the borders had against the British Government.

The Glenelg  
Despatch.

The Glenelg Despatch was the last blow. It was this which set the long streams of ox-waggons going, in 1836. So far, the people of South Africa had been wronged by England. Now they were calumniated. Their calumniator was the Secretary of State for the Colonies in person.

Sir Benjamin D'Urban, having arranged the affairs of the frontier as well as he was able with the means and the methods at his disposal, returned to Cape Town, where he met with a very cordial reception from the people, who appreciated the untiring energy and ability he had displayed at a difficult and dangerous time in the country's history. From every town and village in the Colony, and from all classes of the population, came expressions testifying to the favourable impression which the Governor's actions had created. But no approval came from England. In April, 1835, the Earl of Aberdeen's Ministry had fallen, and Viscount Melville had become Premier.

New Ministry in  
England.

The new Secretary for the Colonies was the Earl of Glenelg, one of the leaders of the "philanthropic party," who were thus in power. Writing from Downing Street under date of 26th December, 1835, this Minister instructed the Governor to withdraw the Colonial authority from the new province of Queen Adelaide, as, in the opinion of Her Majesty's advisers, "the original justice was on the side of the conquered, not of the victorious party." In the same Despatch the Colonists were accused of systematic injustice towards the Kaffirs, who, according to Earl Glenelg, had been perfectly justified in invading the Colony, as they



had been driven to despair and desperation by continued acts of oppression and tyranny on the part of the frontiersmen. Captain Andries Stockenstrom, an able and accomplished, but somewhat vacillating and unreliable, South African Colonist, whose father had, in 1812, been treacherously murdered by the Kaffirs, but who had now, before the Committee of the British House of Commons, given evidence very favourable to Earl Glenelg's views, was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Eastern Frontier districts, with a salary of £1000 a year. This distinguished official had rendered himself popular in England by his valuable services in the Slachtersnek affair. In December, 1836, the Lieutenant-Governor entered into an agreement with the Kaffir Chiefs for withdrawing the Colonial authority from all the country east of the Keiskamma and Chumie, and again making the boundary line what it had been proclaimed by Lord Charles Somerset in 1819: from the Winterberg to the Katberg, then, along the Katberg to a ridge forming an extension of that mountain-range, and, further, along this ridge to the source of the Chumie; then, all the way along the banks of the Chumie and Keiskamma, to the sea. But even this border was soon abandoned. For Lord Glenelg and the philanthropists desired that all the country between the Fish river and the Keiskamma should also be given up to the Kaffirs. And so the old Fish river line of the time of the Dutch Government again became, in reality, the frontier. For, although the country between the Fish river and the Keiskamma was still to be called British, it was ex-

Lieut.-Governor  
Andries  
Stockenstrom.

Old Frontier  
Restored.

Territory Given  
Back to Kaffirs.

pressly laid down in the instructions from England that the Kaffir Chiefs in this region should be allowed to exercise their own dominion, and to exclude all White Colonists from the country. The only rights which the Government retained in this territory, which had so long been an integral part of the Colony, and for which the burghers had fought so hard and so bravely in the late war, were to station troops and build forts in it.

The frontier, therefore, now ran from the watershed between the Chumie and Kat rivers to a rocky ridge in the vicinity of Fort Beaufort; thence, along the Kat river to its junction with the Great Fish river, and then, along the Great Fish river, to the sea. All to the east of this line was Independent Kaffirland. The Kaffirs stationed posts along their side of the frontier. The British Government built forts on the Colonial side, west of the Fish river.

It was not enough that the Colonists had been robbed and deceived by the Government which they had served, and whose plighted word they had trusted in the matter of compensation. Still more bad faith, still further perfidy, was to mark with an indelible stain the escutcheon of British diplomacy. Part of the territory now given up to the Kaffirs had been British territory since 1817. Grants of land and allotments for farms had been given, in these regions, to various individual burghers and frontiersmen who had rendered service, in the field, and otherwise, to Government. For these lands, also—to the eternal disgrace of the Crown's administra-

tion in South Africa—all compensation was now refused.\*

As has been pointed out, the coast region between the Nahoon and the Buffalo rivers (part of the territory ceded by the Kaffirs in September, 1835) had been promised to the burghers of the frontier for their services in the last war. This land, also, was now virtually confiscated by the British Government. By the Lieutenant-Governor's treaty agreement of December, 1836, the treaty of September, 1835, was cancelled, and the country restored to the Kaffirs, without compensation to the White Colonists.

\* Cloete: "Lectures on the Emigrant Farmers." Cachet: "De Worstelstrijd der Transvalers," p. 92.

Theal: "South Africa," vol. iv. pp. 66-67.

Noble: "South Africa, Past and Present."

## CHAPTER XIV

### WANDERING AND SUFFERING

#### THE PILGRIMS OF DELAGOA

Lieutenant-Governor Stockenstrom's Opinion—Andries Hendrik Potgieter—The Members of his Trek—The Orange River—Thaba 'N Chu—The Vet River—Alliance with Makwana—The Nucleus of the Federal Republic—First Title-deeds—Northern Emigration-Movement becomes general in the Colony—British Government alarmed—The Attorney-General's opinion as to Legislative Restrictive Measures—The Philanthropists—The Rev. Dr. Philip and the African Angels—Crusade against the *Boers*—The Deskhumpers Rampant—Trichard's and Van Rensburg's Trek in the Zoutpansberg—Fate of Van Rensburg and his Followers—The Trichards on the way to Delagoa Bay—Their sufferings in the Low Country—Arrival at the Bay in December, 1836—Death of several Members of the Party—Carel Trichard the Younger endeavours to procure help from Mozambique—Kindness and Hospitality of the Portuguese Authorities—Remarkable overland Journeys of Carel Trichard—Rescue of the Survivors—Carel Trichard stands by the Graves on Delagoa Bay—Travels overland through Maputaland, Amatongaland, and Zululand to Natal—Acts as Artillerist with the Burgher forces in the War against England, in 1842.

The Great Trek  
Movement.

BEFORE the arrival of Earl Glenelg's Despatch, extensive preparations for departure from the Colony were already being made by the farmers of the Eastern districts. Now, a great many more waggons were being got ready. In August, 1836, when the new Lieutenant-Governor, Andries Stockenstrom, arrived at the village of Uitenhage, he was presented with an address by the inhabitants, who asked him his opinion as to the possibility of any law being made to prevent the

farmers leaving the country and emigrating to the North, it being rumoured at the time that such a legislative measure, founded on a certain English law of *ne exeat regno*, was actually under consideration. The people of Uitenhage had then had the report of the brothers Uys and the other delegates whom they had sent to Natal, and many of the farmers of the district were preparing to leave. Captain Stockenstrom's answer was: "I must candidly say that I know of no law which could prevent any of the King's subjects from leaving his Majesty's dominions and settling in another country; and such a law, if it did exist, would be tyrannical and oppressive."

At that time Potgieter's followers were already fighting the armies of the Matabele king on the Vaal River.

Let us pause for a moment, and study a type of the Frontiersmen of 1836.

Andries Hendrik Potgieter was a burgher of the Tarka, in what is now Cradock, and what then was part of Somerset district. He was a member of an old Dutch frontier family which had considerable influence among the farmers of the district; had already attained the age of middle life; and had had much military experience in the Kaffir wars. In the days when he was a boy—and for a very long time after—no facilities, and indeed no opportunities whatever, to pay attention to the ordinary requirements of education, were in existence on the frontiers. He had, therefore, grown up, as many farmers of those days had, an unlettered man. The only book which he knew was the

Andries Hendrik  
Potgieter.

Bible. He had read nothing, he knew nothing, or next to nothing, concerning the history of modern civilisation. He had made no study of the theories then ruling and guiding the development of the political world in Europe. He cared nothing whatever about those theories. What he had learned as to the ancient world was contained in the one Book which he carried with him—in that history of the nation which, led by God, travelled through the wilderness and through the country of the heathen to the Promised Land. His faith in the Divine control of human destiny was as firm and unyielding as that of any pious Israelite wandering through the desert. He unhesitatingly believed that Heaven would not forsake him and his people, would protect and shield them from harm, and would ultimately bring them to a country where they could dwell in peace and contentment under a government of their own choice. But though, according to European ideas, not educated, he was a man of good common-sense. His acquirements were those which the life of the South African frontiersman of those days made absolutely indispensable to him who would command and lead among his compeers and his fellows. In the hard school of experience he had been taught all that he knew. He had fought the Kaffirs; he had encountered the elephant, the lion, the leopard, the bull buffalo, the black rhinoceros, and all the dangerous beasts of the hunting-field. On more than one occasion he had had to guard himself, not only against the poisonous arrows of the Bushman marauders, but against the venomous snakes and reptiles of the forest

and the mountain. He had braved the dangers of swollen rivers which he had had to cross, and of the thunder-storm with its lightning shafts and its death-dealing fury when there was no friendly roof to shelter him. He knew the language, the habits and customs, the prejudices, the likes and dislikes, the antipathies and predilections, of the Native races among which he had lived and grown up. He was well versed in the uses of all the agencies at his command for travelling, exploring, campaigning, and for occupying and developing the country. The ship of the veld had been his home on many a long trek. He could steer it, remedy its defects, utilise it for defensive purposes in war. He knew what the patient oxen could do, what were their wants and necessities, and what should not be required of them. He had inspanned and unyoked, and guided them, when he was a lad. He had found grass and water for them. He had sheltered them, and defended them against the lions and the Kaffirs and the Bushmen, more than once. The horse, also, was his friend; for the frontier Trek-Boer is the Arab of the South. In the saddle, Potgieter had often, years and years before he went to the Orange River, seen the sun rise over the mountains. Travelling across the plain by night, he had, more than once, sitting in the saddle, watched the stars rise above the horizon, in order to know what time it was. Galloping across the same plain by day, he had leaped from his horse to fire at some antelope. Or he had had to load and fire from the saddle, his horse carrying him onward all the time, away from the assegais of the Amakosa warriors

coming in swift pursuit from the forest on either side. By the camp fire, he had often, for want of a better pillow, laid his head to rest on the same saddle. Or, he had stood sentinel over the horses while his companions rested. In every phase of frontier life Potgieter had had experience.

Like so many of his race and his day, he showed himself no mean strategist, and not lacking in skill as a military leader, when occasion arose to try him in that respect.

He was cautious in all his undertakings, careful and thorough in all his enterprises. He was not impulsive, but persevering and determined to the verge—and on the verge—of obstinacy. All his views were characterised by moderation and forbearance. He was neither ambitious nor aggressive. He was extremely conservative. Although a student of Bible maxims and Bible teaching, he was, while faithful and true to his friends, bitter against his enemies or those whom he deemed his enemies. He was considerate and kind to all Natives with whom he had entered into any alliance or friendly agreement. He never forgot any service which they had rendered to him and his people.

Leaving the Tarka early in 1836, a little after the arrival of the Glenelg Despatch in South Africa, Potgieter's trek made straight for the Orange River. It was joined near Colesberg by a party of farmers from that locality, with their wives and families. The combined trek now numbered some two hundred individuals.

They had a large number of waggons, and took with



them some thousands of cattle and sheep. Among the members of Potgieter's trek were many who afterwards became famous in helping to build the Republic in Africa, and many who gave their lives in the service of its cause. There were the aged Barend Liebenberg and his sons, Stephanus, Barend, and Hendrik, who were soon afterwards murdered by the Matabele on the northern banks of the Vaal river. All these came from Colesberg, as did Jan du Toit, old Barend Liebenberg's son-in-law, who, also, was killed by the Matabele at the encampment on the Vaal river. There were, too, Jan Botha and Sarel Cilliers,—other Huguenot-Africanders from the Colesberg district. Cilliers distinguished himself in fighting the Matabele; and afterwards, under Pretorius, on the battlefields of Zululand, in the war against Dingaan. He was also as eloquent and earnest a camp preacher as any of Cromwell's Puritan Ironside divines had been. Then, there was Casper Kruger, one of Pretorius' most valiant and trusted Commandants at the battle of Boomplaats, in 1848. Last, but not least, there was Casper Kruger's son, Paul, then a lad just over ten years of age, now President of the South African Republic.

There was quite a large number of women and children among these Emigrants, for not one member of any single family remained behind in the Colony. Fathers, sons, and grandsons went, with all they had in the world, to form a new home and a new land in the wilds of the North. The aged Barend Liebenberg was followed by no less than eight sons, all married and

every one bringing with him his wife and children. Other members of this trek were the Van Rensburgs (three families), Brits, and Broekhuizen.

Potgieter's Trek  
at Thaba 'N Chu.

After the Orange river was crossed, the expedition went in almost a straight line to the eastern part of the present Orange Free State. The Barolong Chief, Moroko, then had his head kraal at Thaba 'N Chu, and there a halt was made. The Chief himself, as well as the Rev. Mr. Archbell, a Wesleyan missionary at that time resident in those parts, showed great kindness and hospitality to the Emigrants. Then the trek was resumed northwards, to the Vet river. At a place near to where Potgieter afterwards founded the town of Winburg, a Bataung Chief, named Makwana, ruled the remnants of his once powerful tribe, which still claimed the ownership of all the country between the Vet and Vaal rivers. His territory had, however, been overrun and depopulated by successive incursions and depredations of Mantatee invaders and Matabele raiding parties. He and his people were glad to enter into an alliance with Potgieter. The terms of this alliance

Alliance with  
Makwana.

Purchase of  
Territory  
between Vet  
and Vaal.

were: that the Commandant and his followers should in future own all the land between the above-named rivers, except a sufficient and specified portion of it which was set aside as a residence for Makwana's people and as grazing grounds for the cattle which Potgieter gave them in exchange for the land. Protection against Matabele aggressions and invasions was likewise guaranteed to those Natives by the Emigrants. Makwana was rejoiced to receive the assurance of this protection, for he dreaded the fierce warriors and

marauders of Umsiligaas' powerful nation more than any other.

