THE TRANSVAAL AND
THE BOERS
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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE 
SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, WITH A CHAPTER 
ON THE ORANGE FREE STATE

BY

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Vitius argentum est auro, virtutibus aurum

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PREFACE

The war which is now unhappily raging in South Africa has brought into special prominence the affairs of the two Boer States which are embroiled with us. Before the South African Republic and the Orange Free State pass out of independent existence, many may be glad to read their story in a convenient and impartial form. History, as Seeley and Freeman were so fond of reminding us, is but past politics, as politics are history in the making. So this book may be found of some use in the political discussions which have been silenced only for the moment by the bugles and the guns. To know how a thing has come into existence is no bad preliminary for knowing what it is; and only a competent acquaintance with the history of the two Boer States can throw light on some questions which have suddenly become of great practical importance to our Empire.

It is no easy task to write the history of South Africa, where the mirage has almost as strange effects as that described by Alphonse Daudet in Provence. Especially is it hard to see steadily and
whole when it is needful to look across the dust
of battle and the shouting. But I have done my
best to be impartial, and to write, not as an advo-
cate, but as a historian, *nullius addictus jurare in
verba magistri*. The earlier part of the present volume
is largely based on a sketch published in 1896, with
the same title, which has been out of print for about
three years. This has now been rewritten through-
out, and much has been added to it. The last six
chapters are entirely new. In them I have en-
deavoured to give a coherent account of the ten
years’ struggle between Boers and Outlanders for
the supremacy in the Transvaal, as it looks to un-
baised people in England. Practically all the books
of importance on the subject have been consulted;
amongst them I must specially name the laborious
volumes of Mr. Theal and the picturesque book of
Dr. Voigt, which are indispensable to all who would
understand the earlier history of the Boers. Among
the numerous books that have been written on South
Africa since the Jameson raid, I must acknowledge
special obligation to Mr. Bryce’s weighty and sug-
gestive “*Impressions of South Africa*,” Mr. H. C.
Thomson’s very lucid and able account of “*Rhodesia
and its Government*,” the Hon. A. Wilmot’s “*History
of Our Own Times in South Africa*,” and Mr. J. P.
FitzPatrick’s official presentation of the Outlander
case in his ably written though biassed “*Transvaal
from Within*.” To the compilers of Blue Books
and other official publications I must express gratitude tempered with fatigue. It would be tedious even to enumerate the other writers who have given me their silent assistance, and this general acknowledgment will, I hope, satisfy their claims.

W. E. G. F.
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THE TRANNSVAAL AND
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CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATION OF CAPE COLONY

It has long been a matter of dispute amongst eminent geographers whether what we call the Cape of Good Hope was known to the ancient world. Herodotus informed us that a Phoenician expedition had circumnavigated Africa about two centuries before his day, sailing by King Necho's canal from the Nile to the Arabian Gulf, following the sun ever southward, and so, in three years, coming to the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar), and from them by the Mediterranean back to Egypt. This account, however, is now gravely doubted by some authorities on the ground of its lack of verisimilar detail, whilst others are content to accept it as a record of fact. The voyage of the Carthaginian Hanno, long miscalled his Circumnavigation of Africa, is universally accepted as a true story. But Hanno, who sailed

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from Carthage with sixty ships about 500 B.C., and founded many colonies along the west coast of Africa, does not seem to have got further on his southward journey from the Mediterranean than Senegambia, or at farthest the Bight of Benin. One Eudoxus, in the second century before Christ, is said to have found on the Æthiopian coast of East Africa the figure-head of a vessel which appeared to have come thither from Gades in Spain—the modern Cadiz—but its crew had perished dumbly in their enterprise, as did Eudoxus himself when he attempted to retrace their course. Strabo, the greatest geographer of the ancient world, refused to believe any of these stories, and indeed laid down the doctrine that the Torrid Zone was, by reason of its fervent heat, impassable by man; whereby he may have contributed to delay the discovery of the Cape for some fifteen centuries. At the same time, the maps of "the world as known to the ancients," given in the latest French and German historical atlases, all depict the African continent in a form approaching more or less roughly the triangular shape so familiar to us, and thereby indicate, what is no doubt the fact, that it was generally believed by the ancients to terminate in a southern point rather than to stretch on for ever, although practically nothing very definite was known about it.

The actual finding of the Cape, however, was left for the Epoch of the Great Discoveries at the end of the fifteenth century, when the spirit of exploration and adventure was in the air, and all
stout sailors yearned, with Ulysses, to break through the curtain that had for so many centuries overshadowed

"That untravelled world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever, when we move."

It was the instigation of Prince Henry the Navigator, the fifth centenary of whose birth the world was lately engaged in celebrating, that sent the Portuguese captains out into the Atlantic to search for the southern secrets of the Dark Continent. For their behoof he obtained a Papal Bull granting to the crown of Portugal authority over all the lands it might discover in the Atlantic, as far as and including India, with an offer of plenary indulgence to all who should die in the course of these expeditions. Prince Henry died a generation before the goal was reached, but his spirit lived after him in the work that he had set on foot. In 1486 one Bartoloméo Diaz sailed from Lisbon with three little vessels: the largest did not exceed fifty tons. Voyaging ever southwards, far beyond the farthest point of the African coast yet known, Diaz came at last to the desolate inlet of Angra Pequena, since made famous by the German annexation of Namaqualand, where "for the first time Christian men trod the soil of Africa south of the tropic." Still holding on his southward course, Diaz encountered heavy gales which blew him clean out of sight of land. When at length he was able to turn east again, no shore was to be found where it should have been expected. Diaz, in fact, had passed the Cape, and when he
finally turned north and found the coast again, it was somewhere between Cape Agulhas—the Needles—and Algoa Bay. Still going on, Diaz came to the Great Fish River. There his crew felt that enough had been done for glory, and forced him to turn.

It was on the way home that the "hidden mighty head of land," as Camoens called it, was first seen. Diaz christened it the Cape of all the Tempests or the Stormy Cape, *Cabo de todos los Tormentos* or *Cabo Tormentoso*, in honour of the quality that seamen recognize even to-day. But the King of Portugal thought this a name of ill-omen, and substituted that of the Cape of Good Hope, in allusion to the possibility of reaching India by the new route. Eleven years later the great Vasco da Gama fulfilled this hope. In a voyage that lasted from 1497 to 1499 he sailed round the Cape, and boldly crossed the Indian Ocean to Calicut, being the first white man to reach India by sea. He visited Natal on his journey to India, and named it in honour of its discovery being made on Christmas Day.

The ocean highway to the rich lands of the East, which has played so important a part in the history of the world and the development of the British Empire, was now at last discovered. For a hundred years it was left to the sole use of the Portuguese, who were content to regard the Cape merely as a half-way house to India, where provisions and water could be obtained, and shelter might be found in stress of weather. Table Mountain took its name from them, but there ended their contribution to
South African geography. The next act in the drama of discovery was inaugurated by the voyage of the English Pelican round the world. "We ran hard aboard the Cape," says Drake's log, "finding the report of the Portuguese to be most false, who affirm that it is the most dangerous cape of the world, never without intolerable storms and present danger to travellers who come near the same. This Cape is a most stately thing, and the fairest cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth." Ten years later Linschoten describes the innocent surprise of a Portuguese captain "that God the Lord caused them, who were good Christians and Catholics, with large and strong ships, always to pass the Cape with such great and violent tempests and damage, and the English, who were heretics and blasphemers, passed it so easily with small and weak ships." One cannot help thinking that it is possible that the superior seamanship of the English may have counterbalanced their heresy.

From the year 1591 onwards English ships began to make Table Bay a regular port of call on the way to the East Indies. They set a good precedent by treating the natives with kindness, which had a far better effect than the cannon-shot and arrow-flights which the Portuguese had been in the habit of administering. In 1595 the Dutch entered Table Bay for the first time. The decay of the Portuguese supremacy in the East dates from the end of the sixteenth century, and especially from the formation of the English East India Company in 1600 and of
a similar Dutch Company in 1602. Both English and Dutch speedily perceived the immense value of the Cape as a permanent station, to which the Portuguese had never paid attention. It is worthy of note, by such as do not already know it, that the first step towards colonization was actually taken by Englishmen. In 1620 two captains of East Indiamen—Shillinge and Fitz-Herbert—hoisted the English flag above Table Bay, and formally annexed the country around, for the very modern reason, amongst others, that it was better that the Dutch, or any other nation whatsoever, should be subjects of the King of England, "than that his subjects should be subject to them or to any other." But the cautious Government of James I. disavowed the action of these headstrong sailors; nearly two centuries were to pass before the flag of England should fly permanently at the Cape.

The Charter of the Netherlands East India Company was signed and sealed on March 20, 1602. That Company received the monopoly of trade with the East, so far as the United Provinces had a say in the matter, and was despotically governed by a Chamber of seventeen Directors. It soon acquired most of the trade of China, Ceylon, Malaya, the Moluccas, Sumatra, and Java, much of which Holland still keeps under her flag, though China was too big a handful, and Ceylon, like India, was destined to another master. For many years the Dutch East Indiamen found Table Bay a convenient port of call for fresh water and meat, whilst
a rough-and-ready post-office was established by the employment of marked stones and the trunks of hollow trees. But it was not until 1652 that the Company, incited by the reports of some ship-wrecked sailors who had explored the land whilst waiting for a vessel to rescue them, sent out an expedition to take regular possession of the Cape and Table Bay. It was commanded by one Jan van Riebeek, formerly a surgeon in the Company's service, who is described by Mr. Theal as a little fiery-tempered, resolute man in the prime of life, with perfect health, unbounded energy, and untiring zeal. Dr. Jan, as he was called by his followers, carried out his mission with entire success, built a fort under Table Mountain, and founded that Dutch rule at the Cape which continued without a break for nearly a century and a half, and found its direct descendant in the South African Republic and the Orange Free State.

The native inhabitants whom Riebeek found in possession of the Cape on his arrival were of two distinct races. The Hottentots, as the Dutch called the more advanced race, in an apparent attempt to imitate the jabbering of those who called themselves by the prouder title of Khoi-Khoi, "Men of Men," occupied the best parts of the land, where they led the life of pastoral nomads. The Dutch, whose great need was cattle, speedily came into close relations with the Hottentots, with whom they and their imported negroes freely mingled their blood, and so produced a half-breed race of slaves which
will be again mentioned in the next chapter. The Hottentots possessed the woolly hair, flat nose, and thick lips of the negro, but differed from him in their yellowish-brown complexions, somewhat obliquely set eyes, triangular-shaped faces, and certain other marked physical characteristics. Their language was rendered unique by its strange and bewildering clicks, which scarcely any European tongue can pronounce. Besides these, there were the tiny wandering hunters known as Bushmen, whom anthropologists have pronounced to be the original stock of the Hottentot race, the true aborigines of South Africa, unchanged by crossing with those negroid races of the north which have so modified the less exclusive Hottentots. With the wild and timorous Bushmen the Dutch had little or no friendly traffic; but the Hottentots soon became a factor that cannot be omitted from any account of the history and even the ancestry of the Boers.

The original intention of the Dutch East India Company was to fortify the Cape solely as a half-way house to India, where the settled servants of the Company might trade with the natives for regular supplies of cattle and vegetables, and so victual all passing Dutch ships. But it was in the nature of things that European settlers on the fringe of so lovely and fertile a country as surrounds the Cape should wish to cultivate it themselves. The primæval instinct of the farmer had its way. Also the natives proved unwilling to trade, and were at best untrustworthy providers, so that the
Commandant was forced, much against his wish, to let some of his men leave the service and turn farmers and stock-raisers. As the "free burghers," these were the first real colonists of the Cape. In the course of the seventeenth century their number was greatly augmented, both by the freeing of more soldiers and sailors for work on the land, by the arrival of would-be colonists from Holland, Germany, and France, and by their own rapid production of families with the aid of the complying Hottentot women or of the Dutch wives sent out from Amsterdam to that end. As their number increased, these farmers or "Boers" spread over the land, until in the year 1780 they had advanced to the Great Fish River, where they found themselves at last face to face with the Kaffirs, a third native race, who were more warlike than the gentle Hottentots, and not so easily to be dispossessed of the soil. All this time, however, it is easy to see that the colonization of the Cape had been due rather to accident and the force of circumstances than to any intention on the part of Holland. In the eyes of the Dutch East India Company the colonists were merely intruders to be more or less patiently tolerated, who were one and all liable to military or civil service under the Company if called upon. The "half-way house" theory of the Cape still prevailed.

In 1795 the Company's rule came to a sudden end. It is unlikely that it would, in any case, have lasted much longer, in face of the growing hostility
of theburghers, Boers, orfarmers, who were then acquiring that deep distaste for a settled government which is one of the great secrets of their character and policy to-day. During the whole rule of the Dutch East India Company the Boers were subject to two influences, neither of which was very likely to increase their respect for law and order. The first was that of pioneer work; the second that of bad government. The limits of the Colony were continually being extended amongst savage tribes and wild animals, and the settler on the advancing border was compelled to be not only a law but a police unto himself. In the free air of the karroo and the mountains, these pioneer adventurers were turned into hardy frontiers-men, related in their simple virtues to the Leatherstockings of America, skilled in the use of firearms, accustomed to an outdoor life, proof against fatigue, and inured to hardship and danger. Among such men, as Fenimore Cooper has so well shown, respect for government, law and order cannot be expected to be a conspicuous quality.

Such government as they knew at the Cape under the rule of the Company was not even calculated to invite respect. Within fifty years after Riebeek's landing the Colony was engaged in an internecine struggle between the Governor and his official underlings on the one hand, and the great body of the settlers on the other. The colonists asserted their right to personal liberty, to exemption from arbitrary arrest, to the free administration of justice,
to the right of open market—in a word, to the position of Dutch citizens. The Governor, Van der Stell of infamous memory, asserted his authority to rule as he chose and to ignore all rights that clashed with his will. Appeal was made to Holland, and the burghers carried their point after a good deal of suffering. Still it was tacitly understood that they existed for the Company—not the Company for them. Throughout the eighteenth century this principle led to continual friction: no man of Teutonic stock can long endure the unchecked government of a commercial association. About 1792, when the white population of the Cape amounted to some 15,000 souls, disaffection drew to a head. The same causes that led, forty years later, to the foundation of the Transvaal and Orange States were at work. The Government at Cape Town heavily taxed the settlers on the border, which had then reached the Great Fish River; but it was quite incompetent to perform the one service which they asked in return, and guard them from the incursions of the warlike and bloodthirsty Kaffirs, with whom the growing colony had then for the first time come into contact. The Government would not even allow the frontiersmen to appoint their own leaders and make war on their own account. Was it right, the Boers began to ask themselves, that they should suffer the imminent risk of ruin and slaughter to save the purse of foreign merchants six thousand miles away? There was no hesitation as to the answer. In 1795 the two frontier districts which were chiefly concerned,
Graaff Reinet and Swellendam, threw off the Company's yoke and proclaimed the Republic.

Meantime, however, events had taken place in Europe that were speedily to end these earliest Boer Republics. The gigantic convulsion of the French Revolution, like the Lisbon earthquake or the eruption of Krakatoa, made itself felt half across the world, and the Cape was handed over to the temporary guardianship of England, as the only Power that could safely preserve it from the opening clutches of greedy France.

The officials at the Cape readily submitted to the British force, which arrived with the mandate of the Prince of Orange to exercise his authority until the world should be at peace again. The Republic of Swellendam accepted the wise and generous terms offered by General Craig, and agreed to try whether British government was better than Dutch. Only the frontiersmen of Graaff Reinet held out, and pulled down the British flag which had been hoisted over their chief building. It is highly significant that the names of Kruger and Joubert occur amongst those of the leaders in this act. We have always had to reckon in the Transvaal with a hereditary distrust of the English flag, as well as a dislike of all governments that profess to govern. Troops were sent against Graaff Reinet, which was in no case to offer resistance, and gave in without fighting, although the Commandant, Prinsloo, took to the open country with a handful of men, and held out for some years. Ultimately he was captured,
tried and condemned to death; the sentence was commuted, and he lingered in prison until England's departure from the Cape, after the Peace of Amiens, in 1803.

No attempt was made to restore the Company's rule. Amid general rejoicings, the Batavian Republic took its place. But the restoration of the Cape to Holland was only of the briefest duration. In 1806 an expedition of sixty-three ships and seven thousand troops, under Sir David Baird, recaptured Cape Town after a little fighting and the loss of about a hundred lives. For the next eight years the Cape, still nominally belonging to Holland, was in the hands of an English Governor, who was practically an autocrat. In 1815 the Treaty of Vienna gave the Cape in name as well as in fact to England, who paid Holland liberally for a possession that had long been a source of expense rather than of revenue. With this date begins the true history of Cape Colony. What we actually took over consisted of the forts, castle, and possessions of the Dutch East India Company at Cape Town, who had a kind of loose control over a few thousands of discontented Boers scattered over an immense range of country. The white population was then about 26,000 souls. It has increased nearly twentyfold in the eighty years of the British occupation.

The further history of the Cape Colony only concerns us at present in so far as it bears upon the founding of the Transvaal State. Under this head we must notice in passing that in 1799 the first
English missionaries came out to the Cape to carry on the work which had already been begun by Schmidt, the apostle of the Hottentots. It was their privilege, by insisting upon the rights of the black and the brown man to a place, in this world and the next, alongside the white, to intensify that "native question" upon which the Transvaal Boers and the English Government at last parted company.

The more or less continuous struggle for constitutional privileges and political rights in which the Boers had been engaged during the eighteenth century had laid the first foundation of their nationality, which has always been cemented rather by pressure from without than by cohesion from within. Twice within our own memory we have seen the Transvaal State ripe for dissolution, when the English annexation in the first place and the Jameson raid in the second restored the necessary binding force to its loosening elements. In 1815, under the third English Governor, Lord Charles Somerset, a body of Boers, settled near the frontier of the Colony, broke out into open rebellion, the state in which the English had found them, indeed, in 1795, but which they had abandoned for twenty years in the hope that the new government would of its own accord remedy the grievances which they alleged. The change in the system of land-tenure, which was alleged to inflict great hardships on poor farmers, and the new consideration given to Hottentot complaints against white men, as shown in the "Black Circuit" of 1812, undeceived them.
A certain Bezuidenhout, summoned to answer a charge of ill-treating a Hottentot servant, resisted in arms, and was shot dead by Hottentot soldiers in the English service attempting to arrest him. His friends and neighbours at once made preparations for a rising against the English. The strongest argument which they could use to incite the colonists at large to join them was that the English Government had committed a crime against humanity by levying Hottentot soldiers for use against the white inhabitants of South Africa. The care with which our military authorities announced their intention of using no native Indian troops in the second Transvaal war shows that such an argument would still hold valid. It was a little inconsistent in the insurgent Boers that they unsuccessfully urged one of the most powerful of the Kaffir chiefs to join them. Fortunately, the mission to Gaika was unsuccessful, and only resulted in alienating from the rebels a good deal of the colonial sympathy with them which might otherwise have been practically shown. Jan Bezuidenhout, brother of the slain man and leader of the insurgents, could only muster some fifty followers: nearly as many Boers volunteered to join the British force which was sent to crush him. He took his stand on the pass known as Slachtersnek, in the Winterberg Mountains, and there awaited the British attack. Before it his undrilled levies melted away, and Bezuidenhout himself was left alone to continue the hopeless conflict. He fell fighting bravely, with his equally
courageous wife and son at his side. It is impossible not to wish that such valour had been expended in a better cause; the Bezuidenhouts had in them something of the stuff of which Tells and Hofers are made. The insane attempt was thus put down, with the loss of one life on each side. Six of the rebels were sentenced to death for high treason: one was let off with transportation, but the other five were executed in due course. There has been much discussion as to the exact reasons for this heavy punishment, which do not concern us here. But whether or not it was a crime, as has been contended, it was indubitably a blunder. At the moment it seemed effective; but the bill for Slachtersnek was sent in later on, and perhaps we are even now engaged in paying a final instalment of it. "From that day order was maintained on the frontier," says Mr. Theal, "and to all outward appearance the farmers were loyal; but in their hearts they preserved the memory of this event, which to them appeared an act of cruelty and oppression, and which was one of the causes of that feeling of animosity towards the English Government which resulted in after years in their voluntary expatriation."

In 1819 there broke out the fifth—generally called the first—of the wretched but inevitable Kaffir wars, which formed part (like all our native wars in South Africa) of that process of securely settling white men upon land formerly owned by black ones, which we are accustomed to call the
advance of civilization. In 1820 the stream of British emigrants which always follows the flag began to become important.

Large numbers of emigrants from the United Kingdom settled about this time in the country round Algoa Bay. From then onward consistent but ill-advised attempts were made by the Government of Cape Colony to assure the predominance of the British element, on whom the Boers looked, not without reason, as new-comers and Outlanders who had done nothing to drive back the verge of savagery from the land which they occupied. Not content with assuring equal rights to all white settlers, the authorities tried to discourage the continued existence of the Dutch racial element. In 1825, for instance, they forbade the use of the Dutch language in official documents. Three years later they enacted that all legal proceedings must be conducted in English, and replaced the local courts of Landdrost and Heemraden by Magistrates’ Courts, over which the English Civil Commissioners presided, much as in India. They went too far, and oppressed the English emigrants as well as the Dutch to such an extent that the Home Government had to interfere in 1827, and insist upon important reforms, which satisfied the English settlers, but left the grievances of the Dutch element only remedied in part. By that time the mischief was done. A large number of the Boers, especially in the outlying districts near the border, had come to the conclusion that the new government was worse than the old—
King Log had been replaced by King Stork. They could protect themselves against the Kaffirs, but not against the English.

In the mean time the English officials had been employing themselves by drafting a constitution. The Dutch farmers received most of the boons they wanted in the way of fair government and relief from injustice, and they were prepared to remember that, after all, they were the distant cousins of these English. But, unfortunately, the English legislators did not stop there. They actually ventured to fancy that the Hottentots and blacks had some civil rights; and the fat was at once in the fire, where it has been frizzling and flaming ever since.

In 1828 was passed the famous Fiftieth Ordinance, to which in reality the Transvaal owes its present existence as an independent Boer State. Up to this time the position of the Hottentots had been wretched in the extreme. Vagrancy regulations promulgated in 1809, and based upon the Dutch system of the preceding century, had reduced the whole race to what was practically a condition of serfdom. Any Hottentot travelling without a magistrate's pass was liable to be arrested and assigned as a servant to any white man who desired him. It was further enacted in 1812 that Hottentot children, on reaching the age of eight, should be apprenticed under regulations which made them serfs in all but name. In fact, during the first few years of the English occupation, legislative influence, as brought to bear on the natives, riveted their
chains more tightly than before. The Hottentot servant who preferred a charge of ill-usage against his or her master, did so on peril of being incarcerated with thieves or murderers for a week or a month (while the case was being tried), and of being flogged in addition if the case should break down. Effect, indeed, was given everywhere to that broad distinction made by the Boer mind between white and black, to the latter of whom, in all shades, neither civil nor religious rights of any sort were allowed, more than to the four-legged cattle who joined with them to make up the live-stock of the Colony. For a century and a half this view had been gaining strength, and it blazed out brightly in the first years of the English rule; but its total extinction was near at hand.

The missionaries deserve the chief honour of bringing about the change. To the consciousness of this is due the antipathy with which they were regarded by almost all the whites of the Cape two generations ago, and which still survives amongst the less enlightened Boers of the inland districts. Some of the obloquy thrown on the early missionaries, whose converts were accused of making fine words an excuse for laziness and vice, was probably deserved: what the Chinese call "rice Christians" must always occur in the early history of a mission. But the head and front of the missionaries' offending appear very differently to our modern eyes: they raised the price of labour by increasing the value which the natives set upon themselves and their
ideas of the necessaries of life. At the mission stations the Hottentot learnt for the first time that he was a man, and that he ought to "be'ayve as sich." This was a lesson he could never forget, so that by those who were accustomed to the instant obedience and abject submission of slaves, we are told that the mission Hottentots soon came to be regarded as violent and rebellious. Consequently, every possible obstacle was put in the way of mission work by the majority of the farmers and the subordinate officials at the Cape.

But there now lay an appeal to the public opinion of a great nation instead of the selfish oligarchy of the Dutch East India Company. The Rev. Dr. Philip took advantage of it by publishing a book which exposed the wrongs of the Hottentots, regarded as human beings. Fowell Buxton, Brougham, Macintosh took up the question, and proposed to raise it in the House of Commons. The Government at home and at the Cape determined to be beforehand with the Whigs, and the result was the repeal of the vagrancy and apprenticeship laws, and the passage, on July 17, 1828, of the Fiftieth Ordinance, which once and for all gave the Hottentots every civil right to which the European colonists laid claim. It long had to encounter violent opposition among the Boers; but no one who is acquainted with its results and who holds modern ideas on these subjects will venture to disapprove of its aims or deny its efficiency.

The next great step taken for the amelioration
of the condition of the natives was the emancipation of all slaves, which was ordained, throughout British dominions, by the passage of Mr. Fowell Buxton's Bill in August, 1833. This, together with certain attendant circumstances that will be mentioned in a later chapter, raised the indignation of many of the Boers to boiling-point. Then commenced the Great Trek which resulted in the foundation of the two Boer Republics of to-day. Whatever trouble we have had and may still have in these States, Englishmen have the satisfaction of knowing that, if it is partly due to that official incompetence and lack of sympathy from which our Empire has so often suffered, part of it also is the price which they have had to pay for a sincere and philanthropic attempt to make life easier and better for their native subjects in South Africa.
CHAPTER II

THE ANCESTRY OF THE BOERS

To know how a race came into being is, according to the fashionable doctrine of heredity, an essential preliminary to knowing what it is. No biography is nowadays considered complete without at least one chapter of genealogy. Accordingly, the racial history of those members of the population of the Cape Colony whom, in familiar parlance, we are accustomed to call the Boers deserves to be investigated before one can begin to tell the story of their separate existence in the Transvaal. It has already been implied that the name of Boer is simply a corrupted Dutch word akin to the German bauer, peasant. Our word boer (which was used as equivalent to Boer by so recent and polite a statesman as Mr. Gladstone) has the same origin, but it has grown to denote certain qualities, found in the majority of peasants, which do not necessarily exist in the Cape Boer, who is primarily a farmer, or squatter—a tiller of the ground, if not always a too fortunate agriculturist.

The first notion of the essential Boer in the popular mind may be supposed to be that he is of
pure Dutch descent, a belief which his language, a bastard and jejune patois known as the Taal, or Cape Dutch, helps to confirm. But this is by no means the whole truth. A Boer of the Transvaal, picked out at random, may indeed, like the famous Pretorius, trace his descent direct from the Netherlanders who fought at Haarlem and withstood the wrath of the Emperor Charles the Fifth. Or he may pride himself upon the fact that in his veins runs the blood of the French Protestants who fought at Moncontour, and followed the white plume of the most romantic of kings at Ivry. It is also quite possible, though he will not boast of the fact, that he has something more than a tinge of Hottentot or other black blood. From these three main elements, of which the last is much the least important, the modern Transvaal Boer derives his being.

The earliest European settlers at the Cape of Good Hope, as we have already seen, were servants of the Dutch East India Company. Van Riebeek's original followers consisted chiefly of soldiers and sailors, with a few artisans and gardeners. Two galleots which speedily followed him brought out fifty workmen and a clergyman, whose courageous wife, a month after landing, bore him the first European child that saw light in South Africa. At first, of course, the Dutch at the Cape were not agricultural settlers, but men holding a military post in the midst of unknown dangers, for whom there could be no question of marryng and giving in marriage. Later on, however, most of them,
promoted to the dignity of "free burghers," became ancestors of the Boers of to-day, and it is of interest to know what kind of people they were. On this point there is no higher nor more impartial authority than Mr. Theal, who writes of them as follows:—

"The class of men introduced into South Africa in this manner was neither then, nor at any subsequent period, that of which a prosperous and independent community is formed. The sailors and soldiers of the Company were not such men as had followed gallant Barendz to the polar seas or heroic Heemskerk in his glorious career. The Republic had barely sufficient of these to serve her at home, and had there been myriads of them, the Company's service was the last employment to which they would have devoted themselves. For that service—in its lowest branches—had acquired a most disreputable name in Europe. A scarcity of seamen had first caused the Company to make use of a set of wretches whom they termed agents, but who were known to every one else by the odious designation of kidnappers. These persons were constantly busy endeavouring to entice the unwary and vagabonds of all the countries of Western Europe into the service of their employers. The Company paid them two months' wages in advance for each individual they ensnared, which amount was afterwards deducted from the pay of the victim. In this manner was gathered together a motley crew of spendthrifts, vagabonds, and simpletons, the very refuse of Europe. Yet among them were to be found men who had
once moved in the higher circles of society, but who now, by their crimes or their misfortunes, were reduced to the general level of their associates. This system, once commenced, could not be changed. To keep in subjection a number of men like these, rendered desperate by the circumstances in which they were placed, a discipline so severe was necessary, and was carried out with so much determination, that no good seaman or soldier would enter the service. Cause and effect were thus continually reacting on each other. It is not surprising that men, to free themselves from such a life, should be found willing to accept grants of land in South Africa . . . and it is still less surprising that, in general, they made very unruly and improvident citizens."

The original Dutch settlement at the Cape, whose formation some modern writers have rashly compared to the arrival of the Pilgrim Fathers in America, was thus, it will be seen, of rather a different character. Indeed, an account of an early mutiny, in which four Englishmen, four Scots, and three Dutchmen were engaged, shows that the original servants of the Company were decidedly a motley crew. But, in the rough life and necessary fellowship of a military settlement, differences are speedily rubbed down, and "general average" is the law of existence. The use of a common language and religion is a potent transforming influence. The Dutch language and the Dutch Reformed Church were alone authorized throughout the period of the Company's rule at the Cape, and thus the early
racial differences soon disappeared in a common type which was, on the whole, more akin to the Dutch than to that of any other European nation.

In the year 1657 we find that the total number of Europeans at the Cape was one hundred and thirty-four, and was made up of one hundred salaried servants of the Company, ten free burghers, six married women, twelve children, and six convicts. The "free burghers," of whom mention has been made in the preceding chapter, were discharged soldiers and sailors who engaged to remain in the country for ten years, and were then placed on farms which were to become their own property after three years' cultivation. The Cape was still regarded merely as the "half-way house to India," and these free burghers' particular object, in their rulers' eyes, was to raise cattle, corn, and vegetables for the garrison and for Dutch ships that called at the Cape. But they were also the first true South African colonists, and so must be reckoned the begetters of an ultimate advance of the outposts of civilization which never came within the wildest dreams of Van Riebeeck and his masters. And in this direction a most important step was taken when, in 1665, the heads of the Company selected a number of poor but respectable young Dutchwomen from the Orphan Asylum at Amsterdam, and sent them out in the capacity of farmers' wives. By this means, as Mr. Theal points out, a character of stability was stamped upon the settlement, which it lacked before. The sailor-men, turned farmers, who received these young
women in marriage, now began to look upon South Africa as their home, and endeavoured to gather property about them for the sake of their prospective families. Before the arrival of these young women, the free burghers had been so little of a success that the Governor could find no better words for them than "lazy and worthless rogues." It is thus from 1665 that the history of the Boers, as a South African race, should really take its origin. Visitors to Amsterdam are familiar with the picturesque black-and-red costumes which dot the Kalver-Straat on a Sunday. It was from the wearers of such garments that were chosen the great-great-grandmothers of the Boers.

Still the free burghers, even when thus successfully "married and done for," left something to be desired. In 1685 a law had to be made for the expulsion of such of them as persisted in dissipated or irregular habits. Directly afterwards a very important addition was made to the young colony in the shape of fifty respectable Dutch families, chiefly tillers of the soil, but including a few mechanics, who were sent out and settled on farms in the Stellenbosch district. Forty-eight superior selected orphans were added, with a view of further reforming the morals of the free burghers.

So far, it will be seen that the genesis of the Cape Colony was more like that of New South Wales than that of New England. But in 1687 there was an addition made to it which not only helps to justify the mention of the Pilgrim Fathers, but—if that
hypothesis of theirs be true—quite probably originated all the best qualities of the modern Boer. This was the arrival of a body of those Huguenots whom the revocation of the Edict of Nantes had driven from their homes in France before the hoofs and broadswords of Louis XIV.'s dragoons. Ninety-seven families of these exiles, including about three hundred men, women, and children, were sent by the Dutch East India Company to the Cape. They carried with them, amongst other things, the twin blessings of wine and the Bible. Some had been of high rank in France; many were manufacturers; still more were vine-growers and gardeners, from whose arrival dates the manufacture of wine at the Cape on a large scale. Their native language was speedily abandoned in the face of the Company's stringent regulations enjoining the general use of Dutch, but their names and families have lasted to this day: Joubert, Dutoit, Villiers are amongst the most notorious. They intermarried very freely with the Dutch, and it is said that almost every Boer to-day has some French blood in his veins.

Perhaps the most notable contribution of the Huguenots to the character of the Boer was the importation into it of an earnest religious feeling. We can hardly suppose that the earliest free burghers were much imbued with the ideas of the gospel, nor was religion a marked feature of Cape life up to 1687. But the Huguenots, having suffered for their religion, prized it as only martyrs can, and imparted their feelings to the other colonists. Even in the virgin
veld, the Voortrekkers were still wont to recall the sufferings of their Huguenot ancestors, and "Papist" was their strongest term of execration. Mr. Theal thinks, and probably with reason, that this earnestness of religious feeling helped greatly in the colonization of South Africa. The Boers, he admits, through their crass ignorance of every other book excepting the Bible, have come to hold views which are repugnant in many respects to those of a progressive people; but it was their militant Old Testament religion which enabled them to push their way singly into the interior, without schools or churches or shops, with only savages around them, yet without becoming savages themselves. It is this religion, too, which has impelled the Boers to treat the natives around them as Israel was directed to treat the Amalekites and Midianites: but that is a later story.

There is much interest to an ethnologist in the manner in which the Dutch has completely absorbed the French element, leaving no trace in the modern Boer of the vivacity, versatility, and dash which we associate with the Gallic nature, unless it be in the form of a certain political craftiness which is supposed to be foreign to the proverbially phlegmatic Dutchman, but is native in the Celt. Probably this is due in part to the climatic influences, which there is not room to discuss here, and in part to the deteriorating influences of slavery, which will be duly discussed in a later chapter.

There is a third and, on the whole, a distinctly less important element in the Boer, which is often
ignored, but on which a historian, even of the briefest kind, is bound to touch. This is the strain of native blood, as to which it is, for obvious reasons, difficult to obtain any trustworthy statistics. From a very early period, however, the soldiers of the Dutch East India Company began, according to a way they have in the army, to make irregular alliances with the Hottentot women. This practice, as many travellers bear witness, has continued, more or less, down to the present day; as, indeed, it seems bound to exist in all countries—India is a familiar example—where Europeans of the lower classes live on terms of friendship with less highly civilized races. But it is peculiarly noticeable at the Cape, since a whole nation, the Griquas or Bastaards, has there sprung from these irregular unions. Livingstone tells us that a bitter writer once taunted the highly moral Boers with "having produced a whole nation of bastards." But public morals were much looser two centuries ago than they are now, and it is quite possible to let bygones be bygones in this matter of social morality.

It seems, indeed, that the Dutch East India Company at one time went so far as to encourage the production of a half-breed race of colonists. In 1664 Eva, a Hottentot girl, who acted as interpreter, was married to a Danish surgeon, "and the Company approved so highly of the match that they bore the expense of the bridal feast, presented the bride with fifty rix-dollars, and promoted the bridegroom on the day of his marriage." This was before the arrival of
the Amsterdam orphans, and at that time the chief anxiety of the Company was to see their farms sufficiently occupied by trustworthy cultivators of any race or condition. Thunberg, the interesting Swedish traveller of 1772, tells us that the example of the Danish surgeon was followed in several cases. "There are a few families," he says, "that have descended from blacks, in the female line, for three generations back. The first generation proceeding from a European who is married to a tawny slave, that has been made free, remains tawny, but approaching to a white complexion; but the children of the third generation, mixed with Europeans, become quite white, and are often remarkably beautiful."

But, as a rule, the unions between white and black (or rather tawny, which is the real complexion of the Hottentots) were of a less regular nature than marriage. Many of the half-breed children simply remained slaves, and were thus reabsorbed into the race of their mothers. Some escaped to the veldt and gave rise to the already mentioned Griqua or Bastaard nation, who led a nomadic life on the great plains south of the Orange River, and at the beginning of this century were only raised above the Hottentots by the possession of the colonial Dutch language and the proud consciousness of a semi-European origin. It was through the agency of one of their leaders that the Orange Free State was deprived of the Kimberley diamond mines:

"The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us."
Others of the half-breeds were admitted into the ranks of the white community. Special provision for this introduction was made by law. In 1671 it was decreed that such acknowledged half-breed children were to be instructed in Christian doctrines, and particular care, said the Company's regulation, was to be taken that they were not alienated so as to remain in constant slavery, but that they might in due time enjoy the freedom to which, in the right of the father, they were born. But in the course of a century this humane ordinance was almost lost to sight. Sparrmann tells us that in 1775 half-breed children were left unbaptized as a matter of course; nor, indeed, were they ever inquired after by the Christian ministers at the Cape, except when it happened that any one should present himself as the father, and make a point of his child's being baptized, in order thus to give the infant the right of inheritance. Half-breeds, the same traveller goes on to say, were not necessarily slighted in company of the Christian farmers, although signs were appearing of the scorn for "natives" which is nowadays so eminently characteristic of the Boer.

Lastly, one must not conclude this account of the Boer's native connection without at least mentioning the statement of Thunberg, who is generally a creditable witness on social matters. "The daughters of the colonists," he says, "are sometimes with child by their father's black slaves. In this case, in consideration of a round sum of money, a husband is generally provided for the girl, but the
slave is sent away from that part of the country." There is nothing inherently improbable in this story, which has never been contradicted by any good authority. Altogether, it seems that the possible percentage of black blood in the Boers is a factor that can hardly be disregarded by one who is attempting to portray their national character and origin.
CHAPTER III

THE BOER CHARACTER

The Boers of the Transvaal present a remarkable instance of a population that has been almost stationary for two centuries in manners, customs, and education. At any rate, this was true up to the beginning of the present decade, thanks to the nomad Boer's habit of trekking away from the growth of civilization. How far the past ten years have modified this statement it would, at the present time of writing, be rash to guess. In most European countries, where there is a constant intercourse, both in space and time, between home and foreign lands, between the present and the past, a continual change in both superficial features and the feelings and ideas that underlie them is going on with a celerity that increases every year, until many well-meaning persons are positively alarmed at it. Even in the comparatively unprogressive Cape Colony, a great development has taken place; the social and intellectual conditions of the average Cape Boer, especially near the towns and among the wealthier classes, are very superior to-day to what they were fifty or a hundred years ago.
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But the great majority of the nomad Boer population, cut off as they have been from churches, schools, shops, and every kind of social intercourse save with the one or two accessible neighbours and the occasional trader or explorer, have retained to the full the habits, alike in thought and action, of their forefathers. It is a commonplace of the sociologist that the settled agricultural life is more favourable to the development of civilization than the nomad pastoral one. A rolling stone gathers no moss, and the wandering Boers, who were never content to make a home where another man's smoke was in sight, had little chance of that social intercourse which softens manners. In the Transvaal, more especially, the Boers have jealously secluded themselves from possible influences of change. It is only the last few years, with the gold discoveries and the coming of the Outlanders, which have introduced an element of novelty which even the stubborn Boer tries in vain to resist.

So lately as 1880 a traveller was able truthfully to declare that the seclusion in which the South African Republic chose to nurse itself for so many years had nourished and intensified the prejudices and habits of its dominant race. All critics of insight agree that the Transvaal Boer of to-day is, to all intents and purposes, one with the Cape Boer of the last century or with the nomad farmers of the Great Trek. It is well, then, before entering upon the story of the Transvaal, to consider a few of the accounts which impartial observers have given of
the most distinctive characteristics of its original inhabitants.

It is not very easy, indeed, to ascertain the exact truth about the nature and habits of the Boers in the midst of the contradictory reports that one finds in the works of various travellers. Recent writers have shown regrettable but natural tendencies to lose sight of the undoubted good qualities of the typical Boer on the one hand, or minimize his numerous faults and anfractuosities on the other, according as their political prepossessions ranged them on his side or on that of the Outlanders. At the present moment the war-cloud hangs over the land, and what Mr. Spencer calls the patriotic bias inclines us to look rather through than over it. Let us, however, at least make an attempt to set politics and polemics aside for the present, and endeavour to see the Transvaal farmer—the *homme sensuel moyen* of the South African Republic—as he really is.

The truth seems to be that the average Boer, like most human beings, is compact of good and evil. His best qualities are his stubborn perseverance in the face of difficulty and danger, his genuine family affection, his equally genuine though narrow and antiquated religious spirit, his determination never to endure injustice, his hospitality to guests of whom he approves. His worst faults are his brutal treatment of the natives, his defect in political honesty, and his curious lack of the Dutch passion for cleanliness and industry. It is a further fact that he is usually opposed to what we call "progress," and
looks with strong dislike, carried to the extremest length in practice, upon the incursion of gold-miners and others who desire to "open up" his country. But whether this is to be accounted as a defect, a good quality, or simply a natural outcome of the Boer's history, in which he has so often seen himself dispossessed of a peaceful life, depends greatly upon the point of view.

One of the earliest and most lifelike sketches of the typical country Boer is that given by the Swedish traveller Sparrmann, who is generally admitted to be a most trustworthy authority. He shows us the Cape farmer far changed in a century from the proverbial industry and cleanliness of the original Hollander to a state of Arcadian indolence and innocent dirt: the heat of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the employment of slaves being the concomitant causes of this melancholy alteration.

"It is hardly to be conceived," wrote Sparrmann in 1776, "with what little trouble the Boer gets into order a field of a moderate size; . . . so that . . . he may be almost said to make the cultivation of it, for the bread he stands in need of for himself and his family, a mere matter of amusement. . . . With pleasure, but without the least trouble to himself, he sees the herds and flocks, which constitute his riches, daily and considerably increasing. These are driven to pasture and home again by a few Hottentots or slaves, who likewise make the butter; so that it is almost only with the milking
that the farmer, together with his wife and children, concern themselves at all. To do this business, however, he has no occasion to rise before seven or eight o'clock in the morning. . . . That they (the Boers) might not put their arms and bodies out of the easy and commodious posture in which they had laid them on the couch when they were taking their afternoon siesta, they have been known to receive travellers lying quite still and motionless, excepting that they have very civilly pointed out the road by moving their foot to the right or left. . . . Among a set of beings so devoted to their ease one might naturally expect to meet with a variety of the most commodious easy-chairs and sofas; but the truth is, that they find it much more commodious to avoid the trouble of inventing and making them. . . . Nor did the inhabitants exhibit much less simplicity and moderation, or, to speak more properly, slovenliness and penury, in their dress than in their furniture. . . . The distance at which they are from the Cape may, indeed, be some excuse for their having no other earthenware or china in their houses but what was cracked or broken; but this, methinks, should not prevent them being in possession of more than one or two old pewter pots, and some few plates of the same metal; so that two people are frequently obliged to eat out of one dish, besides using it for every different article of food that comes upon table. Each guest must bring his knife with him, and for forks they frequently make use of their fingers. The most wealthy farmer here is considered as being well
dressed in a jacket of home-made cloth, or something of the kind made of any other coarse cloth, breeches of undressed leather, woollen stockings, a striped waistcoat, a cotton handkerchief about his neck, a coarse calico shirt, Hottentot field-shoes, or else leathern shoes, with brass buckles, and a coarse hat. Indeed, it is not in dress, but in the number and thriving condition of their cattle, and chiefly in the stoutness of their draught-oxen, that these peasants vie with each other. It is likewise by activity and manly actions, and by other qualities that render a man fit for the married state and the rearing of a family, that the youth chiefly obtain the esteem of the fair sex. . . . A plain close cap and a coarse cotton gown, virtue and good housewifery, are looked upon by the fair sex as sufficient ornaments for their persons; a flirting disposition, coquetry and paint, would have very little effect in making conquests of young men brought up in so hardy a manner, and who have had so homely and artless an education as the youth in this place. In short, here, if anywhere in the world, one may lead an innocent, virtuous, and happy life."

After all, it is a kindly picture enough that the worthy Swede here draws of a country life at the Cape a century ago. One may still take it as fairly representative of Boer life in the Transvaal, at any time within the last fifty years, so far as it goes. It is true, among other things, that the wealthy Boer has fallen a victim to the tyranny of black broadcloth for Sundays and holidays, and that there
are a few similar changes in detail. As to the matter of laziness and Lotus-eating, it has to be remembered that the Boer knew no wants for which he should labour to provide, beyond the purely physical ones of food and shelter. Education, amusement, books, and the thousand other needs that make us toil so strenuously nowadays, were equally foreign to his taste and knowledge, and a provision for his children was assured in the unlimited land itself.

About 1816 this matter was put in a nutshell to the Reverend Mr. Latrobe by one of the most shrewd and sensible farmers of the Cape, on whom he had been urging the advantages of modern methods of scientific agriculture; they had the idea, if not the phrase, even in 1816. "What," said this sensible Boer, "would you have us do? Our only concern is to fill our bellies, to get good clothes and houses; to say to one slave, Do this, and to another, Do that, and to sit idle ourselves and be waited upon; and as to our tillage, or building, or planting, our forefathers did so and so, and were satisfied; and why should not we be the same? The English want us to use their ploughs, instead of our heavy wooden ones, and recommend other implements of husbandry than those we have been used to, but we like our old things best." One of the most picturesque and instructive modern writers on the South African Republic narrates an amusing story which shows that this conservative spirit is still strong in the Transvaal Boer. A travelling companion
told Mr. Nixon that a Boer came to his store at Kimberley with some bundles of tobacco for sale. The Boer had carefully weighed them over with some antique scales which had descended from some remote ancestor. The storekeeper reweighed the bundles, and finding the scales belonging to the Boer gave short weight, he suggested that they should take the store scales as the standard for computing the price, which was so much a pound. "No," said the Boer, "these were my father's scales, and he was a wise man and was never cheated, and I won't use anybody else's." The storekeeper dryly remarked that he did not press the matter, since he found himself a gainer by £12 in consequence of the Boer sticking to his scales.

Mr. Theal has given us an accurate and careful description of the domestic life of the Boers about the beginning of this century, part of which is worth quoting as a supplement to Sparrmann's picture.

"The amusements of the people were few. . . . Those who possessed numerous slaves usually had three or four of them trained to the use of the violin, —the blacks being peculiarly gifted with an ear for music, and easily learning to play by sound. They had thus the means at hand of amusing themselves with dancing, and of entertaining visitors with music. The branches of widely extended families were constantly exchanging visits with each other. A farmer would make his waggon ready regularly every year, when half the household or more would leave home, and spend a week or two with each
relative, often being absent a couple of months. Birthday anniversaries of aged people were celebrated by the assembling of their descendants, frequently to the number of eighty or a hundred, at the residence of the patriarch, when a feast was prepared for their entertainment. These different reunions were naturally productive of great pleasure, and tended to cement the friendship and love of those who otherwise might seldom see each other. The life led by the people when at home was exceedingly tame. The mistress of the house, who moved about but little, issued orders to slaves or Hottentot females concerning the work of the household. If the weather was chilly or damp, she rested her feet on a little box filled with live coals, while beside her stood a coffee kettle never empty. The head of the family usually inspected his flocks morning and evening, and passed the remainder of the day, like his helpmate, in the enjoyment of ease. When repose itself became wearisome, he mounted his horse, and, with an attendant to carry his gun, set off in pursuit of some of the wild animals with which the country then abounded. The children had few games, and though strong and healthy, were far from sprightly."

As to their physical characteristics, a traveller of the period of the Great Trek tells us that the Boers appeared to him to be in general a tall and large-limbed race of men, but often with something heavy and ungainly in their movements, as if their joints were not compactly knit. This observer was much
struck with the almost gigantic stature of many of the young men, and found that the young women were often handsome. After the prime of life was past both sexes, then as now, were apt to become very corpulent.

It is a common reproach against the Boers that they are rude and uncivil to travellers, especially to the English since the war of 1881. Whilst there is undoubtedly some truth in this charge, one must bear in mind, first, that a great deal seems to depend on the attitude of the traveller, and secondly, that civility is comparative. There are so many tramps of the type of Bonaparte Blenkins in South Africa that the Boer woman is apt to be as suspicious of a dubious-looking stranger as is the New England housewife or the inhabitant of a villa on the Dover Road. But to an accredited traveller, or one who arrives in some state and proves to be amiable, they are hospitable enough. "The Cape Dutch," says Mr. Bunbury, "in general have a strong dislike to the English; yet I found them tolerably civil, even on my journey back from the frontier, when I was not in company with the Governor. They will not, however, put themselves out of their way for anybody, so that a traveller must conform to their habits and hours, and at whatever time he arrives at a house, he must wait for food till the customary meal-time of the family." This does not seem altogether unreasonable, especially when we read that the Boer usually refuses to accept any payment for his hospitality. In both these respects, as in
some others, he is not unlike the Scottish farmer. Livingstone, again, who had no cause to love the Boers, says: "The Boers of a lower grade, who live far from the centres of wealth and civilization, . . . when not soured by the bad manners or villainy of English adventurers, are a body of industrious, well-meaning, and most hospitable peasantry. They are always civil, and decidedly more gentlemanly in their deportment than the English of the same grade who have settled among them." So Gordon Cumming praises the politeness with which a decent Boer receives a trader or a sportsman, provided that the visitor is willing to go through all the hand-shaking and question-answering which are according to Boer ideas of etiquette.

The fact is that the Boers, as one of their own apologists has pointed out, are essentially peasants, and must be treated as such. It is ridiculous to compare their reception of an unexpected guest to that of the Indian Civil Servant or the great Australian squatter; though it has never been heard that either of these was much more tolerant than the Boer of "tramps." If one remembers the descriptions which R. L. Stevenson and Balzac have given of the reception which the French peasant-proprietor is apt to keep for strangers of whom he knows nothing, one will admit, I think, that it would be difficult for the Boer to behave more brutally; and yet the French are by common consent the politest people in the world.

When we come to consider education, it has to
be admitted that the average Boer is, like the average peasant of most countries, frankly ignorant. This is not altogether his own fault. When the Boers left Cape Colony, no example of the need of education had been shown them. The state of public instruction at the Cape in 1837 was scandalous. With the exception of the missionaries' schools (which were principally, if not entirely, designed for the instruction of the coloured races), and perhaps a very few others, we are told that the only teachers in most parts of the country were old discharged soldiers, generally very ill qualified for the office, in point either of intellectual acquirements or moral character. These men were in the habit of going about from one Boer's house to another, staying a month or two at each, to teach the children to read. In return for this service they were lodged and fed, and sometimes (by no means generally) received some trifling payment. Even where there existed free schools nominally supported by the Government, the teachers were miserably ill-paid, were often inefficient, sometimes of very indifferent character, and were regarded with great contempt by the farmers. At the same time, it must be said that the Cape Boers were not then so entirely devoid of education as might be supposed; most of them could read and write, and a huge family Bible was to be found in every house, however poor. When the Great Trek occurred, it found and left the emigrants at this stage of instruction. This fact accounts for much in their history that would
otherwise be inexplicable—their disregard of foreign opinion, their confidence in their own superiority to all the world, their remarkable ideas of history and geography. There is every appearance of truth in the statement that they trekked steadily north in the hope of reaching Jerusalem, or at least of discovering the Garden of Eden and entering into the Promised Land. Their views on most subjects, except the Bible and farming, were equally simple. A recent traveller describes the untutored surprise of a Boer on learning what a big city London was, and what a number of inhabitants it contained: "Why," he said in incredulity, "they will want a couple of hundred sheep killed every day for their food!"

The Boer military organization, which is just now on its trial, may fitly be described in this place. As in the Republics of Greece and in Elizabethan England, every man in the Transvaal is supposed to be a soldier when the need arises for him. Every burgher or colonist between eighteen and sixty years of age could, we learn, be called upon to serve on a commando. The whole country being divided into districts, and these districts being subdivided into wards, each of these wards elected a field-cornet, who had military duties when a commando was called out. The "commandant" was the officer who took the chief command of the field-cornets. This system was first made necessary, in the early days of the Cape, by the presence of the natives, whose raids or risings might need to be repelled at
any moment on any given spot. Thunberg noticed it a hundred and twenty years ago on the same footing that it holds to-day. As to the fighting qualities of the Boers in the past, there is much to be said. On many occasions they have shown themselves as brave and determined as could be desired; at other times they have incurred grave suspicion of cowardice. The battles with Dingaan and the onset upon Majuba Hill would have been creditable to any soldiers. But, if many witnesses are to be believed, the Boer leans unduly to the citizen soldier's weakness of preferring, if he can, to do his fighting without risking his skin.

Thus it was that Livingstone wrote on the subject: "The Boers have generally manifested a marked antipathy to anything but 'long-shot' warfare, and, sidling away in their emigrations towards the more effeminate Bechuanas, have left their quarrels with the Kaffirs to be settled by the English, and their wars to be paid for by English gold." In their early forays they had two favourite methods of warfare: one was to drive a battalion of friendly natives or slaves in front of them, and to shoot down their enemies from behind the secure shelter of these advanced guards. The other, as employed against the Zulus of Dingaan, is thus described by Livingstone in an essay written about 1853, but not printed until after his death: "The Boers approach the Zulus to within 300 or 400 yards, then fire, and gallop off to a considerable distance and reload their guns; the Zulus pursuing have by this time come
sufficiently near to receive another discharge from the Boers, who again retire as before. This process soon tires out the fleetest warriors, and except through the accident of the stumbling of a horse, or its rider’s drunkenness, no Boer ever stands a chance of falling into their hands. The Boers report of themselves that they behaved with great bravery on the occasion.” In fact, they said that they had killed from 3000 to 5000 Zulus, with the loss to themselves of only six men. In a subsequent war with the Griquas, who, being the bastard children of the Boers, possess many of their peculiarities, the two opposing parties kept at such ludicrous distances that the springboks quietly grazing on the plains between were frequently shot instead of the combatants. The unfortunate war which is raging as one writes must be left to correct and settle our impressions on this head.

Lastly, one cannot fail to touch upon the religion of the Boers, which forms so important a factor in their life and habits. The whole spirit of religious life in South Africa has always been intensely Protestant. “Left to itself,” says Mr. Greswell, “Puritanism has seemed to harden and crystallize in the Veld.” The rustic seclusion of the Voortrekkers somehow made them singularly inclined to confine their study of the Bible to the Old Testament. This supplies the explanation of their union of strong religious feeling with extreme brutality to the natives, which has puzzled many observers into charging the Boers with hypocrisy. Even Livingstone, who was
an authority on the question, scarcely realized the state of the case so well as others have done. "Religion with many of them," he wrote of the Boers, "is a traditional sentiment—a system of theology or a class of emotions. The fact that admission into the Dutch Church is obtained by any one who can repeat the Catechism in schoolboy fashion has contributed largely to this unfortunate result. Hence, when they become connected with the Church they do not feel that they ought to carry out the truths of Christianity into actual life in their regenerating power." If, however, we stop to think over our home experience, it is quite clear that this is not sufficient reason for branding the Boers as a nation of hypocrites.

Mr. Theal says of the original settlers of 1652, who set apart a day of thanksgiving for God's goodness to them: "Where side by side with expressions of gratitude to the Creator are found schemes for robbing and enslaving natives, the genuineness of their religion may be questioned. But two centuries and a quarter have rolled by since then, and men's minds have been greatly enlightened during that period. In the seventeenth century the slave trade was not deemed a crime, and savages had practically no rights." That is still the mental attitude of the Boer. He has been described as a mixture in religion of the old Israelite and the Scotch Covenantant, and there is much truth in the portrait. From the French Refugees, the historian has noted, the colonists acquired a deep religious feeling, which,
though too often misdirected, yet preserved even those farthest removed from places of worship from falling into barbarism. The cruelties inflicted upon the natives were always justified by quotations from the Old Testament. The Boer compared himself to the Israelite of old, and the native to a Canaanite whom it was doing God a service to destroy. In every household religious exercises were regularly observed every day, and it was no unusual circumstance for a farmer to make a journey occupying three or four weeks for the purpose of attending Divine service. At the administration of the Communion ("Nachtmaal"), which took place every three months, there was always a large gathering of people from distant parts. Like the Jewish festivals of old, these seasons were made the occasions for holding fairs, when sales by auction of land and cattle took place, and traders from Cape Town supplied the farmers with such goods as they needed.

The individual Boer, in short, has been well described by a friend of his people as, according to his lights, a citizen pioneer, and a rough, God-fearing, honest, homely, uneducated Philistine. His indubitable cruelty to the natives is, perhaps, the fault of his needs and upbringing, as his political shiftiness is that of the demagogues and adventurers who have too often meddled with his national affairs.
CHAPTER IV

THE TRANSVAAL AND ITS NATION

Some ingenious geographer has memorably compared the physical structure of Africa to that of an inverted pie-dish. We find almost everywhere a great inland elevated plateau, girdled by mountains which slope outward and downward to the sea-coast. The Transvaal lies entirely upon this internal tableland.

The name of the district originated in the fact that it was simply described as "the country north of the Vaal" at the time of the Great Trek, when it was almost unknown to Europeans. This is rather a loose term, and the Boers themselves thought that it might include Jerusalem. They have also charged England with a breach of faith in pushing her conquests north of the Vaal in Bechuanaland and Rhodesia. Comment is needless. In modern geography, however, the name of Transvaal has been applied definitely to the territory of the South African Republic, which in 1899 covered an area somewhat smaller than France, lying between the Limpopo River on the north and the Vaal River on the south, bounded on the east by the great ranges of mountains, known respectively as the Lobombo
and the Drakenberg, which run parallel to the Natal coast, and on the west by the arbitrary frontier of British Bechuanaland, stretching away to the great Kalahari Desert. It marched with Portuguese territory and British Zululand on the east, with Rhodesia on the north, British Bechuanaland on the west, and the Orange Free State and Natal on the south. That is to say, it was enclosed by British territory in all directions save the east, where there was an outlet through Portuguese East Africa to the sea-coast and the important harbour of Delagoa Bay.

The Limpopo or Crocodile River, so called by the natives from the abundance of these pleasing creatures in its waters, rises between Johannesburg and Pretoria, and sweeps round, running at different times north-west, north-east, east, and south-east, in a wide semicircle of nearly a thousand miles to the sea near Delagoa Bay. Unfortunately, a large cataract prevents its being navigable beyond the point at which it leaves the Transvaal for Portuguese territory. The Vaal is an important tributary of the great Orange River. It rises among the hills of the Drakenberg and flows to the west in a curved course, which served as the boundary between the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

The district of the Transvaal thus defined varies in height from 2000 to 8000 feet above the sea. It is usually divided by physical geographers into three portions: the Hooge Veld, or uplands of the south-east, comprising the Drakenberg highlands, a region of about 35,000 square miles, rising from 4000 to
8000 feet above the sea, which is known to abound almost everywhere in rich auriferous deposits; the Banken Veld, or terraced lands, a lovely pastoral and arable district of 18,000 to 20,000 square miles, between the Drakenberg and the outer slopes of the Lobombo range; and the Bosch Veld, or bush country, which comprises all the central and western parts, merging gradually in the dry steppes of Bechuanaland, and forming a vast plateau over 3000 feet above sea-level, and about 60,000 square miles in extent.

The Hooge Veld is chiefly used by the Boers as grazing-land, where they breed cattle and work gigantic sheep-farms. Its climate is dry and cold in winter, hot, though tempered by frequent thunderstorms, in summer, and nearly perfect in spring and autumn. A brilliant starlight night is then usually succeeded by a bright sunny day, with a warm sun and a cool, bracing air. It is on these uplands that all the gold-mining is done. The Bosch Veld has a softer climate, and is largely infested by malarial fever and the dreaded tsetse fly, so fatal, in spite of the increase of science, to almost all domesticated animals. This bush country is covered with grass and trees, and only needs a better water-supply to be capable of growing almost every sub-tropical plant and cereal. The Banken Veld partakes of the nature of both the other kinds, and is chiefly known at present as furnishing admirable corn-land and grazing-ground.

Geologists are of opinion that the Transvaal,
with its far-stretching plains, its rounded sandstone hills, or kopjes, and its water-worn and terraced mountain ranges, was once the bed of a vast inland lake, such as sanguine engineers have dreamed of making in the Sahara. That was in the long, long ages, since when the whole plateau has been heaved up by volcanic action.

"They melt like mists, the solid lands."

"The numerous fossil remains of aquatic life," says Mr. Keane, "together with extensive sandy tracts and much water-worn shingle, give to this great table-land the aspect of an elevated lacustrine basin, whose waters escaped partly through the Limpopo to the Indian Ocean, partly through the Vaal and Orange to the Atlantic." These two great fissures in the plateau still carry off most of the superfluous drainage of the Transvaal; the now famous Witwatersrand is the water-parting between their basins.

It is, of course, to its mineral resources that the Transvaal owes its fame in these latter days. Great coal-fields extend through almost the whole of the High Veld. The first railway constructed in the Transvaal was a short line from Johannesburg to the nearest colliery. Formerly the simple Boers, when they needed fuel, went to one of the numerous places where a stream cut across an outcropping seam of coal, and filled their waggons there with pick and shovel. Gold, as everybody knows, is found in vast quantities in many parts of the same High Veld, notably at Lydenburg, in the Kaap
district round Barberton, and in the Witwatersrand district, centring in Johannesburg. This is so important a matter, being as it is the key to Transvaal history for the last ten years, that it must be considered later on in a special chapter. No one in the Transvaal has as yet thought it worth while to take much interest in any other metal. Thus, though silver, copper, and lead are said to occur in large quantities, no serious attempt has been made to work them. Cinnabar and tin are also said to be present, as well as iron, which, however, has not yet been found in quantities worth working. There seems to be very little doubt that many Boers would be unfeignedly glad if the same could be said of gold; for they believe, rightly or wrongly, that all their troubles of the past decade have sprung, like their prosperity, from the discovery of "hard food for Midas" in their territory.

Our knowledge of the Transvaal before the Boers began to settle there is chiefly based upon the accounts of explorers in search of game, to whom its plains and bush-land afforded a veritable hunter's Arcadia. Even that rather bloodthirsty Nimrod, Mr. Gordon Cumming, grew almost poetical when he entered the Transvaal. "It was truly a fair and boundless prospect," he says of the view from a mountain near the border; "beautifully wooded plains and mountains stretched away on every side to an amazing distance, until the vision was lost among the faint blue outlines of the distant mountain ranges. Throughout all this country, and vast tracts beyond,
I had the satisfaction to reflect that a never-ending succession of herds of every species of noble game which the hunter need desire pastured there in undisturbed security; and as I gazed I felt that it was all my own, and that I at length possessed the undisputed sway over a forest, in comparison with which the tame and herded narrow bounds of the wealthiest European sportsman sink into utter insignificance.” The number of elephants and lesser game which Mr. Gordon Cumming bagged after this touching meditation fully bore out his hopes.

But the most interesting account of the Transvaal, before white men inhabited it, is to be found in Captain William Cornwallis Harris’s fascinating and valuable narrative of his expedition into the interior of South Africa in the years 1836 and 1837. He paints the new country in most lively and picturesque colours. At the very first sight he fell in love with it.

“Instead of the dreary waste over which we had lately passed, we might now imagine ourselves in an extensive park. A lawn, level as a billiard-table, was everywhere spread with a soft carpet of luxuriant green grass, spangled with flowers, and shaded by spreading mokaalas—a large species of acacia which forms the favourite food of the Giraffe. The gaudy yellow blossoms with which these remarkable trees were covered, yielded an aromatic and overpowering perfume—while small troops of striped Quaggas, or wild asses, and of Brindled Gnoos ... enlivened the scene.” The Transvaal,
THE TRANSVAAL AND ITS NATIVES

indeed, was then remarkable for its abundance of undisturbed game, on which the Boers practised in after years, until they learned the sharp-shooting which has more than once served them so well in time of war.

"I turned off the road," says Captain Harris, whose spelling of zoological names belongs to the pre-scientific era, "in pursuit of a troop of Brindled Gnoos, and presently came upon another, which was followed by a third still larger—then by a vast herd of Zebras, and again by more Gnoos, with Sassaybys and Hartebeests pouring down from every quarter, until the landscape literally presented the appearance of a moving mass of game." When this was wont to be the hunter's daily experience, what marvel is it if he called the land where such things happened a Paradise of Sport? Captain Harris's testimony to the charms of the Transvaal was not confined to its provision of food for powder, as one more quotation will show.

"In the extensive and romantic valley of the Limpopo, which strongly contrasts with its own solitude, and with the arid lands which must be traversed to arrive within its limits, Dame Nature has doubtless been unusually lavish of her gifts. A bold mountain landscape is chequered by innumerable rivulets abounding in fish, and watering a soil rich in luxurious vegetation. Forests, producing timber of the finest growth, are tenanted by a multitude of birds, which, if not generally musical, are all gorgeously attired; and the meadows throughout
are decked with blossoming geraniums, and with an endless profusion of the gayest flowers, fancifully distributed in almost artificial parterres. Let the foreground of this picture, which is by no means extravagantly drawn, be filled in by the animal creation roaming in a state of undisturbed freedom, such as I have attempted to describe, and this hunter's paradise will surely not require to be coloured by the feelings of an enthusiastic sportsman to stand out in striking relief from amongst the loveliest spots in the universe."

Giraffes and elephants, the lion, the hippopotamus and the rhinoceros, covered the plains and filled the forests: it is no wonder that Captain Harris described the scene one day as like a Zoological Garden turned out to graze! Sixty years have brought about a mighty revolution in this respect. In natural beauty the Transvaal can still hold its own, where the hideous miner's batteries and the mean farmhouses have not blotted the landscape. But otherwise the country has undergone a transformation directly the contrary of that suffered by the courts where Omar tells us that once Jamshydg gloried and drank deep. "The lawyer and the financier," says a recent traveller, "thrive where in recent years the lion and the leopard fought for food, and townships have sprung up on spots where living Boers have formerly shot big game." It has been suggested that this extinction of the former wealth of animal life will react upon the Boer himself, and that he, who is no longer the mighty hunter, will soon cease to be "the matchless
marksman that he was of old." That, perhaps, is worthy of consideration.

The district between the Limpopo and the Vaal Rivers was thickly inhabited, at the dawn of its history in the beginning of the present century, by tribes of the so-called Bechuana, who still give a name to British Bechuanaland. These were a branch of the great Bantu family which fills Central and South-Eastern Africa, to which also belong the Basutos and the Zulus. The Bechuana occupied the inlands, on the western side of the Drakenberg and Lobombo mountain ranges; the Basuto tribes held, and still hold, the impregnable strongholds of these hills, the Switzerland of South Africa; whilst the Zulus and their kindred occupied the coast slopes of the modern Zululand and Natal, from Delagoa Bay to the Great Fish River. Early travellers, who unscientifically lumped all these tribes together as Kaffirs, yet could not avoid noticing their unmistakable difference from the family of the Hottentots and Bushmen, which occupied the southern extremity of the Continent. The Bantu race, according to Mr. Keane, must be classed as Negroid—"that is, a modified negro race, in which the Hamites of North-East Africa constitute the modifying element." The Kaffirs, in fact, are not very distantly related to the Somalis; and thus we see that the Boers were not so grotesquely wrong as at first sight appears when they thought they had encountered the Egyptians in their search for the Promised Land of the North. There are striking differences in the
individuals of the Bantu races, which bear witness to the mixture of types from which they have grown up. In one Kaffir we may see features of the lowest negro type—thick projecting lips, broad flat noses, and narrow receding foreheads; while other members of the same tribe may be almost Asiatic in appearance, with prominent and, in rare instances, even aquiline noses, broad upright foreheads, and lips but little thicker than those of Europeans. Among the southern tribes these extremes may sometimes be noticed in the same village, but the great majority of the people are of a common type which is somewhat higher than a mean between these two.

The Coast tribes, and notably the magnificent Zulu aristocracy, have, no doubt, owing in great part to their environment, developed on such lines as chiefly to excel in physical qualities and in warlike virtues. The Inland tribes, who inhabited the Transvaal, were less warlike and manly, but far more skilled in the arts of peace. The Mountain tribes, who will scarce appear in this history, were in all respects a middle term between the other two. "In comparing the Central and the Mountain with the Coast tribes when Europeans first came in contact with them," says a careful observer, "the former are found to have attained a somewhat higher degree of perfection in such handicrafts as were practised by them all. Their government was less despotic, for matters of public importance were commonly submitted to the decision of a general assembly of
the leading men. The males were found aiding the females in agriculture, though the hardest and most constant labour was by them also left to the women. Their habitations were vastly superior. The house of a Mochuana* had perpendicular walls, and consisted of a central circular room, with three or four apartments outside, each being a segment of a circle. It was surrounded with an enclosed courtyard, and was, with the exception of being destitute of chimney or of window, as capacious and comfortable as the cottage of an ordinary European peasant. The hut of a native of the Coast region was a single circular room, covered by a low dome of thatched wickerwork, and no effort was made to secure the slightest privacy. Midway in convenience between these was the hut of a resident in the Mountain land. But with these exceptions, all comparisons between the tribes must be favourable to those of the Coast. The Bantu of the interior are smaller in stature and much less handsome in appearance than the splendidly formed men who live on the terraces between the Drakenberg and the sea. In all that is comprised in the word manliness, they are vastly inferior."

Beyond the fact that the Bechuanas of the Transvaal were very numerous in the first decades of the century, and lived a pastoral life, they have no annals worth mentioning up to the incursion of Umsilikatsi, the event with which the real history of the Transvaal begins, about the year 1817.

* I.e. an individual of the Bechuana tribes.
Before narrating this, one must return to the Bantu tribes of the coast, and give a brief outline of Zulu history, which is necessary to the comprehension of the dealings of the Boers with that courageous and powerful nation.

About the year 1793 there was a certain Dingiswayo, son of the chief of the Abatetwa, a Bantu tribe settled in modern Zululand. This man fell into suspicion of compassing his father's death, and had to flee for his life into the territory of the Cape. During the six years which he spent in exile, Dingiswayo, who was a man of singular genius, heard much about the European military system, and reflected on what he heard. When he returned home on his father's death in 1799, and recovered the headship of his tribe, he utilized his knowledge and reflections to organize a highly disciplined army. Among his chief officers was a certain Chaka, born in 1783, who was heir to the chieftainship of the small Amazulu tribe—the Zulus proper—but had had to flee in much the same circumstances as Dingiswayo, with whom he took refuge. Dingiswayo raised him to a post of high command, and finally placed him in the vacant Zulu chieftainship. Chaka's bravery and military skill endeared him to the army. Thus, when Dingiswayo fell in battle, Chaka became chief of the two tribes, to both of which he gave the Zulu name. Then he proceeded to improve the already existing Zulu army into the most perfect military machine, perhaps, that was ever originated in an uncivilized country.
Strange stories are told of the unquestioning obedience which Chaka enjoined, under the fear and penalty of instant death. To tread out a roaring bush-fire, or to bring in a full-grown lion or elephant alive and unwounded, were the ordinary tasks set for a regiment on review days. If a man or a regiment hesitated for a moment to accept an order, however dangerous or absurd, death was the sole penalty, which there were never wanting doers of the King's pleasure to inflict. Want of success was punished as want of will: it can easily be conceived what desperate warriors men became who knew that to return from defeat was to meet instant and terrible forms of death. The whole of Chaka's kingdom was put on a military footing. Before long he ruled over a hundred tribes instead of two, each as it accepted defeat being incorporated in the Zulu nationality. His policy, as he said himself, was not to destroy, but to subdue. Thus Chaka, who has been variously called the Attila and the Napoleon of South Africa, soon ruled with undisputed sway over the desolated regions of Natal, Zululand, and the modern Boer states, where he carved himself out a real empire. In September, 1828, Chaka was assassinated by one of his brothers, who in turn speedily yielded life and empire to another, the ferocious Dingaan, of whose conflicts with the Boers we shall have to say much later on. Finally Dingaan's power was broken by Pretorius, between 1838 and 1840; in the latter year he was assassinated by yet another brother of this happy family, the unwarlike Panda, who ruled peacefully
until 1872. From 1856 to 1861, however, this monarch was unable to prevent civil wars between the two most likely of his heirs, of whom Cetewayo was victorious in 1861. Until Panda's death in 1872, Cetewayo was the practical, though not the nominal chief, and thereafter he reigned without opposition until 1879, when the advance of civilization rendered him an intolerably dangerous neighbour, and England, after the disaster of Isandhlwana, finally broke the Zulu power at Ulundi. Since then Zululand has been practically under English rule. A large slice of it was annexed, on the excuse of its anarchy, by the raiding filibusters of the Transvaal, and the rest was formally declared a British protectorate in 1887.

It was an indirect consequence of the growth of the Zulu power under the formidable Chaka that the earliest emigrants across the Vaal River found, not the thickly populated and peaceful country of the Bechuanas on which the century had dawned, but a comparatively deserted land, guarded by the leonine Matabele chief, who struck savage blows at them from the district where Pretoria and Johannesburg now stand. Umsilikatsi was one of Chaka's favourites; his skill to sway the ranks of battle and his personal bravery had won him the hearts of that division of the Zulu army which he commanded, when, in 1817, he forfeited the King's favour by keeping for himself part of the booty in an expedition dispatched to extirpate a hostile tribe. Chaka sent an army with orders to slay Umsilikatsi, who persuaded his own troops to cast in their lots with
him, and fled across the mountain-barrier into the territory of the modern Transvaal. Mr. Theal has well described the slaughter and terror which he carried before his arms. Unlike Chaka, he aimed solely at destruction.

"The numerous tribes whose remnants form the Bapedi of our times looked with dismay upon the athletic forms of the Matabele, as they termed the invaders. They had never before seen discipline so perfect as that of these naked braves, or weapon so deadly as the Zulu stabbing-spear. All who could not make their escape were exterminated, except the comeliest girls and some of the young men who were kept to carry burdens. These last were led to hope that by faithful service they might attain the position of soldiers, and from them Umsilikatsi filled up the gaps that occurred from time to time in his ranks. The country over which he marched was covered with skeletons, and literally no human beings were left in it, for his object was to place a great desert between Chaka and himself."

It was upon the head waters of the Limpopo, a little south of the modern Pretoria, that Umsilikatsi settled. Secure of safety, there he built his kraals, and proceeded to send out marauding expeditions north, south, and west, to gather in the spoil of the timorous and unwarlike Bechuanas. Captain Harris, who has left us the most lively and complete account of Umsilikatsi and his kingdom, gives a graphic impression of the devastation of the country over which the savage Matabele hordes had swept. "We
continued to advance to the northward," he says, for instance, "over extensive rugged tracts, strewed with numerous stone walls, once thronged by thousands, but now presenting no vestige of inhabitants. Wherever we turned, the hand of the Destroyer was apparent:

"The locusts' wasting swarm,
Which mightiest nations dread,"

is not more destructive to vegetation than he has been to the population of this section of South Africa. We frequently travelled for days without meeting a solitary human being, occasionally only falling in with the small and starving remnant of some pastoral tribe of Bechuana, that had been plundered by Umsilikatsi's warriors." Whatever may be thought of the Boers' treatment of natives in general, it must be admitted that, in this instance at least, Umsilikatsi was to get from them no more than he deserved.
CHAPTER V

THE GREAT TREK AND ITS CAUSES

The European colonization of the Transvaal, like most other events of any moment, may be doubly traced back to what the doctors call a predisposing cause and an exciting cause. The predisposing cause was of twofold nature. On the one hand there was the hereditary and deep-rooted distaste of the Cape Boers for any kind of civil government which interfered with their entire liberty of action. We have already seen that two centuries of misrule and oppression had given them too good reason for this attitude. On the other hand, closely interwove with this, was their long-formed habit of remedying any grievance, whether due to mankind or nature, by trekking, or going away from its neighbourhood. The Boer had managed to simplify his life so far that he could at any time pack all his worldly goods and chattels upon one or more of the ox-waggons which are the ships of the veld, and move off with his family and flocks, after the patriarchal fashion of Abraham, when his borders grew too narrow. The exciting cause was the emancipation of slaves in the Cape Colony by the action of the English Government,
and the failure of the Boers to obtain anything like what they considered fit compensation for an arbitrary and, in their eyes, indefensible act.

The dislike of the South African Boers for any of those restraints upon personal liberty which are, even in these democratic days, inseparable from the idea of a settled government, may be traced back to the earliest years of the Dutch rule at the Cape. The piratical spirit of lawlessness, which is still abundantly manifest in the Transvaal Boer, as the half-dozen filibustering expeditions of the last few years bear witness, was indeed imported from Holland and Germany, Scotland and France, by the original settlers, nearly all of whom had been in serious conflict with the law, either for crimes of their own or wrongs of their rulers. It was hardly to be supposed that the Huguenot who had fled with his bare life before the dragoons of Louis, the Dutch farmer who had heard from his parents of the cruel days of Alva and Philip II., or the prison-breaker who had fallen into the all-embracing net of the Company's kidnappers, should have any particular respect for law in itself.

And the early rule of the Dutch East India Company was of a kind to foster this spirit of opposition into tenfold vehemence. A severe discipline was needed to keep the good-for-nothing soldiers in order, and the officers of the Company were restrained by neither public opinion nor private scruples from enforcing it to the utmost. One of the earliest entries in the records of the settlement
tells how the starving men were encouraged to be cheerful; the punishment of the grumbler was swift and heavy, and one man received a hundred blows with the butt end of a musket for uttering maledictions upon the purser because he served out penguins instead of pork. Flogging and keelhauling were the punishments for the most trifling offences against the regulations of the Governor. Very possibly no lighter hand could have controlled the "Pilgrim Fathers" of the earliest Dutch settlement.

Unfortunately, it never occurred to the officials of the Company, who were rather traders than statesmen, that sauce for the military goose might not be equally good sauce for the agricultural gander. When French religious refugees and independent Dutch farmers came out to the Cape, they were placed under the same severe and often vexatious discipline as the original servants of the Company. Far from being admitted to any voice in the affairs of the colony, they were made to feel that they existed upon sufferance, and that their only business was to grow food for the sailors engaged in the profitable East Indian trade. Amongst the arbitrary regulations which vexed and harassed the Huguenots in especial was the prohibition of the use of their native language, not only in addressing the Government, but even—so far as the authorities could hinder it—in the service of their Church and the privacy of their fireside. Other rules weighed upon all burghers alike. The only chance which a burgher had of making money and of improving his position was by
selling the produce of his farm, in the shape of vegetables, fresh meat, milk, and wine, to passing vessels, yet he was debarred from doing this with success by the vexatious rules with which the Governor attempted to bolster up the Company's monopoly. He was also forbidden to roam far afield in the desert or to explore the Veld. On all sides he felt that he was cribbed, cabined, and confined.

Less important, but perhaps even more hard to bear, were the sumptuary laws which the Governor and his Council thought it necessary to promulgate in the eighteenth century. No one except the Governor was permitted to use a gilded coach, or one bearing a coat-of-arms; no one under the rank of a member of Council might put his coachman in livery; no one might carry a sunshade, save senior merchants and the wives or daughters of members of the public boards.

The way in which the officials carried out the rules of the Government—one can scarcely dignify them with the name of laws—was not less annoying to the colonists than the nature of the rules themselves. Before the close of the seventeenth century it is a well-established fact that corruption in the administration of business had become well-nigh universal throughout the possessions of the Dutch East India Company. Records show us that the majority of the higher officials were unscrupulous in their pursuit of wealth. It is even true that many officers used the power entrusted to them to make money in ways that can only be called
absolutely criminal. This evil arose, as in our own East India Company's service, from the system of paying very small salaries and winking at their being eked out by trade and presents. The consequence of it was that all through the eighteenth century the Cape settlers were continually sending home protests against the rapacious and unjust conduct of the officials. The evil must have been great, for even to protest was an offence punishable by imprisonment during the Governor's pleasure (which actually happened to a namesake of the famous President Pretorius), or by deportation to Batavia or Europe. The defence made by one Governor was that the colonists had no rights as against the Government; they lived on sufferance, exactly as the colonists' descendants of to-day say that the Outlanders in the Transvaal should do. The colonists were "a parcel of people who had been released from the Company's service, and permitted as an act of grace to live in the country, under condition that they could be ordered back into service at the will of the Government." It is highly interesting to compare this Governor's attitude with that so lately maintained by President Kruger.