This treaty with Makwana, and the cession of territory included in it, are of great importance. They at once gave the Emigrants a right to the land in which they now found themselves. This part of the northern Free State country formed the nucleus around which soon clustered those vast territorial areas which, until the embryo Federal Republic was crushed by England, extended the new State's boundaries, southwards, to the Orange River and the Colonial border; northwards, to the Limpopo; and, eastwards, over the great Drakensbergen to the Indian Ocean.

The Nucleus of  
the Republic.

Not by violence or fraud, as cultured European statesmen have done in Africa—and more especially in South Africa—on more than one occasion, but by honest purchase from the rightful owners, and by peaceful occupation, did Hendrik Potgieter acquire for his nation the first territory of the Republic.

Good Title-  
Deeds.

Discouraged and disheartened by the trials and hardships which they had endured since the beginning of the century; with the evidence of the tendency, and the effects, of England's South African policy before them in the ruined state of the frontier districts; and despairing of any improvement or amelioration in their condition as long as the British flag remained in the country: large numbers of Colonists were then continuing their preparations to leave for the North. Others were already on their way to the Orange River, to join Potgieter's party on the wide, free plains beyond that stream. Up the slopes leading to the mountain passes

forming the gateways to the basin of the great river, long streams of ox waggons were toiling, carrying away from that beloved land (where they and their fathers had been born, and where they themselves and their children had suffered so patiently and so much) the brave men and women who were determined to dare all the dangers of the unknown wilderness in order to rid themselves of a Government which they now hated.

British Authorities Consider Means to Stop Emigration.

Realising, rather late in the day, that the future prosperity of the Colony was threatened and imperilled by this general exodus of those who had been the most ardent promoters and champions of the settlement's welfare, the British authorities now began to consider what means could be adopted to stay the emigration.

Legal Opinion.

The Attorney-General, the Crown's highest legal functionary at the Cape, was Mr. Oliphant. His opinion was asked, with a view to legislative interference in order to check and restrain the movement. His answer was: "The class of persons under consideration evidently mean to seek their fortunes in another land, and to consider themselves no longer British subjects, so far as the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope is concerned. Would it, therefore, be prudent or just, even if it were possible, to prevent persons, discontented with their condition, trying to better themselves in whatever part of the world they please? The same sort of removal takes place every day from Great Britain to the United States. Is there any effectual means of arresting persons determined to

run away, short of shooting them as they pass the boundary line? I apprehend not; and if so, the remedy is worse than the disease. The Government, therefore, if I am correct in my conclusions, is, and must ever remain, without the power of effectually preventing the evil—if evil it be.”

At this very time the adherents of Dr. Philip in the Colony were still doing their best to make the British public believe—then no very difficult task—that the White Frontier Colonists were fiends in human form, and that all Kaffirs and Hottentots were angels.

The reverend gentleman himself had in England been engaged in a lecturing tour, in which he was accompanied by a specimen of each of the African angel races. These were the Kaffir, Jan Tshatshu, a Christian so-called convert, educated in Mr. Read's mission station of Bethelsdorp, afterwards expelled from Church membership for drunkenness and disorderly conduct, and Andries Stoffels, a Kat River Hottentot. They were the lions at numerous assemblies and festive gatherings of the philanthropists, at which Dr. Philip spoke with great earnestness and great zeal on his favourite themes—the pretended equality of the Black race with the White in everything, and the alleged outrages and cruelties committed by the White Colonists in South Africa. It was the time of the crusade against the “Boer,” and the missionary desk-thumpers were rampant.\*

British Philanthropists and African Angels.

\* Referring to this tour of Dr. Philip's, Theal says; “In stirring addresses, in which the most sordid truths were mixed with fantastic theories, he appealed to those feelings of English men and women which are most easily worked upon. His eloquence was amply

The Trichards  
and Van  
Rensburg.

While Potgieter, with the Tarka and Colesberg families, was North of the Orange River, Trichard and Van Rensburg, with their party, had advanced far into the Zoutpansberg district, which they had reached in December, 1835.\* (May, 1836, according to Theal.) They travelled as far to the north as the neighbourhood where the village of Schoemansdal was afterwards built. As they penetrated further and further north, they had found the way to the east blocked by huge walls of mountains, through which they could find no passes. They were looking for an outlet, for the object of their journey was now to get to the sea. They knew that there was a Portuguese settlement at Delagoa Bay, and they intended to reach that harbour and establish commercial relations with it, so that the settlement which they hoped to form in the Zoutpansberg region could have free access to the Indian Ocean. Now, finding further progress to the northward also made difficult by that mountain range, the central portion of which lay before them, its summits 3500 and 4000 feet high, while far to the west it stretched onwards to the distant Blauwberg, and to the east to Albasini's, they arranged that the two sections of the trek should separate; that Van Rensburg and the

Exploration of  
the North.

rewarded. His tour was described by his admirers as a triumphal procession, in which such incidents were not omitted as Tshatshu and Stoffels taking ladies of rank to the dinner tables of houses where they were guests, and the enthusiastic cheers with which they were greeted on appearing before public assemblies."

\* The date here given is from Cachet's work, "De Worstelstrijd der Transvalers," which contains the narrative of the Trek as given by Louis Trichard—one of the surviving sons of Carel Johannes Trichard, the leader.

families with him should enter the ravines to the east, and endeavour to find their way through the mountains in that direction, while Carel Trichard and his followers remained encamped where they were, merely sending small exploring parties into the surrounding country, in order to obtain more information as to its capabilities for future settlement. Van Rensburg's party never returned. It is said that they were attacked and massacred by the Makwamba or Knob-nosed Kaffirs, a tribe which derived this name from the custom, prevalent among them, of puncturing their noses in such a way as to give the warriors a particularly fierce and unsightly appearance. Rensburg's trek numbered forty-eight individuals—men, women, and children. The above version of their fate is that which was afterwards ascertained from Native sources. But whether they actually perished in this way, and where the exact spot of the massacre is to be located, seems somewhat uncertain to the present day. Whether they travelled eastwards through the Spelonken and then onward towards the Klein Letaba valley; or whether they went in a more north-easterly direction, past Albasini's, and then through the country along the base of the great mountain range, where the road from Albasini's leads towards the Limpopo; whether they crossed this river and were destroyed on the great plain to the north of it: all these are questions the answers to which have been by no means definitely and conclusively given. The unhappy wanderers—men, women, and children—plunged into the unknown wilderness and were lost. The wild mountain ravines, the vast forest

The Fate of Van  
Rensburg's  
Trek.

solitudes, the savage tribes of the North, know their fate.

In the  
Zoutpansberg.

The members of Trichard's trek remained in their camp, to the south of the great Zoutpansberg, for a couple of months; and, in June, 1836, as they had received no tidings whatever from Rensburg's party, they travelled eastwards through the Spelonken. Their object was to reach Delagoa Bay as soon as possible, in order to ascertain what was the best and most practicable road to that harbour; and also to enter into negotiations with the Portuguese authorities for the purpose of establishing permanent commercial relations between the Bay and the future settlement in Zoutpansberg. They intended to return from Delagoa Bay and colonise the regions where their camp had been.

To the Indian  
Ocean.

It was the dry season of the year. So far they had found the new land attractive on account of its natural beauty and fertile soil; the climate, also, seemed healthy. Trichard, however, realised the importance of being able to find access to the seaboard, and to a good harbour quite independent of the British Government and its dominions in Africa. But he and his companions knew nothing of the difficulties and dangers of that memorable journey which they were about to undertake. They were unacquainted with the climate of the Low Country, through which their way to the Portuguese colony would lead them, and had as yet heard nothing of the pestilential swamps and fever regions in the close vicinity of the great harbour itself.



After a toilsome journey through the rocky ravines <sup>The Unknown North.</sup> and defiles to the south of the Spelonken, and travelling eastward along the banks of the main tributary of the Klein Letaba (past Mahilas Kop and the Matyatyes Berg), their waggons emerged from the mountain passes. They were then in a broad valley, through which the Klein Letaba river and its chief tributary flow eastwards. After having crossed the tributary stream, they travelled further onwards into this valley; and then crossed a range of hills, which are now known as the Sutherland. Then, further east, they came to another valley, and crossed a larger river, the Letaba. They found abundance of game; along their route there was good pasturage for their oxen, and it was still the winter season. They had, therefore, so far, suffered no ill effects from the climate of these regions, where, later in the year, when the rains have commenced to fall, malarial fever prevails. They were on the southern side of the Letaba river. Going further east still, they passed the northern end of the Murchison Range of mountains, and travelled onwards through another valley, which brought them to still lower country. A little further east than where the Portuguese border is now, they had the Letaba river again before them, and crossed it. As they journeyed on, they found the weather getting hotter, and they began to suffer from fever. Then their oxen were first bitten by the Tsetse fly. Soon some of the animals died, these losses of cattle making the progress of the heavy waggons more tedious.

Onward Still.

Now the Emigrants turned due south, crossed the Olifants river, and kept on their course over the plain stretching between that river and the Komati. A long range of mountains extending from north to south (the north-eastward prolongation of the Lebombo hills) lay to the west of their route all the way to the Komati river. They found those vast eastern plains, which the feet of few, if any, white men had trod before, covered with herds of game. Springbok and other antelopes abounded, and there were also buffaloes, giraffes, and elephants. But the pleasures of the chase now afforded no attraction to the weary wanderers. The fever season had commenced, and many were ill. The women and children must have suffered much on that painful journey. As the pioneers went further south, the heat became terrific. Some of the waggons had to be abandoned on the plains. Perhaps one or two had already been left north of the Olifants river. The travellers' progress, therefore, necessarily became much slower. Still they kept on. Crossing the Maputa river, they passed some large Kaffir kraals, and again emerged from the fly belt. But most of their cattle had been lost from the effects of the bites of the destructive insect.

Wandering and  
Suffering.  
Undaunted by  
Difficulties.

Arrival at  
Delagoa.

When, in December, 1836, Trichard and his party reached Delagoa Bay, the few Portuguese officials then stationed there—for it was a very small settlement in those days—were struck with amazement and wonder at the feat which the travellers had accomplished, as well as moved with pity and compassion for the women and children of the party. Food and clothing

were provided for those who were hungry and ill-clad : medicines for all who were ill. No payment was asked or accepted for any of these articles. Nothing was too good for the exhausted pilgrims. The great kindness and hospitality of the Portuguese people in those days have not been forgotten in South Africa, even now.

Five days after their arrival at Delagoa Bay, The Fever. the Emigrants lost one of their bravest travellers. The wife of Commandant Carel Trichard died of malignant malarial fever. Then followed, from the same cause, the deaths of young Carel Trichard's wife and her two children, both breathing their last within a few hours after their mother. Another son of the old Voortrekker died a few days later.

Carel Trichard the younger, then twenty-two years of age, sailed for Mozambique in the Portuguese vessel *Stralla da Mau*, which was just leaving the harbour. His mission was to have an interview with the Governor of the northern Portuguese Colony, in order to seek help and advice.

Nearly all the other Emigrants, including the leader of the expedition, were down with fever, and, as almost all their trek oxen had died, they could not move away from the unhealthy district near Delagoa Bay to the high tablelands of Gazaland in the north-east, where they now wished to form a settlement.

The young pioneer reached his destination after a twelve days' sea voyage, and then travelled overland from Mozambique, through the Zambesi basin, Sofala, and Gazaland, to Albasini's in the northern Zoutpansberg region, and back again to Mozambique. On that long

journey, in the course of which he returned to a place not very far from the spot whence he had started with his father and the other Emigrants to go to Lourenço Marques, he was indefatigable in his attempts to procure assistance, and especially the necessary means of transport, for those whom he had left. A year and a half had passed before he found himself back at Delagoa Bay. The graves were there: the graves of his father, his mother, his brother, his wife, his children, and of many of the other brave Emigrants.

Death of Carel Trichard Sen, and his Companions.

Soon after his son's departure to procure help from Mozambique, the old Voortrekker, Carel Trichard, had died of the fever; and then, one by one, others had perished in that pestilential climate; but in June, 1838, the survivors had obtained assistance from Natal, where the Government of the Emigrants had then been established. Louis and Pieter Trichard; the widows of H. Botha, J. Pretorius, and G. Scheepers, with their children (twelve in all); and seven other children whose parents were dead; these were all who remained of the trek. They were landed at Durban, from which place the *Mazeppa* had been sent to their rescue, in July, 1838.\*

The Graves of Delagoa.

What must have been the young Voortrekker's

\* According to Theal, the survivors of Trichard's Trek were not landed at Durban before July, 1839. "At length their friends, hearing where and in what condition they were, chartered the schooner *Mazeppa* to proceed to Delagoa Bay to their relief, and in July, 1839, the remnant of the party, consisting of Mrs. H. Botha and five children, Mrs. G. Scheepers and five children, Mrs. J. Pretorius and two children, three young men, and seven orphan children, were landed in Natal." (Theal: "History of South Africa," vol. iv. p. 94.)

The same authority states that the Emigrants under Trichard and Van Rensburg did not reach the Zoutpansberg district before May,

thoughts as he stood by those lonely graves, and found that all his toilsome journeys had been in vain? No: not quite in vain. He came too late to save, or even to see again in life, those whom he loved, whose graves were now around him; but their heroic and patient suffering and enduring have not been in vain. The monument which marks the spot where they sleep testifies to the admiration and the sympathy of that hospitable nation whose Government stretched out a helping hand to them when they were despairing and dying. The father, whose grave is by the waves of that blue Indian Ocean, towards which to find a way—for his nation and his people—he had given his life; and the son, who helped to find that way, and who braved all the dangers of the wilderness and of an unhealthy climate;—they have not suffered and toiled, and dared, in vain: their example and their name will never be forgotten by their countrymen. The memory of the martyr pilgrims of Delagoa—of the men, women, and children, who perished—will endure.