The result of all this was that, when England took possession of the Cape in 1795, a large number of the Dutch inhabitants were, as we have seen, in open rebellion against the Company's rule, and were ready to look upon England as a deliverer. Unfortunately the impatience of government which a hundred and fifty years of misrule had created was
too deeply rooted in Boer nature to be soon extirpated: nor, as has been indicated and is further to be shown, did England take the best measures for attaching her new subjects to herself. Mr. Theal, however, thinks that no people who were not actually of British descent ever presented such favourable material for the formation of a dependency loyal to Britain as did those South African colonists. It is true that, in race, they came in great part "of that sturdy Nether Teuton stock which peopled England and Scotland as well as the delta of the Rhine." But it is not to be expected that recollections of a distant kinship which is already a thousand years old will outweigh considerations of immediate comfort or profit. Two centuries of misgovernment, if they had alienated the Cape Boers from Holland, or at least from the Dutch East India Company, had also prepared them to look with equal suspicion on all forms of government alike.

One remedy, when the tyranny of the Company's officials was at its worst, the Boers had always held in their own hands. This was the simple one of moving out of reach, as soon as the discomfort of staying within the borders of the colony grew greater than the trouble and danger of going forth amongst the savages to seek fresh woods and pastures new. In all ages this has been a recognized practice amongst pastoral peoples, whose wealth goes mostly upon four legs, and the Boers pointed to the case of Abraham and Lot as Biblical warrant for their
practice of trekking, or dragging their goods and chattels, animate and inanimate, out of the reach of any danger that threatened them. The same custom has of course been noticed in all our colonies, but it is perhaps most remarkable at the Cape, where alone it has acquired the dignity of a special word to denote it. It is impossible to say when the first trek took place. Every writer on the Cape has noticed the practice, and has regarded it as one singularly characteristic of the Boer, who has scarcely any of that attachment to a particular spot of ground which so often marks our own yeomen or the French peasantry. It is this habit of frequent trekking to which is due almost all the northern extension of the Cape Colony.

"The Dutch colonists were not of a disposition to remain long quiet and stationary, or to rest contented with the limits of their possessions; they continued, as had been their wont, to move gradually onwards, according as they were tempted by the prospect of better pasturage for their cattle, or by other natural advantages, or merely by a roving disposition, till considerable numbers of them were established far beyond the acknowledged boundary of the colony. The colonial Government, upon finding this to be the case, thought fit, without any regard to the rights of the natives, to alter and extend the boundary so as to take in all the territory which had been occupied in this unauthorized manner by the roving Boers."

Mr. Gordon Cumming has left us a picturesque
account of the nomad Boer, the Pioneer or Voortrekker, who "lived in a small canvas tent pitched between his two waggons, round which his vast flocks of sheep assembled every evening, his cattle and horses running day and night in a neighbouring range of grassy hills." Thus he travelled with his wife and family, feeding on flesh, milk, and wild honey, until he came to a fountain that pleased him well enough for him to settle by it and build a house once more. The Bible was his sole literature, and he very likely steered by the map of the Garden of Eden which adorns the black-letter folios of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Many of the Voortrekkers were under the sincere impression that they would ultimately reach Jerusalem, and, a second Chosen People, establish a new Kingdom of God in the Holy Land. The Transvaal district of Nylstroom owes its name to this belief, for the trekkers who fell in with a river running north promptly hailed it as the Nile, whilst they saw Egyptians in the Kaffirs, and too hastily identified Pharaoh himself with a certain chief called Palo.

This long habit of trekking must have added to the Cape farmer's inaptitude for regular government. A century and a half spent in the desert converted the Boer, whether Dutch or French, into a keen and crafty pioneer, but an impatient member of an organized state. An apologist and former official of the Boers, one Aylward, puts the matter in a faithful light:—"One indelible feature has by
their long and continuous wanderings been impressed upon their character—that is, an unsettled and vagrant disposition. Having been on trek for forty-four years, the trek has eaten itself into their hearts. They are still (1881) on trek; and few, indeed, are there who are not ready at a moment’s notice to hurl themselves once more into the desert in search of brighter and happier homes.”

Mr. Froude, in his South African Journal, gives a highly characteristic instance of a modern trek, which deserves to be quoted as throwing some light upon the wish of the typical Boer for solitude, and his unwillingness to lend himself to what most English farmers would consider a highly desirable form of “progress.” The Dutch farmer, or rather Boer, in question had an estate adjoining the Diamond Fields, which were originally in what was then supposed to be unquestionably Boer territory.

“Had he remained where he was, he could have made a large fortune. Milk, butter, poultry, eggs, vegetables, fruit, ran up to fabulous prices. The market was his own, to demand what he pleased. But he was disgusted at the intrusion upon his solitude. The diggers worried him from morning to night demanding to buy, while he required his farm produce for his own family. He sold his land, in his impatience, for a tenth of what he might have got had he cared to wait and bargain, mounted his wife and children into his waggon and moved off into the wilderness. Which was the wisest man—the Dutch farmer or the Yankee Englishman who
was laughing at him? The only book that the Dutchman had ever read was the Bible, and he knew no better. The whole talk among these people is of diamond fields and gold fields, and diamonds and gold never made the material of a nation, and never will."

Of all the innumerable treks of the Boers, by far the most important was that commonly called the Great Trek, which gave rise to the South African Republic and the Orange Free State in the fourth and fifth decades of the present century. It may, on a small scale, be compared with the great folk-wanderings (as the Germans well call them) which gave rise to so many new states in Europe whilst the Roman Empire was falling to pieces. Only there is this fundamental distinction, that it was not the incursion of barbarian tribes into a settled and civilized country, but the steady advance of comparatively civilized whites amongst a savage population of Kaffirs. It is somewhat difficult, in the midst of party feeling and conflicting authorities, to get at the exact truth about this event. On the one hand, we are told that the sole motive of the Boers was to pass the English boundary into a country where their harsh and demoralizing treatment of their slaves would not be interfered with; on the other hand, the Boers themselves and their apologists look upon the Trek as the Exodus of "a poor persecuted people," seeking freedom only, and leaving English territory, like the Pilgrim Fathers, for conscience' sake. Probably the real truth is
somewhere between these two extremes, and one must endeavour to set forth an outline of it, as it appears after a careful examination of the statements made on both sides.

The numerous reasons which led to the discontent of the frontier Boers with English rule are thus stated by their own best historian. They were impoverished and alarmed by the constant wars with the neighbouring Kaffirs, in which they were commandeered for service, but had no voice in the selection of their leaders, nor in the settling of terms of peace. They had been deprived of the services of their native servants on the only terms which they believed to be practicable, at the same time that the check was removed from the increase and circulation of what Elizabethans called sturdy beggars and masterless men. They had practically been deprived of the free resort to justice when the only language that they understood was forbidden in the law-courts and in official documents. Changes in the monetary system of the colony had borne hard upon them. And lastly, the harsh punishment of the rebels of Slachtersnek had driven the iron into their souls. All these evils they attributed—one must admit, with much justice—to the presence of the British Government in their country.

Whatever may have been the various motives which prepared the Boers for the Great Trek, there can be no dispute that the emancipation of all slaves by England was the match which finally set light to the accumulated magazine of explosives. For nearly
two centuries, the Boers had grown more and more convinced of the right of the white man to do as seemed good in his eyes with the black and the brown. A glance at the history of the Cape slave system will illustrate this proposition.

At an early period in the Dutch occupation of the Cape there was taken that most unfortunate step which has led to such constant trouble there, as it has also done in America. This was the adoption of a system of recognized slavery, on which, in spite of the successful precedents set by the ancient world, we moderns have never succeeded in making our civilization flourish for long. In 1658 there arrived at the Cape one hundred and seventy negro slaves from Angola, to whom were speedily added a hundred and twenty-six from Guinea. The learned Mr. Theal rightly points out that the introduction of this class of people was a grave political as well as moral error. Its effects were soon apparent in fostering a feeling of pride among the Europeans, which made them despise manual labour of any kind. The development of the agricultural resources of the country was thus in fact retarded. More slaves were imported, and encouraged to breed in captivity: it was soon found convenient to extend the “domestic institution” to the Hottentots, especially to such as could be accused of overt or intended rebellion; and in 1834 the number of real or nominal slaves held in the Cape Colony had increased to thirty-five thousand.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century,
and especially after the suppression of the slave trade in 1807, it became daily more and more apparent that slavery was doomed in all the English dominions. The noble and unceasing efforts of Macaulay, Wilberforce, and their friends, made themselves vaguely felt on the other side of the Equator, and the Boers seem, on the whole, to have accepted the possibility of the gradual extinction of slavery with some equanimity. The general view of the colonists may be supposed to be expressed in a letter of the Volksraad of the Natal emigrants, which declares:—"A long and sad experience has sufficiently convinced us of the injury, loss, and dearness of slave labour, so that neither slavery nor the slave trade will ever be permitted among us."

But every Boer in the colony was deeply convinced that, however great an evil slavery in general might be, the sudden liberation of his own slaves would be a far greater one. Selfish motives may have contributed to this view, but it is only fair to add that certainly it was also based upon knowledge of what had been the effect of a sudden emancipation of slaves in the French West Indian colonies, and upon grave fears as to what course the liberated slaves would take, in addition to a strong disinclination to bow to the decision of a distant and foreign Government on so vital a matter. Consequently, when Fowell Buxton's bill became law in 1833, providing for the liberation of all slaves in the British dominions on December 1, 1834, but allowing their masters to retain them as "apprentices" for four years longer,
it gave the signal for a widely spread move of the Boers across the frontier of the Cape Colony. Those who remained looked forward with the greatest terror to the fatal day of December 1, 1888, when they declared that they apprehended from the total release of thirty-five thousand slaves, not only poverty to themselves personally, but a complete disruption of society, attended by riots and all the results of legalized vagrancy throughout the colony generally. They were signally in error: the emancipated slaves at once settled down to work, and have been a credit to the colony ever since. But by that time the Great Trek had taken place.

Fear of the consequences of a sudden emancipation of slaves and dislike to its principle were not, however, the only causes of the Great Trek. Some of the others, as we have seen, are much less creditable to the English Government of the period. To these must be added the general and justifiable disgust at the injustice with which the emancipation of the slaves was, so far as most of the Boers were concerned, turned into practical confiscation of their property. England, it is true, offered compensation. But this was calculated on the basis of the West Indies, where slaves were worth less than half as much as at the Cape. Thus, to begin with, every slave-holder lost three-fifths of the value of his slaves. Beyond this, the devotees of red tape had a finger in the pie. The compensation money was only payable on application in person at the Bank of England—a most iniquitous provision. The
slave-owners of the Cape had to pay discount and commission to the amount of twelve per cent. and upwards, in order to receive their share at Cape Town, and even for this many of them had to travel several hundreds of miles. "An English speculator, taking advantage of this state of things, went out to the Cape with a large sum of money, to buy up compensation claims, which many of the owners, disgusted with the trouble and loss they were exposed to, were willing to sell cheap; and it turned out, I believe," says Mr. Bunbury, "a very profitable speculation." This was the kind of thing that so justly endeared the Old Country to her distant colonies and dependencies in the earlier part of this century.

A somewhat analogous complaint was made by the farmers whose horses and cattle had been seized for the use of the British army during the Kaffir war of 1835. Full compensation had been promised; but the claims lay in the Government Offices at Cape Town until the claimants were weary of reiterating their requests, and it does not seem that anything was ever paid.

A further grievance of the colonists settled near the frontier, as we have seen, was that the Government was quite unable to protect them from the forays of marauding Kaffirs and Bushmen; whilst, if they retaliated on their savage foes, they were liable to punishment. Across the border, they thought, the peril could be no greater, whilst their trusty roers, or elephant guns, would at least be available for protection and reprisals.
Thus, to sum up the causes of the Great Trek, when the numerous and indubitable errors of the Cape Government in dealing with the Boers have all been taken into account, one thing stands out clearly enough. The actual rock on which the Boers split off from England, we are enabled to see, was simply that terrible and eternal African stumbling-block, the Native Question.
CHAPTER VI

BOERS AND NATIVES IN THE TRANSVAAL

The great wave of emigration which thus began to spread northward across the Orange River in or about the year 1834 soon divided itself into three branches. Many of the first-comers were content to settle down on the fertile plains of what afterwards became the Orange Free State, between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers. Another branch turned to the north-east and poured over the passes of the Drakenberg or the Quathlamba Mountains into Natal, then a portion of the empire of the Zulu Dingaan, where, after bloody massacres and hotly contested battles, the genius and valour of Pretorius at last broke the Zulu power. A short-lived Republic of Natalia was then formed, but was soon put down by England, after a trifling skirmish, and its territory added to the Cape Colony. Many of the Boers then turned from Natal to the northwest, where they joined with the late comers and the most advanced of the Voortrekkers to found the several little states which coalesced later on into the South African Republic. This, in brief, is the history of a score of the most full and heroic years that the Boers have known.
A contemporary traveller gives us an interesting picture of one of the earliest bodies of the emigrant Boers, which may here be quoted in order to show the kind of people that they seemed to observers.

"The Graham's Town Journal has lately (September, 1838) contained some interesting accounts of the emigrant Boers, by a man of the name of Boshof,* who has returned from a visit to them. He says that their number now amounts altogether to about 640 men, 3,200 women and children, and perhaps 1,260 blacks, with about 1,200 waggons; and that they calculate their live stock at 300,000 sheep, 40,000 head of cattle, and 3,000 horses (including mares and colts). . . . If these accounts are to be depended on, the emigrants have established a regular system of government among themselves, vesting the supreme power, both legislative and executive, in a council of twenty-four members elected for one year by 'the people'—I presume by the majority of their number. They have also appointed magistrates for the trial of petty offences, and a court of justice for more serious cases; and it is stated that they pay much attention to public worship and religious instruction. But they feel severely the want of some one qualified to take a decided lead, and to acquire the confidence and respect of all. One statement made by Boshof is so unexpected that I will extract it word for word. He says:—'There are not a few slave apprentices with the emigrants; but it has been determined by the

* Perhaps this was the future President of the Orange Free State.
council that these shall be set at liberty on the 1st of December, the same as in the Colony. The emigrants do not seem to have the slightest idea of entering into any slave trade whatever, and are even offended at a question on the subject being put to them. They say, "We are not averse to the emancipation of the slave—the colonists never introduced the slave trade, the European Government forced it upon us—what we complain of is, that our slaves have been emancipated by England under a promise of full compensation, whereas we have scarcely received a third of their value." 

This is undoubtedly a plausible utterance, and would command our respect, if we were not forced to discount it by the future history of the South African Republic, in which both slavery and the slave trade flourished under the faintest disguise. Livingstone refers to this declaration as being made, like the fine-sounding proclamation against slavery set forth by President Pretorius, himself a slave-holder, in 1859, solely to throw dust in the eyes of the European Governments. It is quite probable that it was made in good faith, and that circumstances forced the Boers to abandon its doctrine, like that so distinctly set forth by the Natal Volksraad. But it is perfectly certain that, whether of design or not, this declaration was entirely misleading as to the action of the emigrant farmers. Their idea of emancipating their slaves was to free them, as slaves, with one hand, and take them back, as apprentices, with the other.

The view of the Colonial authorities as to the
Great Trek was very undecided, and of a piece with the vacillating conduct which England has always displayed towards the Boers. Few of that race, unfortunately, are sufficiently educated to comprehend that indecision or mildness in the conduct of a State can arise from any other cause than weakness. The emigrants themselves, mindful of the old law of the East India Company which strictly forbade any colonist to cross the frontier without a written permission from the authorities,* and perturbed by some rumour of the English law *Ne exeat regno,* hardly expected to be allowed to go peaceably. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Cape, the sensible and sympathetic Captain Stockenstrom, however, publicly declared that he knew of no law to prevent the King’s subjects from crossing the boundary and settling in another country, and that, if there were such a law, it would be arbitrary and tyrannical. This declaration had a great effect in encouraging the movement, which soon became, as many observers have agreed, a perfect passion, infecting even the long-settled districts about Cape Town. The Governor attempted, without avail, to check the tide of emigration by the issue of a proclamation in which he earnestly exhorted “all public functionaries throughout the Colony, as well as all ministers of religion, and other persons of sound views, who cannot but foresee the inevitable result of the

* "So anxious were the authorities to prevent the settlers from leaving the lands assigned to them, that edicts were frequently issued forbidding them to trek under pain of death and confiscation of their property.”
prevailing mania of emigration, to endeavour by every means in their power to dissuade intending emigrants from the prosecution of plans which cannot fail, sooner or later, to involve themselves, and their families who are prepared to accompany them, in certain and irretrievable ruin."

The fate of the earliest party of emigrants was such as fully to bear out the Governor's words, which were, indeed, a prophecy after that fact. The northern boundary of the Colony at this time was the Orange River. The first party of emigrants, numbering about thirty families, and headed by one Carel Trichard, crossed the frontier soon after the beginning of 1834. The coast was then overrun by the fierce warriors of Dingaan, and the interior plateau rendered scarcely less insecure by the predatory bands of the Great Elephant or the Old Lion, Umsilikatsi. Trichard therefore held a middle course right along the mountains to Delagoa Bay, where he and many of his followers died of fever, whilst the rest, two only excepted, were slain by a war-party of the Matabele. The second body of trekkers, crossed the Orange River, about two hundred strong, in 1836, under the famous Commandant Hendrik Potgieter. A boy, just ten years of age, amongst Potgieter's followers lived to become President Kruger. Ignorant of the fate of their predecessors, the second party kept more inland, until their advance guard was caught unawares in the neighbourhood of the Vaal River by a body of Umsilikatsi's warriors: twenty-five were slain, but a few
escaped to warn the main body. The Boers had time to form their waggons into a circular laager, lashing them together with ropes of hide, and filling the interstices with thorn bushes. The Matabele, who were five thousand strong, failed to break the laager, lost a hundred and fifty men in a quarter of an hour, and made off from such hot company with all the emigrants' live stock, said to be six thousand cattle and forty thousand sheep.

It was quite clear to the Boers by this time that, unless Umsilikatsi's strength was broken, the emigrants could hope for no peace beyond the Orange River. Potgieter returned to meet several other bands, to whom he explained the facts. It was decided that they should endeavour to do as they had been done by; and, in fact, they bettered the instruction. One cannot speak too highly of the courage with which the emigrants and their devoted wives set themselves, in the midst of hardships and privations, to what they held a crusade in the cause of liberty and the white man's burden. A strong commando was at once formed and marched under one Gerrit Maritz in January, 1837. The skill of its leader, long trained in border warfare, and the zeal of some friendly natives executed a somewhat ruthless but efficient plan to perfection. The force took one of Umsilikatsi's chief military stations by surprise, and covered it with a rain of bullets from a commanding and impregnable position. Four hundred Matabele warriors were slain and seven thousand cattle recovered, without a single wound
on the part of the Boers. Umsilikatsi was not himself present at this fight, but the Boers were well aware that he also would thirst for revenge, and they resolved to strike another crushing blow before he was prepared. The outline of the second fight may here be given in the words of Mr. Theal; it is so thrilling in its details that only the sternest sense of proportion can prevent one from diverting much more space to this campaign than Mr. Theal has allotted.

"A large commando, of which Maritz was elected commandant, assembled and marched fearlessly into the Old Lion's den. In conducting operations against their savage enemies, the emigrants were not troubled with any qualms of conscience, but sought only how to subjugate them most thoroughly. In common conversation, they constantly compared themselves to the Israelites fleeing from Egypt, and their foes to Canaanites, whom it was not less their duty than their interest to subdue. They shot them down with as little compunction as if they had been so many wolves. Three days Umsilikatsi stood at bay, putting forth his strength in vain against those terrible horsemen, who were so fearfully avenging the Christian blood he had shed. Then, crippled and bleeding, he gathered his forces together and fled. But the pursuers were close behind, panting still for further vengeance. At the Little Marico River he made his last stand, and there sustained a defeat that utterly broke his power. The Lion of the North was now driven, like a timid antelope, far
beyond the Limpopo, to a tract of country near the Zambesi, from which he never returned."

It is hardly necessary to remind the modern reader that Umsilikatsi there founded the kingdom of Matabeleland, and that his son and successor was the famous Lo Bengula, who in turn fell not long ago before the avengers of Christian blood, or the pioneers of civilization, as they would probably prefer to be called. This was the last fight in which the Boer emigrants to the Transvaal had to defend their existence. The numerous native wars that followed, up to the time of Sekukuni and Malaboch, were undertaken rather for the purpose of maintaining order and obtaining Kaffir apprentices.

Perhaps it will be well, before carrying on the history of the Voortrekkers, to stay and consider the much-discussed attitude of the Boers upon this Native Question. Travellers seem never to have settled in their own minds whether the Transvaal is or is not a slave-holding State. The friend and official of the Boers, Aylward, emphasized Froude's assertion "that the white people were much more in the position of slaves to the Kaffirs than the blacks were to them." Livingstone roundly accused the Boers of "carrying on the slave-trade." Which of these conflicting statements is nearer the truth?

After the destruction of the power of Umsilikatsi, the Bechuana tribes that were freed from his yoke were disposed at first to welcome the white men as deliverers. But they soon found that things were not, from their point of view, greatly improved.
The Boers, according to their neighbour, the famous and noble Livingstone, "came with the prestige of white men and deliverers; but the Bechuana soon found, as they expressed it, 'that Umsilikatsi was cruel to his enemies, and kind to those he conquered; but the Boers destroyed their enemies, and made slaves of their friends.' The tribes who still retain the semblance of independence are forced to perform all the labour of the fields, such as manuring the land, weeding, reaping, building, making dams and canals, and at the same time to support themselves. I have myself" (adds Livingstone) "been an eye-witness of Boers coming to a village, and according to their usual custom, demanding twenty or thirty women to weed their gardens, and have seen these women proceed to the scene of unrequited toil, carrying their own food on their heads, their children on their backs, and instruments of labour on their shoulders."

This is rather a curious commentary on the assertion of the emigrants that they had abandoned slavery in theory as well as in practice. But the Boers had an ingenious device by means of which they cheerfully signed any number of declarations against slavery, and at the same time had the full advantage of it. This was the apprentice system, which flourished unchecked until the time of the British occupation of the Transvaal. It was simply slavery under a different name, and so was supposed to smell sweeter in English nostrils.

But even the natives of the Transvaal, whom,
according to a certain apologist named Krieger, the Boers were justified in making work for them, in consideration of permission to live in their country— even these serfs and villeins could not supply the whole demand for domestic service. That was met by forays on outlying tribes which had a good supply of cattle. A double purpose was thus served by the raid. Those individual Boers who would not have engaged in it for the sake of slaves, could, we are told, seldom resist the twofold plea of a well-told story of an intended uprising of the devoted tribe, and the prospect of handsome pay in the division of the captured cattle besides. The men of stern virtue shared the cattle; those of less tender consciences took the children as apprentices, who were brought up to perform all the duties of the emancipated slaves.

Livingstone himself, as it has been seen, could not understand how the Boers could reconcile their practice of slave-raiding with their profession of Christianity. To his amazement, as he wrote to a friend at home, "their Church is, and has always been, the great bulwark of slavery, cattle-lifting, and Kaffir marauding." If he had had more opportunities of studying the Boers at close quarters, perhaps this union would not have seemed so wonderful.

We have already seen how the education of the emigrant farmers was practically limited to the Bible. That, as a very able writer points out, was the sole volume from which all the history, the geography, and the science known to the generation
that grew up in the wilderness was derived. And the simple language of the Old Testament, much of it applying to a people leading a similar life to the Boers, wandering in a wilderness, depending upon flocks and herds, fighting with heathen tribes for existence, had a meaning for them which it cannot have for dwellers in the towns of Europe. The very skies and the landscapes, the animals and the plants, of the ancient Scriptures were the same that they were familiar with in daily life. Thus the Voortrekkers easily came to regard themselves as God's peculiar people. They were quite as stiffnecked as the Israelites could possibly have been, and they believed that the blacks whom they encountered were either Canaanites to be destroyed, or Gibeonites to be enslaved. Even to-day, the Boers are said to look on the Kaffirs as the descendants of Cain, and consider any attempt to Christianize them as a foolish effort to nullify God's curse. Missionaries are asked, in all seriousness, why they waste time in preaching to the Kaffirs, who, as every Boer knows, have no souls. It is recorded that a friendly Boer, once speaking to an English acquaintance about Matabeleland, assured him it was a beautiful country, and would one day be taken over by the Boers, adding, seriously, "God Almighty never made such a beautiful country for Kaffirs!"

One now begins to see how the Boer finds it easy to believe that the natives have no rights, and how even his religion prevents him from using any of the rules of ordinary justice or truth, not to speak of
mercy, towards his poor relations. Placed in a black man's country, he feels somehow that the distinction between himself and the aborigines is a real one, and the constitution of his States has always been drawn up with distinct reference to this demarcation. A cynic, remembering the dash of the tar-brush in the Boer's own genealogy, might see in this feeling something of the haste of the parvenu to tread down all his old associates, and to forget the pit whence he was digged. However that may be, it is certain that the Boer denies all rights to the natives. If he promises to give them some, in deference to the absurd English ideas, it is with a mental reservation that, if he may not enslave them, he will make them permanent apprentices; and it is not very easy for the Englishman to perceive where the difference comes in. Thus one of the chief causes of the Great Trek was the Boer's determination to reach a country in which he might pursue, without molestation, the proper treatment of the blacks. "It is almost needless to add," says Livingstone, "that the 'proper treatment' has always contained in it the essential element of slavery, namely, compulsory unpaid labour."

This state of the national mind, in fact, derived as it was from the original Dutch attitude, was founded on views like those prevalent in England in Queen Anne's time, or in the Southern States of America before the Civil War. It regards the native races as helots and serfs, to be humanely treated, but not by nature capable of being placed on any sort of
practical equality with the white races. The constitution of every Boer State has always expressed this as a fundamental principle. The Republics of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet affirmed in 1795 that South Africa was to be a white man's country, and that they wanted equal justice, but not political equality, for black and white. The first written constitution of the Voortrekkers, Pieter Retief's "Eerste Grondwet" of 1837, made this unmistakable. All white inhabitants and immigrants were to be citizens in the new State beyond the Orange River. Slavery was not to be allowed, and all natives were entitled to the full protection of the law. But civil, religious, or political equality of black and white was unthinkable. No native could hold any office in Church or State; and all white citizens must declare on oath that they had no connection with the emigrants' bête noire, the London Missionary Society. We shall see later how this principle was fully reaffirmed in the constitutions of the Transvaal and Orange River States.

The Boer native policy, according to Sir Bartle Frere, was very simple. "To have no more natives than are wanted to work on their farms, and to keep those few in a very complete state of subordination, are, of course, cardinal points. Large, powerful, and growing (races of) natives like the Zulus alongside us are stubborn facts, and a great difficulty to the general run of Dutch Transvaal politicians; but they have a hazy notion that such people ought to be, and may be, driven away somewhere else, into
unhealthy regions north of the Portuguese, or pent up in black Alsatias, where they may grow mealies, but cannot keep horses or sheep."

Natives who attacked the Boers, or who might be expected to do so, were not likely to get any mercy from the holders of this doctrine, as long as the Boers were in the better position. And we find them, accordingly, shot down like wolves, blown up with dynamite, or starved in the caves where they took refuge, as happened to be most convenient. The Boer shows to more advantage when fighting the native for his life than when exploiting him for a living. In all this melancholy tale of murder and outrage, of slave-raiding and cattle-stealing and land-grabbing, which is the history of the Boers and the natives in South Africa, there is yet no reason to suppose that any Boer felt more conscientious scruples than did Mr. Gordon Cumming or Captain Harris when they shot the quaggas and giraffes, the lions and leopards of the Veld. There can be no doubt, as Mr. Theal says, that Pretorius thought he was acting in perfect accordance with Divine command in treating the natives as he did. The injunctions given in the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy were therefore followed to the letter by the Boers where natives were concerned:—

"When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall
serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword; but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.”

For “city” read “tribe,” and this barbarous exhortation will amply and exactly express the policy which the Boers have uniformly employed for half a century towards the natives with whom they have come into contact. All their native neighbours have to bewail, like Mankoroane, the theft of cattle, or, like Khama, the plunder of subjects, or, like a hundred nameless ones, the robbery of land. Only within the last few years has the extension of the pax Britannica made it remotely possible for any native chief within reach of the Transvaal to keep anything that was his, save—as with the Zulus and Basutos—in virtue of his own strong hand.

It was in the course of one of these slave-raids that the Boers came into their well-known collision with Dr. Livingstone. That famous attack upon Sechelé and his subjects was amply avenged in the justly indignant pages of the explorer’s journal, which thrilled all England when it was published. Livingstone’s hatred of the Boers’ slave-raids was all the more noticeable because of his sympathy with the emigrants in other respects.
It would hardly be possible, we have been told, to find a man, not born in South Africa, more closely resembling a Boer in character than Dr. Livingstone. He had all the indomitable perseverance, the disregard of difficulties, the coolness in time of peril, the hatred of restraint of any kind, which characterized the emigrants. But he had been educated in the school of modern English ideas about black men, and in consequence he and the farmers bore little love to each other.

More than once the Boers warned Livingstone, who was settled in Bechuanaeland near the border of the newly settled Transvaal, that his plan of educating the insolent natives would not be permitted. Finally these warnings culminated in the raid on his station at Kolobeng. There can, one fears, be little or no doubt that Pretorius had given his commando of Boers orders, in the course of their raid, four hundred strong, upon the Bechuana, to kill Livingstone if they could lay hands upon him. A happy accident—the missionaries called it an interposition of Providence—delayed him for a fortnight on his way back from the Cape, and the Boers could only content themselves with looting his house. This they did most thoroughly. "They brought four waggons down," wrote Livingstone to his wife, who was fortunately at home in England, "and took away sofa, bed, table, all the crockery, your desk, smashed all the wooden chairs, took away the iron ones, tore out the leaves of all the books and scattered them in front of the house, smashed the
bottles containing medicines, windows, oven door, took away the smith's bellows, anvil, all the tools—in fact, everything worth taking; three corn-mills, a bag of coffee, for which I paid £6, and lots of coffee, tea, and sugar which the gentlemen who went to the north left; took all our cattle and Paul's and Mebalwe's. Then they went up to Limaüe, went to church morning and afternoon, and heard Mebalwe preach! "Think," he writes indignantly to a friend, "think of a big, fat Boeress drinking coffee out of my kettle, and then throwing her tallowy corporeity on my sofa, or keeping her needles in my wife's writing-desk! Ugh! And then think of foolish John Bull paying so many thousands a year for the suppression of the slave-trade, and allowing Commissioner Aven to make treaties with Boers who carry on the slave-trade!" One is not altogether displeased to know that this time the Boers gained a very doubtful victory; the Bechuanas fought bravely, and killed thirty-five of the assailants, with a loss of sixty to themselves.

At the same time, it must be remembered that this story is not absolutely proved. The statement of the commandant of the Boers was that Livingstone's house had been pillaged before his commando arrived at Kolobeng. On the other hand, even Mr. Theal admits that the burghers regarded Livingstone as a very dangerous enemy, and that the story is not in itself improbable. And the commandant himself confessed that he had broken open Livingstone's workshop, and, on finding guns under
repair in it, had confiscated and removed the whole of the loose property upon the place. He also seized some three hundred women and children of Sechelé's people, the greater part of whom were divided among the members of the commando as slaves—I beg the Boers' pardon—as apprentices.
CHAPTER VII

THE BOERS IN NATAL

A glance at the map will show that two courses were open to the Boer emigrants who had crossed the Orange River. They might either make northwards to the Vaal River, leaving settlers at every pleasant fountain on the way, as Maritz and Potgieter and the other conquerors of Umsilikatsi had done, or they might turn towards the coast and cross the mountain ranges to the river valleys of Natal. The history of the Trek cannot be completely understood without some account of the gallant but fruitless attempt of those who took the latter direction to found a Boer Republic in Natal, to which the present chapter shall therefore be devoted.

The district of Natal, as we have already seen, had been named by Vasco da Gama in memory of his land-fall there on Christmas Day, 1497. Up to the time of the Great Trek, however, the only Europeans who knew anything of the coastwise country lying between the Great Kei River and Delagoa Bay were a few itinerant traders. During the first third of the present century this district was the scene of Chaka's ruthless attempt to emulate
Napoleon's empire-building. Army after army had carried devastation amongst the original inhabitants, and when the Boers began to cross the mountains not a soul between the Drakensberg and the sea ventured to question the absolute sway of Chaka's murderer and successor, the cruel Dingaan. The seat of his power, however, was Zululand proper, lying to the north of the Tugela River, and the present Colony of Natal was only inhabited by a few thousands of starving and abject Kaffirs. Naturally it presented a favourable aspect to the Boers in search of new homes.

There was a lion in the path, however. Dingaan, though he was friendly enough to the few white traders who had asked leave to settle on the Bay of Natal and go among his people, had no intention of giving up half his country to the Boers without a struggle. In 1835 he had allowed the British traders to found the town of Durban, whose original population was about a score of white men. But when the Boers proposed to come in so much larger numbers, he changed his foreign policy. This is one of the few cases in which an impartial historian is able unhesitatingly to take the Boers' side in their dealings with the natives. Their leader, Pieter Retief, seems to have been one of the finest characters whom their race ever produced. We agree with Dr. Voigt that his nobility of soul, patriotic ardour, and tragic fate stand out in such vivid relief on the pages of Boer history as "to entitle him to be considered pre-eminently the national hero." Retief,
who was born in the closing years of the eighteenth century, had already distinguished himself by protesting against the injustice of the Colonial Government in a manifesto which no one can read without respect and admiration for its author. He was better educated and more a man of the world than most of his compatriots, and had splendid visions of building up a great Boer republic in South Africa beyond the reach of the hide-bound and unsympathetic English officials. "In his patriotic day-dreams he saw his countrymen coming from the East and from the West," says Dr. Voigt, "to help him transform the wilderness to civilization; 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 free and glorious among the nations of the earth—with a flag and a maritime territory of its own."

He had already been warned of the impracticability of realizing this grand ideal, with such a material as the Boers furnished, by the quarrels which already began to divide their counsels within a year or two after the Trek began. With more or less success Retief had played peacemaker between Potgieter and Maritz; but we may guess that he was already sick of the task when he turned aside from their northern track to lead those of the emigrants who would follow him into the well-watered and depopulated valleys of Natal.

The strength and ferocity of the Zulu empire was well known by repute to the colonists, and the
first necessity was to negotiate terms of settlement with its autocrat. Retief undertook this dangerous task himself, and in October, 1837, set out to visit Dingaan with five companions. On the way he passed by the new settlement of Durban, and received a hearty welcome from the little English colony, two of whom volunteered to accompany him as interpreters. Dingaan received the party with every mark of favour and esteem. He readily promised to grant the land-charter which Retief desired, on condition that the latter would restore certain cattle which the Zulus believed some of the emigrant Boers to have stolen. With this promise Retief returned to his friends, of whom no less than a thousand waggons had, in the mean time, with remarkable skill and endurance, crossed the difficult pass of the Drakenberg into Natal. The cattle were easily recovered from the Basutos who had stolen them, and Retief again set out to visit Dingaan. This time he was accompanied by sixty-five Boers—a force at once too large for massacre and too small for successful resistance against treachery. It seems that Retief and his companions, who were accustomed to the spiritless Hottentots and degraded Kaffirs of the Colony, had no conception of the Zulu qualities. Dingaan received the second mission with every mark of amity, and delivered to Retief the promised deed, ceding to him and his countrymen in perpetuity all Natal south of the Tugela River, as far as the land was Dingaan’s to give. Two days later, on the 6th of February, 1838, Dingaan caused the whole
party to be massacred at a farewell feast, and impaled their dead bodies on the top of the Hill of Slaughter—Chlooma Amaboota—which overlooked his capital. There, according to the native tradition preserved by Cachet, for more than ten months the bodies were respected by vultures and wild beasts: and there, when Pretorius arrived on his errand of vengeance, the Boers found the deed which gave them Natal still hanging round the neck of the gallant and ill-fated Retief.

Having thus declared his intentions towards the Boers, Dingaan lost no time in striking a further blow. He fell unexpectedly upon the rest of the emigrants and slew over three hundred of them, men, women, and children, at a place that still bears the melancholy name of Weenen, or Weeping. One or two of the survivors thought of flight, but the stern religion and the courageous women of the emigrants alike advised a bolder course. An expedition was sent against the Zulus, which was drawn into an ambush and had to retreat, fighting bravely but in total disorder, with heavy loss. Even Potgieter, who had come to the aid of his fellow emigrants, now counselled retreat, and it seemed that all was over, when occasion brought out the best qualities of the remarkable man to whom, more than to any other, the Transvaal State may be said to owe its very existence.

Andries Wilhelmus Jacobus Pretorius, a farmer from the district of Graff Reinet, came to the front at the psychological moment when a leader was needed.
He was then just forty years of age, endowed with vigour and strength of body uncommon even amongst the athletic and often gigantic Boers, and in appearance, we are told, a calm, unexcitable, plainly dressed farmer, unassuming in manner, slow in counsel, but quick in action. He already possessed wealth and reputation. His family were proud to trace their descent through many generations to Johannes Pretorius, son of a clergyman at Goeree in South Holland, who had arrived at Cape Town in the early days of settlement; and they equally prided themselves upon having preserved an unstained reputation for integrity during two centuries. Like the majority of the Boers, Pretorius had received so little education as to have no knowledge of geography or modern history; he was totally ignorant of the condition and relative strength of European nations; but in Bible history he was thoroughly well versed. It was because he was a model of piety, according to the ideas of the farmers, and an embodiment of their ruling passions—hatred of control and of sudden innovations, love of freedom and of abundant space to move about in—as well as on account of his indubitable ability and bravery, that Pretorius came to be the hero of the emigrants. He has been called the Boer Cromwell, and those who wish to find the key to his character, as well, indeed, as to that of the typical Boer, should read the letter which he wrote from his deathbed to the Transvaal Council of War, couched in the biblical phraseology which seems as strange to us across the ocean as it does across the
centuries in the case of Cromwell. There is no reason to doubt that Pretorius was a sincerely good man: and, after his lights and opportunities, he certainly was a great one.

His first action, when called to command, was to punish the treachery of Dingaan. To this end Pretorius set out, near the end of 1838, at the head of an expedition which has ever since been known amongst the Boers as the Win-commando. His force was about four hundred white men with a few native auxiliaries, and he had three small pieces of cannon. One of these, by the way, survived for effective use in the War of Independence forty years later. Dingaan was not one to shrink from battle with an equal foe, any more than from the treacherous massacre of the unresisting, and at the Blood River —so christened when it ran crimson after the battle —his impis, ten or twelve thousand strong, fell on the Boers in laager. The prudent tactics of Pretorius, who was wounded in the action, with the stubborn valour and good shooting of his followers, totally routed the Zulus, who lost at least a third of their number. Dr. Voigt, who describes the campaign against Dingaan from the mouths of the men who shared in it, fills every reader with admiration for the behaviour of the Boers. This first victory was followed up by a series of swift and crushing blows which utterly broke the Zulu power. Dingaan's chief kraal was burnt, and Christian burial given to the withered bodies of Retief and his companions. Dingaan was dethroned and driven into exile, where
not long afterwards he fell by the hand of an assassin, and his brother Panda ruled in his stead. The 16th of December, on which day, in 1838, the Zulu power met its first check from white men, is still proudly and gratefully remembered as Dingaan's Day by the Boers of the Transvaal.

Panda, who now governed the Zulu nation, was unwarlike by nature and had seen enough of the Boers' military abilities to swear and keep peace with them. Free at last from native terror, the emigrants swarmed into Natal, and proceeded to set up a Republic there. From the beginning of the Great Trek this had been the chief ambition of the emigrants: whenever they stopped for a few days, indeed, they amused themselves by drawing up constitutions and electing Volksraads or representative assemblies, for a dozen small states, that perished almost as soon as they came into being. But the Republic of Natalia, as it was called, had an independent existence for several years, and is important to us as having been the first cause of armed conflict between the Boers and the British authorities.

The detailed history of the circumstances which led to this conflict is long, intricate, and not very relevant to the present subject. It is to be noted that the emigrants were still expressly described by the Governor of Cape Colony as British subjects, although they had most distinctly asserted that they laid down their allegiance when they crossed the frontier. As early as the middle of 1835 the thirty white men who composed the population of Port
Natal and had founded the town of Durban invited the English Government to annex Natal and make it a self-governing colony, whilst the people of Cape Town desired it to be annexed to the Cape Colony. At this time, however, the authorities at home were convinced of the inexpediency of extending their territory in South Africa. But in July, 1838, when the Boers were preparing to attack Dingaan, the Governor of Cape Colony issued a proclamation in which he again announced that the emigrants were still British subjects, wherever they might go, and added that he intended in due course to occupy Natal.

It seems that the Boers' incursion into the neighbourhood of Port Natal had at length called the Government's attention to the value of that place as a colonial possession, it being one of the two or three good harbours of the South African coast. Accordingly Sir George Napier sent troops to occupy Durban, which was a sufficiently statesmanlike proceeding. But he did not properly face the problem of how to deal with the emigrant Boers. They were British subjects, he repeated; but the Cape Government was prepared to afford them neither rule nor protection from the natives. Let them lay down their arms and give up their ammunition, and Dingaan would be formally instructed not to attack them. This was hardly sufficient guarantee for men who had seen Weenen and the Hill of Blood covered with the skeletons and corpses of their massacred wives and companions. We cannot wonder that
the Boers, under the able guidance of Pretorius, refused to obey; and Sir George Napier informed his representative that it would be inexpedient to press the matter at that time.

The emigrants founded the town of Pietermaritzburg, and the new state of Natalia seemed fairly established. Port Natal, with the rudimentary town of Durban, remained for a time in the hands of the English garrison, which was withdrawn at the end of 1839, but no attempt was made to interfere with the Boer Government in the rest of their territory, which was bounded by the Drakenberg, the sea, the Tugela and the Umzimubu Rivers. The Zulu power was completely crushed; but the foundation of the new Republic, which had begun so bravely, was blackened by one shameful deed, which can only be palliated on the Boer theory that natives had neither souls nor rights, and that faith pledged to them was to be kept so long as it profited, and no longer. This was the execution in cold blood of Dingaan's envoys for peace, in which disgraceful act the Boer leader Pretorius and the Zulu chief Panda took an equal share.

The government of the new Republic has been authoritatively described as "utter anarchy." It speaks well for the character of the emigrants that they were not completely demoralized by the absence of all real restraint save public opinion. Pretorius was Commandant-General in Natal, Potgieter Chief Commandant in the allied western districts. A Volksraad of twenty-four members was the supreme
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legislative power; but there was no stability in its acts. In moments of difficulty Pretorius and Potgieter were invested with the practical, if not the nominal authority of joint dictators; at other times every man did what seemed right in his own eyes.

It showed the good sense of the emigrants that they founded their first Republic, as Retief had constantly urged on them, within touch of the sea, and therefore of civilization and future trade. Natalia was their main settlement; but attached to it by the slender political tie of an "Adjunct Raad" were two smaller settlements on the western, or inland side of the Drakenberg, one south and one north of the Vaal River, which may be called the germs of the later Orange Free State and South African Republic.

Towards the end of 1840 the Natal Volksraad entered into negotiations with the Cape Government, with the view of getting their independence formally recognized. The Governor was inclined to take possession of their territory and establish a strong government in it, to ward off the native troubles that he foresaw would otherwise follow. But his hands were tied, for the Ministry at home had already adopted the plan, which proved to be so fruitful in mischief through the middle third of the century, of obstinately refusing to increase England's responsibility in South Africa. In January, 1841, the Volksraad formulated their demands in a letter whose terms are interesting as showing with what the Boers would then have
been contented. They were "willing and desirous to enter into a perpetual alliance with the Government of Her Majesty," on the following conditions, amongst others of less importance.

The Republic of Natalia was to be acknowledged as a free and independent State, in closest alliance with the British Government. If the Republic were attacked by any other Power by sea, Great Britain might interpose, either by negotiation or arms. If Great Britain were at war, the Republic would remain neutral. Customs and duties were to be settled as for an English colony, with the exception of "wines, strong liquors, and other articles prejudicial to this Republic," which were to be more heavily taxed. British subjects residing in the Republic should have equal protection and no higher taxes than the burghers. In case of war, the Republic would give every assistance to a Colonial or British force marching through its territory. Lastly, as to the native question: the slave-trade would not be permitted; every encouragement would be given to the spreading of the Gospel and civilization amongst the neighbouring tribes; the Republic would engage to make no hostile movement against the natives in the direction of the Colony, without the leave of the Governor, unless inroads, "contemplated attacks," or robbery rendered immediate action imperative; and as to other tribes, no attack would be made on them, and no annexation of their land allowed unless it seemed essential to the safety of the Republic.
THE BOERS IN NATAL

It is quite possible that, if the Cape Government had accepted the somewhat elastic terms whose gist is here given, the Boer troubles of the last twenty years might never have arisen, whilst the Colony would certainly have been saved the Zulu War. However, it is of little profit to speculate on what might have been. Whilst these terms were being submitted, a practical commentary on the last of them was afforded by a cattle-and-slave-stealing Boer raid into Pondoland, justified by the lifting of a few Boer cattle, and headed by Pretorius himself. Whether this action can be called a crime or not, after allowance has been made for the Boer theory of native rights, there can be no doubt that at that moment it was a blunder. The Cape Government felt that it was impossible to reconcile the methods of the Boers with the view of the native question taken by public opinion in England, and the Volksraad was curtly informed that the Boers were still British subjects. The Home Government could not make up its mind to take any decided step for the enlarging of its possessions in South Africa; but it instructed Napier to write, as he did on September 3, 1841, that "Her Majesty had desired him to inform the emigrant farmers that she could not acknowledge a portion of her own subjects as an independent Republic, but that on their receiving a military force from the Colony, their trade would be placed on the footing of the trade of a British possession."

To this proposal the Volksraad returned an
immediate and decided negative. They had already issued a long defence of their State against the charge of cattle-stealing; they now put forth a proclamation which reads, with its appeal from the injustice and force of men to the justice and power of God, like the words of the old Huguenots or Covenanters, and would be equally admirable if the oppression against which it thundered were really any worse than the refusal of a right to dragoon and enslave the natives at pleasure. The Boers insisted that their way of dealing with the natives was that of the truest philanthropy; that, at any rate, it was the only one which could ensure their permanent safety in Natal; and that the English Government, considerate as it was for the brutal Kaffirs, would not care if the Boers, their wives and children, were all butchered like sheep. There were only two courses, they said, open to them: one was to leave their painfully acquired homes and commence a new emigration; the other to take arms and fight for their liberty. Which, they asked, would his Excellency, as an Englishman, think preferable in similar circumstances?

The emigrant Boers have tried both these alternatives, and the consequence is that their descendants of to-day in the Transvaal are a backward, ignorant, and, as far as the treatment of natives and the keeping of treaties are concerned, a demoralized people. So much depends upon the principle to the defence of which the spirit of the Covenant and the Huguenot, admirable in itself, may be
applied! It never occurred to the Volksraad that there was a third course open: they might have tried the English methods under which Cape Colony and Natal have prospered at least as greatly as the Transvaal or the Free State.

On the receipt of the reply of the Boers, Captain Smith, with some three hundred men, made a rapid march across country to Natal, where he was saluted by the Boers with the statement that they had placed themselves under the protection of Holland. The fact was that the supercargo of a Dutch ship had succeeded in passing himself off as a delegate from the sympathetic homeland of the Boers. By his aid treaties were drawn out containing proposals of peace and alliance with the Kings of Holland, France, and Spain, the President of the United States, and the Emperor of China! The despatches for the King of Holland were enclosed between the double soles of a pair of boots, made expressly for the diplomatic supercargo, and this stretch of ingenuity the Boers were fully convinced that the English Government could never circumvent. History does not state what the Emperor of China thought of the appeal thus made to him. The King of Holland seems to have duly received his missive, for he wrote to the English Government to say "that the disloyal communication of the emigrant farmers had been repelled with indignation, and that the King of Holland had taken every possible step to mark his disapproval of the unjustifiable use made of his name by the individuals referred to."

The
respect which European governments are now supposed to have for the Boers is evidently a plant of very recent growth.

The Boers called out their commandoes, and, for the first time, prepared to fight the red-coats. The war which followed was brief. At first Captain Smith followed the course which seems so inevitable for Englishmen in South Africa, of underrating his opponents. In the opening skirmish he lost about fifty men, thanks to the vast superiority of the Boer marksmanship, and was driven to entrench himself at Durban and stand a siege. One Richard King got away, however, and, by a plucky ride to Grahamstown, through a dangerous country, brought up reinforcements. On the appearance of an English frigate and a regiment, the Boers who had been besieging Captain Smith for a month, with their three guns and six hundred men, melted away from Pretorius, who was forced to make terms. A general amnesty was issued by the British, and a provisional government installed. The emigrants admitted themselves to be British subjects. For some time negotiations went on in order to secure a modus vivendi for Boers and British on the native question. But these efforts, owing in part to the obstinacy of the Boers, and in part to the unsympathetic methods of the British, were not successful. At the beginning of 1844, when Natal was definitely declared to be a dependency of the Cape Colony, the great majority of Boers took to their waggons again, and toiled back across the Drakenberg, to
settle amongst their compatriots who had already scattered themselves on both sides of the Vaal River, where they helped to found the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. It is only within the last fifteen years that they ever again attempted to cross the mountain-barrier which separated them from the coast-lands. Thus unsatisfactorily ended the first episode in the history of the emigrant Boers. All their blood and toil had been spent in vain, and they were to begin anew the task of making homes for themselves beyond the reach of the now hated British Government.
CHAPTER VIII

THE ORANGE FREE STATE

In the last chapter we have seen how, when Natal was added to the Cape Colony, the greater part of the emigrant farmers again took flight from the encroaching English laws. There can unfortunately be no doubt that they brought with them a not wholly unjustifiable hatred of England. The northward road through Zululand and along the coast was closed to them by Portuguese territory and the fever-stricken marshes around Delagoa Bay. Therefore the only course for those who desired liberty to pursue what they held to be the only proper treatment of the natives, was to turn back over the Drakenberg, and to spread their waggons over the fertile land that lies in the basins of the Orange, the Vaal, and the Limpopo Rivers. Some of their brethren were already settled there, and in a short time room was found for all in the territory from which they had, only a few years before, driven the savage warriors of Umsilikatsi. On the way the emigrants were met by other proclamations from the Cape, reminding them that wherever they settled they were still British subjects; and against
THE ORANGE FREE STATE

this persistent theory for a while they made no protest.

By this time, however, the Boers were divided into two parties. The later-comers, whether from Natal or the Colony, were hotter against England than those who had not had the mortification of being forcibly dispossessed of a country that they had begun to regard as their own. Even amongst the first Boer emigrants, there were many who openly declared that their first object was not the remedy of any specific grievances so much as the acquisition of that self-government which has always been deservedly dear to the Teutonic mind. They had remonstrated in moving terms against the refusal to them of such a boon by "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." But no notice was taken of their reasonable demands, and the Republican party amongst the Boers was thenceforward firmly established. There was another party, however, which acquiesced in the claims of the Cape authorities and desired to remain loyal to the English flag so long as that was permitted: its members only crossed the frontier for the same reasons that influence Australian squatters to move ever deeper into the interior, to find more land and untrodden pastures for their growing herds. It is probable that the former party coloured the opinions of the anti-English Transvaal, the latter those of the Orange Free State, which
only our own action prevented from remaining as closely attached to the Cape Colony as Natal.

About the close of 1838 Potgieter and his companions had founded the earliest settlement beyond the Vaal, which they named Potchefstroom. Here they established the Republic of Winburg, which included the northern half of the later Orange State and as much of the Transvaal as the Boers had then explored: its limits roughly coincided, in fact, with the territory from which Umsilikatsi had been expelled. The southern half of the Orange State was occupied by several Boer settlements of the still loyal party, which had primitive local governments of their own. After the suppression of the Republic in Natal, towards the end of 1842, it seems that the irreconcilables had intended to proclaim the whole country north of the Orange River as an independent republic. They were forestalled in this, owing to the information of their intentions which was given to the English officials by the loyal party, and a British claim was formally made to the whole territory east of E. long. 22° and south of S. lat. 25°, except in so far as it already belonged to Portugal or to recognized native chiefs.

In the following year, certain treaties made by the Cape Government with the Griquas exasperated the whole body of emigrant Boers more than anything which had yet happened. The Griquas, they said, with some justice, were as much British subjects as they were; yet the independence of these semi-savages was acknowledged, and they were admitted
to the position of allies of England, and furnished with arms, whilst white men with far stronger claims to freedom were told that, go where they would, they could not throw off their allegiance, and the further insult was added that whilst living in native territory they were to be under the jurisdiction of native chiefs. The curious spectacle was beheld of the Boers, who had left the Cape Colony because the natives were given equal rights with themselves, now suing humbly for equal rights with the natives. "It is not our intention," they reminded the Governor, "to drive the coloured people from their possessions or dwellings; but it is our wish that measures should be adopted to give us also rights." The refusal to consider this petition alienated even those who had hitherto been loyal from the English Government, and the Boers proceeded to show how they would act when placed in a position faintly comparable to that in which they had always kept the Hottentots at the Cape.

In the first place the Government of the Winburg Republic at Potchefstroom, of which Potgieter was President, issued a proclamation in April, 1844, repudiating the treaty with their fellow emigrants by which Natal had been peaceably added to the Cape Colony, and declaring themselves a free and independent Burgher Society. Winburg and Natalia had actually made a treaty of close union in 1840, under the auspices of Potgieter and Pretorius, which had no tangible result, but gave an excuse for this action. Potgieter and his friends still preserved beautiful
visions of including all the Boers north of the Orange River under a single representative and powerful government. As an instalment of their aims, they proceeded to make war on the insolent Griquas, who claimed equality and independence, in order "to larn them to be a twoad." In the course of this campaign they found themselves unexpectedly at close quarters with a troop of English cavalry; they were not prepared to renew the contest of Natal, and incontinently broke and fled, with the loss of three men.

For two or three years affairs thus dragged along, the unfortunate Cape Government being always engaged in the task of reconciling the claims of the Boers and the pretensions of the natives, which was about as easy as to solve the old scholastic problem of the effects of an irresistible force upon an immovable body. In 1846 a conference was summoned, which had led to nothing when the attention of the Government was called away by another Kaffir War. In the meantime a general move northwards had taken place among those of the Boer emigrants who were chiefly hostile to the British rule, to the districts immediately north and south of the Vaal. Potgieter, who was still commandant of the double district, resided chiefly at Magaliesberg in the Kashan Mountains, north of the modern Pretoria. It was about this time, if the testimony of Livingstone is to be believed, that Potgieter's unscientific followers, having heard of the arrival of Herschel's
great telescope at the Cape Observatory, sent to inquire "what right the Government had to erect that huge instrument at the Cape, in order to see what they were doing behind the Kashan Mountains"—nearly a thousand miles away!

Potgieter himself, who was still set upon escape beyond the utmost limits of the British rule, had spent his time in exploring the monstrous cantle of land cut out by the semicircular sweep of the Limpopo, whither he had looked with longing ever since British troops arrived in Natal. He made more than one attempt to break out coastwards to Delagoa Bay, but the deadly tsetse fly and malarial fever proved a more solid barrier than even Zulu assegais or British bayonets. In 1845 there was a general move of the emigrants to the north and north-east of the Transvaal. There, amongst other places, they founded the village of Lydenburg, where the first Transvaal gold was to be found a generation later, and thought (as we have already seen) that they had discovered the Nile and the Egyptians. Several more native quarrels, undertaken by the emigrants, as usual, in self-defence against real or contemplated attacks, led to the opportune acquisition of many thousands of cattle and sheep, with which the Boers added to their already ample stocks, and settled down to that pastoral and patriarchal life, which has only of late years been rudely disturbed by the so-called march of progress.

In 1847, Pretorius became the spokesman of the
comparatively few Boers who had remained in Natal, for the redress of some only too real grievances as to the tenure of their land. The English Governor, Sir Henry Pottinger, very unwisely refused even to see him. On his return to the Orange River, with the plan of a new migration in his head, Pretorius was welcomed by the Boers everywhere as a hero, and he was freely compared to Moses about to guide the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. The enthusiasm was immense, and the tide of Boer emigrants from the Colony, which had never quite ceased during twelve years, was greater for a few months than it had been since 1838.

At the end of 1847, Sir Harry Smith arrived as the new Governor of the Cape Colony. The hero of Aliwal and Sobron, as well as the conqueror and would-be pacificator of the Kaffirs, Smith was already favourably known both by experience and repute at the Cape, and men looked to him with hope and enthusiasm for a vigorous policy which should settle at once the native question and the Boer grievances. Sir Harry has been described as a curious mixture of the soldier and the statesman. Ignorant of fear, and audacious almost to a fault, he united to his dash a wit and cunning which fitted him well for the country he came to govern. We are told that he possessed an uncontrollable temper, and when excited his oaths were fearful. But the paroxysm of rage was no sooner over than he immediately became the courteous and sympathetic commander. An excellent man to deal with Kaffirs, he was not so
well adapted to negotiate with the stubborn Boers. However, his rule had the good effect of making a division amongst the emigrants. It has often been asked why for nearly fifty years we have never had any serious trouble with the Orange Free State, but have been so often embroiled with the Transvaal? The answer, perhaps, is to be read in the history of their foundation.

Sir Harry Smith had known most of the emigrant Boers twelve years before. He had since been away from Africa, and was apparently unaware of the great change in their nature, and especially in their sentiments towards England, which had been brought about by the intervening events. He thought, therefore, that his personal influence would by itself avail to stay the growing discontent. Pretorius had just prepared to head a final emigration from Natal when the Governor summoned him to a conference, and then sent him on a journey round the country to ascertain how the farmers would receive a proclamation of British rule over their new territories. Pretorius said afterwards that he had assured the Governor that the Boers would not endure it: Sir Harry Smith, whose word has never been doubted, told a contrary story. In any case, such a proclamation was issued on February 3, 1848, declaring the Queen’s sovereignty over the whole country between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers, and eastward to the Quathlamba Mountains. The Home Government consented to the step with some reluctance, but in the sincere belief that the natives
required protection from the Boers, whilst it was supposed that the better-disposed farmers, tired of living in a state of anarchy, would gladly submit to a strong settled government which was willing to grant them any local authority that they chose. About a quarter of the Boers in the annexed district were in this frame of mind. Of the rest, a great number again moved north into the Transvaal, which was now looked upon by both parties as the natural refuge of the disaffected and the disloyal: though, in using the latter convenient epithet, one must remember that the Boers cannot be justly blamed for any lack of loyalty to England. Then it was that the Transvaal acquired the character, which it has never lost, of being what Froude happily christened the Alsatia of South Africa. Not only were the disaffected Boers taking refuge across the Vaal, but with them fled many men of a much worse character than could be ascribed to Pretorius and his enthusiasts. Some of these men, as we learn from the impartial Mr. Theal, were fugitives from their creditors, others were deserters from the army, a few were even escaped criminals. The influence of such persons upon a simple and credulous people like the emigrant farmers was all for evil. In our own day we have seen Fenians play the same part, if Sir Bartle Frere and Scotland Yard are to be trusted in their estimate of the causes of the Transvaal War of 1881.

Sir Harry Smith's proclamation stamped this Alsatian character on the country beyond the Vaal, and events speedily illustrated it. Many of the
emigrants were disposed neither to accept English government again, nor to be dispossessed of their farms south of the Vaal without striking a blow for them. They turned in this emergency to the man who had saved them from the Zulus; who had carried their complaints to the English Governor; who had been unanimously hailed by his fellow-countrymen as the Moses of a new Exodus. The messenger of the insurgent Boers to Pretorius discharged his office in circumstances that might have been told of an antique Roman, and bear witness to the finest side of the Boer character. Pretorius's wife, to whom he was utterly devoted, was on her deathbed. The messenger could not urge him to leave her; but this heroic woman had courage to do so. "By staying here," she said, "you cannot save my life; your countrymen need your services, go and help them." He went, and never saw her again alive.

In July, 1848, Pretorius accordingly crossed the Vaal southwards from Potochefstroom with an armed party. He captured Bloemfontein peaceably, and expelled the British Resident who had been established there in 1846. Sir Harry Smith's reply to this move, when the news came to him, was to offer a reward of a thousand pounds for the apprehension of the rebel leader, and to march from Cape Town to the front with all the available troops of the Colony. Nothing short of a shower of bullets could persuade the Governor that the rebels, as he had no hesitation in naming the Boers, would venture to fire on his sacred person. At Boomplaats, about halfway to
Bloemfontein from the Orange River, he was rudely undeceived.

The Boers, about a thousand strong, had occupied a formidable position across the road, where they had entrenched themselves with some skill and thrown up covering walls of dry stones. They were superior both in horses and in guns to Smith, whose force consisted of six companies of British infantry and two squadrons of the Cape Mounted Rifles. Having once made up his mind that the Boers would fight, Sir Harry did not hesitate on a plan of action. He stormed the position at midday and scattered the Boer forces, after what this veteran soldier described as "one of the most severe skirmishes that had ever, he believed, been witnessed." There, for the present, ended all Pretorius's dreams of a great Boer State bounded on the south by the Orange River. He and his followers hastened back across the Vaal, where the British authorities were sufficiently content to let them escape for the time being. Their story must be continued in the next chapter: in the mean time it will be convenient to follow the uneventful history of the district between the Orange and Vaal Rivers down to the present time.

Having finished his fighting, Sir Harry Smith turned to statesmanship. He re-established the British Resident at Bloemfontein, and annexed the territory of the modern Free State to Cape Colony under the title of the Orange River Sovereignty. Such Boers as objected to British rule were allowed
quietly to follow Pretorius across the Vaal, whilst many new emigrants arrived from the Colony to take their place on the fertile plains which they abandoned. Smith seems to have hoped that a self-governing Dutch colony would soon arise to rival Natal and the Cape; but the doctrine of Little England was then at its zenith, and the Colonial Office had other views. In six years it managed to "cut the painter," and send the promising Sovereignty adrift as the Orange Free State.

The immediate pretext of abandonment of British rule in 1854 was a Basuto war. The Basutos were a branch of the Bechuana race, who had been formed by their great chiefs, Motlume and Moshesh, into a nation of much cohesion, and who held their mountainous country—the Switzerland of South Africa—against Zulus and Boers alike. The seasoned warriors of Basutoland, who had a secure retreat in their mountain fastnesses and were fond of plunder, formed a continual menace to the Boers of the Free State until England assumed their direct control in 1884. They had seen their brethren dispossessed by the Boers and slaughtered by the Matabele: they made little difference between the two foes, and might have said with the Highland cateran, whose relations with the Lowlander theirs with the Boers much resembled—

"Pent in this fortress of the North,  
Think'st thou we will not sally forth  
To spoil the spoiler as we may,  
And from the robber rend the prey?"
It was only on the establishment of the *pax Britannica* that the inhabitants of the Orange Free State began to feel secure against these marauders, though they were fairly well able to protect themselves against the constant menace. In 1854, however, the Colonial Office had none of our modern Imperial conceptions, and the English Government, which had made terms with Pretorius two years before, definitely withdrew from the Orange River Sovereignty and allowed the Free State to come into being and devise its own means of protection from Mosheash. The Boers were extremely unwilling to part company from the English flag, but they were offered no choice in the matter.

The Colonial opinion was that the two Boer Republics which had thus been brought into existence would soon coalesce. The Transvaal State long desired such a union, and even went so far as to attempt to bring it about by an unsuccessful armed raid across the Vaal in 1857, led by the second Pretorius and with Mr. Kruger among its officers, which was repulsed without bloodshed before it got near Bloemfontein.

A nation is said to be fortunate when it has no history, and for nearly forty years the Orange Free State was in this happy position. Occasional Basuto raids were the only matters that disturbed the slow but steady growth of its agricultural prosperity. The Free State, which began with a tradition of friendship to England, preserved excellent relations with us, only broken from 1870 to 1877 by the quarrel
over the diamond mines. This dispute deserves more than a passing mention, as being the one event of more than domestic importance in the State’s history, and as having begun that gradual alienation from England and approach to the Transvaal, which has ended so unhappily in actual war.

Diamonds were first discovered in the valley of the Orange in 1867. Sporadic finds led to a systematic search, which resulted in the discovery of the remarkable diamond fields round Kimberley. When the value of these mines was clearly established several claimants sprang up. The chief of these were the Griqua chief Waterboer, the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, and the Cape Colony, to whom Waterboer was easily induced to cede his rights. No frontier had ever been surveyed in the No-man’s-land which bounded the Free State on the west, and it is probable that if the Cape Government had claimed the diamond fields at the outset no great opposition would have been made. But the circumstances of the transaction were such as to leave the burghers of the Free State convinced that they had been robbed, slandered, and insulted by the English. This impression, produced by the blundering of the Colonial Office, was not removed even when we ended the actual discussion in 1877 by paying the Orange Free State £90,000 for their alleged rights in the diamond fields. During the war of 1881, though the Free State remained honourably neutral, the majority of its burghers made no secret that their sympathies were with their fellow Boers. The result of the war,
though they were better able than their Transvaal neighbours to imagine that the English forces were not limited by the few hundreds of men who had been defeated, certainly inclined them to believe that their interests as well as their sympathies lay in the direction of a closer union with the Transvaal and a wary avoidance of the British. The discovery of gold in the Transvaal drew the two states still closer together by opening a splendid market to the farmers of the Free State across the Vaal. Mr. Kruger was anxious to accept the friendly overtures of a State which was noted for its quiet prosperity, its successful treatment of the native question, its liberal acceptance of new burghers, and its love of independence.

In 1889, at a conference between the two Boer States on the railway question, which was then assuming importance, Mr. Kruger made tentative proposals for a federal union between them. Mr. Reitz, the Orange President, who perhaps foresaw the troubles already looming on the Transvaal horizon, and was thankful that the gold mines were across the border, did not go as far as this. But a treaty of amity and commerce was negotiated, in addition to the railway treaty. Burghers of either State were to have all civil and political rights in the other if they chose to apply for them, and mutual free trade was agreed upon. Further, a clause of much importance appears, in which the Orange Free State and the South African Republic bind themselves mutually to assist each other with all power and means whenever the independence of one of the
States shall be threatened or assailed from without, unless the State which is to render such assistance shall prove the injustice of the other State's cause. The unfortunate events which ushered in 1896 drew the two Republics still closer together. The election of President Steyn, early in the year, by an overwhelming majority was due in great measure to his known sympathy with President Kruger. The Free State still held aloof from any closer alliance with the Transvaal; but itsburghers have now shown, by the sternest proof, that their offer of help when national independence was threatened was no idle boast.

It only remains to add that the Orange Free State, in law and administration, has always been a model of what a Boer republic might be. The purity of its government has never been questioned, though it is only fair to add that it has never known the temptations which beset the rulers of the sister State. Had Kimberley remained within its borders, the recent history of the Transvaal might have been anticipated by the Orange Free State. But the Boer south of the Vaal has reached a far higher standard than his northern cousin, in legislation, in education, in the treatment of the native question, and in his foreign relationships. We should be the last to blame him for casting away all his hard-won prosperity and cherished independence at what seems the call of duty and the ties of blood. The Orange Free State, in committing national suicide, has done a generous and unselfish action, and deserves to leave an honourable name upon the page of history.
CHAPTER IX

THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1852–1877

After the skirmish of Boomplaats we have seen that Pretorius and most of his followers had placed themselves in safety on the other side of the Vaal River, whither they had prudently made all preparations for flight in the event of defeat. There for a time they busied themselves with settling down in their new homes and organizing their dear Republic. The Cape Government did not interfere with them further than to increase to £2000 the price which had already been put on their leader's head. By the year 1851, however, it had become apparent to the Government that, as the State across the Vaal was independent in fact, it had better be made so in theory. The outlawry of Pretorius was accordingly reversed. He was then invited to confer with a British agent for the settlement of the Transvaal's independence. At this time there were still in existence the long-standing internal dissensions between the parties of Potgieter and Pretorius, which prevented its being certain that the latter could speak for the whole country. These two leaders had never been in real accord, and their factious differences are
said to be accountable for all the Boer squabbles of the ten years following the Great Trek. These quarrels were happily composed on the return of Pretorius from his errand of peace, and the two chief Voortrekkers spent their last years in amity.

The original terms of the Transvaal’s independence were definitely settled by what is known as the Sand River Convention, signed on behalf of Great Britain and the Boers on January 17, 1852. It began by guaranteeing to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal River, in the country which about this time began to be called for convenience the Transvaal, “the right to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves according to their own laws, without any interference on the part of the British Government;” and undertook “that no encroachment should be made by the said Government on the territory beyond, to the north of the Vaal River.” This clause was afterwards asserted to have been broken by the English annexation of the Transvaal. But the makers of this accusation seem to forget that the two parties to a treaty can together abrogate it whenever they please; and it is certain, as will be seen later, that we were tacitly, if not openly, invited into the Transvaal. Further, it was agreed that no slavery should be permitted or practised in the Transvaal by the emigrant farmers: we shall see how this clause was kept. Free passage was to be given to all traders and explorers through the Transvaal: this provision was steadily broken by the Boers for nearly twenty years. Criminals who fled
from justice to either the Boer or the British side of
the Vaal were to be delivered up to their authorities
if required. The sale of ammunition to the natives
was prohibited, and free entrance to the Transvaal
was to be permitted to any Colonial subjects who
desired to emigrate. Such were the provisions of
the first Charter of the South African Republic, as
the Transvaal State called itself from 1853 to 1877.

The history of this first Republic in the Transvaal
is of a comparatively tame and quiet sort. Small
native wars—the battles of the kites and crows—
internal dissensions, attempts at progress, and ulti-
mate bankruptcy make up a much less stirring tale
than the romantic exploits of the Voortrekkers.
Such as it is, however, this history may be divided
into two periods—that of President Pretorius, which
was a time of seclusion and opposition to European
ideas; and that of President Burgers, which was, in
its way, a time of progress, in which gold mines and
railways began to dawn upon the consciousness of
the Transvaal Boer as possibilities for good or evil in
his country.

In 1852, when the Sand River Convention placed
the Boers in undisputed possession of the Transvaal,
there were about five thousand European families in
the country. These were divided among four districts,
ruled by Commandants of equal rank and mutual
independence. This arrangement had been made by
the Volksraad, or Parliament, of the Transvaal as a
desperate attempt to appease the jealousies existing
between the chief leaders, of whom the two most
important, as we have seen, were Potgieter and Pretorius.

There seems to be considerable dubiety as to the exact political constitution of the Transvaal for some time after its independence was assured. Some writers describe these four districts as independent Republics, whilst others seem to imagine that they were simply four divisions of a single State. The question is not of much importance, and it is probable that the Transvaal burghers themselves, in their loose and impatient notions of government, would have been somewhat puzzled to give a complete answer to it. The fact is clear that the most important of these districts, or Republics, was that which made Potchefstroom its capital, and was under the joint control of Potgieter and Pretorius. It gradually absorbed the other Governments, until, by 1860, it had covered almost the whole ground of the present Transvaal. It was known at first as the Dutch African Republic, but in 1858 it adopted the more ambitious official title of the South African Republic, which, in spite of its rather impudent disregard of the existence of the Orange Free State next door, has been again usurped by its descendant, the Transvaal State of to-day. In it there was indubitably no man equal in ability or in personal reputation to Pretorius, who, although never formally elected President, had no serious rival but Potgieter.

In July, 1853, the new State lost the services of this remarkable man, to whom, more than to any
other, it owed its being. "Incessant mental labour," says Mr. Theal, "had told upon an iron constitution. . . . For a month he lay upon a bed of sickness, where he continued to display those admirable qualities which had made him worthy of being the hero of the emigrants. Feeling that his end was near, he put all the papers relative to the Government in order, and then sent for the Commandants, Field-cornets, and other influential men, to hear his last advice. They assembled round his bedside, when he entreated them to preserve a cordial union among themselves, and not to let party strife or ambition find a place among them. He recommended them to give heed to the exhortations of the minister, and to promote morality and civilization by every means in their power. Afterwards, several native chiefs were admitted to see him. They had heard of his illness, and had come to pay their respects. The relatives of the dying man were much affected on seeing these heathen exhibit intense grief, as they knelt successively and kissed his hand. To them he had appeared as a preserver of order in the land, as a gracious and humane master. Everything connected with this world having been settled, Pretorius devoted his remaining hours to praise and prayer. He expressed perfect resignation to the will of the Almighty, and satisfaction at the prospect of being speedily transferred to a region where sorrow and trouble are unknown. Then, having committed his soul to his Saviour, he calmly
and quietly breathed his last." Such a record carries us back to the days of the Puritans of our own country, whom Pretorius strongly resembled in character. Admirable as he was in many ways, he was only to be blamed for faults which were those of his race and upbringing rather than of his personal character.

On the death of Pretorius, his countrymen showed his memory no lack of respect or gratitude. His son, Marthinus Wessels Pretorius, was unanimously elected President of the whole Transvaal, and land was purchased near the head-waters of the Limpopo for the erection of a town which should bear the dead hero's name; there the modern capital, Pretoria, was formally founded in 1855.

One of the first steps of the new President was to give effect to the general tendency which now became visible among the Boers to close their country to visitors, especially to such as were suspected of having an eye to the education of the natives. Missionaries, of course, were the most unwelcome of all, from the Boer point of view. The story of the attack on Livingstone, which was undoubtedly meant to drive him out of the country, has already been told. No less than five mission-stations were similarly broken up within a few years. A trader was fined 500 rix-dollars for publishing a geographical description of the road to Lake Ngami; a law was passed to prevent Englishmen or Germans from holding land in the Transvaal, and another to prohibit the raising and working of
minerals. Every attempt, in short, was made to keep the outside world ignorant about the doings of the Republic; and for some dozen years the Boers were quite successful in this policy of seclusion.

One of the minor historians of South Africa, Mr. Noble, has described the tendency of this period very well. "The Sand River Convention of 1852," he says, "was interpreted by the emigrants as placing all the country north of the Vaal River, and inland as far as the Equator, under their control, and they were very jealous of any encroachment upon it, especially by British subjects." To such an extent did they carry this feeling that they adopted what Mr. Noble justly calls a policy of isolation. They had little intercourse with the parent Colony, or even with the Orange Free State, and scarcely ever saw any of their neighbours across the Vaal, the aristocrats of the Boers, whose superior character or intelligence might have influenced them. During this period there was as little intercourse between the two Boer States as was consistent with the Transvaal attempts at conquest. The few Hollanders who made their way into the Transvaal, whence Europeans of any other nationality were practically debarred, were mischievous demagogues of the stamp of that "bankrupt bookseller from Amsterdam," who, as Livingstone relates, established a great reputation for a time by denouncing Queen Victoria as the Scarlet Woman of Babylon, against whom all Christians ought to fight as against Antichrist, until he married a Boer woman and suddenly disappeared
—a prototype of Bonaparte Blenkins—from the public ken. "It happened, however," goes on Mr. Noble, "that the discovery made by Owen and Murray and Dr. and Mrs. Livingstone of Lake Ngami gave a stimulus to travelling to the interior. Several parties started—some in pursuit of game, some for purposes of trade, and some for geographical study. The Boers were apprehensive that the English Government would again follow them up if they did not stop these proceedings. They also feared that the numberless and dangerous natives to the north of them would be supplied with arms and ammunition. For these reasons they attempted to block up the path of travellers, refusing any passage through the Republic, and in some instances ordering the expulsion of visitors across the Vaal." It was thus, as has already been seen, that they came into collision with the great Livingstone, when "the Boers resolved to shut up the country," and he determined to open it.

Among the various causes of this dislike of foreign investigation was, no doubt, the fact that the Republic was knowingly contravening one of the most important clauses in the Charter of its existence. The Sand River Convention had declared that slavery would not be permitted or practised in the Transvaal. It is very possible that the Boers had been quite honest in their declarations, made by such men as Retief, when they began the Great Trek, that they were as convinced as the English of the wickedness and the folly of the slave system. In that case we can only
conclude that twenty years in the wilderness had forced them to alter their views. "Slaves," indeed, they still asserted vigorously that they would never consent to possess; but how could a Boer get his work done without "apprentices," who were legally bound to work without payment, and could not change their master or their task without permission? Accordingly, in 1856 the Volksraad passed an Apprentice's Act, which really established a system of thinly disguised slavery in the Transvaal; and in 1858 was enacted the Grond Wet, or Fundamental Law of the Constitution, declaring that "the people would tolerate no equality of persons of colour with the white inhabitants, either in State or Church." More will be said on this subject in the next chapter. It is only fair to add here that the Boers could point to English precedents in the Cape Colony for the nominal distinction and real likeness between apprentices and slaves. Justice compels us to accuse the first South African Republic of nothing worse, in this matter, than lagging fifty years behind our own Cape Colony in its views on the "domestic institution."

The Boers had dimly begun to understand, too, that their methods of keeping the natives in order, efficient and complete as they might be, were apt to lead to disagreeable comment if they came to the ears of the English authorities. One of the grimmest of all the massacres in which they were ever concerned, either actively or passively, took place in 1854. A certain Hermanus Potgieter (not, of course, the old
rival of Pretorius, who had died in 1853), in charge of a party including thirteen men, and ten women and children, had broken the law by going to barter ivory with a Kaffir chief named Makapan. Perhaps the Boer's demeanour angered the chief; perhaps his show of wealth inflamed the greed of the Kaffirs. No witnesses survived on either side to say what the facts were. But we know that the Kaffirs murdered the whole party of Boers, carrying their cruelty so far as to flay Potgieter alive and make his skin into a kaross, or cloak. The retribution was swift and terrible. Four hundred armed Boers assembled, under President Pretorius, to hunt down the murderers. The Kaffirs took refuge in a huge cavern, some six hundred yards in length and a quarter of that in width, which was closely blockaded by the Boers. The pacificatory uses of dynamite were unknown in those days, and the patient but implacable Boers were content to let thirst and starvation do their work. Frantic with thirst, the imprisoned Kaffirs sought at night to reach the water that flowed near the cave, but they were shot down by scores in the attempt. Quarter was a word unknown, and after twenty-five days' blockade, the cavern was entered and its horrors seen. According to Commandant Pretorius—who could, as Mr. Theal points out, have no interest in exaggerating the figures—nine hundred Kaffirs had been killed outside the cavern, and more than double that number had died of hunger or thirst within it. The present President Kruger took an active share in this piece
of wild revenge, as he seems to have done also in the commando that raided Sechelé's country and destroyed the house of Dr. Livingstone. "Oom Paul" must have conveniently forgotten the deeds of his youth when he talked with such humane horror of the bloodshed caused by the raid of Dr. Jameson.

The next event of any importance under the rule of the second Pretorius was the attempt of the South African Republic to annex the Orange Free State. This was the earliest of those numerous occasions on which the Boers have acted on their theory that might is right in all questions of land-owning. This practice of theirs seems completely to cut the ground from under their feet when they complain, on purely moral grounds, of their own territory being threatened by armed raiders. We shall have occasion to say more on this head in a later chapter. At present we merely note that Pretorius actually crossed the Vaal in 1857, at the head of a large commando, to take possession of the territory of the friendly Boer Republic. Its President, who had had some warning, met him with a similar force. Neither party was very willing to come to blows, and finally a harmless but inglorious peace was patched up through the mediation of Mr. Kruger, in which the Republics mutually recognized each other's independent status.

In 1860 Pretorius, who was still working in an underground manner for the union of the Boer States, suddenly left the Transvaal, resigned his
Presidency of it, and was elected President of the Orange Free State. It is to be supposed that he had some hope of uniting the two countries under his personal sway. But the Free State very sensibly refused to be dragged into the troubles that were already showing their heads in the Transvaal, and it had its reward for this wise decision in forty years of internal and external peace.