The younger Trichard had still another journey to perform. In order to rejoin his surviving brothers, he rode on horseback from Delagoa Bay to Natal. Accompanied by no one excepting a few Kaffir guides, he travelled through Maputaland, Amatongaland, and Zululand. In the latter country Dingaan was at that time marshalling his armies for the final combat with the Emigrants under Pretorius. The ride was, on that account

1836. According to Louis Trichard's narrative, as given by Cachet, they got there in December, 1835. The date given by Theal as that of the arrival of Trichard's party at Delagoa Bay is April, 1836. According to Louis Trichard, this should be December, 1836.

a perilous one; but the intrepid and hardy traveller accomplished it safely, and joined his countrymen in Natal, where he subsequently (in the war against England in 1842) distinguished himself as an artilleryist.\*

\* The brothers, Carel, Louis, and Pieter Trichard, the surviving sons of the old Voortrekker leader, remained in Natal until after the war with England. There we meet with them among those who, crossing the mountains with Pretorius, share want and poverty and suffering with all the others who are determined to be free and to build up a new Republic with a flag and a government of its own. In later years, in many a Kaffir war, we find these Trichards and their sons among those who are storming the mountain strongholds, and are distinguished for gallantry and daring.

In the war of Independence (1880-1881) Jeremia Trichard, a son of Carel Trichard, and grandson of the old Voortrekker of Delagoa, took part in the siege of the British fort at Lydenburg, and was wounded. Another son, Stefanus, fought with the storming party on Majuba, and thus took a prominent part in helping to re-establish the Republic.

It is a bright, sunny day in May, 1894. The Volksraad, in session at Pretoria, resolves that its members adjourn, and, with the State President, proceed to the home of a veteran citizen whose eightieth birthday is being celebrated. While the guns of the State Artillery on the fort are thundering forth their deafening salutes, President Paul Kruger and all the members of the Volksraad of the South African Republic stand in that dwelling-house, uncover their heads, and offer their congratulations to him who first came to that land when it was still a wilderness, and before the feet of other white men had trod on its soil; who was then a lad, and whose hair is now grey with age, while his shoulders are bent with years.

His children and grandchildren stand around his chair, while the President shakes him by the hand, and the great guns of the fort (over which the free red, white, blue, and green flag waves) boom out their thundering salvos in salute. For it is the eightieth birthday of Carel Trichard the Voortrekker, the discoverer of Zoutpansberg, the hero of Delagoa Bay, one of the founders of the Republic; Carel Trichard, the son, who, in the years of the dim long ago, endured much suffering and sorrow while wandering and toiling by land and sea; who had crossed the great mountains and rivers, traversed the huge forests, braved the dangers of the wilderness and of the fever swamps; and who had stood by the graves on the Delagoa shore.

## CHAPTER XV

### IN THE STORM

COME OVER AND HELP US

Emigrants Cross the Vaal without taking Precautions against Native Attacks—Exploration of the Mooi River—Potgieter's Journey to the North-East—A Fertile Land without Human Inhabitants—Umsiligaas, the Chief of the Matabele—Potgieter in Zoutpansberg—Discovers Gold, but regards its Existence in the Country with Indifference—Travels South-eastwards and meets with some Makwamba Kaffirs—Gets Information concerning Delagoa Bay—Meets the sons of Conrad du Buis—Returns to the Vaal River—Prospects and Resources of the new Country—Potgieter's Policy as distinguished from that of P. Retief and A. Pretorius—The Pioneer of the North—Umsiligaas' Fame as a Destroyer—Hostilities between his Armies and some Griquas and Korannas—The Matabele Massacre some Elephant Hunters and Attack a Laager on the Vaal River—They are Repulsed with Heavy Loss—Retreat on Thaba 'N Chu—Sarel Cilliers with Forty Men goes into Laager at Vechtkop—Position of the Battlefield—Matabele first Attacked on the Plain to the North—A Running Fight kept up (on horseback) for an Hour and a Half—The Enemy now Invest the Laager at Vechtkop and make repeated Assaults on it for Half an Hour or More, but are Repulsed with a Loss of some Five Hundred—Losses of the Emigrants—Causes of the War.

SOON after the conclusion of the treaty with Makwana, to which reference has already been made, Potgieter and some of his followers travelled north of the Vaal. That Umsiligaas claimed dominion by right of conquest over all the southern and western Transvaal was, at that time, either imperfectly understood by the Emigrants or quite unknown to them. Had they realised the danger

Potgieter's  
Trek over the  
Vaal.

of a possible attack by the Matabele, which any northward advance on their own part might create, they would certainly have taken measures to guard against such an onslaught. That they did not do so proves that they had no fears.

While the majority of the Farmers spread themselves, in small scattered parties, over the country between the Vet and Vaal rivers, some, consisting mainly of hunters and explorers, crossed the Vaal. In those days elephants were still to be met with in the basin of that river; and on higher ground, where the tender shoots and tops of the young mimosa trees afforded them their favourite pasturage, giraffes were by no means scarce. Some of the hunters, after having crossed the river, went up stream towards the north-east, others advanced westwards along the northern bank of the Vaal river, and discovered the points of junction of several tributaries with the main stream. One of those tributaries was found to be larger than the others. On its banks clumps and extensive clusters of willow trees grew in profusion. Its waters seemed to the Emigrants by no means insignificant in volume. When they had explored the fertile valley through which this river flows, and in which they afterwards built their dorp of Potchefstroom, they gave it the name of *Mooi*, or the beautiful, river.

Exploration of  
the Mooi River  
Valley.

In May, 1836, Commandant Hendrik Potgieter himself, accompanied by his brother Hermanus, Sarel Cilliers, and others, viz.: J. G. S. Bronkhorst, A. de Lange, C. Liebenberg, H. Nieuwenhuizen, J. Roberts, A. Swanepoel, L. Janse van Vuuren, and D. Oppen-



man, formed an exploring party. Crossing the Vaal river, they travelled in a north-easterly direction. The objects of their journey were to make a tour of inspection of the Transvaal regions, and to see whether they could reach Delagoa Bay and enter into diplomatic relations with the Government of Portugal, with the view of facilitating trade and commerce between the harbour and the new settlement which they were then forming. Finding the country north of the Vaal entirely uninhabited, it appeared to them that it would be easy to extend their Colony in that direction. They could foresee no probable difficulties with Native rulers, of whom they found none in occupation of the Transvaal territory. But, as they travelled across the southern part of what is now the South African Republic, Potgieter and his pioneers had evidence of the scourge which had desolated the country when the Mantatee and Matabele invasions burst, like devastating torrents, over all the plateau lands to the west of the Drakensberg range. They saw before them a fertile land without human inhabitants. Game there was in abundance — Wildebeest, Springbok, Hartebeest, Koodoo, and various other species of antelopes; besides Quaggas and Zebras, on the open, grass-covered plains; Giraffes and Elephants where small forests and clumps of acacia trees diversified the landscape. And at night, by their camp fire, the intrepid travellers were sometimes startled by the roar of a Lion from the neighbouring *rand* or *koppie*. But no Kaffir kraals or *mielie* plantations, and not a single Kaffir or other human inhabitant, were seen by the Emigrants during the

Potgieter's  
Journey to  
Zoutpansberg.

first eighteen days of their journey. At the end of that time they had reached Rhenoster Poort. Here they met a few wandering Blacks. From Makwana's Bataung, and other nations south of the Vaal, Potgieter and his followers had already had accounts of the cruel massacres committed by the Matabele invaders; and now again the Kaffirs begged the White men to protect them from the spears of the mighty Matabele Chief, whose warriors had depopulated the country to the south, and who had conquered nearly all the land between the Limpopo and the Vaal. Again Potgieter heard of the son of Machabane, of the founder of the Abaka-Zulu (or Matabele) nation, who had crossed the Drakensberg to escape the wrath of Chaka, and to scourge the nations of the interior. Umsiligaas' principal military stronghold was then at a place called Kapayin, on the Mariqua. Further south, and somewhat east of where now is Zeerust, the Chief had another important kraal, that of Mosega. But Potgieter and his companions do not seem to have been told of the existence of this more southern stronghold until afterwards. From Rhenoster Poort the exploring party went—as the Trichards and Van Rensburgs had done before them—in a north-easterly direction, towards Delagoa Bay. At least, they, like their predecessors, attempted to do so, but found that the inaccessible mountain gorges to the east compelled them, as they failed to find a pass, to go more and more north instead of north-east. At last they came to Carel Trichard's old camp in the Zoutpansberg district. Here they found some of the Natives wearing gold ornaments

and ear-rings made from the gold found at a spot near a mountain opposite to Trichard's camp. Most of the pioneers, probably, had never heard of Van Riebeeck's expedition in search of Monomotapa and the river Spiritu Santo; and the important discovery which they had just made does not seem to have excited them very much. Like the members of Trichard's expedition, they had been struck with admiration of the grand scenery around them as they travelled northwards. The wild mountain ranges towards the east, the magnificent wooded slopes towards the valleys, the luxuriant vegetation, the rich soil, and the numerous rivers which they saw flowing towards the Indian Ocean, made the pioneers appreciate the importance and value of the new regions which they were exploring. But they looked at the country with an eye to its capabilities for farming and cattle-grazing, and the existence or non-existence of the precious metals was probably a matter as to which they were quite indifferent.\*

It was winter. They did not, therefore, suffer from the

\* On the old maps the town of Monomotapa ("the City of the People of the Mines" or "the Town of the Chief of the Mountain") was placed on the right-hand bank of the Spiritu Santo, at latitude  $25\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  south, and longitude  $26^{\circ}$  east—in other words, very close to the spot where, on modern charts, the Malmani goldfields are situated, not far from the ruins of Umsiligaa's kraal of Mosega, where again there are ruins of old buildings erected by the Bakwanas before they were conquered by the Matabele. On the map of Joan Blaeu's "Groote Atlas Ofte Wereldbeschrijving," published at Amsterdam in the middle of the 17th century, and on the charts in Linschoten's earlier works (1595-6) the river Spiritu Santo flows into the Indian Ocean at a spot which corresponds to the mouth of the Manice or St George river.

The old geographers often confused this stream with the Limpopo.

fever which prevails in the deep valleys and low-lying grounds of that part of South Africa during the rainy season. As they had travelled northwards they had met more Natives, all of whom they had found friendly. Potgieter was an experienced frontiersman, well versed in the habits and customs of the Kaffir races; and some of the Native tribes, through whose country he now passed with his followers, understood him when he spoke to them in the language of the Amakosa Kaffirs of the Old Colony. Travelling through the mountains in a south-easterly direction from Trichard's old camp, the Emigrants, after a journey of about a week, arrived near the northern frontier of the present district of Lydenburg. Here they came to a kraal of the Makwamba tribe. The farmer-commandant, who then knew nothing of the massacre of Van Rensburg's party, at once entered into friendly relations with these strangers, and obtained from them some valuable information relative to Lourenço Marques. The Natives stated that there were ships in the harbour of Delagoa Bay, waiting for cargoes of ivory and other products of the country. Some Kaffirs from Delagoa Bay were at the kraal, and had brought with them, from the seaport on the Indian Ocean, straw hats, shawls, blankets, calicoes, and various cloths, which they were bartering with the Natives for ivory (THEAL). Those Kaffirs could speak the Portuguese language, and were preparing to carry their loads of ivory to the coast. From them, no doubt, Potgieter obtained information—which was useful to him in a later expedition—as to the best route to the Bay. At this kraal the

explorers also met Carel and Doris du Buis, two half-breed sons of the out-law, Coenraad or Conrad du Buis, one of the frontier leaders in the Graaff Reinet insurrection of 1799. Having been away from their encampments near the Vaal river for some three or four months, and knowing that the rainy season was approaching, the travellers resolved to postpone their journey to Delagoa Bay, and to return at once. Early in September they again reached the Vaal river basin.

Potgieter had now made up his mind that the wonderful country which he had just explored should form an integral part of that State which he determined to found north of the Vaal river. The vast tracts of land, which, on his route northwards, he had discovered to be uninhabited, waiting as it were for colonisation, were fertile and healthy uplands, perfectly suitable in every way to the wants and requirements of the farmers whom he led. There was no scarcity of water, and there was good pasturage for all kinds of cattle. Further north still, in the low country, the sheltered and fertile valleys, with their abundant vegetation, would give valuable winter pasturage for large herds of sheep and cattle, which could be brought back to the high tablelands to the south and west before the beginning of summer. The wonderful forest trees, which he and his companions had seen, would yield an abundance of timber; and the prospect of access to the Indian Ocean through Delagoa Bay offered a further inducement to colonisation of all the country north of the Vaal. The opening up of commercial and diplomatic relations with a foreign European Power,

The New  
Country.

which held the sea coast, would ensure independence for the new settlement from English rule as well as English commerce. The keynote of Potgieter's policy was to get as far away as possible from English government and English influence, and to be quite independent of both, not by getting a seaport of its own for the Republic, but by getting access to a seaport in possession of a European Power other than England. In this important respect he differed from Pieter Retief, who desired independence in a country with its northern frontier further south of the equator, and with an extensive sea coast of its own. As to diplomatic relations, Potgieter desired none whatever with England. Here he differed from Pretorius in after days. The latter sought, and was ultimately successful in obtaining from England by diplomacy, a recognition of the independence of the State.