In 1864 Pretorius returned to the Transvaal, and was re-elected President there. His sudden departure, which had caused much indignation among the majority of his people at the time, had been forgotten in the troubles that had arisen in his absence. The Transvaal had been the theatre of a civil war on a small scale. One Schoeman, who had been appointed Acting President on Pretorius's defection, had endeavoured to make himself independent of the Volksraad. Mr. Paul Kruger was sent as the Parliamentary general to attack him. Schoeman, we read with some amusement, took refuge in Potchefstroom. The hostile commando blockaded the town, and bombarded it at a great distance with small cannon, which did no particular harm. Ultimately Schoeman was compelled to flee across the Vaal River and take refuge with Pretorius in the Free State. The next year he raised the standard of rebellion again, and Mr. Kruger was again sent against him. After a nearly bloodless defeat on each side, the valiant warriors had had enough of battle, and terms of peace were arranged. The return of Pretorius put an end to all these internal dissensions for a time.
The second Presidency of Pretorius was marked by the gradual advance of that insolvency in which the South African Republic ultimately saw the ship-wreck of its independence. It was hardly to be expected that the Boers' agricultural and rustic training should have made them good men of business, and such European advisers as they had were mostly intent upon lining their own pockets. "The intestine disturbances," says Mr. Nixon, who took great pains to acquaint himself with the true state of the country, "and the incessant Kaffir wars had well-nigh exhausted the finances of the Republic. The exchequer was only tardily replenished under a loose system of taxation. The Boers have never been good tax-payers, and no Government has been able to enforce the proper payment of taxes due to the State. . . . A decade after its establishment, the Republic was practically insolvent. Even as early as 1857 the Government was compelled to issue mandaten, or bills, wherewith to raise money to buy ammunition, and to pay its servants. In 1866 a regular issue of paper-money was sanctioned by the Volksraad. This was followed by further issues, until, in 1867, a Finance Commission found that there were more notes in circulation than had been authorized by the Volksraad. Nevertheless, the financial requirements of the State became so pressing that still more issues had to be made, and in 1870 there was over £73,000 worth of notes in circulation. The notes were declared a legal tender, but the Government were unable to keep up their
value by artificial methods. They fell to a low ebb, and passed from hand to hand at a discount of about 75 per cent. from their nominal value."

In 1867 took place two events which, though they had no great direct influence on the Transvaal at the moment, really were the germs of its future development and of the state of things there at the present day. These were the already described discovery of diamonds in the district of Kimberley, and the finding of gold in the Lydenburg district of the Transvaal itself, which will be considered later. The Boers did what they could to oppose the immediate influx of European miners, and for some time they were successful in checking it. But the road from Cape Colony to Pretoria was at last opened up by the diamond-seekers who diverged from it to the west, and the gold-miners who sought the north-east, and from 1867 onward the Transvaal began to have relations with the world outside, for the first time in its history. For some years, indeed, the various genuine and well-meaning teachers and preachers who had found their way into the Transvaal had begun to diffuse modern ideas amongst the farmers. Contact with diggers of all races at the diamond mines and gold-fields, where a market for all kinds of farm produce attracted even the most independent Boers by its abnormal prices, did much to increase the effect of such missions. A small stream of traffic had begun to flow across the Transvaal, from Lydenburg to Kimberley. Such a trade highway, it has been well said, causes modern ideas
to flourish as surely as water running over dry ground causes grass to spring up. Both from Europe and the Cape Colony, too, other agricultural settlers had at last been attracted by the beauty and fertility of the country, coupled with the low price of land and the opportunities for successful and remunerative trading. From 1870 to 1877 it was calculated that the average European population of Lydenburg fluctuated from five hundred to a thousand men. An English newspaper was published at the gold-fields, and the journals of Pretoria and Pothef-stroom catered largely for English readers. The Anglo-Saxon race had fairly begun to make its appearance in the Transvaal.

The triumph of the party of modern ideas in the Republic was marked by the accession to the Presidency, in 1872, of Thomas Francis Burgers, in the place of Pretorius, who had lost his popularity and office in consequence of his failure to make good the claim of the Republic to a piece of land disputed between that State, the Griquas, and the Orange Free State. The new President had been a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, where the breadth of his views had exposed him to an accusation of heresy. He is said to have been a brilliant speaker, and a man of undoubted talent and wide views. He was impressed with lofty notions of a coming Dutch African Republic for the whole of South Africa; but his ideas were altogether too visionary and unpractical for the people he had to deal with. A considerable minority were opposed to him from the first on account
of his religious views; for religion has been a ground of dispute and dissension in the Transvaal, as in more civilized States. His determined efforts to infuse some vigour and desire for progress into the stolid and ignorant Boers made him still more enemies; and his precipitancy and want of practical knowledge brought to a head the crash which had been long impending.

It is impossible to deny that many of Burgers' proposals would have been for the permanent good of both his own country and South Africa in general, if they could but have been carried out. But he had too unpromising material to work with. He began by a vigorous attempt to straighten out the Transvaal finances, and concluded a loan with a Cape bank, which enabled him to redeem the depreciated paper-money. He intended to replace it by a coinage of the newly discovered Lydenburg gold; a few coins were actually struck from his dies, and are now greatly prized by collectors. But the continued disinclination of the Boers to pay regular taxes balked all his schemes for the extrication of the Republic from its money difficulties, and it is said on good authority that, at the conclusion of Burgers' Presidency, the British officials found only 12s. 6d. in the treasury! What is more certain and more significant is that Government £1 notes were then passing at a shilling each, and there was a public debt of £215,000 on which not a penny of interest could be paid. All the officials' salaries were in arrears, and even the gaols had to be thrown open, because there was no money to buy food for the prisoners.
The President's excellent project of an educational system was as unfortunate as his finance. It was drafted on the latest educational principles; teachers were specially imported from Holland, but no pupils were forthcoming, and their chief, Dr. Jorissen, had to turn Attorney-General in order to have something to do. It is not without interest that the visionary President also designed a coat-of-arms and a flag for his country.

Of all his plans, perhaps the most important was that of a railway from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay. This important inlet of the sea, which shares with Simon's Bay at the Cape the reputation of the finest harbour in South Africa, was discovered by Vasco da Gama in 1502, and has ever since remained in the languid hands of the Portuguese. A glance at the map shows that it is the natural seaport of a State in the position of the South African Republic. The far-sighted Retief perceived this, and his vision has never been forgotten by his countrymen. In 1863 Pretorius proclaimed that Delagoa Bay belonged to the Transvaal. The supine Portuguese might have taken no notice of this claim; but diplomatists discovered that England had some rights to assert in the matter, and a train of negotiations were set on foot which ended, in 1875, by the verdict of Marshal Macmahon, who had been chosen as arbitrator, that Delagoa Bay was, without question, entirely in Portuguese territory. Before the award was given, Burgers saw that a railway to Delagoa Bay would afford the Transvaal the nearest outlet to the world, whatever flag might fly
over the harbour. This scheme, which has since been fully carried out, seemed at the time as futile as it was ambitious. Railways and education, it has been well said, are the factors of the future African civilization, and Mr. Burgers has the credit of having tried to give his fellow-countrymen both. But the Boer was not so speedily to be regenerated; even in 1877 it was apparent that the change in the policy of the Republic and in the ideas of its citizens had been too sudden and too great to be durable. The Transvaal had scarcely any decent roads, and its rivers were all unbridged; yet the sanguine President would have a railway. African and American experience shows that this was not as wild an idea as it looked to the Boers twenty years ago.

In 1874 the Volksraad was persuaded to borrow £300,000 for the construction of this railway, on the security of three million acres of cultivated land. The President, who foresaw some difficulty in negotiating the loan, went to Europe in order to appeal for money to the racial sentiment of Holland. His energetic and eloquent declamation brought in £90,000 out of the £300,000 required. Instead of waiting for the rest, Mr. Burgers at once saw success attained. "He bought a large quantity of rolling-stock, including (characteristically enough) a state carriage for himself. He distributed commissions right and left, and, on the faith of great sums to come, spent more than he had obtained. The railway plant was delivered at Delagoa Bay before an inch of the railway was constructed or
properly surveyed.” In 1885 it still lay rotting there, as some one has said, a monument of great ideas combined with an utter want of practical knowledge.

In the mean time, whilst the President was devising his extensive and ambitious plans and failing to carry them out, the Native Question was looming more and more largely on the horizon. The Boers’ inveterate habit of slave-raiding, which has already been sufficiently described in the sixth chapter, had aroused bitter and implacable enmities on all their borders. Cetewayo, the Zulu king, to whom thirty years of peace with the white man had restored almost the strength of Chaka and Dingaan, claimed a large tract of country which, as he alleged, the Boers had stolen from him, and hovered menacingly on the western border with his fierce regiments eager to wash their spears in blood. To the north of Zululand the Amaswazi, over whom the Boers had asserted and tried to enforce sovereign rights, were brooding in sullen discontent. In the extreme north there was war and confusion both within and without the Transvaal border. On the west even the peaceful Bechuana were growing uneasy, and some of them, such as Mankoroane, who had been plundered of land, and Sechelé and Khama, who had been plundered of their subjects, already showed unmistakable symptoms of breaking out.

Worst of all these native dangers was the trouble with Sekukuni, Chief of the Bapedi, who inhabited the wild district on the eastern border of the
Transvaal, where the Olifants River finds its passage through the mountain barrier of the Lobombo Mountains. The difficulty with him seems to have arisen, in a not unusual manner, through the claim laid by the Boers to the territory of Sekukuni, in virtue of an alleged treaty with a Swazi chief who posed as his overlord or conqueror. Many of the Bapedi had been to the diamond mines and brought home guns. Confident in their strength, they retaliated by encroaching on the territory of the Boers, and in June, 1876, the Volksraad sent a commando fourteen hundred strong to punish these rebels. With the help of a savage Swazi contingent, who were allowed to butcher native women and children to their hearts’ content, two minor strongholds were taken. But Sekukuni’s chief kraal was in a very strong natural position. The Boers met with a stouter resistance than they expected. Their hearts failed them, and they fled from the dangerous task ignominiously. Burgers, who did not want courage, tried in vain to rally them. He used the utmost force of his persuasive eloquence. He actually shed tears at their conduct, and it is said that he asked them to shoot him rather than disgrace him. But they would not listen, and a thousand Boers out of the contingent of fourteen hundred trekked home, leaving their President hemmed in and powerless. The old commando system appeared, to observers of the moment, to have broken down for ever. The Boers were completely demoralized, and a great disaster might have followed, had not Sekukuni
fortunately allowed Burgers to retreat without attacking him. The Volksraad rose to the occasion, and enlisted a corps of "free lances," "filibusters," or "volunteers," as they have variously been called. This corps was under the leadership of a Prussian adventurer, Von Schlieckmann, of infamous memory, and a certain Fenian refugee, one Aylward (or Murphy, under which name he is said to have turned Queen's evidence in the matter of the Manchester murder), who has left a very well-written, though not over-trustworthy account of their services. "The Foreign Enlistment Act presented a few difficulties," says Aylward, in describing how he picked up recruits at the Kimberley diamond mines in British territory, "but these were overcome by a little ingenuity." It is pretty clear that the Transvaal authorities had as much legal or moral right to utilize these men against the territory of Sekukuni, an independent chief, as Dr. Jameson had to use the British South Africa Company's forces against the Transvaal: and no more. But a native had no rights; and even when the volunteers were accused of acts of singular barbarity, which have never been disproved, the Volksraad was content to record its approbation that the war was being prosecuted with vigour.

But though Sekukuni, by one means or another, was soon compelled to sue for a temporary peace, Cetewayo was not so easily to be disposed of. The Boers, penniless and demoralized, felt themselves and seemed to others to dwell under the shadow of
a black cloud that seemed as if its bursting might involve half of South Africa in storm. Writing about the end of 1876, Mr. Theal said:—

"It is evident that the paramount South African Power cannot permit affairs to remain in this state much longer. The peace of all the colonies is imperilled, and unless a change takes place within a few months, interference will be a necessity. Meanwhile the opinion is gaining ground in the Transvaal that the easiest way out of all these difficulties is by a return to allegiance to Great Britain. The party holding this view is yet in a minority, but any further disasters would have the effect of converting it at once into a majority. Under any circumstances, it must become a majority in course of time. For there is a yearning after union with the other countries of South Africa, and it is beginning to be recognized by even the most conservative of the Boers that such a union can only take place under the flag of England."

It was in these circumstances that the first South African Republic was annexed by Great Britain, after a quarter of a century of independent existence. The story of how this happened cannot even yet be told with absolute certainty; opinions still conflict as to the true motives of the various parties to the annexation. At any rate, the question is sufficiently complicated to form the subject of a new chapter.
CHAPTER X

THE BRITISH ANNEXATION

The Boers had given representative government a fair trial, and had not found it a success. Twenty-five years of unfettered independence had, as we have just seen, brought the South African Republic into a position of external peril and internal bankruptcy. The Boers, having thus shown their own unfitness for democracy, were now to have an opportunity of giving England a happily brief yet sharp and effective lesson in the folly of attempting to govern a race that one does not understand by men and methods that are equally foreign to its ideas and beyond its comprehension. Perhaps the historian of the twentieth century will count the temporary occupation of the Transvaal, and its ignominious end, amongst the various valuable experiences that have gone to build up England's colonial policy, which is only now beginning to acquire firmness and coherence. In the mean time it is not an episode upon which an English writer can be expected to linger with any pleasure. Yet the truth must be told, so far as it can yet be discerned through the shifting haze of party feeling. It seems to be somewhat as follows.
As early as October, 1876, Lord Carnarvon, the English Colonial Secretary of the day, had informed the President of the South African Republic, in reference to the barbarous Sekukuni War, that his Government could not "consent to view passively and with indifference the engagement of the Republic in foreign military operations, the object or the necessity of which had not been made apparent." To this the President replied by a barren defence of the natural right of the Boers to all the land of the Transvaal. The quarrel with Sekukuni, it must be remembered, originated in the Boer claim to his land. A little later President Burgers, in a speech delivered before the Volksraad, declared his belief that to accept a South African Confederation, such as Lord Carnarvon hoped to establish under the British flag, was the only clear way out of their difficulties. This seems to have been generally accepted, both in the Transvaal and the Cape Colony, as a tacit invitation to this country to take over the thankless tasks of a discredited Government. There was a faction at Pretoria, headed by General Joubert and the present President of the South African Republic, which was prepared to go the length even of civil war to thwart any further actions of Burgers. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was convinced that the annexation alone staved off civil war in the Transvaal; the gold-fields were in a state of open rebellion against the capital, and were kept from overt acts only by Shepstone's warnings and promises. Further, there was ample reason in the
famous argument of "a house on fire next door" as a ground for haste in English interference, which was used in allusion to the successes of Sekukuni and the threats of Cetewayo. In despatch after despatch of the date of the annexation we read the conviction of independent witnesses that, if we had not taken over the Transvaal, it would have been ravaged by the natives, who remembered the slaughter of the earliest Trekkers, and many an act of cruelty since. Just before the annexation forty square miles of the Transvaal were plundered and every house burnt. Cetewayo openly admitted to Shepstone (whom he called his white father) that he was massing his impis in order to sweep the Transvaal to Pretoria, and drive his hereditary enemies, the Boers, back over the Vaal. Sekukuni and Mapocho and a dozen smaller chiefs were waiting their opportunity. There was another reason for the apparently undue haste of the English intervention. It was understood by all concerned that Burgers, though he was willing to accept the British flag under protest, had been coquetting with more congenial nations. Frere says that Shepstone had no reason to doubt that, if England declined the task, Germany would be induced to undertake the protection of the Transvaal, which would have infinitely complicated our position in South Africa.

The position of the South African Republic in the early months of 1877 could indeed scarcely have been worse than it was. The old pioneers of the country, the rustic, hardy, God-fearing Boers of the
Veld, whose brutal treatment of the natives was the only serious fault that could be alleged against them, had indifferently parted with much of their political power to those noisy and self-seeking demagogues who have been the curse of so many rising nations. President Burgers seems to have been an honest and well-intentioned man; but he had not the gift of choosing equally excellent persons for his subordinates. We have seen that the State was heavily in debt. Now its creditors, seeing its difficulties, became clamorous; whilst the Government, turn to which side it would, found itself equally confronted by threats, reproaches, accusations of slavery and cruelty.

The President himself, coming near to desperation in the last days of his rule, spoke some very stinging home truths to the Volksraad. "I would rather," he declared, "be a policeman under a strong Government than a President of such a State. It is you—you members of the Raad and the Boers—who have ruined the country, who have sold your independence for a drink. You have ill-treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty." The whole of this speech is very curious and instructive reading at the present day. English interference in the affairs of the Boer States, said Burgers, was exactly as justifiable as Boer interference in the affairs of the Kaffirs on their borders. He reminded his hearers of European interference in Turkey: "Because no civilized government was carried on
there, the Great Powers interfered and said, 'Thus far, and no farther.' And if this is done to an Empire, will a little Republic be excused when it misbehaves?' In the "Vindication" which he left for posthumous publication, Mr. Burgers declared that the charges made in this speech were nothing to what he might have said against his countrymen. "Had I not endured in silence," he wrote—"had I not borne patiently all the vile accusations, but out of selfishness or fear told the plain truth of the case, the Transvaal would never have had the consideration it has now received from Great Britain. However unjust the annexation was, my self-justification would have exposed the Boers to such an extent, and the state of the country in such a way, that it would have deprived both of the sympathy of the world and the consideration of the English politicians."

It is probable that in this strong and sweeping accusation, the ex-President alluded mainly to the Boer treatment of the natives and the encouragement of the slave-trade. The annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 has been stigmatized by the Boers of late years as a breach of the Sand River Convention; but, if it could be fully proved that the Republic had, from its earliest to its latest day, been in the habit of breaking the third clause of that convention, which provided for the abolition of all slavery, such an argument would scarcely have much weight. This, indeed, is so important a point that it is necessary to seek diligently for some glimmering of the
real facts amongst the confused and contradictory mass of statements which have been made on the subject of slavery in the Transvaal. Coloured as these uniformly are with the political sentiments of both African and English parties, it is a matter of some difficulty to make them unite into the white light of truth. But the attempt at least must be made.

The reader has already seen that the emigrant Boers, although they publicly attributed their dislike of the English rule in great measure to the forced emancipation of their slaves, had yet, strangely enough, admitted their sense of the fundamental justice of that decree, and had officially asserted a willingness, even in exile, to comply with its provisions. It has also been seen to what extent the admirable sentiments expressed in the Sand River Convention must be discounted by the enactment of the laws of 1856 and 1858, which were designed to reduce the coloured population of the Transvaal to a condition of servitude and villeinage, since called apprenticeship, if not a state of confessed slavery.

It is clear, from a proclamation issued in 1859 by President Pretorius, that the forbidden slavery must have existed in the Transvaal side by side with the legal apprenticeship. After quoting the article of the Sand River Convention which forbade slavery and the slave-trade, this proclamation went on as follows: — "The Commandants and Field-cornets are hereby ordered to bring the same to the notice of the inhabitants of their wards without delay, and shall report all such cases having the least semblance
of slave-trading to the Landdrosts." This proclamation in itself is strong evidence in favour of the actual existence of slavery in the South African Republic. Men do not make laws against offences which are not known to exist. The world never knew so plain a man as the Boer to lock his stable door when there was no steed to be stolen.

But all mention of slavery pure and simple was carefully avoided in the proclamation which added the Transvaal to the English dominions. Let us, for the moment, imitate that prudent course of action, and confine ourselves to the investigation of the system of apprenticeship which formed part of the legal constitution of the South African Republic throughout its separate existence. To the apprentices themselves, and to the unenlightened natives whose territories bordered on the Transvaal, this system was indistinguishable from slavery itself. Let us glance at a single one out of the many instances of this that lie buried in Blue Books. We find a complaint sent to the Queen by that Christianized chief, Khama, whose recent visit has made him well known in England, and whose words ought to appeal especially to those philanthropists who have of late befriended the Boers. Khama wrote urgently in 1876 to ask for English protection against his neighbours of the Transvaal, who were then seriously beginning their westward raids into Bechuanaaland.

"The Boers are coming into my country," wrote Khama in his simple language, "and I do not like
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them. Their actions are cruel amongst us black people. We are like money: they sell us and our children. . . . There are three things which distress me very much—war, selling people, and drink. All these I shall find in the Boers, and it is these things which destroy people, to make an end of them in the country. The custom of the Boers has always been to cause people to be sold, and to-day they are still selling people. Last year I saw them pass with two waggons full of people whom they had bought at the river at Tanane."

But Khama, even if a Christian native, was still a native, and the Boers and their apologists will not allow his charges to have weight. They are apt, indeed, to parody the words of Mr. Justice Stare-leigh, and say to their critics, "You mustn't tell us what the native said: it's not evidence." Unfortunately, there is no lack of white testimony to the same effect. In 1868, for instance, an English traveller roundly accused the Boers of purchasing native children, "who, with those captured in their wars with the tribes, remained in a condition of slavery until released by death." Nor was the trade, he declared, confined to children: men and women, of any age, taken by illegitimate means, were sold or exchanged for cattle and goods. It was clearly at this sort of thing that President Pretorius's proclamation of 1859 was aimed. We are bound to suppose that these raids were the work solely of these wild and lawless nomad Boers of the Transvaal frontier, who have so often brought their State into
disrepute by their marauding expeditions, and whom
the Republic, devoid of police and of a standing
army, has always declared itself powerless to control
or to punish: to whom are attributable murders like
those of Captain Elliot and Mr. Bethell, and cruelties
like those which Sir Owen Lanyon asserted to have
been practised on the undistinguished English cap-
tives of the War of Independence. No State, of
course, can properly be held responsible as a whole
for acts committed by its wildest subjects. It was
on this ground, no doubt, that President Burgers,
in 1874, felt himself able to declare that not a single
proof could be given for "such a false and improper
charge against the Government of this State" as
that of encouraging or permitting slavery. "I do
not mean to say," he was careful to add, "that
there has not existed in this State, more especially
in past times, a system of apprenticeship of natives
who have been taken in war."

The ecclesiastical training of President Burgers
had evidently included a course of scholastic logic,
with its nice distinctions. Other people were not
so keen at dividing hairs between the north and
north-west side. Here, for instance, is what another
Dutch clergyman wrote on the subject of appren-
ticeship, in a book published at Utrecht in 1869.
His testimony on this matter has never been
seriously impugned.

"Till their twenty-second year, or in some places
till their twenty-fifth [the native children taken in
war or purchased] are apprenticed. During this
period they are obliged to serve their masters without any payment. The Boers say, 'This is fair, because we must be compensated for the care and expense of their bringing up.' Care and expense, forsooth! No sooner are the wretched children able to walk than they are set to watch the cattle, or to nurse their mistress's youngest child, which may be as big and twice as heavy as they are. Till their twenty-second or twenty-fifth year! And all the time with no reward, but perhaps a ragged garment, abuse, oaths, blows! And when the specified period of apprenticeship is at an end, are they free? Who will set them free? Who will tell them what the law provides? Not a soul. This is slavery, in the fullest sense of the word, with this difference, that slave-States have their laws and inspectors, who at least keep harsh owners within certain limits; whilst here nobody—I repeat, not a soul—cares for their welfare, and they are completely given over to the caprice of their cruel masters, and often yet more cruel mistresses. . . . After this, let no one say that slavery or the slave-trade are abolished in any part of the Transvaal Republic!''

A German missionary, again, who was asked by President Burgers to report on the condition of the natives in the Transvaal in 1875, was equally frank. He also would have none of the hair-splitting distinctions of the law. "I understand slaves," he wrote in his report, which was afterwards sent to Lord Carnarvon, "to be persons who, against their own will and agreement, by craft, persuasion, or violence, are
brought into a state of servitude for a definite or an indefinite period; who have no legal right to claim wages for their service; who are not free before the expiration of a prescribed time to engage themselves to any other master, or to return to their families and relations. . . . And if I am now asked to say conscientiously, whether such slavery has existed [in the Transvaal] since 1852, and been recognized and permitted by the Government, I must answer in the affirmative." He gave chapter and verse for many instances in support of this theory, but a mere reference to the laws of the Republic was sufficient to establish it.

As a matter of theory, the only difference between the old slavery and the new apprenticeship was that the latter was legally supposed to terminate at the age of twenty-five: as a matter of fact there was often not even this difference. New "apprentice," a Transvaal Milton might have said, was but old "slave" writ large. From the lonely farmer of the Veld to the President himself at Pretoria, every Boer was an owner of apprentices of this kind. It is very clear, in short, that, if the English authorities had thought proper to put forward this continual breach of the spirit, if not the letter, of the Sand River Convention as an excuse for annexing the Transvaal, they would have had no difficulty in establishing their case, and the Boers might have been deprived, as President Burgers hinted, of one of their strongest claims to the sympathy of at least one section of public opinion in Great Britain.
But it was not the desire of the rulers of England to appear to have annexed the Transvaal in pursuit of the Imperial idea or out of greed for territory; and the unprejudiced investigator can scarcely avoid giving them credit for being really actuated by the motives which they themselves assigned by the mouth of their instrument, Sir Theophilus Shepstone. Amongst the first of these was the weakness of the Transvaal Government, which was discredited alike within and without the borders of the State. We have already seen the condition into which the Republic’s relations with its native neighbours had drifted. Internal dissensions were also rife. At the beginning of 1877 there were two parties among the Boers, one inclined out of contrariness to favour the prospect of English domination, and led by Mr. Kruger, the other, headed by President Burgers, in favour of independence, but not unwilling to join in a South African Confederation. Burgers, at least, felt strongly that the English annexation was aided, if not promoted, by the intrigues of his opponents. “The Boers following Kruger,” he wrote, “considered themselves absolved from their obligations to the State under my rule, while the Boers adhering to me did not care to support a State of which Kruger was to become the chief, and so both parties not only refused to pay their war taxes, but also the ordinary nominal tax on land and other taxes. This soon had its effect, and when Shepstone came to Pretoria the Government was already unable to meet any of its money obligations.”
Without dwelling longer on this painful state of things, one may remark that Sir Theophilus Shepstone’s proclamation, when tested by all the available evidence, seems to have expressed the state of the country with great fairness. All confidence in the stability of the Transvaal Government, once felt alike by neighbouring African and distant European communities, had been perforce withdrawn. Commerce was well-nigh at a standstill. The country was in a state of bankruptcy. The white inhabitants, discontented with their condition, were divided into quarrelsome factions. The Government had fallen into helpless paralysis, from causes which it was unable to control or counteract. The prospect of the election of a new President, far from allaying anxiety or inspiring hope, was looked forward to by all parties as likely to result in civil war between the partisans of Burgers and Mr. Kruger. The helpless condition of the Transvaal afforded a strong temptation to the neighbouring native powers to avenge in blood long years of slave-raiding and cattle-stealing, and to wipe out the memory of old defeats. The successes of the comparatively weak Sekukuni had already shaken the prestige of the Boer, if not that of the white man in general, amongst all the wild races of South Africa. Lastly, the English authorities were led on good grounds to believe that a large number, if not a majority, of the Boers themselves were eager for annexation as the only road out of their difficulties.

For all these reasons Sir Theophilus Shepstone
used the authority which had been vested in him, and hoisted the Union Jack over the Government buildings at Pretoria on the 12th of April, 1877. The Transvaal was to remain a separate Government, with its own laws and legislature, and to enjoy "the fullest legislative privileges compatible with the circumstances of the country and the intelligence of its people." Dutch and English were equally to be the official languages: the laws were, for the present at least, to be unaltered. Equal justice was guaranteed to black and white, but it was made clear that there was no intention to insist that the natives should receive any of the further civil rights which had successfully been conferred upon them in the Cape Colony. Here, perhaps, was the only allusion in the proclamation of annexation to those Transvaal practices of slave-holding and slave-raiding which were a by-word in the Cape Colony and among the natives at the time. Shepstone's wish, as he said, was not to find useless fault with the Boers, but to show them their true position.

The immediate result of the annexation, which was entirely unsupported by any military force, was such as to prove the correctness of the views which led to it. Addresses of thanks and congratulation came in to the English authorities by every post, many being signed by Boers who afterwards took a leading part in the War of Independence. We cannot call this a proof of Boer double-dealing so much as of the English blundering, which in less than three years converted loyalty, or at least toleration, into
hatred and open rebellion. When the first English troops reached Pretoria at the beginning of May, they were received with general rejoicing, which we may believe to be none the less sincere because the immediate result of Shepstone's proclamation had been to restore credit, to revive trade, and send up land to double its value in the market. Even the members of the deputation which set out for England in May, ostensibly to protest against the annexation on behalf of the Volksraad, allowed it to be understood that they had no alternative policy to suggest as possible.

There can, indeed, be little doubt, when one looks into all the complicated history of these dubious transactions, and considers a thousand details that must be omitted here, that when England annexed the Transvaal she took the only course that was either politically wise or morally right in the circumstances. She has often been accused, alike by her enemies and by her own repentant children, of being impelled in this as in other deeds by the simple hunger for more land. It is really unnecessary to drag in that well-worn argument at all in this case. What was the alternative to that interference which the Boers and their officials seem to resent so bitterly to-day? A dozen writers, of the most various views, are united upon this point. If we had stood aloof, the house which was smouldering would have been on fire with a vengeance. It was not in savage human nature to be restrained any longer by mere persuasion and diplomacy, and if we
had not annexed the Transvaal no one seems to doubt that Dingaan's massacres of the Boers would have been joyfully repeated by his nephew Cetewayo, with whom Sekukuni and the other discontented chiefs would gladly have made common cause in the expectation of plunder and revenge. The Boers, the Zulus, and the English Government were equally convinced of this at the time.

The Boers, indeed, pretended to have thought that they could break the power of Cetewayo as Pretorius had broken that of Dingaan. "What is your strength?" Shepstone asked them. "You have eight thousand white men, all told, capable of bearing arms. Of these a thousand live in towns or villages, 350 are a floating population of gold-diggers, and the remaining 6650 are farmers, scattered widely over a surface of country which in Europe would maintain twenty-five millions of people. Upon these 6650 farmers is laid the task of supporting the State by the produce of their farms, and upon them also rests the military duty of defending the country or fighting for its rights." Possibly the Boers might have replied that a smaller body of their ancestors had held its ground against Dingaan; but the disgraceful episodes of the Sekukuni War were too fresh in their minds. There can be little doubt, indeed, that a Zulu invasion would have healed their dissensions and roused their national spirit in a way that never could be done by the attack on Sekukuni—which, as Mr. Kruger justly observed at the time, had not the blessing of God upon it. The Zulus
would ultimately have been repulsed, but probably after a slaughter which would have christened a new Place of Weeping and a new River of Blood. English diplomacy, which has been so freely accused of self-seeking, was not sufficiently cold-blooded or Machiavellian to view such a possibility with calmness and inaction. Isandhlwana and Majuba Hill are part of the price that we paid for interfering to save the Boers from their probable and imminent disasters.

However that may be, there can at least be no doubt that, at the time of the annexation, the English authorities had reason sincerely to believe that the Boers were, on the whole, glad to be taken out of their Slough of Despond by the strong hand. It is true that the official heads of both parties united, in a fashion which reminds one of the common remark that the Transvaal is the Ireland of South Africa, to protest against external interference. President Burgers closed his official life with a strong and dignified protest against the English annexation, though its effect was spoilt, to the colonial mind, by his immediate readiness to accept a pension from the new Government. Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen set to work to collect signatures to a monster petition against annexation, which ultimately became a serious document in the controversy; but Mr. Kruger was happy to continue in office under the English, and his sons were said to be foremost in the train of enthusiastic Boers who waved palm branches and dragged the carriage of Sir Theophilus Shepstone
into Pretoria. And even President Burgers admitted that "to draw the sword would be to draw the sword against God"—to contend against the force of nature, as one of our own statesmen might prefer to say.

Even a writer who is so far from being prejudiced in favour of England as to ascribe the annexation solely to her "historical greed of territory" declares it to be unquestionable that "the Boers did not at that time receive the visitor with other feelings than those of satisfaction, and practically surrendered their country voluntarily and gladly to the rule of a greater power, under the impression that Sir Theophilus Shepstone... would carry out the promises he made them." No man, we are assured on all hands, who was living in the Transvaal in 1877 could honestly give a different account of the general feeling. In itself this statement is the most probable that has been made, even though we remember that those who later on supported the movement for independence with their lives and rifles were chiefly farmers, dwellers in the country, who had no opportunity at first of making their voices heard above the jubilant plaudits of Pretoria. There is quite enough reason in the stupidity and blundering of the next three years to account for a complete reversal of Boer opinion as to the blessings of English rule.

For a time, at any rate, there was peace, if not satisfaction, in the land. Sekukuni, who had begun to give trouble again, was finally crushed by a British
expedition under Sir Garnet Wolseley; Cetewayo was warned off; the finances were disentangled; the domestic feuds were quieted. And, for a few months, it seemed likely to all men that the Transvaal would take a peaceful share, with Natal and the Cape Colony, in bringing about Lord Carnarvon’s pet scheme of a Federal South Africa united under the British flag.
CHAPTER XI

THE GROWTH OF DISCONTENT

To a dispassionate observer, indeed, there was every reason why the day on which the English flag was hoisted at Pretoria should have been the beginning of a new and prosperous era for the Transvaal, as a portion of the English dominion at the Cape. If we had but managed to govern the Boers wisely and sympathetically when we had the chance, the troubles of the Outlanders need have had no existence, and the history of the gold-fields of the Kaap and the Rand might have been at least as peaceful as that of the diamond mines of Kimberley. But Fate would not have it so. The hereditary distaste of the descendants of the emigrant Boers for any settled government, and especially for English government, afforded a hot-bed for the seeds of discontent which were artfully sown, from the earliest days of the annexation, by the demagogues who have always found a happy hunting-ground in the Transvaal. But the chief credit for the speedy and tragical end of the first English attempt to control the destinies of the Transvaal must, unfortunately, be laid at the door of the English authorities themselves.
Of the presence of mischievous demagogues in the Transvaal there can, indeed, be no doubt. All the authorities from whose conflicting accounts one has painfully to disentangle history agree upon this, though they do not all agree in the motives that they assign to these firebrands. English writers naturally attribute the gradual rise of discontent with the English rule in the Transvaal to demagogues of the type of the Fenian Aylward, who were actuated by hatred of England as much as by any desire of self-aggrandisement. On the other hand, the Boers are quite as ready to account for the acceptance of English rule itself by the machinations of English secret agents. Thus a Boer historian declared that the annexation had been invited by an active discontented party, chiefly foreigners, dwellers in town, non-producers, place-hunters, deserters, refugees, land-speculators, "development-men," and pests of Transvaal society generally, who openly preached resistance to the law, refusal to pay taxes, and contempt of the natural and guaranteed owners of the country in which they lived, in the distinctly and often expressed hope that foreign intervention would fill the country with British gold and conduce to their own material prosperity. It is amusing to remember that, according to President Burgers, the leader of this party of discontent was Mr. Kruger, who poses to-day as the conservative embodiment of pious respect for the law and constitution.

Still there can be little doubt that the Boers in 1878, led away in part by their hereditary suspicion
and dislike of foreigners, in part by the rooted prejudice of country folk against people who lived, like most of the English, in towns, were easily induced to take as low a view of the morality and intentions of the English party as they professed to take of those of the leaders of the Outlanders in modern Johannesburg. President Burgers, amongst his other projects, had imported a number of foreigners to aid in the executive work of the Government, some of whom were really excellent men, whilst others were of as low a type as the Amsterdam book-seller to whom reference has already been made. The Attorney-General, for instance, prided himself on having taken the degree of Doctor of Geology (he meant Theology) at a Dutch University; he had been a minister in Holland, was unfrocked, and became the sub-editor of a paper, came out to Africa as a schoolmaster, and had nothing to show for his knowledge of law but the certificate of a law-agent at Pretoria. Thus, when the Republic collapsed, there was not a single man in high office who was a genuine Boer of the Transvaal. The true Boers had resented this so strongly that they grew doubly opposed to the rule of Outlanders of any kind. One of the surviving Voortrekkers told Sir Bartle Frere that he disliked the Hollanders even more than the Britishers. The Briton, he said, was generally a hard worker, and could ride and shoot, and sometimes could even harness and inspan a team and drive a waggon; but a Hollander could only talk and write, and could not harness a mule or drive a
waggon to save his life. The Boer is apt to argue, like most of the uneducated, that a man who cannot surpass him in his own daily tasks is not fit for higher ones.

On the other hand, the English were as ready as the Boers to attribute ignoble motives to many of the leaders on the other side. Amongst the genuine and honest Boers, they declared with justice, there was a section of hot-headed, violent fellows, who used every endeavour to excite the people to deeds of violence against the British. Mr. Kruger, Joubert, Pretorius, and the moderate men required all the authority that they possessed to counteract the influence of this section, which was composed of "the most bumptious, bragging, swaggering, bullying crew" that could be found in the Transvaal. It is to the extreme Boers of this class, who so often got out of hand, that almost all the ill feeling that has existed for twenty years between England and the Transvaal State is to be attributed. They furnished the expeditions of the filibusters, of whom we are soon to hear; they shot the wounded redcoats; they did their best to bring discred it on the Boer name.

But the Outlanders were not all on the side of the English. The Boer writer and official who has been already quoted, Murphy-Aylward, was a gentleman of dubious nationality. If Sir Bartle Frere and the authorities of Scotland Yard were not mistaken, he was an Irish Fenian who had turned Queen's Evidence against his comrades, and so had been forced to expatriate himself. Major Le Caron,
whose statement may be taken for what it is worth, stated before the Parnell Commission that money was sent by the Irish secret societies to help to foster the Transvaal rebellion. There is nothing unlikely in the story, from what we know of the ways and means of Irish secret societies. Sir Bartle Frere, at any rate, was always convinced of its truth. That famous and ill-used High Commissioner's statement as to the leaders of the Transvaal struggle for independence is worth quoting in this connection.

"The leaders are, with few exceptions," said Sir Bartle Frere in 1879, when he had had many opportunities of making their acquaintance and gauging their character, "men who deserve respect and regard for many valuable and amiable qualities as citizens and subjects. . . . The few exceptions are mostly foreign adventurers of various sorts and nations—English, Irish, and Scotch, Jews, Americans, Hollanders, Germans, Belgians, and Portuguese—who, though often well educated and naturally able, are rarely men of high character and disinterested aims. They acquire great influence among the less educated Boers, but foster the tendency to suspicion, which, mixed with extraordinary credulity in many things, is a marked feature in the Boer character, and makes them very difficult to manage by any one who does not possess their entire confidence. They are extremely sensitive to ridicule and to opprobrious or slanderous imputations, feeling most keenly unjust charges against their race by any in authority.
Hence, perhaps, they are very liable to be deceived by men who, for their own ends, flatter and pretend to sympathize with them."

It is a disagreeable necessity to have to add that England never succeeded in sending the Boers administrators who possessed their entire confidence. Even Sir Theophilus Shepstone, whom Frere called an Africander Talleyrand—shrewd, observant, silent, self-contained, immobile—rather raised their suspicions than gained their confidence. When the promises which he had made as to complete self-government and permanence of old laws remained obstinately unfulfilled, the Boers, who had been most ready to accept English rule, felt, with a good deal of grief but without much surprise, that they had been intentionally duped. They have been accused of ingratitude, of allowing the English to fight their battles and to pay their debts, and then seizing the moment of England's weakness to cast off their allegiance and "shoot the red-coats." It is only fair to state one's conviction, after a careful study of the facts, that the Boers could scarcely be ungrateful, because they had no real cause for gratitude. It is true that we broke the Zulu power; but the Boers asserted that they could have done it themselves. We saved them from bankruptcy, but we left their debt as large as we found it. And neither of these actions can reasonably be said to outweigh our constant and incomprehensible failure to give them a Government that they could understand or endure.
This failure was due not to wilful oppression so much as to ignorance of the real situation, and to those changes of policy which are inseparable, in our modern colonial system, from Parliamentary government plus a telegraph cable. There is a story, told with some authority, that at the time of the Boer War orders were sent to the English Admiral on the South African station to the effect that he was to invest the capital of the Transvaal, but not to bombard it. If this story is not true, it is at least well invented; for this blunder in geography is only of a piece with the gross ignorance that the Home Government constantly displayed alike of the needs of the Boers and of the solemn promises of its own officials and representatives. Thus it comes about that the history of the Transvaal during the English occupation is chiefly a history of Boer protests against English misgovernment and broken promises, which one has neither the space nor the patience here to write in detail.

One or two instances are enough to indicate the nature of the whole story. All who had to do with the administration of the Transvaal, even Sir Theophilus Shepstone and Sir Bartle Frere, much more Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Owen Lanyon, seem equally to have misunderstood the disposition of the Boer. This is very like the nature of the Irishman's pig, which was willing to be led but utterly refused to be driven. A high-handed manner was constantly held in the English official dealings with the Boers, which could only have been defended if there had really
been force enough to back it. As it was, England was foolish enough to display the iron glove over the velvet hand. From Sir Theophilus Shepstone's polite announcement that taxes must be paid, it was a step of little more than two years to the packed Council and the censorship of the Press which Sir Owen Lanyon found it necessary to introduce. When the Boers were brought to this stage inevitable war was in sight. We ought to have been able to prophesy as much of a Teutonic people.

Every Administrator promised, in the name of the Queen, that the Transvaal should receive a full measure of self-government. In the original proclamation of annexation, Shepstone had solemnly declared "that the Transvaal would remain a separate Government, with its own laws and legislature, and that it was the wish of Her Most Gracious Majesty that it should enjoy the fullest legislative privileges compatible with the circumstances of the country and the intelligence of the people." Taken with the rest of the proclamation, this was a clear promise that the Volksraad or an analogous body should remain in existence, and that the whole of the people should have a voice in its election. Instead of this, the Boers found themselves under a despotic and unsympathetic Government, in which they had no say whatever. In July, 1878, a Petition of Right was signed by a large number of Boers, in which their grievances were clearly set out. Amongst these were complaints that the Volksraad had not been summoned for more than a year; that no constitution
of any kind had been offered; that an unfamiliar system of administering justice had been introduced; that public meetings had been suppressed; and that Shepstone was politically out of sympathy with the people whom he was ruling in a way so contrary to his promises. Shepstone himself had done what he could to fulfil his promise by drafting a constitution which he sent home for approval; but his despatch was gathering dust in the pigeon-holes of the Colonial Office.

Two and a half years elapsed from the annexation, during which the discontent steadily grew both wider and deeper, before Sir Garnet Wolseley proceeded to redeem the pledge, according to his view of its meaning, by the creation of an Executive Council and a Legislative Assembly, both of which were to be entirely nominated by the English authorities. When Sir Bartle Frere was superseded in his High Commissionership in 1879, he had designed to form a really representative constitution, and had practically received the adhesion to his scheme of Messrs. Kruger and Pretorius, who were then recognized as the leaders of the popular party. But Sir Garnet Wolseley destroyed the hopes that had thus been raised, and Sir Owen Lanyon's severe administration at last made the Boer inhabitants of the Transvaal practically unanimous in the not unjustified cry for independence once more.

This crusade had steadily been going forward in the hands of the popular leaders. The protest against the annexation, made when the English flag
was first hoisted in Pretoria, had always been kept alive on the Veld. The town population, which had acquired a strong English element, might be content with the Government of the Queen; that was all the more reason for the true Boer to dislike it, with the instinctive opposition that the rustic always has for the urban. A deputation, consisting of Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen, had been sent to England by the Boer Executive Council, directly after the annexation, in order to protest against it. They had several interviews with Lord Carnarvon, then Secretary for the Colonies, and that statesman was certainly under the impression that he had convinced them of the necessity of the annexation. They assured him, on leaving, of their determination to use their best endeavours to induce their fellow-countrymen cheerfully to accept the new state of things; and of their desire, should they be permitted to do so, to serve Her Majesty faithfully in any capacity for which they might be judged eligible. As a matter of fact, Mr. Kruger's salary was raised on his return home, and Dr. Jorissen remained Attorney-General. There is every reason to suppose that if the Transvaal had been properly governed on the lines laid down in Sir Theophilus Shepstone's proclamation, Mr. Kruger's decision for loyalty would have been that of his fellow-countrymen; at any rate, until England chose to ask awkward questions about the apprentice system, which must always have been a rock of offence.

It may be remarked at this stage that, if England
had taken her stand on the Native Question, she would have had every excuse for ruling the Transvaal by military governors of the type of Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Owen Lanyon, and holding down her Boer subjects at the point of the bayonet if they protested. It can hardly be denied that the ways of the Boers with the natives, no less than the direct evasion of the anti-slavery provision of the Sand River Convention, would have afforded both a moral and a political justification for annexation and government by the strong hand. But England chose to ignore the slavery question, and to carry out the annexation under promises of self-government which were never fulfilled. Thus it is that, when the inevitable rebellion came, one cannot help feeling that the Boers, slave-holders and marauders as they indisputably were, were in this instance absolutely in the right. It is not the only time that they have had occasion for gratitude to the folly of those with whom they have come into conflict.

From the return of the first Boer deputation to the earliest appearance of discontent with the English rule, only a very few months elapsed. The British Administrator’s failure to carry out his promises; the absence of any representative assembly which might serve as a safety-valve for the grumbles of dissatisfaction; and the gradual growth of public opinion amongst the outlying Boers of the Veld, all contributed to the disappearance of the original feeling of submission, if not content. At the beginning of 1878 a public meeting was held, at which
Mr. Kruger, having apparently forgotten Lord Carnarvon's statement that the annexation was irrevocable, assured his countrymen, as one having authority, that England would abandon the Transvaal if she were convinced that a majority of the inhabitants wished her to do so. The monster petition, which has already been mentioned, was then formally adopted as the means to independence, and all true Boers were called upon to assist in getting signatures for it. It has been said that threats were held out against all who might refuse to sign; so some loyal Boers complained to the English authorities, but there is no reason to suppose that theirs were other than the isolated cases of excessive zeal which are inseparable from every truly popular movement. At another meeting, held in April of the same year, it was found that 6591 signatures had been affixed to this petition; and a deputation was again appointed to visit England with it and lay the case before the authorities. The members of the second deputation were Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, who, with Mr. Pretorius, were from this time forward the accepted and recognized leaders of the Boer struggle for independence.

This, the second deputation from the Transvaal, reached England in June, 1878, and was received with politeness by the new Secretary for the Colonies, and with cordiality by a section of his political opponents. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had taken Lord Carnarvon's place in the Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield, in consequence of the former Colonial
Secretary's disagreement with his colleagues on a detail of the Eastern Question. The new Secretary, whilst he lacked his predecessor's zeal for South African Confederation, was no less firm than he had been on the question of the Transvaal. Yet the case which the deputation laid before him was not a weak one, and it was ably expounded. The delegates of the Boers began by saying that Sir Theophilus Shepstone had annexed their country under the mistaken impression that the majority of the people desired it. The petition for independence which they had brought with them demonstrated that, even if that were so, their countrymen had changed their minds. The delegates showed that there was good reason for such a change by their contention that the state of the Transvaal had not materially improved under the English occupation: it was in vain to urge that, in our absence, things might have gone from bad to worse; and their plea that the promise of representative government had been broken was unfortunately unanswerable. They declared that the annexation had been a breach of the Sand River Convention, and they wound up by threatening to take to their ox-waggons and to trek still further north if their grievances were not redressed.

The answer of the Colonial Secretary was not exactly of a kind to turn away discontent. He declared that Lord Carnarvon had said that in no circumstances would the Transvaal be given up; which seems to be the fact, but does not agree with
the version which Mr. Kruger had given to his countrymen, and was therefore obliged to maintain. But the present administration of the Transvaal was, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach admitted, "altogether temporary and provisional;" if the delegates would go home and wait patiently, all their wrongs would be put right in the Government's good time. They replied that, once for all, the Government had better know that no reform short of complete independence would now content the Boers; and, although they personally would do their utmost to keep the peace, they could not answer for the consequences of an English refusal of their claim.

On their return to South Africa, towards the end of 1878, the delegates found that, in their absence, events had ripened the Zulu threats into the promise of imminent war. Mr. Kruger now had an opportunity of showing that he was anxious to be friendly to England by giving Lord Chelmsford some advice which, if it had been attended to, would have prevented the bloody day of Isandhlwana. "Mr. Kruger," said a witness of his interview with the English General, "gave him much valuable information as to Zulu tactics, and impressed upon him the absolute necessity of laagering his waggons every evening, and always at the approach of the enemy. He also urged the necessity of scouting at considerable distances, as the movements of the Zulus were very rapid, mentioning how even he had once been surprised, and was extricated only by severe hand-to-hand fighting inside his laager."
Whilst passing through Natal, the delegates had a much more important interview with Sir Bartle Frere, the High Commissioner. He explained very fully how, although independence for the Transvaal was not to be thought of, yet the Boers would be able to enjoy perfect freedom, and independence in their local affairs, as a province of the coming South African Union under the British flag; and that the form of their provincial government would be fully discussed at his intended visit to Pretoria, when he would give them every opportunity of stating their views and wishes. The delegates respected Sir Bartle Frere, though they did not like him, and they listened to him patiently, although they were already beginning to suspect that English promises to them were worth about as much as their own to the natives. Of Mr. Kruger himself the High Commissioner, according to his biographer, entertained a good opinion, considering that he conducted affairs on the part of the Transvaal with ability and fairness.

Whatever Sir Bartle Frere may have intended—no reasonable being can doubt that he was absolutely honest and sincere in his promises—he was able to do nothing for the removal of the Boers' just grievances. The outbreak of the Zulu War at the end of 1878, the disasters to the British arms that followed, and the unpopularity that resulted for the High Commissioner, tied his hands until in the middle of 1879 he was superseded by Sir Garnet Wolseley. We have already seen what measure
of representative government that gallant soldier thought fit for the circumstances of the Transvaal and the intelligence of the Boers. All that Sir Bartle Frere could do was to meet the Boers as he had promised, and, by his personal influence and downright honesty, to persuade them to try the effect of yet another appeal to England. This alone was a considerable achievement, for the return of the delegates empty-handed had inflamed passion in the Transvaal to a point which the supposed weakening of England by the ill-conducted Zulu War did nothing to lower. Many of the younger Boers, especially that hot-headed section of which we have spoken, were now talking freely of freeing the Republic by force, of pulling down the British flag, and driving the Administrator across the Border. Cetewayo at least thought it worth while to send envoys to Mr. Kruger to suggest that now was the time for a rising against the English, which he would support to his uttermost.

At the beginning of 1879 Shepstone was recalled from Pretoria, partly because he was needed in England and partly because his expenditure had been too great to please the Colonial Office. Colonel Lanyon, a soldier of narrow and stern ideas, was appointed in his place as Administrator of the Transvaal. By this time the Republican or anti-English party among the Boers, which Mr. Kruger headed as he had headed the opposition to the previous form of government, was on the verge of open rebellion. The removal of Shepstone set the
revolutionaries free to act. Early in 1879 a camp of nearly four thousand disaffected Boers was formed on the road from Newcastle to Pretoria, where they declared their intention of remaining until they could speak face to face with the High Commissioner. Their presence was a standing menace to British rule, and Frere hastened to visit them, though he believed, in common with most other people, that he was seriously risking his life in so doing. His courage, transparent honesty, and good temper won the Boers over and staved off the day of battle. If Frere had been given a free hand, there can be little doubt that the generous measures of self-government which he was prepared to grant to the Boers would have made the Transvaal as contented a portion of our South African Empire as Natal or the Cape Colony itself. But the Home Government saw fit to make Frere the scapegoat for its own blundering and the military mismanagement of the Zulu War, and no attention was paid to his representations and plans with regard to the Transvaal. Half his jurisdiction was taken away from him, with a public censure which would have made any man less public-spirited and self-sacrificing than Sir Bartle Frere resign the other half. In the mean time he had succeeded in dispersing the Boer camp without disorder. He prevailed upon the moderate party to hold the others back, and promised, in return, to forward to England their Petition of Right, in which they solemnly declared that they would be content with nothing less than
complete independence on the lines of the Sand River Convention. The immediate and only answer to this was the appointment of Sir Garnet Wolseley as High Commissioner for the Transvaal, Natal, and Zululand in Frere's place. This distinguished soldier, with the aid of Colonel Lanyon, practically subjected the Transvaal to a military rule. He treated it, in fact, as a conquered country. Unfortunately, the conquering yet remained to be done.

For a year things dragged along without any events of importance. The Boers were gradually becoming more and more exasperated at the conduct of their military governors, with their irritating superciliousness and tall talk, their declarations that "so long as the sun shone, England would rule the Transvaal," and their readiness to proclaim martial law and talk of hanging "rebels who grumbled." The English gold-miners and merchants who had settled in the Transvaal, it must be added, did all in their power to foment the bad feelings that were arising. "The English inhabitants," says a contemporary writer, "had come to look upon the Boers with increased contempt; their mass meetings and protests were scoffed at by the more ignorant section of the English community as 'gas;' while our troops were in the country, many would no doubt have liked to see an open collision, the result of which they hoped would be to settle this Boer business off-hand. The Boers resented bitterly this hostility of the urban element." At a meeting held in Pretoria in 1879 this feeling came to a head, and nearly
resulted in civil war, or at least a serious faction fight.

In December of 1879 a meeting under the presidency of Mr. Pretorius published a declaration which might have shown how the wind was blowing. The time of memorials to the English Government, this important document said, was over. The Boers could speak no more to England, for there seemed to be nobody there to answer them. Therefore they proceeded to enact that the people of the South African Republic had never been subjects of Her Majesty, and were determined not to be so. They demanded that a Volksraad should be called together, and should make "as peaceful a solution as possible of the difficulty." The six points named in the declaration show the lines on which such a solution might have been offered. They were:—

"(1) That all the rights of the present inhabitants of the country shall stand under the protection of the present laws.

"(2) That to the British Government the right shall be granted to appoint in our country a Consul or diplomatic agent to look after the interests of British subjects.

"(3) That the legal expenditure legally due for the necessary government of the country during the interregnum shall be acknowledged.

"(4) That differences about boundary lines of native tribes shall be submitted to arbitration.

"(5) That the Government is willing to adopt general rules with regard to the native policy, in
accordance with the other colonies and States of South Africa.

"(6) That the Republic is willing to enter a confederation in accordance with the other colonies and States of South Africa."

There is nothing very extravagant in this demand, which might still have been conceded by us with honour. However, the new High Commissioner was wedded to a different policy: forgetful of the unfulfilled promises of his predecessors, he publicly described the meeting as one at which "ignorant men, led by a few designing fellows, were talking nonsense and spouting sedition on the High Veld," and clapped Mr. Pretorius and his secretary into jail on a charge of high treason. At that moment the die was cast. The Boers were convinced of the folly of attempting to redress any of their grievances in a constitutional manner; and they commenced to lay in supplies of powder and lead, against the day when it should be possible for them to appeal to the God of Battles with a hope of success.

For a moment, indeed, the exigencies of English political life brought the Boers a gleam of hope. The Beaconsfield Ministry was drawing to its close; the Opposition were in need of all the capital they could make against the time of the elections; and it happened that the affairs of the Transvaal furnished some counters in the game. In the Queen's Speech of February, 1880, a hint was thrown out that "the powers of self-government already enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Cape Colony" might soon be
extended to the Transvaal. Lord Hartington, who was then gallantly leading the Opposition during the absence of Achilles in his tent, had made himself familiar with the condition of the Boers. In his speech on the Address he declared that it was now perfectly clear that the annexation of the Transvaal was a measure adopted by the Government, and sanctioned by the House, under wrong impressions and incorrect information. He pointed out that the Boers had been said to be in favour of the annexation, whereas they now appeared to be opposed to it, and demanded the restoration of their independence. "If it be proved," he added, "that it is for the advantage of the district, and for the peace of the whole community of South Africa, that the Transvaal should continue to be governed by us, by all means let it be so. But if, on the other hand, we find that it would be more advantageous and more honourable to restore the former government of that country, then I say that no false notion of dignity ought to stand in the way."

This, it will be seen, was at once a carefully guarded and a statesmanlike declaration, which did credit alike to the prudence and the generosity of Lord Hartington. Unfortunately, the Boers, who were quite convinced that there was no possible doubt as to the advantageous and honourable course, forgot to take note of Lord Hartington’s conditions. They had much more excuse for the expectations which they built, shortly afterwards, upon the famous Midlothian speeches of Mr. Gladstone. After the
dissolution of Parliament Mr. Gladstone, who had returned to his leadership, said at Peebles, on March 30th, that Cyprus and the Transvaal, Lord Beaconsfield's acquisitions, were worthless; and he added—"And, moreover, I would say this: that if those acquisitions were as valuable as they are valueless, I would repudiate them, because they are obtained by means dishonourable to the character of our country."

It will be noticed that this is also, in strict grammar, a conditional statement, and that "to repudiate" is not necessarily, in political language, the same thing as "to give up." But the Boers were ignorant enough to base strong hopes on these words, which were sown broadcast over the Transvaal. When Mr. Gladstone was returned to power in April, 1880, by a great majority, Messrs. Joubert and Kruger, who had already written as leaders of the Republican Boers to thank him for his noble language, sent him another and more formal letter, part of which has a quite pathetic interest in the light of history. The Boers had formerly determined, indeed, to make no more appeals to England; but now they eagerly changed their plans. "There was and still is," they wrote, "amongst the people a firm belief that truth prevails. They were confident that one day or another, by the mercy of the Lord, the reins of the Imperial Government would be entrusted again to men who look out for the honour and glory of England, not by acts of injustice and crushing force, but by the way of justice and good faith. And, indeed, their belief has proven to be a good belief,"
They were sure that the new Prime Minister would fulfil his promises made in Opposition by withdrawing British officials from the Transvaal and restoring the independence of the Boers.

Mr. Gladstone's reply, as is well known, was that "it was impossible now to consider the matter as if it were presented for the first time," and that his judgment was that "the Queen could not be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal."

The Boers, who were not intimately acquainted with the exigencies of our political system, nor with the verbal niceties of Mr. Gladstone's logic, said some very rude things about this method of "repudiation." They could not see how the most noble and disinterested of men might find it necessary for the acquisition of power to make promises which it was equally obligatory on him to break for the preservation of power. They thought that a man who acted thus in his private affairs would be liable to unpleasant consequences. But they were uneducated and narrow-minded men, and had not the gift of giving diplomatic expression to their feelings.
CHAPTER XII

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

An important principle of human nature is indicated in the circumstances in which the Boers actually took up arms for the recovery of their independence. However pure and lofty may be the reasons which prepare a man or a nation for rebellion, it is usually some small financial demand which brings about the actual development from theorizing to action. No other incentive is so universally effective. As Byron says,

"Kill a man's family, and he may brook it;
But keep your hand out of his breeches' pocket."

To compare small things with great, one may assert that the Transvaal War of Independence, like the American Revolution, arose directly out of the attempt to impose an unpopular tax upon people who were already irritated by being governed without representation. In each case many less worthy motives were grafted on a genuine national struggle for self-government; and in each case the actual cause of warfare was a dispute with the tax-gatherer.

Towards the close of 1880 it seems that, to most observers, the condition of the Transvaal looked
more peaceful than it had been at any time since the annexation. The Boers, stunned by the strange volte-face of Mr. Gladstone, had apparently ceased to murmur against the inevitable. A keen-sighted traveller who wrote in 1880 declared it to be a certainty that the Boers would not rise against English rule. One who knew the feeling in the neighbouring countries extremely well assures us without hesitation that "if, three months before the first shot was fired, any one ventured the opinion that the Boers would fight, that man would be regarded as something worse than a simpleton." The Government and the English settlers, who were rapidly increasing in number under the shadow of the English flag, were alike confident that the Boers would limit themselves to protests passed at their much-derided meetings. Never was there a greater error; yet it was not inexplicable. The town population of the Transvaal, with its strong English and commercial element, and its instinctive contempt for the rustic Boer—the complement of the "'eave 'arf a brick at 'im" method of greeting the townsman in some of our own villages—this urban population was, on the whole, strongly loyal. It was all the readier to express its ebullient loyalty, because it firmly believed, in common with the British Government, that the Boers would not fight. The malcontent farmers lived far out in the Veld, were not given to writing to the papers, and had no Parliamentary representatives to express their feelings. The ill-fated General Colley, indeed, in his tour through
the Transvaal in 1879, had recognized the existence of "a certain number of obstinate, almost fanatical old Dutchmen" (he meant Boers) "whom one cannot help rather admiring, and who will sacrifice everything, and abandon their farms, rather than live under the British flag, or, indeed, under any form of government but their own." But it was hoped that, at the worst, these obstinate Republicans would content themselves with trekking across the border once more: Rhodesia had not been imagined, and the country to north and west of the Transvaal was still open to white pioneers. The well-meant warnings of Messrs. Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius fell upon deaf ears, or were discounted as the threats of self-seeking political adventurers, and they had almost ceased to utter them. But their quiet was akin to the cessation of vapours that is said to precede the eruption of Vesuvius.

We have already seen that one of the chief difficulties of the original South African Republic arose from the rooted disinclination of the average Boer to pay any taxes. The difficulty found in taking the first Transvaal Census in 1890, because many people thought it was intended to collect information for the tax-collectors, showed that this characteristic still existed then. It was not likely to be less vigorous under the hated English Government. Unfortunately, Colonel Lanyon was instructed to press for full payment of taxes, in order that the Transvaal finances might be put on a fair footing. He bettered his instructions by insisting on the
payment of all arrears, which not seldom dated back to the time of Mr. Burgers. The inefficient way in which the Transvaal's official accounts had been kept seems to have led to claims being made on the Boers in many cases in which nothing, or at least less than was demanded, was owing. All through 1880 this went on; over and over again the badgered Boers openly told the magistrates, "You will drive us to desperation; you will force us to open resistance." Finally the match was laid to the train, and the long accumulated magazine of discontent and indignation took fire.

The Transvaal Hampden was a certain Bezuidenhout, son of the man whose insistence on the right to do as he would with his own had led to the Slachtersnek rebellion of 1815 in the Cape Colony. In November, 1880, he was summoned to Potchefstroom to pay an assessment of £27 5s., which was, as far as one can now find out, about double of what he really owed and was willing to pay. His plea that the assessment was wrong was not accepted, and his waggon was attached by the Landdrost. Bezuidenhout had already made himself popular among his compatriots by going to prison rather than pay the fine for possessing gunpowder without a license, and on November 11th, the day fixed for the sale, about a hundred Boers defocused the sheriff and rescued the waggon. The Administrator at once sent a force to arrest the ringleaders in this deed. Three or four hundred armed Boers had assembled to defend them. Mr. Kruger, as head
of the moderate party, acted as mediator, and arranged that the Boers should not be molested until after a forthcoming general meeting of the whole nation. This had been previously fixed for January 8th, 1881, which seems to show that the Bezuidenhout affair was not premeditated by the leaders. It was put forward to December 8th, and lasted from that day to December 13th, at a village called Paarde Kraal. At that meeting, after five days of animated debate, the South African Republic was again proclaimed, the Volksraad restored, and a Triumvirate, consisting of Messrs. Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius, was appointed to administer provisional government until independence should be assured by arms.

The Boer leaders determined to proclaim their resolve in public on Dingaan's Day, December 16th, 1880, the anniversary of the day on which the Voortrekkers had broken the Zulu power, and so thought to be a date of good omen to the Boer arms. To this end they wrote a letter to Sir Ówen Lanyon in which they said: "We declare in the most solemn manner that we have no desire to shed blood, and that from our side we do not wish for war. It lies in your hands to force us to appeal to arms in self-defence, which God forbid. . . . Should it come so far, we will defend ourselves with a knowledge that we are fighting for the honour of Her Majesty, for we fight for the sanctity of the treaties sworn by her, but broken by her officers."

The proclamation accompanying this letter recited
all the grievances, and reiterated that the Boers "had never been subjects of Her Majesty, and never would be." Finally, it offered the British Administrator twenty-four hours in which to give up the keys of the Government offices and retire, and declared the country from December 16th to be "in a state of siege and under the provisions of martial law." This, of course, was tantamount to a declaration of war against the British Empire.

In the meantime Sir Owen Lanyon had issued a counter proclamation warning the "misguided men" who met at Paarde Kraal that they would be punished according to the law. He had also telegraphed to Sir George Colley, who had been appointed in the preceding spring, in succession to Sir Garnet Wolseley, Governor of Natal as well as High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief for South-Eastern Africa, to send all his available troops to the Transvaal. On the 16th December Lanyon issued orders that no armed body of Boers was to be allowed to come within a mile of any town in the province of Pretoria, and that each British soldier was to carry at all times from seventy to a hundred rounds of ammunition. On the same day hostilities began at Potchefstroom, where a party of Boers insulted the English garrison; a small force was sent to drive the Boers off, and the first shots of the war were fired at it from a Boer ambush. The soldiers replied, and wounded one Boer. Potchefstroom was then besieged, and all communication with Pretoria or elsewhere cut off from the garrison.
The news of the outbreak of hostilities and the Boer leaders' declaration of independence must have reached Sir Owen Lanyon at Pretoria almost together. They were speedily followed by the news of the heaviest blow that had befallen English arms since the day of Isandhlwana. The Boers had declared that they would only fight if forced to arms in self-defence. Either this had been an empty phrase, or they interpreted "self-defence" as loosely as was their custom in their wars against the natives, in which the merest rumour of an intention to raid Boer territory was always sufficient excuse for the extermination of a tribe. The Boers were to prove themselves brave enemies: they began by showing themselves crafty, if not treacherous foes.

A detachment of the 94th Regiment, some 250 strong, had been stationed at Lydenburg, in the north-east of the Transvaal. Sir Owen Lanyon, who had at last seen the need of concentrating the three battalions of infantry which were scattered through the Transvaal, had ordered them up to Pretoria as soon as things began to look threatening. Colonel Anstruther, who was in command, left Middelburg on the 19th December, having then no idea that war had begun. On the afternoon of the following day he fell into a Boer ambush whilst crossing a little stream known as Bronkhurst Spruit, thirty miles from Pretoria. The narratives of the incident vary a little in detail; but the essential facts are established beyond dispute. The Boers, whose exact strength is not known, certainly outnumbered the British.
They were lying in ambush in a ravine and among trees which afforded excellent cover, and they had even taken the precaution of measuring distances from each man's rifle to the part of the road at which the English column would have to pass under their fire. When the main body of the 94th, whose line of march was half a mile long, had reached this dangerous position, some of the Boers showed themselves in front of the troops. Colonel Anstruther at once halted his men and sent back word to hurry up the rear. At the same time a messenger with a white flag brought him a letter signed by General Joubert (who does not seem, however, to have been present) and other Boer leaders, in which he was desired to encamp where he was until Sir Owen Lanyon should reply to the Boer ultimatum. A British advance beyond the stream, it was added, would be considered a declaration of war. Two minutes were allowed him in which to decide. Colonel Anstruther answered bluntly that he should march on to Pretoria. The Boer messenger said that he would take this answer to his leader and let the English Colonel know the reply. The reply came in a minute, while the white flag was still waving, in the shape of a sudden murderous volley from all sides: the Boers had used the minutes of parley to make their aim (especially at the officers) more certain and deadly.

In less than ten minutes more than half the English force were killed or wounded, whilst the rest, surrounded and outnumbered, only saved their lives
by surrendering. The Boers acknowledged a loss of two killed and five wounded; the English loss was over two hundred, whilst all the officers but one were killed or wounded at an early stage of the action—if action that can be called which presented itself to the colonists of the time as a massacre.

The question has frequently been discussed whether the affair of Bronkhorst Spruit is to be called an act of treachery, sharp practice, or legitimate warfare. Colonel Anstruther himself, who only survived long enough to write the despatch with the news of his defeat, seems to have thought that he was treated—to say the least—unfairly. The survivors of the 94th certainly talked of their surprise as an act of black treachery. What the rest of the army thought is shown by the general order which the well-meaning Colley issued to "try and check the violent revengeful feeling" which was produced by the news of Bronkhorst Spruit. On the other hand, Sir Evelyn Wood is reported to have said that the action was fairly fought on the side of the Boers, who merely took the legitimate advantages of position and surprise. If this speech were properly authenticated the discussion would be at an end. In the absence of confirmation, one may point out that the tactics of untrained volunteers like the Boers can scarcely be judged by the same standard that we apply to professional soldiers, who have a definite code of military honour which they are rightly punished and reprobated for transgressing in the smallest particular. The Boers had learnt
their fighting from more than a hundred years of savage warfare, in which they were generally outnumbered by ten or twenty to one; they fought for dear life, quarter was given on neither side, and chivalry was a thing unheard of. Their object in fighting was to win battles whose loss meant certain death to them all, and in such a warfare none of the rules which govern civilized campaigns were likely to be developed. The various doubtful acts which were proved against them during the war, beginning with Bronkhurst Spruit, must be judged, with this in mind, more tolerantly than any similar acts committed by a regular army. We shall have occasion to say a little more on this head on a later page.

Whatever view we may take of the character of the Boer tactics at Bronkhurst Spruit, there cannot be the least question as to the infamy of their treatment of the two English officers who survived that ten minutes' butchery. Captains Elliott and Lambert, who were taken prisoners, were offered liberty on parole, on condition that they should leave the Transvaal for the Free State as soon as possible, and not return or bear arms against the Boers during the war. They accepted, and were sent under escort to the Vaal River. Their escort deliberately took them to the Vaal at a place where there was no ford, and made them attempt to cross. The current was so strong that as soon as their horses got out of their depth, the carriage was washed up against a rock ten or fifteen yards from
the Transvaal bank. The Boers chose to consider this involuntary halt as a breach of the officers' parole, by which they had engaged to leave the Transvaal immediately, and fired a volley point-blank at the carriage, killing Captain Elliott on the spot. His wounded companion succeeded in swimming across the Vaal under fire, and brought the story to head-quarters. All that can be said in the Boers' favour is that a whole nation is not to be indicted for the crime of a few wicked men: the annals of guerilla warfare in all countries are marked by stains as black as this. What is specially notable is the curious adherence of the Boers to the letter of their promise, while disregarding the spirit; they could as easily have shot Captain Elliott as soon as they were out of General Joubert's sight, instead of taking him all the way to the Vaal.

It was at Bronkhorst Spruit that the extraordinary skill of these farmers with the rifle, to which the subsequent British reverses were all due, was first seen. The average of five wounds per man which is said to have been inflicted on the British soldiers in this skirmish was hitherto unheard of in civilized warfare. The accurate marksmanship of the past generations of Boers has often been commented upon by travellers, and is to be explained, like that of the ancient Balearic slingers, by the early training given to them. The young Boer was sent out with one or two valuable cartridges, and it was taken for granted that he would get no food unless he came home with his game. In their War
of Independence the system of the Boers was to begin by picking off all the hostile officers. This to a great extent accounts for the bad behaviour more than once attributed to the English soldiers, who were easily thrown into disorder when they had thus been deprived of all leadership.

The immediate result of the action of Bronk-hurst Spruit was that the small number of English troops in the Transvaal, lacking a Cæsar to lead them safely through all ambushes, were confined within their walls. Potchefstroom was already besieged; Pretoria and Standerton, Lydenburg, Wakkerstroom, and the other places which had English garrisons were at once invested. Sir Owen Lanyon was shut up in Pretoria, where he amused himself by composing despatches which reflected on the morality of the Boers. Many of the sieges produced interesting events, notably Colonel Winslow's heroic defence of Potchefstroom; but, as none of them had any effect on the result of the war, no more need here be said about their details.

Both Boers and English were well aware that the real business of the campaign would be entrusted to the English forces which were outside the Transvaal at the outbreak of hostilities. The Boers, with considerable military foresight, perceived that the only point of the Transvaal at which an attack was immediately practicable was at its junction with Natal. Sir George Pomeroy Colley was able to muster about fourteen hundred men of all arms, whom he rashly judged sufficient for the business in
hand. This little army, as Sir William Butler tells us, consisted of "twelve companies of infantry, taken from four different battalions; 120 mounted troops, half of whom were infantry partly trained to ride; six guns, also composite, and 120 sailors; in all a column from which about twelve hundred fighting men could be evolved when the day of action came." So small a force has scarcely ever in modern history been allowed to decide the fate of a campaign on which so much depended as that which Colley inadequately strove to carry through without waiting for the reinforcements which were on their way from India and England. The General paid the extreme penalty for his misjudgment: yet he cannot be freed from blame for the ill-success of the operations which his admirable and sympathetic character still left him unequal to direct.

Sir George Colley's plan of campaign was to march into the Transvaal, by way of Newcastle and Standerton, and raise the siege of Potchefstroom, and then that of Pretoria, where Lanyon was awaiting rescue. Joubert, who was the Boer generalissimo, had placed his chief camp at Coldstream, on the border-line between Natal and the Transvaal. Between him and Newcastle the road traversed a mountain pass known, from the name of a neighbouring farmer, as Laing's Nek—"Nek" being the Dutch equivalent of the Swiss "Col." The railway from Durban to Pretoria now tunnels through the Nek, and the traveller is whirled at thirty miles an hour under the ground that was so freely watered with English
blood only eighteen years ago. On the right hand of the Nek, as you look towards Natal, a ridge of the Drakenberg rises straight up into the frowning precipices of Majuba Hill, whose terraces rise steeply above one another in apparently unclimbable fashion. On the other hand the same ridge runs to the Buffalo River. The rise to the Nek from the Newcastle side is so gentle that a horse can canter up it; the distance from the top of the Nek to the level ground below is about five hundred yards. On either side the hills put out horns towards Newcastle, which offer strong positions for a defending force, as they are very steep and difficult to ascend, especially in wet weather. This position, of great natural strength, was the spot that Joubert wisely chose for his Thermopylae, as Colley expected him to do: his main camp was at Coldstream, but his real fighting line occupied the Nek and the ground immediately behind it, whence it was Sir George Colley's task to drive them out. Although the Boers had technically invaded Natal, the invasion was only a necessary part of the strategy of a general standing on the defensive. The English were throughout the attacking party.

The first battle was fought on the 28th January, when Sir George Colley delivered an attack upon the steep hills flanking the Nek itself, with practically his whole available force. The Boer right was too strongly posted to attack, and Colley concentrated his force upon the left or the eastern flank of the position. He ordered a double attack by
infantry and cavalry. The cavalry charge up the Nek was delivered too soon. In spite of the fierce and accurate fire of the Boers, the leading troop, consisting chiefly of the King's Dragoon Guards, crested the ridge, and got among the Boers, whose leader the dismounted English commander shot with his revolver. The Boers were making for their horses to retreat, and the hill was practically won, when the second English troop, consisting of half-trained mounted infantry, seeing their leaders unhorsed, turned and fled. The Boers at once rushed back to the ridge, and poured such a fire on the flying men that they could not be induced to fight again that day. This reverse left the infantry attack exposed to a flanking fire, and in spite of the gallantry of the 58th they had also to retreat, with a loss of one-third of their number and all their mounted officers. Thus the English forces had to draw off, with the loss of nearly two hundred men killed and wounded, whereas the Boers, who fought behind shelter, had only twenty-four disabled. It was after this battle that the English learnt that there were two parties among the Boers. "One party," said a war correspondent, "were insolent, the other showed a very different spirit, deploring the loss of life, but saying they must defend their country. . . . It was the young men—some mere boys of fifteen—who displayed, with pardonable ignorance, bragging insolence. The men of mature years, with very few exceptions, behaved like men, and in the hour of victory in many instances
restrained the braggarts from committing cowardly acts."

After this first fight at the Nek, the forces on each side remained where they had been. The Boers had been restrained from invading Natal, if they had ever intended to do that: so, at least, General Colley consoled himself by thinking. On the other hand, the English troops had learnt to think much more highly of their enemy than the "cowardly massacre" (as they called it) of Bronkhurst Spruit had at first inclined them to do. "Our men," said a letter written at this time from the camp before Laing’s Nek, "have learnt now to look upon the Dutchman as a stubborn and determined enemy, brave enough to be worthy of our steel." They were to think still more highly of him before the war was over.

On February 7th the Boers issued their formal Petition of Right, a long and argumentativo document which took a historical survey of the Boer position, recapitulated the Boer grievances, alike real and imaginary, and concluded with a still bolder demand than had yet been made; a revival of Retief’s wildest dream—nothing less, in short, than "from the Zambesi to Simon’s Bay, Africa for the Afri- canders!" On the next day another battle took place. This time Sir George Colley, instead of attacking the Nek in front, as all military critics think that he ought to have done at first, tried to work round it by the Z-shaped plateau known as the Ingogo Heights. General Colley started with thirty-eight cavalry, four guns, and about 280 infantry on
a reconnaissance in force, which might develop into an attack if circumstances were propitious. When he had crossed the Ingogo River and reached the top of the plateau, the Boers appeared in force. It was hoped that the guns would hold them in check. But the first shells were badly aimed, and the Boers had time to gallop in within rifle range, when they abandoned their horses and took to cover. Then above all their terrible marksmanship was displayed. "A ceaseless stream of bullets swept the plateau, and crossed the level ground a few feet above its surface. Terribly fatal was the fire to the men who served the guns." The British return-fire was scarcely any use; our riflemen fired shot for shot, indeed, but they seemed to fire at random where the Boers shot to kill. The Boers took full advantage of the shelter of boulders and long grass, and crept in closer and closer. So the long day wore on, and only darkness came to save the little British force from gradual extermination. Colley and his remaining troops had to steal back to their camp under cover of night, leaving their wounded at the mercy of the enemy, and barely managing to carry off their guns. The English loss was about a hundred and fifty out of three hundred, with the usual high percentage of officers. The Boers lost about ten men, and as many were wounded; the only alleviation to this defeat was that the British troops had behaved splendidly under fire, and the Boers had not attempted to press the attack or follow up their advantage. It was after the Ingogo, as Sir William
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Butler has pointed out, that the immense superiority of the Boer marksmanship was fully realized. "Ingogo had shown once more that power in war depends not alone upon the weapon, but on the man who uses it; that muscle and sinew, soundness of wind and keenness of sight, have just as much to say to victory as in the old Plantagenet days when the yeomen and peasant soldiers of England had brought to confusion all the trained and expert intelligence of military medievalism." In addition to this lesson, which has since borne valuable fruit in our army, the result of that day's fighting was to discourage our troops as much as it elated the Boers with a confident sense of their own superiority to British soldiers, which they were to retain for nearly twenty years.

In the mean time President Brand, of the Orange Free State, had been generously but fruitlessly offering his services as a mediator for peace. The day before the first fight at Laing's Nek he prevailed on the High Commissioner to promise that, if armed opposition ceased, such a scheme of local government would be devised as would satisfy all friends of the Transvaal; this was merely a repetition of the offers that had been awaiting fulfilment for nearly three years. On the 12th of February Mr. Kruger wrote again to General Colley, repeating that the Boers had no wish to quarrel with the Imperial Government, but that they "could not do otherwise than offer their last drop of blood for their just rights, as every Englishman would do." He offered to submit the
Boer claims to a Royal Commission of Inquiry, and to allow all the besieged garrisons to withdraw with the honours of war on such an understanding. General Colley answered this proposal, nine days later, by promising to secure the appointment of such a Commission of Inquiry, if the Boers' armed opposition ceased; but as he only gave forty-eight hours for the acceptance of this offer, and it took more than that time for his letter even to reach the Boer leaders, nothing came, or perhaps was expected to come of it.

By this time Sir Evelyn Wood, who was then second in command in Natal, had come up with reinforcements, which were instrumental in stopping a Boer attempt to outflank Sir George Colley. The Commander-in-Chief accepted the reinforcements, but sent Sir Evelyn Wood back to hurry up more men. It has been supposed, and is now known, that General Colley was nettled at his two defeats, for both of which he had magnanimously, but not unjustly, accepted the entire blame, and that he was determined to beat the Boers single-handed. The Orange Free State, to which some of the Transvaal patriots had appealed for help, was beginning to wear a menacing look; the attitude of the Boers in the Cape Colony was not too certain; and it was evident that a decisive blow would have to be struck speedily, or not at all.

Sir George Colley, therefore, who felt most strongly and properly that a decisive victory was essential to British prestige before any negotiations
could be attempted, resolved to try yet a third method of attack. The Majuba Hill, which has already been described, commanded the back of Laing’s Nek, and the whole Boer position. To take artillery or horses up it was impossible, but Gatlings and rocket-tubes could be dragged up on the English side. The Boers, trusting in the difficulty of the ascent, had not occupied the hill. Sir George Colley’s plan was to take half his force to the top of this hill, and so render the position of the Boers untenable. On the night of the 26th February the idea was put into action. A force of 554 rifles—selected from the 58th, the 60th Rifles, the 92nd Highlanders, and the Naval Brigade—was led up the back of the Majuba by General Colley. It reached the top in successful secrecy, and only at dawn did the Boers become aware that the red-coats were two thousand feet above and looking down on them. Some thought of flight; if a frontal attack on the Nek had at that moment been made by the rest of the English force, and if the men on the Majuba had had Gatlings or rockets, with which to join in the fray, success would have been practically certain. Whether this would have ended the war is quite another matter; but it would at least have opened up the Transvaal to invasion, and strengthened the hands of the Government to carry on a conflict which, as most people thought, when once begun, should have been fought to the end.