Hendrik Potgieter, more than any other leader among the Emigrants, was the Pioneer of the North. He had already had opportunities of showing his skill in negotiating with the Native races, and in establishing friendly relationship between them and the White strangers. He soon proved, also, that when hostilities could not be avoided, he was the right man to be a leader of the Emigrants.

We have seen how, on their journey to the north-eastward, the members of the exploring party had become impressed by the devastated and desolate condition of the country, and by the evident dread and fear of the Matabele King and nation in which the scattered individual remnants of the conquered

Abantu tribes lived. Potgieter and his companions had been told of the hecatombs of slaughter in the region to the west (now Marico). Afterwards they were to see for themselves abundant proof of the appalling cruelties which had been perpetrated by the Matabele conquerors. All that he now heard put the Commandant on his guard, and although he did not as yet know of the existence of a Matabele kraal so far south as Mosega, he thought it prudent to go back to the Emigrant encampments without any more delay.

None too soon did their leader return. Imagining themselves quite secure; at peace with the Native tribes around them; not dreaming of the close proximity of hostile Matabele raiders: the Farmers had numerous encampments spread over the country between the Vet and Vaal rivers. And some small venturesome bands had even crossed to the north of the Vaal. In the meantime, the Matabele King had, no doubt, heard of the arrival of the White men in the country. It may be assumed that intelligence had reached him of the alliance concluded by Potgieter with the Bataung chieftain. Some little time previously, a band of his own warriors had come into collision with the Griquas, under their captain, Barend Barend. That clan leader, although he had previously been well treated by Umsiligaas, had attacked some outposts of the Matabele King. In the onslaught Barend Barend, assisted by Barolongs, had been at first completely successful, as the Griqua warriors were armed with muskets. But the Matabele soldiers soon received re-

The Griquas and  
Korannas.

The Matabele.

inforcements. The Griquas were carelessly led, and their captain was completely out-generalled by Umsiligaas' Commander-in-Chief. The result was that the Bastards and their allies were almost entirely annihilated. With the invaders were a party of Korannas under their chieftain, Jan Bloem. These, also, had firearms, and they, as well as the Griquas, wore European clothing. Umsiligaas afterwards pleaded, in extenuation of his conduct in attacking the Emigrant Farmers, that he mistook them for the Griqua and Koranna marauders.

First Matabele War.

Trichard's party had passed northwards without being observed by the Matabele scouting bands which were now watching the country to the east and south of Matabeleland. Potgieter also escaped attack. But a similar good fortune did not attend a party of elephant hunters. This little band—consisting of Stefanus Erasmus and his three sons; Pieter Bekker and his son; Jan Claassen; and Carel Kruger—after crossing the Vaal river, went some distance northwards, hunting along the way. They had five waggons, eighty oxen, and about fifty horses, and took with them quite a number of Native servants. One morning when, on the return journey, they were approaching the neighbourhood of the Vaal river basin, their waggons being then outspanned at a place which seems to have been about opposite to what is now known as the Erasmus Drift on the Vaal river, the party, after having taken an early breakfast together in camp, separated to hunt elephants. Stefanus Erasmus and one of his sons were together during the day.



They shot an elephant not very far from the encampment. Towards evening they returned to cut out the tusks, and, when getting to camp, they saw the waggons surrounded by Matabele warriors. The other two sons of Erasmus, and Carel Kruger, had first been attacked and killed on the hunting-field. The two Bekkers had escaped. Claassen was never heard of again.

The Elephant  
Hunters  
attacked by the  
Matabele.

Seeing the waggons in possession of the savages, Erasmus and his son made for the nearest laager of the Emigrants, which they reached after five hours' hard riding.

There they obtained help, and then went, with twelve other Farmers armed with their heavy elephant guns, to ascertain what fate had befallen their companions. They were soon met by a detachment of the Matabele forces, which had pursued them. They had barely time to fall back on the encampment which they had just left, and where the waggons were already drawn up in a hollow square. The laager was hastily formed, and was not so securely constructed as on many a subsequent occasion in the history of the warfare of the Emigrants with the Zulu race; but it saved the handful of defenders (thirty-five men in all) from certain destruction.

In the centre of the square, one or two waggons were drawn as a refuge (of greater security than the outer lines of vehicles) for the women and children; and then the thirty-five defenders posted themselves, mainly at the two angles where rifle barricades had been hastily thrown out, so that their fire could sweep the faces of the square (*see* page 294).

Fight near the  
Vaal River.

Barely had these hurried arrangements been made, when the assault commenced. Again and again did the Matabele Indunas hurl their attacking columns against the square, which belched forth fire and smoke from ten in the forenoon till four in the afternoon. The Farmers fought for life, and for their wives and children. The laager camp was impregnable to the attacking columns, armed only with assegais, kieries, and light battle-axes. The Zulu shield of ox-hide formed no protection whatever against the deadly discharge of bullets and slugs which the Emigrants, driven to bay inside the square of waggons, poured into the serried ranks of the Matabele force.

After more than a third of their number had been killed, the storming parties of the savages broke and fled.

Of the Emigrants, only one man, Adolf Bronkhorst, was killed.

This fight on the Vaal River is not without historical importance.

The Matabele regiments had hitherto thought themselves invincible. This was the first battle between them and the forces of the Emigrants, the latter represented only in very small numbers. It was a severe lesson to the savages, the first of four defeats inflicted on the armies of Umsiligaas by the White men. Fought on the soil of what was afterwards to be the South African Republic, this victory, gained by a handful of men, was the first triumph which encouraged the Emigrants to the deeds of daring displayed shortly afterwards at Vechtkop Laager, at Mosega Kraal, and on the Marikwa.

Another body of the Matabele army had, meanwhile, gone up the river, come on the encampment of the Liebenbergs, and taken it by surprise. A massacre followed. The aged Barend Liebenberg, a patriarch who, with his sons and grandsons, his daughters and grand-daughters, had left his former home near Colesberg in order to pass the evening of his life in helping to build up a new State, was one of the victims. His sons Barend, Stefanus, and Hendrik, were also murdered. One of his daughters, as well, was among the slain, and with her died her husband, Jan du Toit. The wife of Hendrik Liebenberg, four children, a schoolmaster called Daniel McDonald, and twelve native servants, also lost their lives in this massacre. Sarel Cilliers' family and others escaped from the laager. But some of those who got away were wounded. Three white children—a boy and two girls—were carried off as captives by the savages.

Massacre at the  
Encampment of  
the Liebenbergs

The two divisions of the Matabele army then united, and fell back on Mosega with the cattle they had taken from the Emigrants.

It was just after the battle which has been described, and the massacre of the Liebenbergs, which took place at the same time, that Potgieter and his companions returned from their journey of exploration to the Zoutpansberg district.

When he arrived on the banks of the Vaal river, his first care was to send scouts towards the north-west, in order to be accurately informed of the movement of the enemy, and to be prepared for any fresh attack on their part.

Concentration  
on Thaba  
'N Chu.

Then he gave instructions that all the different scattered parties of the Emigrants now in retreat across the Vaal river should concentrate in the neighbourhood of Thaba 'N Chu.

Sarel Cilliers'  
Retreat to  
Vechtkop '

The Commandant Sarel Cilliers, who was returning with Potgieter's exploring party, narrates how, when they reached the Vaal river and heard of what had occurred, he went to where he and his fellow-emigrants from the district of Colesberg had formerly had their laager; how he heard particulars of the sad end of old Father Liebenberg and his sons Stefanus, Barend, and Hendrik, and of that of his own friend and fellow-descendant from the Huguenot stock, Jan du Toit; how the fierce Matabele had not spared the women and children; and how three of the latter had been captured and carried off. Cilliers saw the wounded, who were suffering a great deal. Deeply moved by the woes and sorrows of his distressed companions, he travelled with them south of the Vaal, towards the Rhenoster river. Their Kaffir (Barolong) scouts were bringing in reports day by day, and when they were on the banks of the Rhenoster, they received intelligence that a large Matabele army was rapidly approaching, and had already reached the Vaal river.

There was no time to be lost. Hastily sending a message southward to the nearest body of Emigrants, Commandant Cilliers went into laager at Vechtkop, between the Rhenoster and Wilge rivers.

This hill is situated just a little over twenty miles south of the present village of Heilbron. It is the only elevation of any note that rises above the surface of the

level plain which, as one travels southward from the banks of the Vaal river, slopes gradually upward towards the south-east and east. To the north there is no other ridge or eminence till one comes to the Losberg, beyond the river. To the south there is none nearer than the Twee Kop (Two Top) Hill, which lies between twelve and fifteen miles in a south-easterly direction. To the east the country is an unbroken plain; the nearest river is the Wilge, twenty-five miles off, and the nearest hill is the Leeuw Kop, about fifty-five miles away. To the west lies the basin of the Rhenoster river, and its tributaries, flowing northwards to the Vaal; but even the nearest tributary is a couple of miles away from the Vechtkop, and not, therefore, near enough to make its banks of any strategic value, for the purpose of executing a flanking movement, to an attacking force.

The battle-ground at the foot of this hill was well chosen to fight the advancing Matabele regiments.

Drawing his fifty waggons up in the form of a hollow square (with three in the centre of the encampment to shelter the women and children and the wounded), Cilliers had strong barricades, made of mimosa (*Kameel Doorn*) branches and heavy iron chain links, so arranged as to bridge over the space between the front and hind wheels of the waggons; so that any savages who managed to come close up to the vehicles could not crawl in under them to enter the square. At two opposite angles of the laager he had *schiet-hokken* constructed. These were massive, square, wooden, loop-holed barricades, from which the fire of the defenders

Vechtkop  
Laager.

could sweep all the faces of the camp during the coming assault.

At these two small improvised fortresses the largest number of the defenders stationed themselves when the Matabele army stormed the encampment.

But, before the black circle closed round the laager, Umsiligaas' warriors had to cross the plain already referred to as stretching northward towards the Vaal

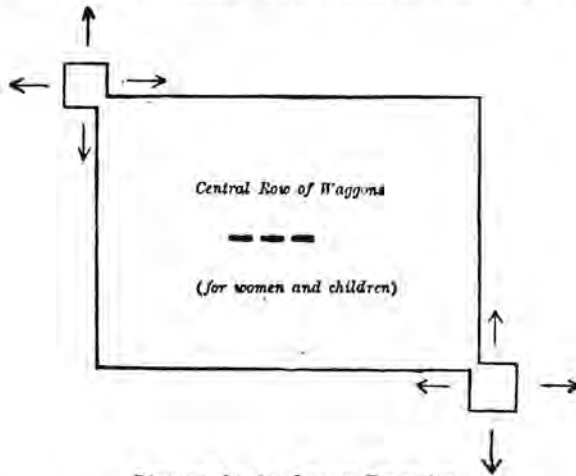


Diagram showing Laager Formation.

river. It was early in the morning of 2nd October, 1836, when the sentry on the top of the Vechtkop reported the Matabele army in sight and advancing. Commandant Cilliers found that (inclusive of boys of the age of twelve and thirteen) he had available for the defence of his laager a force of forty in all. Fortunately, there were some spare guns, many of which, probably, belonged to the wounded who were in the encampment. There was a fair amount of ammunition. The women set to

at once to mould bullets. Thirty-three men, armed with old-fashioned heavy muskets, were ready to ride out on horseback and meet the enemy on the open plain.

At the head of this small band, Sarel Cilliers turned his horse to the north outside the gates of their little fortress. One of their spies had just come in and given

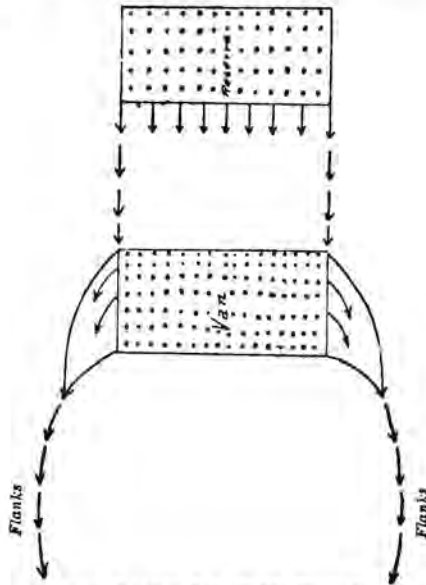


Diagram showing Zulu Battle Formation.

his report as to the whereabouts and numbers of the Matabele. After riding across the Veld for an hour and a half, the Commando came upon the advancing lines of the enemy. The head Indunas at once drew their regiments together into two squares—the one placed close behind the other. This movement was executed with great rapidity; and, as the columns were

massed close together, the Matabele warriors sat down with their shields (of distinct colours for the different regiments) held in front of them. This was their old Zulu battle formation (that of Chaka) preparatory to an attack. From the square in front, the horns of the crescent-shaped attack would subsequently advance, and attempt to encircle the enemy. From the rear square, the reserves would be drawn, as the circle was being formed. But the Emigrants, although they had already suffered severely from the onslaughts of Umsiligaas' Impis, were as yet imperfectly acquainted with Zulu customs and traditions. They were to learn more afterwards.

Riding to within fifty paces of the enemy, the Farmers endeavoured to find out why the Matabele Chief had commenced hostilities against them. A Hottentot scout who could speak their language was ordered by Commandant Cilliers to ask the Kaffirs why they made war upon the Emigrants, who had not done them any harm, and why they had come to kill and murder the White people.