But General Colley’s plan on that fatal Sabbath was pursued by the usual fate of English dealings
with the Boers. He had under-rated his enemy, and had neither ordered a frontal attack by the rest of his force, nor carried up the Gatlings and rockets. Rifles would not carry to the Boer camp from the top of the hill; and Sir George Colley really seems to have believed that his mere appearance on the top of the Majuba would terrify the Boers into submission or flight. He never dreamt of being attacked there, and omitted to order any measures of entrenchment. But his opponents, elated by the Ingogo, took another view of the possibilities. Under Smit, Joubert's second in command, and commonly called "the fighting general," two bands of picked shots from among the boldest and youngest of the Boers began to climb the precipitous face of the Majuba, whilst the older men made for positions whence they kept up a terribly accurate long-range fire on everything that showed itself over the brow of the hill. The slope of the Majuba was so steep that the English troops, sheltered in the saucer-like depression on its top, could not fire on the slowly climbing assailants without exposing themselves to the more distant sharp-shooters. The Boers, who were trained like deer-stalkers to take advantage of every inch of cover, climbed the mountain, as Mr. Joubert wrote, "with a courage and energy beyond description." They suffered scarcely any loss in the ascent. Among the English, too, there were very few casualties during the early hours of the day. General Colley, with his fatal inability to understand the true position, was rather pleased than otherwise that the
constant fusillade of the Boers was causing them to waste ammunition at such a rate. He did not realize that this steady hail of bullets, aimless and ineffective though it seemed, was admirably designed to keep the English troops under cover, where they could not see the Boers who were stealthily ascending the hill in two directions, and that it served its purpose of covering the intended attack as well as artillery could have done.

By half-past one several hundred Boers were crouched among the covering boulders, a hundred feet below the crest of the Majuba, waiting their opportunity. They were massed in force below the north-west koppje, or natural bastion, of the summit, which was held by a party of the Highlanders and the 58th. These troops, quite ignorant of the close neighbourhood of the enemy, were keeping up a desultory and ineffective fire on the distant sharp-shooters. The Boer leader waited for a moment when the majority of the outpost would expose themselves at once. When it came, he gave the word; the Boers aimed carefully, and fired a point-blank volley, which simply wiped the piquet out of existence. This sudden blow so amazed the supporting troops that they instinctively recoiled from the brow of the hill. The Boers seized the moment, and lodged some sixty men on the summit of the koppje. From this moment the relative positions were changed. The saucer-like depression in the Majuba summit, which had seemed so good a cover for the troops, now held them helpless and panic-stricken under the searching
fire of the Boers, whose numbers were steadily increasing. For a few minutes our troops returned shot for shot; but their volleys were wild, whilst the Boers fired low and with aim.

There was some idea of trying the bayonet, but the Boer fire was so deadly that even the Highlanders and sailors would not face it. The British troops, whose officers were falling faster than the men, wavered, then they broke, and in a minute they were all running for life down the side of the mountain that they had painfully climbed less than twelve hours before. General Colley, who could not bring himself to run, was down with a bullet in his brain. The Boers were on the top of the hill, firing on the broken enemy, keen to wipe out, in the blood of the fleeing red-coats, the insults that the lower kind of English had been heaping on them for years. They had no idea of sparing the vanquished, and more men fell in the flight to cover than in the battle. Even the white flag and the Geneva Red Cross of the ambulance were no protection against the deadly Boer bullets. The total loss to the English force of 554 men was 280—just over fifty per cent. The Boers, who were justly proud of the combined bravery and skill which had won them the day, ultimately came to believe that they had defeated, if not slain, at least half of the whole British army.

Something must be added here to what was said on an earlier page about the Boers' method of fighting. On the one hand, they have been praised
as modern Ironsides; on the other, they have been accused of cruelty and of ignoring the conventions of civilized warfare. There is something of the truth in both statements. It has already been pointed out that the Boers are not to be judged as professional soldiers, with their special etiquette and code of honour. The immortal "Gentlemen of the Guard, fire first, if it please you!" would be impossible, and even foolish, to their minds. They are plain, determined, and not very scrupulous farmers, who only profess to fight in defence of their lives or liberties, and they take every advantage, short of actual treachery, that seems likely to help them to win. To measure them by the standard of the English Guardsman would be an injustice. Most of their military ideas have been gathered from native wars, and they have imbibed something of the crafty spirit of the Kaffir warrior. Their use of flags of truce, as convenient means of stopping a hot fire for a time, is a sign of this. Their idea of a fight is to do as much harm as possible to the enemy, with as little damage as possible to themselves; it is not a chivalrous view, but it is a highly practical one. As to their treatment of the wounded, it has to be admitted that some of the younger and less sensible Boers brought grave discredit on their name by such actions as were reported by Colonel Lanyon and others. But it would be unfair to saddle the whole race with their guilt, any more than with such acts as the murders of Captain Elliot or Mr. Bethell, which were the work
of a few of the most worthless Boers. The leaders can only be accused of having failed duly to punish such actions. Both at Bronkhurst Spruit and at Majuba the field hospital was fired on, and the doctors were shot; the Boers' own excuse was that they did not know what the Red Cross flag meant, and thought the ambulance was an ammunition-waggon. This curious piece of probably genuine ignorance is a sample of the Boers' not unnatural carelessness of the whole European code of military etiquette.

Sir Evelyn Wood prepared to do his utmost to repair the disaster of Majuba Hill. Public opinion in England was almost unanimous that the Boers must be defeated before terms could be made with them, and Sir Frederick Roberts, fresh from his Afghan triumphs, was despatched to the scene of action to do the work. Before he arrived the war was over. General Wood had speedily mustered some five thousand men, and had prepared to send a force round by Wakkerstroom to outflank the Boers, whilst he attacked the Nek in front. But in the mean time the English Government had at last remembered their leader's remarks about repudiation of the Transvaal. They instructed General Wood, instead of fighting, to make terms with the successful enemy. An armistice was concluded, and on the 21st of March, 1881, terms of peace were agreed on by General Wood and the Triumvirate, by which England was to evacuate the Transvaal, and restore its independence, subject only to the maintenance
of the English suzerainty, on terms to be settled by a Royal Commission to the satisfaction of the Boers. The war was over; and England, defeated in three trifling skirmishes, had surrendered to those just claims which she had ignored for two years when they were only urged in peace.

It has been contended that such a conclusion of the war was as disgraceful as it was certainly dangerous to England. That view was very strongly held by the English settlers in the Transvaal, and by the political opponents of the Government of the day. A resident in Pretoria during the siege has given a lively description of the scene which followed the announcement of the English surrender. The men hoisted the British colours half-mast high. Then the Union Jack was pulled down and dragged through the mud. The distinctive ribbons worn round the hats of the men as badges were pulled off, and trampled underfoot. Not only were women weeping hysterically, but grown men were seen crying like children with shame and despair. Some went raving up and down that they were Englishmen no longer; others, with flushed and indignant faces, declaimed against the treachery which had misled them into a useless sacrifice; while others, again, with stricken and woe-begone faces, sat contemplating their imminent ruin, "refusing to be comforted." It was generally felt that, after the English retreat, the Transvaal would not be a safe place for foreign capital, or even for English settlers, many of whom gave up their possessions in order to get away.
The truth is that the English dealings with the Transvaal throughout this period represent the worst phase of our vacillating colonial policy; and the "surrender," as it was called, is the only really creditable part of them; that it was an expensive blunder in tactics does not diminish its moral propriety. Both before and during the annexation promises were made to the Boers, which were steadily broken. When English settlers began to flock to the Transvaal, they did so under the assurance that the English flag would never be pulled down, and this promise was also broken. But the fulfilment of the first promise involved the breaking of the second, which, in the circumstances, should not have been made. No one can doubt that England could ultimately have crushed the Boer rising, and driven the Boers out of the Transvaal, even if she could not pacify them in it. Let it be counted to her credit that she recognized her errors and yielded, in that most difficult fashion, to a small and insolent opponent who had thrice defeated a handful of her troops, just when preparations had at last been properly made to destroy that opponent and his claims together. It is only a very magnanimous or a very cowardly nation that could act thus: Englishmen will prefer to give their country the benefit of the doubt, and to say that nothing in England's connection with the Transvaal became her like the leaving of it. Such, at least, was the ostensible theory of the Boer leaders, who called the peace a "proof of England's noble and magnanimous love
of right and justice." Political feelings, perhaps, are still too keen to allow the question to be argued dispassionately. But we are free to hope that the historian of the twentieth century, whatever he may add to the secret history of this period, will, on the whole, incline to "say ditto to Mr. Kruger" in this.
CHAPTER XIII

THE TWO CONVENTIONS

Whatever may be said by the moralist of the action of Mr. Gladstone’s Government in making terms with the Boers after Majuba, there can be no doubt that it was a tactical error to do so. Among the qualities of the Boers was not included the power to comprehend magnanimity in an opponent. Whether Boers or British ought to be blamed for it, the fact remains that an incalculable amount of trouble in South Africa has sprung from the Boer belief that they had defeated the British Empire in fair fight. The English Government, in surrendering the Transvaal, expected, as Mr. Bryce has well said, that its inhabitants would appreciate the generosity of the retrocession, as well as the humanity which was willing to forgo vengeance for the tarnished lustre of British arms. The Boers, however, could see neither generosity nor humanity in British conduct. Jubilant over their victories, and failing to realize the overwhelming force which could have been brought against them if the war had been continued, “they fancied themselves entitled to add some measure of contempt to the dislike they already cherished
for the English, and they have ever since shown themselves unpleasant neighbours." On the other hand, English feeling in the Colony had been embittered by the outrages of some of the unchivalrous Boers. Sooner or later all careful observers prophe-sied that further campaigning must follow before general peace and concord could reign in South Africa. The past eighteen years have been steadily preparing the proof of their accuracy.

The definite settlement of the terms of peace had been left after Majuba to a Royal Commission. Sir Evelyn Wood, who had loyally obeyed his uncongenial orders and carried on the negotiations with the Boers so far, was, of course, appointed a member of this Commission. With him were associated Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir J. H. de Villiers, who were respectively Governor and Chief Justice of the Cape Colony. The Commission sat between April and August, conscientiously hearing the proposals of the Boers and the complaints of the Transvaal loyalists. It soon appeared that the original proposals of the English Government, which involved the retention of a considerable portion of the Transvaal, would by no means satisfy the Boers. The Commission seems to have had orders to yield everything rather than force a renewal of hostilities, and the Boer leaders easily carried their point when they threatened to return to their laagers. The final outcome of the negotia-tions was the Convention of Pretoria, which was formally signed on the 3rd August, 1881, and which,
in its attempt to combine Boer independence with British suzerainty, pleased neither party, and was destined to be replaced by the Convention of London in less than three years.

During the sitting of the Commission the Transvaal remained nominally in the hands of the English; it was really at the mercy of the Boers, the more reckless and unscrupulous amongst whom took every opportunity of paying off the old scores that had been run up by the loyalists. The Law Courts were careful to avoid issuing any process, lest their messenger should be shot in contempt of court. Such Boers as had been friendly to England were threatened with death by the successful patriots. Englishmen who returned to their farms were invariably insulted, and sometimes plundered. Two Bechuana chiefs, Montsioa and Mankoroane, who had offered to help Sir George Colley, were attacked, the loyalists being commandeered, or pressed into military service against them, according to the familiar practice of the Boers, who consider it excellent policy to make the disaffected fight their battles and save the skins of the good citizens. In short, the whole country was in a state of turmoil and lawlessness, natural enough in the circumstances, and the respectable majority of the Boers earned themselves some discredit by allowing full exercise to the wilder spirits amongst them. A lukewarm attempt was made to bring to justice several men who had been concerned in acts outside the boundary of civilized
warfare, notably in the killing of English prisoners and in the cold-blooded murder of Captain Elliot; but the trials before Boer juries were farces, as might have been expected, and England did not care to insist in what might have looked like a vindictive course.

The loyalists, and especially the English settlers in the Transvaal, who could not see that their claims to consideration in British eyes were neither so old nor so well founded as those of the Boers who had been the pioneers of the country, made strong protests against the Convention of Pretoria. There is a strong consensus of opinion that these loyal settlers were sacrificed in a fashion which, whether or not it can be called criminal, was certainly one of the gravest of the numerous blunders which have dogged England’s steps in South Africa. The English and Colonial settlers who entered the Transvaal during the time of the annexation, upwards of a thousand in number, had been freely warned that the flag in whose protection they trusted might be hauled down at any moment. The history of the Free State, which England had unhesitatingly abandoned in its troubles thirty years before, was fresh in the memory of the well-disposed Boers, who were held back from openly showing loyalty to our Administrator by the feeling that, if they stood by the English Government, they might be left to bear the brunt of the malcontents’ vengeance when the English flag was pulled down. It is rather ignominious to have to record that
this is exactly what happened. Some consideration was paid to native claims in the Convention of Pretoria, but the loyalists were practically ignored. In spite of their indignant protests, the Convention was duly ratified in the course of the following October.

The Preamble of the Convention of Pretoria is the most important part of it to-day, for it is still a disputed question whether or not it remained in force after the signing of the Convention of London, which admittedly abrogated all the articles of its predecessor, but did not mention the Preamble. This ran as follows:—

Her Majesty’s Commissioners for the Settlement of the Transvaal territory, duly appointed as such by a Commission passed under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet, bearing date the 5th of April, 1881, do hereby undertake and guarantee on behalf of Her Majesty that, from and after the 8th day of August, 1881, complete self-government, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, will be accorded to the inhabitants of the Transvaal territory, upon the following terms and conditions, and subject to the following reservations and limitations.

The first article of the Convention defined the boundaries of the Transvaal State. Lord Kimberley refused at this time to admit the old name of the South African Republic, on the reasonable ground that there were two Republics in South Africa. The second article proceeded to define the suzerainty, which has since been so much discussed that the article may be quoted in full:—

II. Her Majesty reserves to herself, her heirs and successors, (a) the right from time to time to appoint a British Resident in
and for the said State, with such duties and functions as are hereinafter defined; (b) the right to move troops through the said State in time of war, or in case of the apprehension of immediate war between the Suzerain Power and any foreign State or native tribe in South Africa; and (c) the control of the external relations of the said State, including the conclusion of treaties and the conduct of diplomatic intercourse with foreign Powers, such intercourse to be carried on through Her Majesty's diplomatic and consular officers abroad.

The British Resident was to "perform duties and functions analogous to those discharged by a Chargé d'Affaires and Consul-General." His power to protect the natives was defined at length, and he was to be the medium of communication with the Home Government on foreign affairs. The loyalists complained that he was given no authority to see that the clause exempting them from molestation was carried out; but, as the articles of the Convention remained a dead letter until it was superseded, it is hardly worth while to discuss them at length. A Volksraad was to be elected, and fair compensation to be paid for losses of the loyalists during the war. Several articles followed, which provided for the protection of the natives, and reaffirmed the anti-slavery clause of the Sand River Convention. A later article pledged the Transvaal Government to adhere to the boundaries named in the Convention and to do its utmost to restrain its subjects from making any encroachments upon lands beyond them. The commercial rights of England were specially reserved, and the right of all law-abiding European settlers to equal civil rights with the Boers was
established. Among the thirty-three articles of the Pretoria Convention, these provisions are chiefly worth recalling at present. Upon its ratification by the English Government and the Boer Volksraad the English troops were finally withdrawn from the Transvaal, and the Transvaal State entered, for the second time, upon an independent existence.

On the 8th of August, 1881, the Republican flag was hoisted at Pretoria by General Joubert, who made a speech asserting that under it full protection would be given to every one, "whether burgher, foreigner, or Kaffir." Law and order, right and justice, he declared, were the aim of the new Government. In the formal proclamation issued on the same day, the world was assured that the motto of the new State was to be "Unity and reconciliation." The Government remained for nearly a year in the hands of a Triumvirate, consisting of Messrs. Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius. These three had carried the war to a triumphant issue, had negotiated and signed the Convention; it was only fair that they should be the first to wield the power which they had recovered. At the September meeting of the new Volksraad Mr. Kruger, who was coming to be recognized as the chief statesman of the three, laid down the future policy of the Transvaal State in a long and interesting speech. The chief point worth noticing in it was the desire of the Triumvirate to establish a system of education, and to place the finances of the country on a sound footing. To the latter end they not only desired to modify the system
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of taxation, but they asked the Volksraad to encourage industry by the grant of certain monopolies. Such, at least, was their ostensible motive; but it has been generally believed in the Transvaal that the real reasons which prompted the grant of these monopolies were less disinterested—"favouritism pure and simple" is Mr. FitzPatrick's explanation of these grants; he voices the general opinion of the Outlanders, whose truth the Boers have never denied. In 1882, however, there was no immediate prospect that the monopolies would become so important as they did. This may be seen from the price—about one per cent. on its ultimate value—at which the dynamite monopoly was leased. However corrupt a Government may be, it does not become so forgetful of its own interests as to give away 99 per cent. of the possible profits on a job. We may fairly assume that the Triumvirate in 1882, being at the economic stage of our own Elizabethan statesmen, honestly thought that the grant of monopolies was the only way to encourage industry. If they lined their own pockets in the process, we can only remember that Bacon would have done the same. The first of these concessions was issued in 1882, and consisted of the monopoly for the manufacture of spirituous liquors (which, depending mainly on native custom, has been a constant thorn in the side of the employers of native labour) and that for smelting iron. The plan proved immediately profitable, in spite of its economical disadvantages in the long run, and a good deal has been heard of it of late in connection
with the railway concession to the Netherlands Company and the dynamite monopoly. The latter was granted in 1888 to one Mr. Lippert, for a term of sixteen years, in consideration of a payment of £3750 per annum. It proved to be so profitable that the Government afterwards readjusted its terms, on proof of Lippert's contract being broken, to their great financial advantage; ultimately it brought them in as much as £300,000 a year.

But the most important among the early achievements of the new Government of the Transvaal was the re-enactment of a commercial treaty with Portugal, which had been concluded by President Burgers on his visit to Europe in 1875, but which had been allowed to lapse on the annexation. Of still more significance than the treaty itself was the protocol attached to it, by which the Transvaal State and Portugal mutually agreed to aid the construction of the long-talked-of Delagoa Bay Railway, which was now at last to become something more than a dream.

Meantime the internal affairs of the Transvaal were not presenting that picture of sweetness and light which might have been expected after so patriotic a victory. A quarrel arose between the Hollander party, represented by Dr. Jorissen, who was again Attorney-General, and the Africanders, or native Boers, the result of which was Dr. Jorissen's defeat and forced retirement from public life. Not long afterwards Mr. Pretorius, for whom a quiet life now had greater charms than the cares of office, was
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pensioned off; Mr. Joubert was made Commandant-General, and Mr. Kruger was elected to the Presidency of the Republic in 1882; this post he has held ever since.

As the future history of the Transvaal State is to a great extent the history of its single President, it will be well here to try and see what kind of man he really is. Perhaps no more impartial sketch of his character can be presented than that of Mr. Distant, a clear-sighted naturalist who visited the Transvaal about eight years ago. He had many opportunities of judging the President, and here is the portrait that he painted of him:—

"President Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger was born on the 10th October, 1825, in the district of Colesburg in the Cape Colony, and is without doubt the greatest and most representative man that the Boers have yet produced. Uneducated, or self-educated, he possesses a very large amount of that natural wisdom so often denied to men of great learning and of literary cultivation. With many prejudices he is fearless, stubborn, and resolute, and he really understands Englishmen little better than they understand him. In his earlier days he has been a somewhat ardent sportsman and a good shot; he has been engaged and honourably mentioned in most of the Kaffir fights of his time. . . . Socially he has always lived in a somewhat humble position, and it is to the credit of his nature as a man that he bears not the slightest trace of the parvenu. Plain and undistinguished in appearance, he combines the advantages of a prodigious memory with a remarkable aptitude for reading his fellow-man, and this last quality would be more valuable were it not leavened by a weakness in resisting flattery and adulation. He is very pious and self-reliant, which is provocative of bigotry and hot temper; and surrounded and approached on all sides by clever and often unscrupulous financiers and speculators, his soutcheon has worn wonderfully well, and his character and reputation passed through many fiery ordeals; he is also a rough diplomatist of no mean rank."
To Mr. Distant's portrait another and a later one may be appended. The eulogy of a political opponent may generally be trusted to come fairly near the truth, and we shall not go far wrong in accepting the sketch of President Kruger with which Mr. FitzPatrick opens his interesting and able, though biassed, presentment of the Outlander case in "The Transvaal from Within," a book to which the future student will owe much. He there points out that with Mr. Kruger, as with Louis XIV., "l'État c'est lui." One might add that the old President's position may be completely summed up by the addition of Louis XV.'s remark, "Après moi, le déluge." The Transvaal Republic of to-day is the expression of its President's strong convictions and prejudices, enforced by his indomitable will. Mr. FitzPatrick goes on to say, in admirable words:

"In the history of South Africa the figure of the grim old President will loom large and striking—picturesque, as the figure of one who by his character and will made and held his people; magnificent, as one who in the face of the blackest fortune never wavered from his aim or faltered in his effort; who, with a courage that seemed and still seems fatuous, but which may well be called heroic, stood up against the might of the greatest empire in the world. And, it may be, pathetic too, as one whose limitations were great, one whose training and associations—whose very successes—had narrowed, and embittered, and hardened him; as one who, when the greatness of success was his to take and to hold, turned his back on the supreme opportunity, and used his strength and qualities to fight against the spirit of progress, and all that the enlightenment of the age pronounces to be fitting and necessary to good government and a healthy State.

"To an English nobleman, who in the course of an interview remarked, 'My father was a Minister of England, and twice
Viceroy of Ireland,' the old Dutchman answered, 'And my father was a shepherd!' It was not pride rebuking pride; it was the ever-present fact which would not have been worth mentioning but for the suggestion of the antithesis. He, too, was a shepherd, and is—a peasant. It may be that he knows what would be right and good for his people, and it may be not; but it is sure that he realizes that to educate would be to emancipate, to broaden their views would be to break down the defences of their prejudices, to let in the new leaven would be to spoil the old bread, to give unto all men the rights of men would be to swamp for ever the party which is to him greater than the State. When one thinks on the one-century history of this people, much is seen that accounts for their extraordinary love of isolation, and their ingrained and passionate aversion to control; much, too, that draws to them a world of sympathy. And when one realizes the old Dopper President hemmed in once more by the hurrying tide of civilization, from which his people have fled for generations—trying to fight both Fate and Nature—standing up to stem a tide as resistless as the eternal sea—one sees the pathos of the picture. But this is as another generation may see it. To-day we are too close—so close that the meaner details, the blots and flaws, are all most plainly visible: the corruption, the insincerity, the injustice, the barbarity—all the unlovely touches that will by-and-by be forgotten, sponged away by the gentle hand of Time, when only the picturesque will remain.'

It is difficult to improve upon this excellent sketch, which is evidently the work of one who has closely studied his model. But one may add that Mr. Kruger has been said to resemble the hero of the emigrant farmers, the great Pretorius, in his perseverance and anxiety to improve the condition of the Boers. He has endeared himself to his fellow-countrymen by his possession of all their typical qualities, blended with that easy manner and lack of isolation which the Boer finds so necessary in
his rulers. The Boers loved the patriarchal form of government, and when they had, or thought they had, a grievance, some elders were deputed to visit Oom Paul, as the President was familiarly called. President Kruger would listen to all they had to say, had a long talk with them, argued the point, hammered in his own convictions with his own private reasons and perhaps a few texts of Scripture, and the elders generally went back satisfied to explain the case to their constituents. Mr. Kruger's coffee-councils recall to the mind the tobacco-parliaments in which old Frederick of Prussia loved to do the bulk of his work, and which Bismarck imitated.

Since the War of Independence, Mr. Kruger's policy has apparently been dominated by zeal for the importance and independence of the State which he governs, coupled with a not unnatural dislike of England and English interference. Thrown by circumstances into one of the most important positions in South Africa, he has shown himself possessed of a singular tenacity of purpose, and a remarkable diplomatic skill, which, if allied with breadth of view and enlightenment of aim, would have rendered him a great force in the work of civilizing the Dark Continent. As it is, he has proved himself a determined foe to English ideas of progress. Thus he seems to stand in the way of that South African Union, regulated by such ideas, which is the present aim of the English party in Cape Colony and the neighbouring lands. Yet his able and consistent, though narrow, commercial policy succeeded for a
time, thanks to the discovery of gold, in giving his country a greater measure of power and consideration in South African politics than even Mr. Kruger could have dreamed of ten years ago.

It was not long before the Convention of Pretoria began to prove unsatisfactory in working. Indeed, the Boers had only been persuaded to accept the clauses about the suzerainty and the native question by the efforts of the Triumvirate, who were honestly anxious for peace. It was first infringed in comparatively small matters; the Resident was interfered with, the Queen's name slighted, the style of the country changed from "The Transvaal State" back to "The South African Republic." The Boers themselves argued, not without reason, that "Transvaal" might be a good enough name for Cape Colonists to give their country, but that it was obviously absurd for themselves, as the State was "Cisvaal" to those who live in it. But what's in a name?

It was, however, the native and the boundary questions that provoked a serious outburst. It must be confessed that a section of the Boers acted with conspicuous bad faith in this matter; their rulers, as usual, professed inability to keep them in order. No article of the Pretoria Convention had been more clearly expressed than that by which the Triumvirate had bound down their countrymen not to extend the frontiers of the Republic. But, as Mr. Kruger has said, the Boer cannot endure to be "shut up in a kraal;" and no article was more speedily and
distinctly broken, by one of those filibustering raids for which the outlying Boers have always shown a partiality that can only be checked by force. The history of what have been aptly called the "Robber Republics" of Goshen and Stellaland, though we can only glance at it here, is full of interest for those who have lately seen the prompt measures which the Boers take to avenge the violation of their frontier by outsiders.

The first native troubles of the new Transvaal State were in connection with the Boers' old foe, Sekukuni. This chief, who had been deposed by Sir Garnet Wolseley and deported, was restored to his place by the Pretoria Convention. But the land knew him no more, and Sekukuni was speedily killed by his relative Mampoer. The Boers, who had acquired a sort of affection for Sekukuni, threatened to put the murderer to death. He took refuge with a chief called Mapoch, near Middelburg, and the Boers took the opportunity to attack Mapoch, who had always been obnoxious to them. After a war of nine months, in which the Boers made free use of dynamite, Mapoch and Mampoer were captured and condemned to death, whilst their tribes, eight thousand strong, were distributed as apprentices, under a five years' indenture, amongst the victors. This was entirely an internal affair. But the story of the "Robber Republics"—the phrase was Sir Hercules Robinson's—takes us into Bechuanaland. The lands there bordering on the Transvaal belonged mainly to two great chiefs, Montsioa and
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Mankoroane, who had provoked the anger of the Boers by offering help to the English in the war. Two minor chiefs, Massouw and Moshette, were encouraged to rebel against their respective overlords: a great many Boers turned out as volunteers to help them, with cannon and ammunition. Montsioa and Mankoroane appealed for help to the English, who refused to interfere, except by protesting to the Transvaal Government, who merely denied the accuracy of their information. An attempt to raise volunteers against the Boers at the diamond mines was repressed by means of the Foreign Enlistment Act. The two chiefs, after Mafeking had been bombarded, were compelled to buy peace with large tracts of their land, which were divided between the Boers and their native allies. The Boers erected their share into two Republics, just outside the Transvaal western boundary, which they christened Goshen and Stellaland, and by a part of which the Transvaal State was afterwards glad to profit.

Mankoroane and Montsioa continued to appeal to the English Government, which continued to protest against the conduct of the Boer raiders. But Mr. Kruger was on this occasion either unable or unwilling to "damp the trek." By the end of 1882 the English authorities, alike at the Cape and at home, found it difficult to resist the conclusion that the action of the freebooters had not really been received with much disfavour by the Transvaal Government. Early in 1883 the Boer settlers had formed their two little Republics: Stellaland had as
its capital the village of Vryburg, which is now a station on the Bechuanaland railway; whilst Goshen lay on the Transvaal border further to the north. The Government of each proceeded to issue proclama-
tions and make laws quite in the old Boer fashion. Stellaland even adopted a national flag, with a red star on a blue ground, in allusion to the new name, and a canting coat-of-arms; this flag was afterwards presented by its captors to Her Majesty.

Whatever the official view might be, it was obvious to the meanest capacity that the Transvaal Government, if it had not in any way assisted the freebooters, had done nothing serious to prevent their open breach of the Pretoria Convention. The English Colonial Secretary had already written to Sir Hercules Robinson that it was manifest that, if the Transvaal Government was to take advantage of the lawless proceedings of bands of freebooters, many of whom were its own citizens, to extend the boundaries of the State, it was not probable that the disorders would long be confined to the western border. In October, 1883, the two Republics agreed to coalesce and form the United States of Stellaland, with laws and a constitution taken direct from those of the South African Republic. Vryburg was to be the capital. Six months later an English official, travelling to report on the propositions then being made for the annexation of Bechuanaland, found the inhabitants of Stellaland to be "a respectable class, quite equal to the ordinary class of colonial farmers." They had settled down for honest cultivation of the
soil, and were not very likely to have moved in direct and conscious opposition to the wishes of the Transvaal Government. Most of them had purchased these farms from the original volunteers or filibusters.

The wilder spirits among these latter had again diverged to a new Goshen at Rooi Grond, of infamous memory, just outside the new Transvaal border and close to Mafeking, which they more than once attacked. There they lived in a state of internal dissension, varied by inhuman cruelties and barbarous raids upon the natives, which was only closed by Sir Charles Warren's powerful expedition and the British annexation of Bechuanaland in September, 1885, and the creation of a strong Government under which the Stellalanders peaceably merged into English subjects in the Vryburg district, whilst those of the Goshenites who disliked restraint mostly trekked back into the Transvaal. Those who believed that the Transvaal Government secretly abetted these raids into native territory attributed them to Mr. Kruger's anti-English policy, which aimed, they say, at stretching a Boer state right across South Africa from the Portuguese territory on the East coast to the territory annexed by Germany on the West coast, and so at cutting off the English Cape Colony from any direct access to the rich basin of the Zambesi. At present this is no better than a probable conjecture, and the historian has no evidence to counterbalance the strong proclamations which were constantly issued by Mr. Kruger's Government.
against the Bechuanaland raids. We may admit that, in the absence of police or a standing army, it was impossible for the Republic absolutely to prevent these raids without incurring the risk of a civil war. The free right of trekking had always been the prized heritage of the nomad Boer, and it was hardly to be supposed that a clause which he had never read, in a Convention with a country which he hated, should restrain his movements, even when it was backed by a proclamation which might well, in the dearth of newspapers, never have come within his knowledge.

Less than two years had passed since the signing of the Pretoria Convention before these and similar events led both the contracting parties to perceive that the condition of affairs under it was highly unsatisfactory. The Transvaal Government, who not only had their own grievances but were genuinely alarmed at the tone which was being assumed by the English authorities in regard to the Bechuanaland raids, made the first move by offering, in June, 1883, to send a deputation to England in order to have the whole relation between the two countries thoroughly reconsidered. The offer was accepted; the deputation, consisting of Messrs. Kruger, Smit and Du Toit, arrived in England in November, 1883, General Joubert being left behind as Acting President of the Transvaal.

The delegates stated their objections to the Pretoria Convention as being, first, that it had been drawn up by a Commission on which they were not
represented, and had been accepted by them as provisional only; second, that it had proved unworkable in practice, especially in regard to its fixing of boundaries, its view of the Transvaal State as a dependent country, and its interference with the native question. They held that the Sand River Convention had never been abrogated, and asked for a new treaty which should be modelled upon it. Lastly, they pointed out that the notorious raids, or treks, as the Boers preferred to call them, had taken place in territory which had once belonged to the Transvaal, and which had been taken away at various times by England. This was partly true, and partly based on the untenable theory that "the district north of the Vaal," which had been assigned to the Boers by the Sand River Convention, included the whole of Africa beyond the latitude of that river. Negotiations went on for nearly four months, and resulted in the signing of the Convention of London on February 27th, 1884 (the third anniversary of the fight at Majuba Hill). By it most of the wishes of the Boers were conceded, and the country regained its old name of the South African Republic.

The Convention of London has been so much discussed of late years that some of its most important articles must here be given in full. It began with the following preamble, from which it will be observed that all reference to the British suzerainty and to the independence of the Republic has been dropped:—
Whereas the Government of the Transvaal State, through its delegates, consisting of Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, President of the said State, Stephanus Jacobus Du Toit, Superintendent of Education, and Nicholas Jacobus Smit, a member of the Volksraad, have represented that the Convention signed at Pretoria on the 3rd day of August, 1881, and ratified by the Volksraad of the said State on the 25th October, 1881, contains certain provisions which are inconvenient, and imposes burdens and obligations from which the said State is desirous to be relieved, and that the southwestern boundaries fixed by the said Convention should be amended with a view to promote the peace and good order of the said State, and of the countries adjacent thereto; and whereas Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland has been pleased to take the said representations into consideration: Now, therefore, Her Majesty has been pleased to direct, and it is hereby declared, that the following articles of a new Convention, signed on behalf of Her Majesty by Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, the Right Hon. Sir Hercules George Robert Robinson, K.G.C.M.G., Governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and on behalf of the Transvaal State (which shall hereinafter be called the South African Republic) by the above-named delegates, S. J. P. Kruger, S. J. Du Toit, and N. J. Smit, shall, when ratified by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, be substituted for the articles embodied in the Convention of 3rd August, 1881; which latter, pending such ratification, shall continue in full force and effect.

The articles of the Pretoria Convention defining the suzerainty and appointing a British Resident disappeared; in their place stood the third and fourth articles of the London Convention.

III. If a British officer is appointed to reside at Pretoria or elsewhere within the South African Republic to discharge functions analogous to those of a Consular officer, he will receive the protection and assistance of the Republic.

IV. The South African Republic will conclude no Treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than the Orange
Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen.

Such approval shall be considered to have been granted if Her Majesty's Government shall not, within six months after receiving a copy of such Treaty (which shall be delivered to them immediately upon its completion), have notified that the conclusion of such Treaty is in conflict with the interests of Great Britain or of any of Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa.

The reader who will refer back to the account of the Pretoria Convention on p. 230 will have the whole materials of the suzerainty controversy before him. Was or was not the preamble of the Convention of 1881 superseded by that of 1884?—that is the great question on which so much argument has been spent. It seems clear that the preamble of 1881 was not superseded by the Convention of 1884, which explicitly replaced the old articles by new ones. If the expression of the British suzerainty was omitted in 1884, so was the guarantee of the Transvaal's independence; one cannot be thrown overboard without the other. Events have now caused this discussion to have a purely academic interest, although it cannot be removed from its place among the causes of the war of 1899. It may be abandoned here with the remark that the moral is that more care should be employed in the drawing of treaties to state exactly what they mean and how far they supersede their predecessors.

The first two clauses of the Convention of London defined the boundaries of the South African Republic, and engaged the two contracting Governments to do
their utmost to prevent its inhabitants from transgressing them. Clauses V. and VI. provided for the payment of the Transvaal debts. The next four clauses, of which the last has a pathetic interest to us to-day, must be given in full:—

VII. All persons who held property in the Transvaal on August 8, 1881, and still hold the same, will continue to enjoy the rights of property which they have enjoyed since April 12, 1877. No person who has remained loyal to Her Majesty during the late hostilities shall suffer any molestation by reason of his loyalty; or be liable to any criminal prosecution or civil action for any part taken in connection with such hostilities; and all such persons will have full liberty to reside in the country, with enjoyment of all civil rights, and protection for their persons and property.

VIII. The South African Republic renews the declaration made in the Sand River Convention, and in the Convention of Pretoria, that no slavery or apprenticeship partaking of slavery, will be tolerated by the Government of the said Republic.

IX. There will continue to be complete freedom of religion and protection from molestation for all denominations, provided the same be not inconsistent with morality and good order; and no disability shall attach to any person in regard to rights of property by reason of the religious opinions which he holds.

X. The British officer appointed to reside in the South African Republic will receive every assistance from the Government of the said Republic in making due provision for the proper care and preservation of the graves of such of Her Majesty's forces as have died in the Transvaal; and, if need be, for the appropriation of land for the purpose.

The usual "most favoured nation" clause and several clauses relating to the treatment of natives followed; and the only other of the twenty articles which need be quoted is the fourteenth, often referred to as the Charter of the Outlanders:—
XIV. All persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic (a) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic; (b) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises; (c) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (d) they will not be subject, in respect of their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon citizens of the said Republic.

On leaving London the Transvaal deputation made a Continental tour, in the course of which they did some important business and received much welcome as the possible procurers of South African commerce for their various hosts. They first visited Holland, where, as they wrote home, "they were everywhere received with the greatest cordiality, and continued to experience the most indubitable proofs of sympathy and kindness." It was during this visit that Mr. Kruger chose many of the Hollander officials whom he has always found his most convenient tools. Both in Holland and in Germany, where the Kaiser and Prince Bismarck, then in the first blush of their Colonial policy, showed the Boer leaders marked favour, they were received as brethren and descendants of the Teutonic German-Dutch stock. It is somewhat curious to consider that in France, which also had an eye to the partition of Africa, special emphasis was laid rather on the French Huguenot descent of the Boers. Mr. Kruger showed himself quite willing to encourage both varieties of racial friendship; but it may be
supposed that his preference for France, Germany, and Holland over England is greatly influenced by the fact that those countries have not had so many opportunities for interfering with him. Independence is the sacred ambition of the Boer; all means are good that help him to preserve it; and we may guess that any serious attempt at a Continental protectorate over the Transvaal would have been as keenly resented as another English annexation.

On the return of the delegates to the South African Republic—we shall continue to talk of the Transvaal for the sake of brevity—they met with a condition of affairs that must have been an unpleasant change from the honeyed words of their Continental kinsmen and acquaintances. The disturbances on the western border had rather increased than diminished after the signing of the Convention of London, of which it is quite possible that the nomads had never heard. Very shortly after the President's return high words on this subject arose between him and General Joubert in the Volksraad. Mr. Joubert resigned all his offices, after formulating a long and trenchant indictment against the Government, and charging the policy of the President with all the mischief that had lately taken place and "the present bad condition of the country." A vehement discussion was followed by the acceptance of Mr. Joubert's resignation and a triumph for the President, who thus maintained his predominance in the Volksraad. But from that time is to be traced the commencement of a split between President Kruger, who
was to take the majority of the Boers with him in his anti-English and retrogressive policy, and Mr. Joubert, who headed a steadily growing minority of the more educated Boers in favour of constitutional reforms and a policy in conformity with that of the English South African States. It is worth noting here that in 1893 Mr. Joubert’s following had so far increased that he got 7000 votes against Mr. Kruger’s 7854 in the Presidential election. It was the ill-judged raid of 1895–96 that assured the triumph of Mr. Kruger’s anti-English policy, and brought over General Joubert himself to his side.