Clearly and distinctly the words of the herald, whose ancestors had welcomed those of the frontier Pioneers on the shores of Table Bay nearly two centuries before, sounded in the still October morning air; and, at once, as if impatient of delay, the Zulu warriors sprang to their feet. Loud, and disdainfully fierce, came their reply, and thousands of voices repeated it: "Umsiligaas alone has the right to speak." There was no further parleying. The Matabele regiments brandished their shields and assegais, and deployed to the right and left



from either side of the front square, forming two columns, which were already advancing across the plain while the Emigrants, who had jumped from their horses, poured volley after volley, as rapidly as they could, into the black masses. Cilliers, in his account of the fighting, says that there was considerable confusion among the Matabele warriors until after he had fired his third shot, and that, by that time, their flanking columns were steadily advancing, endeavouring to encircle the small detachment of Whites, who then again jumped on their horses, reloading as rapidly as they could, and retreating while the way was still open for them to fall back in the direction of the camp. The rest of the engagement outside the laager was a running fight. The Emigrants had to guard against being surrounded. They now clearly understood the tactics of the foe, and concentrated their fire on the extreme points of the advancing columns—the tips of the horns. There was no time for dismounting in order to ensure a more steady aim. They spread themselves well over the plain, and galloped their horses slowly along as they reloaded their guns after having fired. Each one, when ready, charged close up to the advancing column and fired, immediately wheeling his horse round and commencing to reload his musket, while others of the party kept the enemy back by firing on those in the front ranks.

Running Fight  
on the Plain  
north of  
Vecht kop.

For fully an hour and a half this kind of fighting was kept up. The Emigrants had, as yet, not lost a single man. Cilliers himself, in that space of time, fired sixteen shots. This may appear slow work in these

days of repeating and magazine rifles. But if we bear in

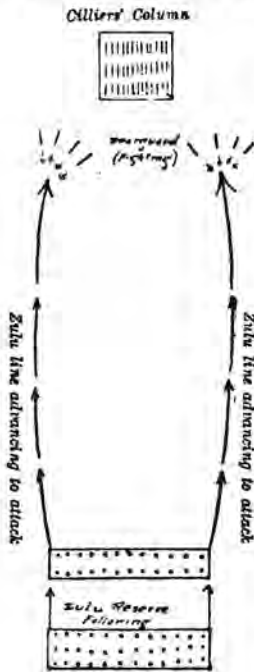


Diagram to illustrate Running Fight on the Plain before Vechtkop.

mind that in 1836 the process of reloading was a somewhat complicated one; that the powder had first to be poured into the barrel of the gun, and the bullet, wrapped in wadding, rammed down on the top of it; that then the priming was to be prepared; and further, that all this had, in the instance under consideration, to be done at a gallop, with the Matabele assegai always ready to interrupt the process: then the case presents itself in a somewhat different aspect. In his account of the events of that day the Commandant says that he seldom missed, and that on several occasions he killed more than one Kaffir by means of the same shot. Altogether, a good many of Umsiligaas' soldiers must have fallen before they reached the laager. Here the women had been very busy, casting bullets. Those brave wives and daughters of the Emigrant Farmers were determined to do what they could to assist in the defence. As the gate between two of the waggons swung open to admit the horsemen, who had left the encampment fully three hours before, the fire was still burning and the molten

The Brave  
Africander  
Women.

lead was seething and hissing as the Africander women poured it into the moulds to make slugs and bullets. The tired horses were quickly taken to the centre of the encampment while the guns were being washed out. The advanced forces of the Matabele were waiting for their main Commando. Then Cilliers, the redoubtable Ironside, officiated at a short religious service. Men, women and children, all knelt down while he prayed and the Matabele Indunas were massing their columns for the assault.

In three divisions, the Impi now advanced on the camp.

From the right and left wings, flanking columns encircled the laager, and then, when the square was completely surrounded, all the line of attack advanced in measured tread on the handful of defenders. Commandant Cilliers' orders were : that all women and children were to take shelter in the row of waggons in the centre of the encampment, and were not to cry out while the battle was going on ; that the defenders, forty in all, were to garrison the four outer rows of waggons, chiefly at two of the angles of the square, from which points their fire could be most effectively directed ; that all the spare guns, loaded, should be distributed among the men ; and that no one was to fire a shot till the Commandant himself had given the signal by firing at the enemy. When the attacking columns had come within thirty paces of the waggons, Cilliers fired one of his guns loaded with slug-shot. In an instant, the thundering reports of other guns followed. Each of the Farmers, after having fired, seized

*The Matabele  
Rush on the  
Laager.*

one of the spare guns, and fired again. The shots, coming in such quick succession and being delivered at such close quarters, did considerable execution among the Matabele. Many of the guns were loaded with slugs. They were even more destructive than bullets.

The Slugs from  
the Elephant  
"Roers."

The attacking columns broke and recoiled; but they were bravely led forward again, and, though numbers went down before the withering fire of the Emigrants, the reserves pressed forward, and the attack was renewed. Some of the bravest and most daring of the assailants actually seized hold of the waggons, and of the thorn branches and chains which formed part of the roughly constructed fortification. After the fight was over, it was found that the wagon which Cilliers himself was defending had the sail cover on the outside perforated in seventy-two different places by stabs from assegais. But the stout forked branches cut from the mimosas, and securely fastened by iron chains, held firmly together; and, although some of the waggons were dragged more than half a foot outside the line, the incessant fire kept up by the Farmers, and the rapidity with which it was delivered, caused great havoc in the ranks of the Matabele, who at last, after having persevered in the assault very pluckily for half an hour, and having lost nearly five hundred of their number, could not be brought to renew the attack. Before finally retreating, they made one or two more rushes, and hurled their lighter assegais over the waggons into the encampment, darting their javelins high up in the air, so as to let them fall down from a considerable height on the defenders of the laager,

The Enemy  
Repulsed.

The Shower of  
Assegais.

whom they could not reach with their heavy stabbing weapons. Showers of spears flew over the encampment while this was going on; for a good many missed the square altogether. But others were aimed with more precision, and fell inside the enclosure. Two of the Farmers, named Nicolaas and Pieter Botha, were killed by these falling assegais, and a good many others were wounded. Two horses, also, were killed, and one wounded.

While the storming of the laager lasted, fourteen of the Farmers, in all, were wounded more or less severely. Fourteen Emigrants wounded: Two killed. Among these was the Commandant himself, who, while defending the waggon by which he was stationed, was stabbed in the thigh. He immediately pulled the assegai out of the wound, and killed the Matabele soldier with the same weapon.

When the fight was over, the Matabele drove off all the live stock belonging to the Emigrants. Cattle and Sheep carried off. About 6000 horned cattle and 40,000 sheep were grazing in the neighbourhood; and all these Kalipi took with him to what was then Matabeleland. Fortunately, the horses were inside the laager, so that they were saved. An attempt was even made to recover the cattle, and the retreating Matabele were followed for some distance, a good many more being killed on the way; but the enemy were still far too numerous to make it possible for the Farmers, few in number and tired as they and their horses now were, to do more. With regret they had to see all their sheep and cattle disappear northwards. It was fifteen days before a relief party, sent by the Rev. Mr. Archbell of Thaba 'N Chu and by their

friends who had retreated to the south, could reach them. During that fortnight the wounded suffered a great deal; for they had no one with them who understood even the most elementary surgery. The women and children were very short of food; for there was neither meat nor milk, the Kaffirs having taken away the milch cows with the other cattle. The supplies of corn and maize were also exhausted. Nor could hunting parties be sent out. The horses were without other food than the grass and herbage which they cropped close to the laager. It was not thought safe for either them or their masters to venture any distance from the camp.

At last the relief party arrived. They brought some provisions, and, also, oxen to draw the waggons southward. These had been sent by some of the other Emigrants who were then at Thaba 'N Chu, the kraal of the Chief Moroko, who, from the first arrival of the trekkers in his district, had been hospitable and kind to them, and by the Rev. Mr. Archbell, Wesleyan missionary at that place. Moroko, himself, sent some of his own oxen to use in the expedition, and when the suffering people arrived at Thaba 'N Chu, he supplied them with corn and maize, as well as other food, for themselves; nor did he forget the little children, for he sent milch cows to give them sustenance and nourishment. The Rev. Mr. Archbell and his wife also showed great kindness and hospitality to all the members of Cilliers' party.\*

Great kindness  
of the Chief  
Moroko and of  
the Rev. Mr.  
Archbell.

\* By these two incursions of the Matabele under Kalipi, the Emigrant-Farmers had sustained severe losses. Not only had large numbers of their cattle and sheep been carried off by the enemy; their ranks had also been thinned by the casualties which have been men-

Why did the Matabele attack the Emigrants? Let us look at this question from both points of view—that of the Matabele themselves, and that of the Pioneers.

Let the Causes of the Matabele Attack.

tioned. Hofstede, in his work on the history of the Orange Free State ("Geschiedenis van den Oranje Vrijstaat") says, p. 34:—"Zoodat by den eersten inval acht-en-twintig, by den tweeden vijf-en-twintig mannen, vrouwen en kinderen om het leven gebracht en hunne goederen, wagens en vee meegenomen werden." ("So that, in the first incursion, twenty-eight, in the second, twenty-five men, women, and children lost their lives, and their property, waggons, and cattle were carried off.") Lion Cachet ("Worstelstrijd der Transvalers aan het Volk van Nederland Verhaald"), after referring to the massacre of Erasmus' party, says (p. 139):—"Dadelijk na den moord werden deze menschen (*i.e.*, the Emigrants in scattered parties along the Vaal and in the country between the Rhenoster and Vet rivers) door de Kaffers aangevallen, en daar zij zich niet onmiddellijk in staat van verdediging konden stellen, moesten velen voor de geweldige overmacht bukken. By een eerste gevecht vielen er 28, en by een ander 25 mannen, vrouwen en kinderen onder de bloedige assegaaien der Kaffers." ("Immediately after the massacre, these people were attacked by the Kaffirs, and as they were unable instantly to render their position secure against the enemy, many of them had to go down before superior numbers. In the first battle, twenty-eight, and in a second, twenty-five men, women, and children fell under the blood-stained assegais of the Kaffirs.")

But only one battle—that against the right wing of the Matabele Impi—was fought during the first incursion of Kalipi's army from Mosega. This engagement took place near the junction of the Mooi and Vaal rivers, early in August, 1836. The only loss on the side of the Farmers here, was one man killed—Adolf Bronkhorst.

Christiaan Harmse, a lad who was looking after some cattle at a distance from the laager, was killed, and several Natives—servants and cattle-herds—were also murdered on the same day. It is now impossible to ascertain the exact number of these. On the previous day, Erasmus' two sons and his companions had been murdered when his camp was rushed by the Matabele, as narrated on p. 289.

Thus we have, in addition: killed—two sons of Stefanus Erasmus; Carel Kruger; Jan Claassen (whose body was never found, but who was assumed to have been killed because he was never heard of subsequently); five coloured men.

At the same time, the left wing of Kalipi's army overpowered the laager of the elder Liebenberg on the Vaal River. Here were massacred—Barend Liebenberg, sen.; Barend Liebenberg, jun.;

Hostilities were commenced by the Kaffirs when they attacked the encampment of Erasmus and his party, who were hunting elephants without the King's consent. The Chief of Matabeleland regarded the obtaining of ivory in the hunting-field in his territories, Hendrik Liebenberg; his wife; Stefanus Liebenberg; Jan du Toit; his wife; four children; D. McDonald (schoolmaster); twelve Native servants and camp-followers.

The right and left wings of the Matabele raiding force were then reunited and marched back to Mosega.

In the second invasion, the scene of hostilities was the country south of the Vaal. Only one battle was fought, that of Vechtkop, and the losses of the Emigrants were two men killed—Nicolaas Potgieter; Pieter Botha. Fourteen were wounded.

Thus we have, altogether, in the two onslaughts on the Emigrants by Kalipi in August and October, 1836—white men, women, and children, killed—twenty.

White men, women, and children, wounded—*first invasion*: in August—number unascertained, although we know from Cilliers' account that there must have been several, and some of them serious cases. *Second invasion*: in October—fourteen.

Coloured servants, Native camp-followers, and herdsmen—Total killed: at least seventeen; according to Theal, twenty-six.

Of the wounded, some would, in all probability, die soon after. These deaths, and also the probable massacre of individual stragglers, would most likely bring the total loss of white men, women, and children to thirty, or thereabouts.

Hofstede and Lion Cachet seem to have taken their figures of the casualties among the Emigrants from Cloete's "Lectures."

Theal's account of the battle of Vechtkop differs from others in stating that Hendrik Potgieter, and not Sarel Cilliers, was in command.

Authorities consulted in drawing up the above description of the attack by the Matabele:—

"*Journal van wijlen Oud Ouderling Sarel A. Cilliers van Kroonstad*" (Hofstede: "*Geschiedenis van den Oranje Vrijstaat*").

Cachet: "*Worstelstrijd der Transvalers.*"

Theal: "*History of South Africa.*"

Narratives (given to the Author in the Transvaal and Orange Free State in 1831) of several surviving Voortrekkers.

The names and figures are taken chiefly from Theal's "*History of South Africa.*"



and in the regions which had been overrun and conquered by his armies, as one of his royal prerogatives. Ivory, grain, and cattle, formed the wealth of the Matabele as well as of the Zulu nation. The Chief was called the "Great Elephant" by his flatterers and admirers. The royal elephant seal was the mark of empire and power at Kapayin and Mosega, as it was in later years at Gabulawayo. To shoot the royal game without the King's permission in territory which had been conquered by the King's armies was, in the eyes of the Matabele, tantamount to defying the King's authority. And these white strangers from the South were powerful magicians. By simply lifting a tube-shaped instrument to their shoulders, they could, instantly, without the intermediary agency of clouds, produce thunder and lightning, and by means of the thunder and lightning they slew the King's elephants. Not only did they defy the King's authority, but they came into the country armed with superior witchcraft. Thus the case presented itself to the wise men and Councillors of the Matabele nation; and, as in after days at Umkungunhlovu, the King's command went forth: "Bulala Amatagati!" ("Kill the sorcerers!"). "It is the King's order." When, at Vecht kop, Cilliers' interpreter asked the Matabele Indunas why they made war against the white people, who had done them no harm, the answer that was shouted in reply amounted to this: "Umsiligaas alone issues commands. He alone can speak. We are his servants, we do his behests. We are not here to discuss or argue: we are here to kill you."

To the Emigrant Farmers it seemed clear that they had been treacherously attacked by the savage warriors, who had received no provocation whatever. They, the Emigrants, had moved northward into a country which they found uninhabited. They had hunted the wild animals as their ancestors had done since the days when Governor Van Riebeeck landed in Table Bay and sent hunting expeditions to kill elephants in the Drakenstein Valley.\*

The pioneers of colonisation and civilisation in Africa south of the Equator, the founders of the Republic, were hunters as well as shepherds and ranchmen. As the frontiers of the old Colony of the Cape had, under the Dutch Governors, extended further and further north, and afterwards, under English administration, north-eastward as well as northward, the upland plateaux swarming with game had called into existence that race of marksmen whose skill and tact in the handling and use of firearms became as proverbial as that of the North American Backwoodsman. Those hunters found that the same vast elevated plains on which the antelopes were so plentiful afforded admirable pasture for sheep and cattle. Hence they took to stock-farming instead of agriculture. The men whose fathers and grandfathers had planted vines and oaks in the Drakenstein and Stellenbosch valleys grazed sheep and cattle on the Great Karroo and in the Tarka whenever they were not engaged in shooting spring-

\* The side of the Simonsberg which faces the Paarl Valley is scarred and seamed by broad white tracks leading downward to the Berg river. These are spoken of to the present day as the elephant paths.

bok, or elephants, or lions. Those hardy frontiersmen often spent the greater part of the day in the saddle. Like the Arabs in the North, the Huguenot-Batavian nomads had come to love the free air of the desert, the fascinating allurements of the chase and of travel and exploration in comparatively unknown regions, more than the artificial advantages of life in towns and villages. The Bothas, the Cilliers, the Du Toits, of 1836, did not care to return to Colesberg when once their horses' heads had been turned to the North. As Potgieter led them through the acacia groves of the Transvaal, they breathed a new existence. The sweet-scented breezes seemed to welcome them to that land, where they should in future have a Government and a Flag of their own.

The period with which we are now dealing was the year, not of the birth, but of the resurrection of the Republic in South Africa. Thousands of Potgieter's countrymen were already on the march towards the northern regions. They were actuated by the same love of liberty as those with the Commandant, and by the same desire to be far removed from that hated Government which had ordered the cruel executions of Slachtersnek. Men, women, and little children, were coming into the wilderness, where a new Nation was to grow up.

A very large number of the Trekkers of Potgieter's party were elephant-hunters. They came to the country north of the Orange and Vaal rivers in search of the large game which was getting scarce in the eastern and north-eastern frontier districts of

the Old Colony. To them, new hunting-fields were as important an inducement to trekking as new pasture-lands for flocks and herds were to other members of the Emigrant expedition. They would certainly not have been willing to acknowledge the right of any black potentate to prevent them from hunting, for it was a privilege which they—infatuated with the free life of the wilderness; passionately fond of the wild sport and exciting adventurous existence of the hunting-field; and, in part, at least, dependent for their living on the produce of the chase—valued as part of their birthright as burghers of South Africa. Their fathers before them, under the Dutch East India Company and the Batavian Republic, had enjoyed this right of hunting whatever wild animals were to be found in the country; and even the British Government had never ventured to deprive them of this privilege. Still, for the sake of peace and prosperity in the new settlement which they were helping to found, the hunters would, no doubt, have been willing to be guided and advised by Potgieter and the leaders of the trek; and, had they seen reason to fear hostilities from the Natives, would have endeavoured to avoid trouble by conciliating whatever Chief ruled in the particular district where they were about to hunt. Indeed, they thought that they had done so. By Potgieter's agreement and compact with Makwana, an alliance had been concluded with those Natives whose territory was nearest to the Vaal River basin. So it appeared to the Emigrants. Probably they did not then at all fear the Matabele, for the simple

reason that they did not know the Matabele King claimed jurisdiction so far south.

As matters stood, Umsiligaas and his councillors looked upon the Emigrants as dangerous wizards, who ought to be killed; who, after entering into an alliance with a race which had been conquered by the Matabele in former days, now had the audacity to come into territory which belonged to the Matabele King, and to kill the King's game, without having asked permission to do so.

But, further, one of the prerogatives of the King was to send his armies—as Chaka had always done—to destroy and to kill. The Amatabele, like their ancestors the Zulus, were warriors, who regarded it as their right to exterminate and kill all other nations. Ever since they first emerged from the passes of the Drakensberg range, and entered the plains to the west of those mountains, Umsiligaas' Impis had spared no tribe which they found in possession of the country through which they passed. Basuto and Mantatee, Bakwana, Barotse, Mashona, Koranna, Griqua, Hottentot, and Bushman had fallen before their spears. Dark trees of the densest forest depths; caves and secret caverns in the ground in unfrequented regions; rocky ridges and inaccessible crags on the high plateaux: such were the inhospitable refuge-shelters for those surviving remnants of the conquered nations which had not been swept to the far North and West by the exterminating tide of savage warriors. Where, here and there, a stand had been made in defence of hearth and home, heaps

of skeletons remained, and the desolate walls of the huts which had been burnt by the invaders showed where the towns and kraals had been destroyed. As the Amatabele warriors went further and further to the west, and continued to kill and destroy all before them save some of the younger women and the children of the conquered tribes, the nations which fled before their spears went northward, westward, southward, and south-eastward; the Barotse and Mashona clans and one section of the Mantatees northward; the Bechuanas westward; the Bushmen, Griquas, Korannas and Hottentots westward and southward; and another section of the Mantatees (now merged in the Basuto nation) south-eastward. The country which had been depopulated was left as a waste wilderness. Those remnants of the survivors, who issued from their hiding-places when famine drove them forth, either fell before the assegais of raiding parties of Matabele which continued to overrun the land, or, finding their villages destroyed, their crops and herds carried off, died of hunger.

Into the wilderness which the armies of Umsiligaas had thus created now came the white men from the South; and one reason why they were attacked, besides those already enumerated, must yet be mentioned. The preceding paragraph of this narrative explains that reason. The Amatabele, like the Zulus, found delight in slaughter. They were brave, fierce warriors, who knew no mercy. To them every nation was an enemy. When they did not attack any people it was only because they were doubtful of victory. They had

not as yet tried their strength against that of the white man. Why should they not attack him? They regarded killing black men—Mashonas, Bakwanas, Barotse, and the rest—as the white man does hunting springbok and other antelopes. That they should kill white men seemed to them quite as natural as that the white men should kill elephants. Only, from their point of view, the white men had, in the present instance, done very wrong to kill elephants without the King's permission. And, therefore, all the more reason to them that they should kill the white men.

Some months before the first arrival of Potgieter's trek at Thaba 'N Chu, a so-called scientific and exploring expedition under Dr. Andrew Smith had been sent northwards by a body of subscribers in Cape Town, many of whom were commercial men, who would naturally favour the extension of British influence and Empire beyond the frontiers, which did not at that time reach to the banks of the Orange.

The expedition was under the patronage of the Government and officials at Cape Town. Missionary influences seem also to have been at work in the starting of this tour; and, perhaps, a good many of the subscribers were not without the thought of forestalling the Emigrants in the territory to the North. No definite alliance was, however, concluded by Dr. Smith with any of those Chiefs whom he visited. He had chains and medals to distribute to them all, as *souvenirs* of his journey to their territories; he was judicious and careful of Native etiquette in the distribution of his presents according to the rank of the different Chiefs.

The Chiefs first visited were those to the immediate north of the Orange, and along the Caledon River basin. Moshesh, Sikonyella, Moroko, Lepui, Pieter Davids, Karolus Baatjie (Carolus Baatje), and Gert Taaibosch were all seen, and received their medals and chains. They were all anxious to make the travellers understand that they desired to be on friendly terms with white people; and they looked upon the mission as having an official character, and upon the presents as tokens on the part of the British Government equivalent to an acknowledgment of their respective ownership of the territory which each occupied. Then Umsiligaas was visited at Mosega. He received the mission well, and was pleased with his presents, two mirrors, two ornamental clocks, and a medal and chain. Nombate, one of his great Indunas, was sent back to Cape Town with Dr. Smith.

In March, 1836, a treaty was signed at Cape Town by Nombate as representing Umsiligaas. The Induna, in attaching his mark to the document, agreed, on behalf of his Chief, to the Matabele nation being considered as in friendly alliance with the Colony, and promised, in his King's name, protection to white people visiting Matabeleland, encouragement to missionaries, and the promotion of civilisation in general. Such were the terms of this treaty, which Sir Benjamin D'Urban signed on behalf of Great Britain. It is, of course, doubtful in how far the Matabele King afterwards thought himself bound by a cross made by one of his Councillors in the presence of the White Chief at Cape Town. It is probable that, when he gave orders to



Kalipi to attack the Emigrants and kill them—men, women, and children—the shrewd savage knew something of what was going on among the white people in South Africa; that these who were now coming northward to his country, and who wanted to establish a Government of their own beyond the borders of the Colony, were not the same nation as those in Cape Town with whom he had come to an agreement, and whose home was six thousand miles across the blue ocean's waves. It is even possible that he had been told by missionaries what they thought of these Afrianders, who were always speaking of their Republic. As early as 1829, Umsiligaas had made the acquaintance of the Rev. Robert Moffat; and, if that distinguished Christian explorer spoke of the Emigrants, to the King, as he and his even more distinguished son-in-law wrote of them in after days, we need not wonder much that the untutored savage potentate considered that he was "*encouraging the missionaries and promoting civilisation,*" when he sent his legions to exterminate the Republicans—man, woman, and child.

The American missionaries, who were well disposed to the Farmers, and who came to Umsiligaas' kraal at Mosega only shortly before the war, were never favourites with the Chief.

Neither Moffat nor Livingstone ever had a good word for the old Colonists of South Africa and for "*the Boers.*"

It has been said that the Emigrants made a mistake in crossing the Vaal without first obtaining Moselikatse's permission to do so. Potgieter and his followers, had

they waited for the Chief's consent before passing through the country, would have admitted his right to be considered the ruler of all the land which his armies had devastated. The Matabele were settled in the western part of the Transvaal only. By far the larger portions of the present districts of Potchefstroom, Heidelberg, Middelburg, and a considerable part of what is now the district of Pretoria, were uninhabited. The Matabele Impis in their invasion had swept away all the inhabitants. Those who escaped death had emigrated to the north-west. The conquerors themselves had passed through the land, but had never occupied it. It seemed to the Farmers a No-Man's-Land. From what we know of Hendrik Potgieter's tact and skill in dealing with Native affairs, it is not unreasonable to suppose it probable that—on his return from the exploring expedition to the North, during which he had heard a great deal as to the real condition of the country and the power of the Matabele King—he would, had not hostilities already commenced, have at least attempted to negotiate with Umsiligaas in order to ensure peace for the new settlement.

## CHAPTER XVI

### HELP IS NEAR

#### VICTORY

Graaff Reinet Trek under Maritz arrives at Thaba 'N Chu—First Volksraad of Thaba 'N Chu, 2nd December, 1836—The Voice of the People—Hapless Condition of Potgieter's Party at the Time—Campaign against Umsiligaas—The Barolongs and Griquas as Allies—Course of the Expedition Northwards—The Evidence of the Matabele Conqueror's Work in the Southern Transvaal—The Military Kraals Kapayin and Mosega—Situation and Position of the Latter—The Battle of Mosega—The Biter Bit—Rout of the Matabele—Waggons and Cattle Recaptured—The Captive Children not found—Return to Thaba 'N Chu—Quarrel between Potgieter and Maritz—Theal's Statement as to Maritz—Foundation of Winburg—Pieter Retief Arrives—Sketch of his Early Life—His Character as a Leader—His Acquirements and Ability—The Constitution of Retief's Trek—Huguenot and British Names—The Volksraad of Winburg—Retief's Grondwet—The State recognises no Equality between Black and White—South Africa a White Man's Country—Exclusion of Missionary Politicians.

WHILE the Emigrants under Potgieter were defending themselves against the attacks of Kalipi's Impis, a large and well organised body of Farmers from the district of Graaff Reinet were approaching the Orange River to join their countrymen in the North. They had no less than a hundred waggons drawn by well-conditioned spans of oxen, and they also brought with them large flocks of sheep and droves of cattle. Their leader was Gerrit Marthinus Maritz. A man of means, but of unselfish and unassuming nature, he had thrown

Graaff Reinet  
Trek arrives at  
Thaba 'N Chu.

Gerrit  
Marthinus  
Maritz.

in his lot with those who were going into the wilderness. Crossing the river opposite the town of Colesberg, Maritz and his column travelled on through what is now the Orange Free State, until they arrived at Thaba 'N Chu, where they were welcomed by the Rev. Mr. Archbell, the Wesleyan missionary, and by the Chief Moroko. Here, also, they met Hermanus Potgieter, who came with tidings of the fights at Vechtkop and at the Vaal River Camp. They immediately organised a relief expedition, and, with the assistance of Moroko, brought the defenders of Vechtkop Camp to Thaba 'N Chu.

The Volksraad  
of Thaba 'N  
Chu.

On the 2nd of December, 1836, a public meeting of the Emigrants then at Thaba 'N Chu was held at that place. It was resolved to elect a Parliamentary body, to which were to be entrusted the duties of a legislative assembly for the new State which the Emigrants were now founding. The members chosen were Gerrit Marthinus Maritz, Andries Hendrik Potgieter, Jan Gerrit Bronkhorst, Christiaan Jacobus Liebenberg, Pieter Greyling, Daniel Kruger, and Stefanus Janse van Vuuren.

These seven members of the primitive *Volksraad* also formed a Court of *Landdrost* and *Heemraden*, exactly similar to the Courts of Justice under the old Dutch administration of the Cape Colony. Commandant Maritz was chosen as Landdrost, and the others were the Heemraden or Councillors.

This first Volksraad of Thaba 'N Chu re-affirmed the principles of the Revolution of 1795. To the older men among the Emigrants, it recalled memories

of the National Assembly of Swellendam, and of the Republic of Graaff Reinet. It declared for the cause for which their relatives and companions had already suffered so much in former days. The seven elected members were the successors of Marthinus Prinsloo and of the Representatives of the Nationalists. They were the "*Protectors of the Voice of the People.*" This new The Voice of the People. land to which the Pioneers had come, and where they had now, through one of their leaders, acquired the first title-deeds of the future Republic, was to be ruled by and for the Colonists of South Africa. There was to be no foreign Government. The flag which Bresler had brought to Graaff Reinet, and which Jacobus Joubert and Jan Kruger had hauled down from the flagstaff of their *Drostdy*, would have no authority and no dominion here. Here would be re-established the Courts of the Batavian Republic—those of the Heemraden, with a Landdrost as the presiding magistrate—which the British Government had abolished. Chosen by the people, this body would again acknowledge the language of the people, which England had proscribed. To this new land would come thousands of those who in the South had witnessed and endured the tyranny and misrule of the imported officials, and of the Government from over the seas. It was fully expected that large numbers would swell the ranks of the Emigrants now north of the Orange River. Therefore, no Constitution was framed for the new State. The State itself was not even defined or proclaimed. All that was declared was that it should be a democratic State; that the voice of the people should rule. All

other considerations were left to a later Popular Representative Assembly. There was, however, pressing necessity for making provision against further hostile action on the part of the Matabele. The military appointment of Commandant-General was, therefore, made, and it was agreed to as a matter of course that the military laws of the Batavian Republic, and of the Cape Colony, should remain in force among the pioneers.

Maritz and his followers had arrived at an opportune moment. Potgieter's scattered encampments had suffered severely from the fierce onslaught of the Matabele Impis. One of the laagers—that of the Liebenbergs—had been almost entirely destroyed. The wounded, in the absence of surgical help, were in agony. The hot weather had commenced. The cattle had been swept off by the Kaffirs, even from the Vechtkop laager, where the Emigrants were victorious. And the cattle formed the only worldly possession of most of Potgieter's followers, who were already impoverished by the losses sustained in the Kaffir wars in the Colony. Even the bare necessaries of life were not to be had in the camp at Vechtkop after the victory. Sarel Cilliers (in his diary) narrates how he saw his wife and children without food, and how he wept for them. The privations and sufferings which they had to endure, and the uncertainty of the future, were calculated to drive to despair the poor wanderers who had followed Andries Hendrik Potgieter from the Tarka and from Colesberg. Their expedition was already falling back at all points.

Hapless  
Condition of  
Potgieter's  
Party.

The territory north of the Vaal river seemed lost to them when Maritz arrived. But none wavered in their devotion to the cause, and in their resolution to brave and overcome the obstacles in their path. The reinforcements from Graaff Reinet were welcomed as brethren and compatriots, actuated by the same motives, and with the same object in view. The waggons and oxen, the horses, arms, and ammunition which they brought with them, were badly wanted in order to make it possible to assume the offensive against the Matabele.

Preparations were now made by the Emigrants for attacking Umsiligaas, chastising him for what was considered his unprovoked hostility, and, if possible, ascertaining the fate of the children who had been carried off by the Matabele in the onslaught on the encampment of the Liebenbergs. The Griqua Chief, Pieter Davids, offered his assistance in the expedition. He desired to liberate his daughter and nephew, who, some time previously, had also been captured by the Matabele.

The Barolong Chieftains, Matchawe, Moroko, Tawane, and Gontse, also volunteered their help. Matchawe had previously been a soldier in the Matabele army, and was to act as guide to the expedition. He, as well as the other Barolong Chiefs, looked upon the Farmers as deliverers, who had come as a godsend to protect them against the dreaded raiders of Umsiligaas. Early in January, 1837, the combined Commando under Maritz and Potgieter, consisting of one hundred and seven mounted farmers, armed with elephant "roers" (heavy

Expedition  
against  
Umsiligaas.

flint-lock muskets carrying 8 oz. balls or big charges of slugs); forty of Pieter David's Griquas, and six of Jan Bloem's Korannas—this contingent also bringing horses and firearms; and about sixty Barolongs under Matchawe, Moroko, Tawane, and Gontse, started from Thaba 'N Chu and proceeded by rapid marches to the Vaal River basin. At Erasmus Drift, the river was crossed. Matchawe, believing that the cattle and the captives taken in the previous year from the Emigrants had been removed by the Matabele to their King's former head kraal (the spot now known as Moselikatse's or Umsiligaas' Nek, not far from the present town of Pretoria), guided the expeditionary force in a north-easterly direction through the ridges of the Gatsrand. Up to this point not a single Native had been met. All the country seemed to be without inhabitants. But now abundant evidence of the existence of a dense population in former days became noticeable. All through the fertile and well-watered region of the Gatsrand, and further to the north, the Africanders found large and extensive ruins of villages and Native kraals, as well as huge heaps of skeletons—the bones bleached white as snow in the fierce sunlight. In some places the remains of the dead were so numerous, and covered such large areas of ground, that it was impossible to count the number of skeletons. The white men saw those mounds of human bones, the heaps piled up so thickly on the plains of the desolate land, in silent awe. Even the horses shivered and trembled at sight of the gruesome relics of the dead. The remains of the thousands slaughtered in former days

Through the  
Land of the  
Dead.



testified to the prowess and fierce cruelty of the foe. Some of the caves north of the Gatsrand had evidently been obstinately defended. Here the vanquished Bakwana Kaffirs had apparently made their last stand. Their bones lay thick enough to commemorate their last stand, and even in the forks of some of the trees, in small forests in the valleys, skeletons were found. Everywhere, as the little column under Maritz travelled northward, the country was voiceless, silent, and desolate. Not a human inhabitant was to be seen—nothing but the old ruins of kraals, the low roofless walls, in many cases charred by fire; the old clearings where maize and Kaffir corn had grown formerly, before the devastators came across the plain from the east; the whitened bones of the thousands that had fallen to the Zulu assegai.

And now the explorers were approaching the region where they expected to encounter their mighty foe. They do not seem even to have known of the existence of Umsiligaas' new military kraal at Mosega, which lay <sup>Mosega.</sup> to the south-west, near the site of the present village of Zeerust. But one day a Griqua or Koranna scout, probably sent on after them by Pieter Davids or Jan Bloem, overtook them, and brought the startling report of the existence of the southern Matabele stronghold, which, it was said, lay in a valley bounded by low hills. There, the scout said, all the captured cattle had been taken, and, probably, the captive children were there also. Turning west, the Commando pushed on rapidly, and, without encountering any living human being—but, in passing through part of the Marico district, again

meeting with abundant evidence of the destructive nature of the war waged by the Matabele against the original inhabitants of the country—advanced towards one of the small passes which lead into the plain on which the kraal of Mosega was built. They reached this pass on the night of the 6th of February, 1837. It was warm enough to do without camp fires, and the leaders were very careful to prevent putting the enemy on his guard against attack. Before daybreak on the morning of 7th February,\* every one was in the saddle.

Potgieter's followers, led by the Commandant himself, and making a wide detour while keeping well behind the range of hills, moved toward another small pass opening on to the plain of Mosega, thus threatening the enemy by a flank attack, while Maritz, the Commandant-General, with his own force, advanced on the pass straight in front and occupied it. The Griqua and Koranna horse auxiliaries, and the Barolong allies on foot, were to skirmish between these two main points of attack, and to cut off any cattle that could be captured.

The Matabele stronghold consisted of fifteen different kraals spread over the plain. In a war against any Native foe, Mosega would have been a very formidable stronghold. In the passes, large numbers could have been held at bay, and even when an attacking force had entered the plain through those passes, it would have required to be very numerous to contend successfully against the circle of warriors (fighting in the Zulu manner) that would have closed around it, and for

\* 17th January, according to Theal.

whose evolutions the ground was admirably suited. Umsiligaas was a great general, trained in the mighty school of Chaka. But the magic of the White man's thunder was too strong even for Chaka's veterans. Mosega was not chosen for defence against horsemen with firearms, and those little passes leading into the plain formed the key of the entire position. When they were in the power of an enemy armed with muskets, and capable of using them as Potgieter and Maritz and their followers were, the day was virtually lost to the defenders of the plain. Everything except numbers was in favour of the attacking force that day. Umsiligaas himself was absent, and so was his chief general, the Induna Kalipi. They had both gone northward towards Kapayin on the Mariqua. Cautiously and quietly as the little invading column had made their way across country, and although they had never seen even a single one of Umsiligaas' warriors, it seems as if they themselves must have been observed by some of the Kalfir King's vigilant scouts when marching northwards. Possibly one or more of these watchful sentinels had given the alarm, and the Chief and his veteran general had both gone northwards to prepare for defending the head kraal against the white men who were now at the very gates of the southern stronghold.

As soon as it was light enough to see well, both Potgieter and Maritz opened fire from their positions. The astonished Matabele flew to arms and were led by their remaining Indunas against the passes where the Farmers were; but the well-directed fire of the latter knocked them over as quickly as they could

Battle of the  
Plain of  
Mosega.

advance up the slope. The Emigrants had their big "elephant roers" charged heavily with slugs. One shot often took effect on as many as five or six of the Matabele. Baffled in their attempts to get at the White men who held the thunder; lamenting the absence of their great Chief and their best general; and, above all, fearing the strangers' powerful magic, the dusky warriors were repeatedly driven back into the plain by well-directed charges on horseback. Many of them were shot down; and repeatedly, when they were reinforced and attempted to form the Zulu circle round the bold horsemen, these again fell back on their original positions. As the sun mounted higher in the heavens, the day became hotter. Even the Kaffirs felt the heat. They fought on. In vain; their men were falling fast. Some were already in utter confusion. Again the White men charged. And then the Matabele warriors broke and fled, leaving about four hundred of their number dead on the battlefield. The waggons that had been taken from the Emigrants at the Vaal river encampments, and also between six and seven thousand head of cattle, fell into the hands of the conquerors. The kraals were burnt.

Victory.

All but one of the objects of the expedition had now been attained. Although Umsiligaas himself had not been encountered, he had been punished for his attack on the Emigrants by this crushing defeat and by the capture of one of his chief military strongholds. The cattle taken from the Vaal river camps had also been recovered, as well as the waggons. Only the un-

fortunate captive children had not been found. It was supposed by the Farmers that, by that time, they had been put to death by the Matabele.

It was the rainy season, and the column travelled without commissariat; nor had the expedition been fitted out to be in the field for any length of time. The horses were tired out, and there was no enemy nearer than fifty miles. It was, therefore, decided by the leaders to return at once to Thaba 'N Chu. With them returned three American missionaries whom they had found at Mosega.

The Retreat  
from Mosega.

During the expedition which had now been brought to such a successful termination, a quarrel had, unfortunately, sprung up between Maritz and Potgieter. Why they quarrelled, or who was in the right, does not appear at all clear from the records which we have of those times. By the primitive Constitution adopted at the meeting of 2nd December, 1836, the highest civil administrative power was vested in Maritz. Possibly Potgieter felt himself a little aggrieved at this; for he and his party had been first in the field, and had already endured such hardships and privations as, perhaps, in their opinion, entitled them to the lead in the new State. Theal—"History of South Africa," vol. iv. page 107 (footnote), quotes a letter written by Maritz to a friend (date 17th March, 1837): "Ik ben uitgetrokken tegen Moselikatse met 107 burgers benevens 40 bastaards en 60 man van de Marolesen,"\* and says: "Mr. Gerrit Maritz, having

Quarrel between  
Potgieter and  
Maritz.

\* "I took the field against Moselikatse with 107 burghers, 40 Griquas, and 60 men of the Barolong's."

quarrelled with Mr. Potgieter, took the whole credit of the expedition to himself." The historian of South Africa, otherwise so fair and impartial in criticism and so guarded against expressing a hasty opinion, is certainly unjust towards Maritz in this sentence. Potgieter and his followers, alone, after what they had already suffered from the Matabele, were not in a position to undertake any expedition whatever when Maritz and his contingent arrived. They were dependent on the latter even for food and the bare necessaries of life. The words quoted from the letter were perfectly natural. Maritz was the Commandant-General. He was chosen as such because his followers were in the majority. Quite possibly, I shall even say very probably, Potgieter was a far more able military leader. Still, he served under Maritz, and it says a very great deal for the good sense and the patriotism of both these men that, although they had had disagreements, they worked together and accomplished the work they had to do. As to Maritz taking all the credit to himself, the man's whole career during the time that he was a leader of the Emigrants north of the Orange and the Vaal and east of the Drakensberg, until the day when he gave his life for them, was one continued series of self-denying personal sacrifice and unselfish devotion to their cause.

Had the meeting of 2nd December decided that Maritz should take the chief position in the civil administration, and that Potgieter should be the chief military leader, no quarrel would have arisen, and the factious differences of those and of later days would

probably have been prevented. But the office of Commandant-General was then, and for some time afterwards, held by the man who was at the same time chosen as the chief Civil Administrator. This arrangement was the cause of a good deal of trouble in after days.

Potgieter and his followers next established them- <sup>Winburg.</sup> selves on the banks of the Vet River, where they founded a township which they called Winburg—in commemoration of their victory over Umsiligaas.

And now, in April, 1837, appears on the scene that striking figure whose nobility of soul, patriotic ardour, and tragic fate, stand out so prominently on the pages of the history of the Republic as to entitle him to be considered pre-eminently the national hero. Pieter Maurits Retief, then about forty years of age, was born in the Wagenmakers Vallei (now Wellington) division of the Paarl district (then part of Stellenbosch). When quite a young man he had emigrated to the Eastern Province of the Colony, where, in the district of the Winterberg, he had become a very influential man and held the office of Field-Commandant. He had married the widow of Commandant Greyling, an officer who fell in the Kaffir war of 1834. After repeatedly representing the grievances of the burghers of his division to the authorities without obtaining redress, he decided to throw in his lot with that of the Emigrants, and to help to found a new State—free from British dominion. His very name was a tower of strength to the cause of the Farmers. It had already become known all over South Africa as that of a man who did not fear to speak his <sup>Pieter Maurits Retief.</sup>

mind freely to the authorities whenever the privileges and the liberties of the White inhabitants had to be defended. His enthusiasm in pleading for what he deemed their rights had caused him to be reprimanded and censured; and now, in leaving the Colony for the North, he published that memorable manifesto which put before the British Government, and before the world, in terse, bold sentences, both the causes of complaint which the Emigrants had against Cape Town and Downing Street, and their aims and intentions as to future policy in the North. This historic document was worded as follows:

“GRAHAMSTOWN, 22nd *January*, 1837.

Manifesto of  
Africander  
Grievances.

“We quit this Colony under the full assurance that the English Government has nothing more to require of us, and will allow us to govern ourselves without its interference in the future.

“We propose, in the course of our journey and on arriving in the country in which we shall permanently reside, to make known to the Native tribes our intentions, and our desire to live in peace and friendly intercourse with them.

“We are resolved, wherever we go, to uphold the first principles of liberty; but while we shall take care that no one shall be held in a state of slavery, it is our determination to maintain such regulations as may suppress crime and preserve the proper relations between master and servant.

“We solemnly declare that we leave this country



with a desire to enjoy a quieter life than we have hitherto had. We shall not molest any people nor deprive them of the smallest property ; but, if attacked, we shall consider ourselves fully justified in defending our persons and effects to the utmost of our ability, against every enemy.

“ We despair of saving this Colony from those evils which threaten it in the turbulent and dishonest conduct of vagrants, who are allowed to infest the country in every part ; nor do we see any prospect of peace or happiness for our children in a country thus distracted by internal commotions.

“ We complain of the severe losses which we have been forced to sustain by the emancipation of our slaves, and the vexatious laws which have been enacted respecting them.

“ We complain of the continual system of plunder which we have for years endured from the Kaffirs and other coloured classes, and particularly by the last invasion of the Colony, which has desolated the frontier districts and ruined most of the inhabitants.

“ We complain of the unjustifiable odium which, under the name of religion, has been cast upon us by interested and dishonest persons, whose testimony is believed in England to the exclusion of all evidence in our favour ; and we can foresee, as the result of this prejudice, nothing but the total ruin of the country.

“ We are now leaving the fruitful land of our birth, in which we have suffered enormous losses and continual vexation, and are about to enter a strange and dangerous territory ; but we go with a firm reliance on

an all-seeing, just, and merciful God, whom we shall always fear, and humbly endeavour to obey.

"In the name of all who leave the Colony with me."

"In the name of all who leave this Colony with me.

P. M. RETIEF."

He was the only one of all the Emigrant leaders who had been born in the West, and, in referring to the emancipation of the slaves, he was calling on the men of his own kith and kin to leave the cool shade of the orange groves and the large oak-trees of *Wagenmakers Vallei*, the *Dal Josafat* and the two *Drakensteins*; he was summoning the farmers of the *Paarl* and of *Stellenbosch* to come to the North and help him to raise the standard of the Republic, instead of continuing to plant vines and fig-trees without labourers to help them.

The circulation of his manifesto among the agriculturists of the West was brought about by the Dutch Press in Cape Town. He knew that, although the Cape and Stellenbosch farmers sympathised with the organisers of the Great Emigration movement, they had themselves not as yet joined that movement in any appreciable numbers. The people of the frontiers had their great grievances, but emancipation of the slaves was not by any means one of these. Pieter Retief knew well that in the West it, or, rather, the way in which it had been brought about, was one of the chief causes of complaint against the British Government; and it was to the West that he was now addressing himself.

Potgieter and Maritz, who had hitherto led the Emigrants, were not possessed either of the accomplishments or of the abilities of Retief. They were not

skilful with the pen, and they did not know English. They were simple, homely, honest, farmer commandants, whose only literature was the Bible. As to future policy, they probably had no very definite idea. Their main objects were to find pasture-lands and hunting-fields for their followers. Besides these points of immediate practical importance, they saw the necessity of getting well away from the English dominions, and of being ready and capable of defending themselves from the Natives, when attacked, at the same time being careful to form alliances with the different tribes that were willing to do so, and to have cessions of territory to themselves and their descendants properly notified by the legal Chiefs of these tribes. These were all Retief's Policy. matters of the utmost weight and consequence, and in all these they had shown themselves capable leaders, worthy of the trust placed in them. But the man who now stepped into the arena had loftier aspirations and Aspirations. higher ambitions. In the Winterberg mountains he had brooded over the wrongs of his nation. In the shades of Slachtersnek he had stood by Hendrik Prinsloo's grave. Like Joan of Arc, he had heard voices. And now his proud spirit had resolved to lead his people to the North, and then to the sea. He had seen more of South Africa than the others. He had been brought up in the Western Province of the Colony, where the industrial and agricultural pursuits of the people, as well as the scenery, climate, and configuration of the country, are so totally different from what pertains in the Eastern district as to make the one a different world from the other. Born and educated in

the West, and with a career in the East already not without distinction, Retief was somewhat of a cosmopolitan as well as a patriot. He was going to found a State, not for cattle-farmers and stock-graziers alone. He meant to build up a free Republic for all White Africanders, where all industries and commercial pursuits could thrive; and, therefore, he thought it of the greatest importance to secure an independent seaboard. He had grown up and worked with the evidences of the misrule and stupidity of the Cape Town officials and of Downing Street all round him. The grumbling and the muttered curses of the Frontiersmen had told him of the growing and increasing discontent which was spreading through South Africa. He thought he saw the opportunity to raise up a State unfettered by British dominion, and to make his Nation free and independent. A harbour on the Indian Ocean would give access to the rest of the world. In his patriotic day-dreams he saw his countrymen coming from the East and from the West to help him transform the wilderness to civilisation; towns and villages spring up in the Republic; commerce and industry foster immigration from abroad, initiate intercourse with other free peoples, and make his own country great and glorious among the nations of the earth—with a flag and a maritime territory of its own. Pretorius and his Commandants afterwards fought hard for the realisation of Retief's dreams, when they conquered Zululand and opposed the British at Congella and on the Bay of Natal.

Patriotic Day  
Dreams.

Thoroughly understanding his own countrymen and the situation of the country; seeing clearly what mad-

for weakness and what for strength in the popular cause; gifted with a genius for organising and for commanding, and with a power—far above that of his compeers—for inspiring confidence and trust; impulsive and enthusiastic, and at the same time resolute and determined; characterised by restless activity and untiring energy in the execution of his projects; bold and daring to the verge of rashness in his enterprises; of amiable, frank, and generous disposition; and eminently fitted by all these great qualities to be a leader of men: Retief, moreover, possessed acquirements which were rare accomplishments at a time and in a country where few opportunities existed for obtaining such education as can be derived from schools and from reading. He not only understood his own Nation—Eastern as well as Western Province Africanders—he was well up in Dutch, and knew something of the literature of Holland as far as it related to politics and history. He had, besides, a good knowledge of English, which he could speak and write fluently. He was an orator and a keen student of the history of his own times, not only in his own country, but also in the outer world. He was as enlightened and educated an Africander as it was possible to find in those days. One fault, only, he may have had as a leader, although even that was a noble trait in his character as a man. He was of too chivalrous a nature to be distrustful even of savages and barbarians; and further, counting his own life and his own safety as nothing, he often forgot or failed to realise what an irreparable loss his death would be to the new State which he was founding.

Acquirements  
and Accomplish-  
ments.

The Others  
from the  
Winterberg.

Retief's followers—sometimes called the fourth trek—came from the slopes and valleys of the Winterberg range, that mountain chain on the frontiers of the district in which so many of the inhabitants had been implicated in the rising of Slachtersnek in 1815.

British Names  
among Retief's  
Followers.

The party consisted of the Commandant and his family, "James Edwards and family, three families Greyling, seven families Van Rensburg, two families Malan, three families Viljoen, one family Meyer, one family Van Dyk, two families Joubert, one family Dreyer, three families Van Staden, and a schoolmaster named Alfred Smith, in all one hundred and eight individuals, besides servants"—(THEAL).

In looking over this list, one or two important points are noticeable. For the first time, if we except the case of D. McDonald who came with the Liebenbergs in Potgieter's trek, British names are found among the Emigrants. These are only James Edwards and family, and the schoolmaster, Alfred Smith; but the fact of their presence is very significant. Taken in conjunction with the subsequent cordial welcome and support given to the Emigrants by the English settlers on the Bay of Natal, it shows the remarkable tact and skill which Retief brought to bear in gaining supporters from all sections of the White inhabitants of South Africa; and the schoolmaster's name proves how manifestly untrue is the assertion that has so often been made by writers on the subject of the trek: viz., that the Emigrants, in going to the North and away from the Colony, were actuated mainly by anti-English and race prejudices. The very large pro-

portion of descendants of Huguenots with the party—Malans, Viljoens, and Jouberts, besides Retief himself—is also noteworthy.

It was in April, 1837, when Retief's trek arrived at Thaba 'N Chu, and on the 6th of June there was a public meeting at Winburg. The followers of Potgieter and Maritz were there with those of Retief, who had already succeeded in persuading the two leaders that the quarrel between them was ill-timed, and must be made up in order to secure success and prosperity to the new State. Every one recognised that an able man had come among them. It was resolved to elect a new Volksraad. Retief was chosen Governor and Commandant-General, and Maritz President of the Volksraad and Landdrost (or Magistrate), with a Court of six Heemraden to advise and assist him. The new members of the Volksraad chosen that day were J. G. L. Bronkhorst, L. S. van Vuuren, E. F. Liebenberg, P. J. Greyling, and M. Oosthuizen.

Volksraad of  
Winburg.

A provisional Constitution, consisting of nine articles, was then drawn up and adopted.

By the terms of this Constitution (*Eerste Grondwet*) the head of the Executive Government was to be the Commandant-General, and with him were to act the Landdrost and Heemraden. All these, as well as the Volksraad, which was to be the Legislative Assembly, were to be elected by the people. All White inhabitants and Emigrants were to be citizens of the new State. Every citizen or burgher was to have equal rights, and was to be eligible for any office. The Dutch Reformed Church was to be the State

Eerste  
Grondwet.

Church. Slavery was not to be allowed, and all Natives were to be under the protection of the law. But there was to be no civil and political equality between Black and White. No Native could be an official either in Church or State; and all White people who joined the Emigrants would have to make a declaration on oath of having no connection whatever with the London Missionary Society.

Friendly relations with other nations were to be cultivated; and all land and other property acquired for the new State should be obtained by legal treaty-cession or purchase; *i.e.*, should not be taken from the Natives by violence or fraud.

In case of doubt as to the law on any particular point, the old laws of the Batavian Republic were to be referred to, to decide that point.

This simple Constitution was regarded as provisional, and is now known as Retief's Grondwet.

Main feature  
in Constitution  
of First  
Republic.

The striking feature of this Constitution is the refusal to acknowledge in it the principle of race equality, then so strongly advocated by Dr. Philip and the London Missionary Society.

This refusal has been interpreted in England—or rather, has been represented by Dr. Philip's adherents in Cape Town and elsewhere—as meaning injustice to the Black races of South Africa; and a great deal has been said and written in this connection about the cruelty and the oppressive tyranny of “*the Boers*.”

But Retief and his followers, in founding their State and drawing up its Constitution, believed that it was their duty to secure the safety—by assuring the



supremacy—of the White race in that part of Africa in which they were interested, and to prevent that also becoming a Black Colony—a home unfit for themselves and their descendants. Their view was that the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope was then being ruined by the bad government of the English philanthropists. Regarding South Africa as what it really was—and, for that matter, still is—an island outpost of White civilisation in a sea of Black savagery, they saw in the principle of complete equality for Natives with Europeans nothing less than political suicide. Leaving to others the risky experiment of launching Utopiawards, on that dark ocean's boundless waves, the frail Equality barque freighted with the destiny of a people, they themselves unhesitatingly expressed the opinion that the Missionary Society, which then so actively promulgated the doctrine of political privileges for the Natives, was an enemy to all true progress and to the just and wise government of the country.

The Native question is still that on which all other questions of policy in every part of South Africa turn. In 1795, when the Republic was first founded, its originators and sponsors, the Frontiersmen of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet, unanimously declared themselves in favour of what afterwards became the main clause of the *Eerste Grondwet* of Winburg. The substance of the Constitution written down at this place, in 1837, was: "This land shall be a White man's country. We want justice, but not political equality, for Black and White." It is interesting to notice that

now, after a century of British rule in Imperial South Africa, the statesmen of the Cape and Natal are coming to say exactly the same thing.

“The brain of Africa is white; the muscle and the sinew are black,” says a British Governor of Natal, to-day.

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