For the moment, however, it seemed as if President Kruger had but obtained a Pyrrhic victory. The constant disinclination of the Boer to pay taxes was intensified by these dissensions, as it had before been intensified by the factions of Mr. Kruger and President Burgers in 1877. The native vigour of the State was testified, indeed, by yet another of those outbursts of nomad Boers, under the stimulus of their characteristic land-hunger, which have been so frequent in its history. This took place after Cetewayo’s death in 1884, when there was no paramount power in Zululand; by the usual steps of independent enterprise, Government disavowal, establishment of a Republic, and union with the mother-state, the Transvaal was enriched by the best part of Zululand. This New Republic, as the Vryheid settlement called itself, was recognized as an independent Boer state in 1886, and fell into the capacious bosom of the South African Republic a year later.
But in the early part of 1885 it looked to most observers as if the close of the Burgers period was about to repeat itself. Bankruptcy stared Mr. Kruger and his Hollander officials in the face. A loan of £5000 had to be raised, at heavy interest, to supply ready money for the most pressing immediate needs of the Government. The salary of the officials again fell into arrear; the Treasury was behind with all its payments; the farmers could get nothing for their produce; and the mutterings of discontent were growing louder every day. At this moment an event took place which at once raised the South African Republic out of its financial difficulties, and whose remarkable consequences soon gave it the most important place amongst the States of South Africa. This was the discovery of gold in vast and apparently inexhaustible quantities, first on the Kaap and then on the Witwatersrand. From that event dates the modern history of the Transvaal, whose revenue went up with a bound. Hitherto it had been an agricultural and pastoral community, almost devoid of external relations, and asking nothing so much as to be let alone. It was now involuntarily to become one of the chief gold-producing countries of the world, and to find itself in consequence the arena of a complex and increasingly bitter struggle between the isolation-policy of the old Boers and the wider views that were characteristic of the great army of Outlanders speedily attracted to the gold-fields.
CHAPTER XIV

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD

From the earliest times men have agreed, with Ancient Pistol, to couple Africa and golden joys in their dreams. It has long been supposed that King Solomon’s Ophir may have been situated somewhere in that Dark Continent. The early geographers, like Milton, connected this desirable locality with the fabulous empire of Monomotapa, the African El Dorado, rumours of whose wealth incited even the indolent Portuguese to unwonted explorations. They sought diligently for the places where they might find sunny fountains rolling down their golden sand. The Lisbon archives show that a considerable quantity of gold was sent to Portugal from East Africa in the sixteenth century. Long before the Portuguese there were prehistoric gold-seekers, who apparently tried diggings as well as alluvial washings, for both in the Transvaal and in Mashonaland the gold-miners of to-day come on many traces of their forgotten predecessors, who may have been either Phœnicians on Solomon’s business or Portuguese seeking their own fortunes. The ruins of Zimbabwe, where smelting-furnaces and manufactured gold have been found,
bear witness to the existence of a comparatively civilized power in the regions south of the Zambesi at a time long before the dawn of history in South Africa. There is plenty of archæological evidence to show that the earlier prospectors included the Transvaal as well as the country north of the Limpopo in their search for gold. In many places such ancient works are found extending over several acres, giving evidence of a vast amount of prehistoric gold-seeking. In some parts the methods adopted have proved a high degree of intelligence and scientific knowledge in the miners; quartz-reefs have been followed to a distance of fifty or sixty feet below the surface. Elsewhere there are traces of placer-mining and mere surface-grubbing, done by folks whose highest flight of mine-engineering was to break off the gold-bearing quartz by first building a fire on it and then dashing cold water on the heated stone, after which they pounded the quartz to dust in such mortars as were used for grinding corn. Probably the true explanation is that many races of miners have been at work in South Africa: the aborigines and their conquerors, Phœnicians, Arabs, Indians, Portuguese—perhaps Parthians, Medes, and Elamites. It may be that in the far distant future the traveller will gaze on the huge pits of Kimberley and the deep shafts of the Rand with the same wonder as to what forgotten race had enough of civilization to burrow into the ground so diligently.

The modern discovery of gold in the Transvaal,
however, was quite independent of any historic records of its existence. It had long been known, indeed, that the natives were in possession of small quantities of gold, which they probably found in the river-beds and made into ornaments and charms. But the real history of the South African gold-fields is confined within the last fifty years. At the beginning of the present century a Dutch physician found gold in the Cape Colony. In 1845 Von Buch, a famous German geologist, asserted that, from his observation, there was such a resemblance between the geological formations of South Africa and Australia that gold-bearing strata should occur in both lands. In 1864 Carl Mauch, a German mineralogist, made a tour across the Matabele country, and discovered the Tati gold-fields; and in 1869 Baines and Nelson, the latter a Swedish mineralogist who had worked for many years in California, found the more remote Mashona gold-fields. That is to say, as early as 1870 the Transvaal had been shown to be belted by a ring of the metal for which men do so much and go so far.

In the mean time there is some reason to believe that gold had also been found on the site of the modern Johannesburg. It is stated that a certain Marais, in 1854, went to work here at some spots which resembled the soil in the Australian diggings, and really succeeded in finding what he sought. Some of the gold thus found was actually on view at the Potchefstroom Court House. But the Boers did not want gold at that time. They had spent
twenty years in getting out of reach of the English Government, they had just achieved an isolated independence, and they knew what a potent bait gold would be for bringing the English on their traces once more. This fear and dislike of gold has always been a Boer characteristic, though the dread of bankruptcy overcame it, to the Boers' ruin, in the present generation. We have already quoted Froude's story of the Boer who declined to profit by the vicinity of the diamond mines. There is a parallel anecdote of Mr. Kruger which shows the true attitude of the Boer mind to gold-mining. It seems that there is good reason to believe that Pretoria stands upon a gold-field, and a proposal was made in recent years to throw the neighbouring land open to prospectors. The President successfully used all his influence to crush this proposal. "Stop and think what you are doing," he said to the Volksraad, "before you throw open fresh gold-fields. Look at Johannesburg; what a nuisance and expense it has been to us! We have enough gold and enough gold-seekers in the country already: for all you know, there may be a second Rand at your very feet." This appeal was effectual, and that it should be so ought to suggest to us how very apt we must be to misjudge the Boers from our own English standpoint.

In 1854 the Boers were all agreed that gold would be a very undesirable national possession. So they hushed up the discovery of Marais, and passed laws to stop all further prospecting; otherwise
it is possible that there might never have been a South African Republic at all. This Arcadian state of mind lasted up to 1868. In that year, in consequence of the successive discoveries of auriferous quartz-veins and alluvial deposits, President Pretorius, who was impelled by the growing poverty of the State, succeeded with difficulty in effecting the repeal of the laws against prospecting, and rewards were even offered for the discovery of payable gold. In the following year one Edward Button, of Natal, accompanied by an Australian miner named Sutherland, explored the districts of Lydenburg and Zoutpansberg, on the north-east of the Transvaal, and found gold in several places. In 1871 a mining commissioner was appointed in Zoutpansberg, and the first gold law was passed by the Volksraad. Mining had been speedily begun in the Lydenburg district, and a floating population, varying in numbers from five hundred to a thousand white men, has been more or less continuously at work there ever since. These were the first of the Outlanders who have bulked so largely of late in the public mind: their nationality was mainly Anglo-Saxon, and President Burgers even christened one of the earliest gold-fields the “Mac-Mac,” because he found so many Scotsmen on it. According to Aylward, who generally represents the contemporary Boer view when he is not biassed by self-interest or hatred of England, these gold-fields did rather harm than good to the Transvaal; they attracted an unsatisfactory class of settlers; they
led indirectly to the Sekukuni War and so to the English annexation, and they were no richer in gold, he said, than Wicklow or Sutherlandshire. There may be truth in the former views, but as nuggets weighing over 200 ounces were found, and something like half a million pounds' worth of gold must, at the lowest estimate, have been found in the Transvaal between 1870 and 1886, the mines cannot be said to have been an entire failure. But they certainly did nothing to reconcile the average Boer to the desirability of gold-mining on his territory. He still held with Froude that diamonds and gold were not the stuff of which nations were made. It would have been all the better for him, though not perhaps for his descendants, if his Government had held staunchly to this decision, and continued strictly to forbid gold-mining of any kind within the boundaries of the Transvaal.

In 1875 gold was found in some quantities on the slopes of the Drakenberg, to the south of the Lydenburg fields. Political affairs for the next few years absorbed all the Transvaal's energy, and no great notice was taken of this discovery until after the war. But in 1882 there was a great rush to this district, which was christened De Kaap, or the Cape, from the lofty headland overlooking it, in which the last slopes of the Drakenberg descend to the Bush Veld. Soon several hundreds of men, the majority of them Boers, were on the spot, and they speedily cleared off all the gold that was lying about the surface of Moodie's, as the land thrown
open to prospectors was called from its proprietor. But the surface-gold was soon exhausted, and various concessions which the Triumvirate had granted to dog-in-the-manger people, who would neither mine themselves nor let others do so, such as long handicapped the rich fields of Lydenburg, discouraged further search for a year or two. Then came a time of depression among the gold-seekers. Untold wealth was lying under the feet of the new-comers, but for some time it did not occur to them to look for gold anywhere but in the rivers, which were already exhausted. The result was that most of the diggers lost both time and money over their work. It has been calculated that the alluvial gold found at the Kaap in these first years cost, on the average, not less than £10 per ounce: few fortunes could be made at this rate. In 1884 systematic mining was commenced, and proved fairly successful on the land of Mr. Moodie. In the following year the diggers struck reefs of gold-bearing quartz which proved to be of immense and unexpected richness. Chief among these was the famous Sheba Mine. In 1886 it was calculated that already ten or twelve thousand Outlanders had been attracted to the Transvaal by this gold. Where there had been only a few tents and shanties in 1883 the town of Barberton sprang up, and speedily acquired a white population of about five thousand. It would, without doubt, have grown still larger, but for the appearance of metal more attractive elsewhere.

We have seen how the early discovery of gold by
Marais in the Witwatersrand had been effectually hushed up. Just thirty years after the original date of it, a labourer named Arnold, or a prospector named Struben—accounts vary—discovered a vein of quartz, extremely rich in gold, upon the Rand, or water-parting between the tributaries of the Vaal and the head-waters of the Limpopo. Mr. Struben and his brother bought the farm where their discovery lay, set up quartz-crushing machinery, and found that the Confidence Reef, as they called it, would at first yield more than 900 ounces of gold to the ton. But this vein speedily gave out. While seeking to recover it, Mr. Struben says that he had the happy thought of examining whether the beds of conglomerates which occurred so freely in the Rand might by chance contain any gold. These conglomerates consist of water-worn and rounded quartz pebbles, varying in size from peas to hens’ eggs, embedded in a sandy or quartzite matrix; the Dutch name for them is “banket,” or almond-rock, from their resemblance to that agreeable and familiar sweetmeat. Sure enough, the conglomerates did contain workable gold, and that in such quantities that it has been predicted by men who ought to know that by the end of the century their annual output will be not less than twenty millions’ worth of gold; it has already risen to more than half of that. For it is in this “banket” that the wealth of the Rand consists, and from the proclamation of the Rand gold-field, on July 18, 1886, date the financial prosperity, the political unrest, and the modern history of the Transvaal.
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Before this discovery, we are told that the properties on the Rand were of comparatively little value. These farms, which became so famous that the mere whispering of one of their names in a corner was enough to shake Exchanges, were bare pasture-land, ranging in price from £350 to £750, and a sum of £10,000 would have sufficed to purchase them all. It is needless to say that they rapidly went up in price, and some of the Boer owners are officially stated to have got as much as £70,000 for a farm situated on the line of the main reef. There was a general rush to the Rand; capitalists came from Kimberley, miners from Barberton, the needy, the greedy, and the enthusiastic from all the ends of the earth.

A story is told of the famous editor of The Scotsman which seems applicable to the Boer policy on this occasion. A certain public man came to Mr. Russel for advice. He had been given to understand that his supporters were preparing a testimonial to him in cash, and he could not decide whether his influence would be injured by his accepting it, as he wished to do. "The matter's simple enough," said Mr. Russel; "if it's five thousand pounds, take it; if it's less, refuse it, and say you wouldn't have taken it though it had been fifty thousand!" So the Boers, who had hitherto been dead against gold-mines, could not resist the bait of the rich "banket," coupled with the pressure of approaching bankruptcy. There are many instances to show that the dislike of the Government to mining was a faithful reflection
of the popular feeling. Some of them have already been mentioned. Another, which has the authority of the late Secretary of the Transvaal Government, is related by Mr. Carter, the historian of the war of 1881. As an instance of the general indifference of the Boers to the precious metal, Mr. Bok told this gentleman that a Boer who had gold worth working on his farm made him (Mr. Bok) take an oath that he would not divulge the fact, for fear that diggers and others should be attracted to the spot and be a source of annoyance to the owner of the farm. The Boer feeling was exactly akin to that of a well-to-do English squire who might be asked to consent to the opening of a coal-mine on his lawn, and not less respectable. The laws against prospecting had been drafted in this spirit, and the examples of the corrupt concessionaries of Lydenburg and the mongrel population of Barberton were not encouraging.

However, Mr. Kruger now for the first time showed himself really amenable to enterprising reason, and signified his intention of encouraging the mining industry, which, though he did not suspect it, was destined to attack the independence of his country. He sent an expert to examine the Rand, and proclaimed it as a gold-field on his report. On the 20th of September, 1886, the Government decided to mark off a township. They advertised the plan, appointed a Mining Commissioner, and held a sale of building sites, or "stands," which brought in no less than £18,000—more than the previous value of the whole of the Rand. The
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new town, which was named Johannesburg, after the Surveyor-General of the Transvaal, was thus practically founded on the 8th of December, 1886. It has had a lively history in its thirteen years of existence. In January and April, 1887, the Transvaal Government held other sales of sites, which realized nearly £40,000; the new industry had already increased the national revenue by twenty-five per cent., quite apart from the sale of licences to gold-diggers. So far, the new Boer policy seemed to be justified by its fruits. No one in the Transvaal seems to have foreseen the inevitable conflict between the new world and the old which it was to bring about.

It is no part of the plan of this book to go into the detailed history of the Rand gold-mines, and the hundreds of companies that have been formed to work them or to make money out of them. It is enough to say that the excess of speculation in the first two years of the Johannesburg "boom" brought about what, in the pretty language of the Stock Exchange, is called a "slump." Thousands of Outlanders were ruined, and had to leave the country; thousands more had to abandon their dreams of snatching wealth in an instant from the pockets of the public, and became content to extract it with comparative slowness from their mines. It is disputed whether this collapse did Johannesburg good, as an advertisement, or harm, as a danger-signal to investors. It certainly led to an epoch of healthy work, which had been rather neglected in the fever
of speculation. In the next few years a real town was built, with pretensions to both solidity and beauty, which became the centre of the English life of the Transvaal. In 1889 its white population was officially estimated at 30,000, with a floating population of 100,000 on the whole Rand. When the Transvaal census of 1890 was taken the white population of Johannesburg was said to have fallen to 10,000, but this was probably an under-estimate; the best authorities put it at 15,000, with 30,000 on the Rand. Probably the estimate of 1889 had been much too large; but there had certainly also been a real decrease during the collapse. In 1893 the population of the town was given as 40,000 and that of the Rand outside it as 30,000; and in 1895 the trustworthy "Statesman's Year Book" gave 60,000 white inhabitants to Johannesburg, and 45,000 to the rest of the Rand. In July, 1896, the population of Johannesburg was stated to be 102,078, of whom four-fifths were men. Of this total 50,907 were white. But it must be borne in mind that no statistics as to the Transvaal population can as yet be called accurate, and many of those freely quoted are little better than mere guess-work.

However speculators may have exaggerated or obscured the true state of things, there can be no doubt that the Rand gold-mines have been, financially, a great success. Mainly through their agency the Transvaal took third place on the list of the gold-producing countries of the world, and there seemed before the war of 1899 to be a probability that it would
even improve on this position. The annual output of gold rose from a million and a half sterling in 1889 to more than eight millions and a half in 1895, just before the raid which most people believe to have really been aimed at this very glittering bait. In 1897, the last year for which it is worth while to tabulate the statistics, the gold-production of the Transvaal was valued at £11,476,260 sterling—about one-fourth of the total gold-production of the world. The Rand, which has produced about ninety per cent. of Transvaal gold during the past decade, was responsible for £10,583,616 of this gigantic total. The other gold-fields of any size and their products were the Kaap, £389,902; Klerksdorp, £296,733; and Lydenburg, £178,296. Such figures by themselves convey little meaning to the mind. But it is highly instructive to compare their growth with that of the Transvaal revenue. No one can doubt that the rapid development of the gold-fields has been the sole cause of the recent prosperity of the South African Republic. The increase of the revenue has kept pace step by step with the increase in the output of gold, thanks to direct and indirect taxation laid on the latter. The following table shows this clearly. It will be remembered that gold-mining in the Transvaal on a large scale began in 1887, when the Rand was occupied. For economy of figures, the unit in this table is £1000—that is, the numbers may be held to express not mere trifling pounds, but nice compact bags of a thousand sovereigns.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Output of Gold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>say 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>from 1870 to 1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>say 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>900</td>
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<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>1474</td>
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<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>770</td>
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<td>1889</td>
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<td>1891</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>1350</td>
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<td>8570</td>
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<td>1894</td>
<td>2248</td>
<td>1735</td>
<td>8604</td>
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<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>3540</td>
<td>2679</td>
<td>11,476</td>
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<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>4808</td>
<td>4394</td>
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<td>1897</td>
<td>4480</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It will repay us to look at this instructive table more closely. In 1884 the South African Republic was for the second time practically bankrupt. It owed a sum of £396,000, which was just covered by the State lands, then valued at £400,000. Its revenue was £43,000 less than its expenditure, and, while the latter could hardly be curtailed, the former was steadily shrinking, in virtue of the Boer's disinclination to pay his taxes. In thirteen years from 1884 the discovery of gold increased the revenue more than twenty-fold, it made the all-but-bankrupt State solvent and even plethoric of money, and placed its credit in so good a position that a national debt of £2,674,000 had no terrors for the Boers; indeed, when Messrs. Rothschild undertook to negotiate the railway loan of two and a half millions
in 1892, it was subscribed twenty times over. The State lands, valued in 1884 at £400,000, were worth several millions after gold had been discovered on them. It was a grateful sense of all these coming mercies that led President Kruger to abandon his old ideas and declare before the Volksraad in 1888 that the existence of the country was bound up in that of the gold-fields. Analyzing the revenue for 1897, we find that it was made up of the following items: import duties, £1,276,319; railway dues, £737,366; prospecting licences, £427,230; duties on explosives, £300,000; stamp duties, £258,396; post and telegraph service, £215,320. The third and fourth of these items were direct taxes on the gold industry; the import duties and railway profits were mainly indirect taxes on the same; and the greater part of the stamp and postal revenue was derived from the various activities of the Outlanders. Nobody doubts, indeed, that the financial prosperity of the Transvaal in the past twelve years has been the immediate outcome of the gold-mines. In the remainder of this book we have to narrate the intestine troubles which the State brought upon itself by admitting the gold-miners. "Qui terre a guerre a:" there is a certain poetical justice in the fact that the same causes which brought wealth have also brought war to the South African Republic.
CHAPTER XV

THE INCURSION OF OUTLANDERS

Hitherto the history of the Transvaal has presented no very complicated problems. The motives of the chief actors in it have been on the surface of affairs, and there has been little difficulty in assigning the proper value to conflicting bodies of evidence. But in entering upon the story of the past fifteen years, beginning with the discovery of gold in tempting quantities, and ending with the unhappy war in which the independence of the Transvaal seems likely to come to final shipwreck, the task of the would-be impartial historian is beset with peculiar and well-nigh insuperable difficulties. The present generation must pass away before the true story of the events which are now to be narrated can be fully laid bare. Without that free access to Government archives at home and in the Transvaal, as well as to the private papers of the men mainly concerned in these affairs, which may be the privilege of the historian in the twentieth century, it is impossible even to pretend to set forth the true inwardness of the following story. The history of the Transvaal during the past five years especially involves a knowledge of the
meaning and motives of the three men chiefly responsible for it—President Kruger, Mr. Rhodes, and Mr. Chamberlain. To sit in judgment on these distinguished and inscrutable men, with only an imperfect outward knowledge of their actions and speeches for evidence, would be equally absurd and unprofitable. Yet various reasons make it desirable that an account of the affairs of the last decade, unbiased by political prepossessions, should be set before the English reader, and some attempt must be made to perform this task. No one can be more conscious than the present writer of the imperfections with which it must be attended, and he will be fully content if he is credited with an honest desire to throw light on the perplexed and dubious history of recent affairs in the Transvaal.

During the nine years that elapsed from the foundation of Johannesburg until the Jameson raid, the great facts in the history of the Transvaal to which all others are subservient are the steady increase in the numbers of the Outlanders whom the gold-fields attracted, and the vigorous but ill-advised efforts of the Boer Government, whilst accepting its new prosperity, to preserve its independence in the teeth of the money and energy of these new-comers. There were two courses open to Mr. Kruger and his countrymen, either of which would have been respectable, and might have been successful. One was to forbid gold-mining altogether; the other was to meet the Outlanders in a liberal spirit. In an evil hour for themselves, but very naturally, the Boers
were seduced by the fear of bankruptcy and the hope of wealth to throw open the gold-fields. They thought that they could eat their cake and have it too; they expected to draw a princely revenue from the Outlanders without giving them control of the country. If, indeed, the gold-fields had been no richer than those of Lydenburg and Barberton, this plan might probably have answered. But the amazing wealth of the Rand upset all calculations, by drawing into the Transvaal a number of Outlanders which far exceeded that of the Boer burghers. Like Frankenstein, Mr. Kruger saw himself in possession of a monster of his own construction, whose acts he was powerless to control. If he granted full political rights to the new-comers, their increasing numbers would speedily bring them into possession of the whole power of the Republic. He constantly felt what he once expressed by saying that, if he gave the Outlanders the franchise, he might at the same time pull down the Transvaal flag. It was too late to expel them; so he did his utmost to keep them from laying their eager hands on the machinery of government. Thus the free Republic, for which the Voortrekkers had fought and died, was turned into a close Oligarchy. This is the key to the Boer policy of the past decade. In the present chapter the most important secondary features of that policy will be displayed, whilst the next will be devoted to the struggle of the Outlanders to acquire political power.

The incursion of the Outlanders began to be a very serious fact in the South African Republic about
1887. In the last chapter one adverted to the difficulty of getting trustworthy statistics in regard to the Transvaal population. There is no means of knowing with entire certainty what was the number of white inhabitants either before or just after the War of Independence. Before the war the white population of the Transvaal was reckoned at about forty thousand, of whom at least ninety per cent. were Boers. The petition in favour of the British withdrawal sent to England in 1878 was signed by 6591 out of 8000 electors; at that time the franchise was granted as a matter of course to every white man residing or holding property in the State, so that these 8000 represent as many families, which, at the usual computation of five to a family, gives 40,000 inhabitants. The Boer, however, is very prolific, and perhaps 50,000 would be nearer the truth. Since 1881 there have been scarcely any Boer immigrants to the South African Republic, and the present Boer population may be supposed to consist of the survivors and descendants of the eight thousand electors of 1878, less the few hundreds of Anglo-Saxons—probably about seven or eight—then settled in the Transvaal, most of whom shook its dust off their feet after the English withdrawal. The native population of the Transvaal at the same time was probably something between half a million and a million. In 1887 a fairly trustworthy estimate put the population at 50,000 Africanders (or white persons born in Africa), 25,000 Europeans, of whom the majority were English, and from 300,000 to
700,000 natives. At the end of 1888 the white population was said to have increased to 150,000, of whom not less than half were English. In 1889 the "Statesman's Year Book" gave the population as 62,000 Boers, 48,000 Outlanders, and half a million natives; but this hardly harmonized with the contemporary estimate of 100,000 white persons on the Rand alone, which must, one would think, have been an exaggeration.

In April, 1890, the first Transvaal census was taken. The general feeling among the Boers that this was a device to facilitate the work of the tax-collector, and the carelessness of the Outlanders about any Government affair, combined to make it extremely inadequate. It gave the population as 66,000 men and 53,000 women—104,000 Africanders and 15,000 Outlanders. At the same time the white population of the Rand alone, of whom the majority must have been aliens, was estimated at 45,000. Perhaps the safest of all guides in this matter is a laborious calculation made by the British Agent at Pretoria at the end of 1894. He concluded that the Transvaal contained about 71,000 Boers, 63,000 British subjects, and 16,000 other white aliens. It was thought at the time that this estimate was probably too small. An incomplete and badly classified but interesting census taken in 1896 is the latest authority. The numbers given by it, with a great air of accuracy to the last figure which is probably misleading, were 137,947 white men and boys, and 107,450 white women and girls, with 622,500 natives.
At the same time the white population of Johannesburg, which was almost wholly Outlander, was given as 50,907, of whom not less than four-fifths were men. If we allow the existence of half as many Outlanders on the Rand and in all the other gold-fields as in Johannesburg—a moderate estimate—this gives us 60,000 male Outlanders and 78,000 Boers; but, as the latter number includes a large proportion of boys and babies, whilst of the Outlanders at least 95 per cent. were adults, the Boer burghers must have been considerably outnumbered in 1896 by those who were clamouring for the franchise, and had lately been convicted of a widespread conspiracy against the Constitution. The number of voters at the hotly contested Presidential election of 1898 was 18,612; it had been 14,935 in 1893.

Two things, at least, are clear from this brief inquiry. On the one hand, the estimates of the population of the Transvaal have always been very loose; on the other, it is practically certain that the number of Outlanders in the Transvaal during the last few years was greater than that of the native Boers. This conclusion is emphasized by the obvious circumstance that the proportion of men to women and adults to children among the coming and going Outlanders must be considerably higher than among the Boers. The Transvaal Government's policy for the last ten years has been dictated by an ever-present consciousness of this fact. The Boer is as jealous of his political independence as the Yankee or the Swiss. He foresaw that, if the growing crowds of
Outlanders were admitted to political rights in the State in which some of them had come to dwell for a time and some would settle altogether, it would be quite conceivable that they should become a majority and get the full control of the Republic into their hands, when their English blood and habits would lead them, not only into the possible heresy of extending political rights to the natives, but into certain union with the other South African States, under the feared and, one must sorrowfully confess, not unjustly hated flag of England. Consequently the Boers adopted the course of keeping all real political power from the Outlanders, in a fashion which grew steadily stricter as the numbers of the latter increased.

A great deal of abuse has been heaped upon the Boers for adopting this selfish and illiberal policy. One can hardly see that it is justified. It may be said truly enough that they adopted a course which was predestined to ultimate failure. The logic of facts, of the geographical situation, of the steady influx of Outlanders, forced observers to the conclusion that the Transvaal must in the end cast in its lot with a united South Africa, and no patriotic Englishman could refuse to hope and believe that it would do so under the English flag. But our enlightened colonial policy of to-day is a plant of very recent growth. The Boers had had many opportunities of studying the rank and bitter weeds that had usurped its place in the Middle Victorian period. Is it surprising that they took all the
measures in their power to ward off the inevitable destiny? If, indeed, the Boers of the Transvaal had been quite faithful to their old ideas, and had refused to permit gold-mining at all within their territory, they would have deserved far more sympathy than they can claim to-day. As honest rustics who objected to urban civilization and the many evils and uglinesses that come, along with much good, in its train, they would have held a perfectly defensible position; and, whilst they might have had something to fear from gold-hunting filibusters, they would at least have had no Outlander difficulty. Such purely agricultural settlers as might have entered the Transvaal would have readily fallen in with the Boer policy. But the Transvaal Government was driven by the fear of imminent bankruptcy into a compromise, which soon proved unworkable. Even after the Jameson raid it seemed that it was not too late for the Boers frankly to face the position, and, by granting all genuine settlers a fair chance of sharing their political rights, to pave the way to the Transvaal's entrance into the South African Union with an entire retention of that local independence which the Boer, at the bottom of his soul, has always prized above all else. Unfortunately, President Kruger had not the foresight and adaptability necessary to take up such a policy, and once more in the world's history it has been left to the rude hand of war to cut the Gordian knot.

We have now to consider various details of the policy actually adopted by Mr. Kruger and his
followers. It is not worth while to follow the exact chronological order in the rest of this chapter, which will aim at showing the general drift of affairs in the South African Republic from the foundation of Johannesburg to the Jameson raid. First, however, in time as in importance, appears their attitude towards the development of a railway system in the South African Republic. This was an inevitable consequence of the discovery of gold in the Transvaal and the Government's decision to allow it to be worked. Little as Mr. Kruger foresaw it, a new political era dated from the close relations into which the railway was bound to bring the South African Republic with its neighbours. We have already seen that the construction of railways and the consequent development of commerce had formed part of the advanced policy of the unfortunate President Burgers, which made him so unpopular with his conservative countrymen. The march of events now compelled President Kruger unwillingly to take up his predecessor's half-formed plan. It was the Delagoa Bay Railway, as being remote from English territory, which appealed most strongly to his anti-English policy. If there must be a railway to the sea, this seemed to him the least dangerous and offensive.

The South African Republic's treaty with Portugal, which had been concluded in 1875 and reaffirmed in 1882, had provided specially for the construction of this line. In 1883 the Government of Portugal granted a concession for the part of the railway which lay through their territory, and in 1887 a
Company was formed by an enterprising American, Colonel McMurdoo, to construct the line from Delagoa Bay to the Transvaal border at Komati Poort. The work was hurried on, and the line (fifty-two miles in length) was opened in November, 1883. In the meantime it had been seized by the Portuguese Government, on the colourable pretext of the work (which they had hindered by all convenient means) not being completed within the specified time. Colonel McMurdoo had offered to carry the line on to Pretoria, but the President, who had already, in 1884, granted the railway monopoly in the Transvaal to the Netherlands Railway Company, would not hear of this. The Netherlands Railway Company, which for the last decade has been the chief financial authority in the South African Republic, was floated in 1887 to take over the concession granted three years earlier. Of its two thousand shares fourteen hundred were divided among the group of German and Dutch capitalists who took it up, and six hundred were reserved by the Transvaal Government. The present capital of the Company is about seven millions sterling, which represents a considerable inflation of its original £166,666, and its annual revenue in the last years was over three millions. Up to 1890 no construction was undertaken by the Company, although considerable sums were paid to it by the Transvaal Government. When the work was actually begun, it was accompanied by glaring financial scandals, which will be mentioned on a later page.
Public feeling among the Boers was long divided on the railway question. A petition was presented to the Volksraad in 1888 by the enlightened section, headed by Mr. Loveday, asking that the monopoly granted to the Netherlands Company should be withdrawn, as being detrimental to the best interests of the country. General Joubert, who was in favour of free trade in railway enterprise, said that he would be prepared at any time to prove in argument that railways were necessary, and that more harm would be done to the country by a railway from Delagoa Bay to Pretoria than by a railway from Cape Colony to that town. He was willing to support railways in general, and did not wish to wait for the Delagoa Bay line. But, as usual, he was out-voted by the supporters of the President's less liberal policy.

In the same discussion, however, which was held during the Volksraad's session of 1888 on the construction of the steam tramway between the Rand and the neighbouring coal-fields, even the President admitted that "if a tramway was not soon constructed for the transport of coal, the gold-fields would be 'done for,' and with the gold-fields the country; coal was then at 17s. a bag." Other members said that the Raad was starving the cow and yet expecting milk, and there was then a general agreement that the interests of the gold-fields were the interests of the country. The steam tramway in question was therefore proceeded with, and was in all but name the first railway actually opened in the Transvaal. For two years more the Delagoa
Bay scheme hung fire. Meantime the President was carrying on negotiations with the Orange Free State, in order, if possible, to prevent the extension of the Cape railways through its territories. In this plan he was not successful, although his neighbours were prepared to show themselves friendly in any less expensive way. In 1889 the Orange Free State agreed to a railway convention with the Cape Colony, by which the Free State got its main trunk line, connecting the capital, Bloemfontein, with Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, made at the expense and risk of the Cape Colony. The Free State drew half the profits, and eventually purchased the line at cost price. The possibility of famine among the crowded population of the Rand, and the great disadvantages caused to the gold-mining industry by the absence of speedy means of communication, finally roused the Government of the Transvaal to action, and by the beginning of 1890 the Delagoa Bay line had entered the Transvaal. Its construction thereafter went steadily on, and in the course of 1895 it was opened as far as Pretoria. In the meantime the Natal Railway, which was completed from Durban through Laing's Nek to Johannesburg in 1895, and continued along the Rand to Klerksdorp, and the Cape Town Railway through the Free State had been pushed on. In 1891 the Cape line was extended to the Vaal River at Viljoen's Drift, whence the Netherlands Railway Company carried it on to the Rand and Pretoria, and still further north. In September, 1892, this Netherlands line reached
the Rand, which was thus at last put in regular and swift communication with the sea and the markets of the world. This line was before long extended to Pretoria, whilst it united at Elandsfontein with the line that ran east and west along the Rand, and through Johannesburg, which was thus put at last in direct communication with the sea at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, and Delagoa Bay.

The general railway policy of the Transvaal Government has been simple and consistent. Railways were only admitted to the Republic as a necessary evil. Everything was thereafter done to encourage the one which went to Delagoa Bay, because it lay outside of English territory, and none of its profits went into the pockets of the British authorities. They were divided between the Transvaal, Portugal, and the Continental shareholders. The notorious Drifts Question, which so nearly led to war between England and the Transvaal, illustrated this policy.

The Transvaal traffic, which was by far the most important in South Africa, in consequence of the immense and growing industry of the Rand, was largely sent over the line through the Cape Colony and the Free State. Though longer than the Delagoa Bay line, this railway was so much better made and managed, as well as being older, that it got the greater part of the Johannesburg traffic. This was not the wish of President Kruger, whose game was readily played by his creation and pet child, the Netherlands Railway Company. The forty miles of
line which connected the Rand with the Cape Free State system belonged to the Netherlands Company, who proceeded to play their cards by raising the rates on this section of the line so high that it became more costly to send goods to Cape Town than to Delagoa Bay. They further did all that they could to discourage the obnoxious traffic by keeping the line at Viljoen's Drift, on the banks of the Vaal, permanently blocked with loaded and empty trucks, so that great delay and inconvenience was caused to those who persisted in patronizing the Cape line. No attention was paid to the protests of the Orange Free State, who thought it anything but friendly of the Transvaal to try to ruin their portion of the railway in order to spite the British officials. The enterprising capitalists of the Rand, however, not only protested, but, seeing that all remonstrance was in vain, took action. They organized a service of ox-wagons between the Rand and the Vaal River. It was quite easy thus to send goods between Johannesburg and Viljoen's Drift, where they were delivered and received direct by the Cape railway. The Netherlands Railway Company seemed to have lost the odd trick, when President Kruger played his trump card. At the beginning of October, 1895, he closed the Drifts, or the fords of the Vaal, to all wagons with goods from the Cape Colony. This ingenious plan, however, was so efficient as to defeat itself. The Cape Colony was unanimous in its indignant protest, which had the full support of the Orange Free
State, not yet alarmed by the approaching raid. Africanders and English stood side by side in their determination to show the President of the Transvaal that he could not be permitted to ruin South Africa because he hated the English. The High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, and the Cape Premier, Mr. Rhodes, both applied to Mr. Kruger in vain. The appeal was then made to England. The new Colonial Secretary, Mr. Chamberlain, who had taken office three months before, and now first appeared prominently on the South African stage, replied that the action of the Transvaal Government was indubitably a breach of the "most favoured nation" and "free admission" clauses of the Convention of London. He inquired whether, in the event of war, the Cape Colony would bear half the expenses and give the Imperial troops free transport. The Imperial-minded Mr. Rhodes and his Attorney-General, Mr. Schreiner, a chief pillar of the Africanders, agreed without hesitation to these terms. Then Mr. Chamberlain sent an ultimatum to President Kruger, in which he announced that closure of the Drifts after the 15th of November would be taken as an act of war. We cannot yet tell whether Mr. Kruger had already begun to perceive that war must be the final outcome of his policy. At any rate, he saw at once that to fight on a question which had gravely divided his own followers and had allied Dutch and English against him throughout the rest of South Africa would be madness. He instantly gave way and re-opened the Drifts, although
he did not induce the Netherlands Railway Company to revise their tariffs, which remained three times as great as those of the Cape Colony on the line to Johannesburg from the south. In other words, he did not think of abandoning his aim, which was to send all the traffic of the Transvaal by the Portuguese port, and so to deprive the English colonies of the customs dues and the railway rates on the traffic of Johannesburg, then, as we have seen, by far the most important commercial centre in South Africa. From the Boer point of view, it cannot be denied that he was perfectly within his right in pursuing such a policy. The high protective tariff adopted in 1892 against the Cape Colony and Natal, no less than the differential rates of the Transvaal railways, were all part of this vigorous and threatening crusade against the prosperity of the English South African colonies.

There has been no other event comparable in importance with the Outlander question in the recent history of the South African Republic. Perhaps the most significant fact of late years is that some attention has been given to the needs of education. In 1895 a sum of £63,000 was devoted to this object, and about 15,000 pupils, half Boer and half Outlander, were being educated in several hundred state-aided and private schools. This should have given much hope for the future to those who worship at the shrine of our "latest English god," Education.

Unfortunately even this good work only served to inflame the discontent of the Outlanders. The Director
General of the Johannesburg Educational Council asserted that, out of £63,000 granted for Educational purposes, £62,350 was spent on 7000 Dutch children, being at the rate of £8 6s. 1d. per head, while only £650, or 1s. 10d. per head, was spent on Outlander children, for whom the parents, though taxed for education, had to pay the difference themselves. Light is thrown on this matter by an instructive debate in the Volksraad in 1894, in which Mr. Kruger maintained that Dutch had no chance against English in open competition, and that, therefore, all who wished to see the Transvaal remain a Boer State should oppose the teaching of English and try to enforce the general use of Dutch. It is curious to compare this attempt to suppress English in the Transvaal, which made its appearance again in the recent negotiations, with the way in which the Dutch East India Company forbade the Huguenots to speak French, and the English Government of the Cape irritated the Voortrekkers by forbidding Dutch in the courts of law.

Some five years after the arrival of the Outlanders in force there was a significant recrudescence of the trekking spirit in the Transvaal. There was, indeed, plenty of unoccupied territory. Some 200,000 whites, all told, of whom half were comparatively crowded on the Rand, divided among them a territory more than half the size of France, with her forty millions, and more than twice as large as England, which affords elbow-room to some thirty millions of people. In 1890 the area of the South African Republic
was supposed to be 122,000 square miles. A better survey in the following year showed that this was an over-estimate by about 8000 square miles. In 1893 a large slice of Swaziland, which had already been claimed by the Boers in 1890, was annexed to the Republic, and raised its total area to 119,000 square miles. But this did not allow the Boers room to keep out of reach of the detested Outlanders. Therefore, during the years 1890 and 1891, the nomad Boers entertained designs of adding still further to the territory of the Republic in the fashion of the freebooters of Stellaland and Goshen. They had long cast eyes of desire on the fertile lands north of the Limpopo, where the fear of the savage Lobengula had acted as an effectual barrier, though General Joubert is said to have attempted the negotiations which Mr. Rhodes carried to success. Now Lobengula's power was being replaced by that of the British South Africa Company, formed in 1889, and the Boers, actuated by their ever recurrent earth-hunger, proposed to make a great trek into the southeastern portion of Matabeleland. As many as 5000 Boers, headed by General Joubert, were said to be prepared to join this Banyailand trek. But the Transvaal was no longer as secluded as it had been in the Stellaland days. English railways and telegraphs served to keep it in touch with the outside world. Thus Sir Henry Loch, the English High Commissioner, was able to make a strong and timely protest against such a breach of the London Convention: this time President Kruger bestirred
himself effectually to "damp the trek," and not more than a hundred roving Boers crossed the Limpopo, to be promptly turned back by Dr. Jameson, who, with tact supported by a strong force of police, averted any serious consequences that might have followed from this raid. Most of the Boers returned to the Transvaal: a few remained in Rhodesia as settlers. It was thereafter recognized that the expansion of the Transvaal was at an end, and that trekking could only be indulged in by such Boers as were willing to settle under the British flag.

In 1894 there was a small native war with a chief named Malaboch. The most important result of it was to bring certain grievances of the Outlanders to a head. Many of them were "commandeered," or pressed into military service. They protested on the ground that they had no political rights in the State, and so could not legally be asked to fight for it. Five of them went to prison rather than submit: an appeal was made through the High Commissioner to Lord Rosebery, then Prime Minister of England, and the Boers grudgingly gave way. This affair will again be mentioned when we come to consider the grievances of the Outlanders in the next chapter. One other subject remains to be considered here, and that is the painful one of the steady growth of corruption in public life, which went hand-in-hand with the increasing prosperity of the South African Republic.

The virtues of the Boers did not include a strict sense of probity in dealing with the finances of the
State. We have already seen how naturally it came to President Burgers to advance the interests of his railway scheme by a free distribution of commissions, and to treat himself to a nice present out of the public funds. When the discovery of gold put large sums at the disposal of the Transvaal Government, there was scarcely a Boer amongst them who did not think it perfectly proper that he should grow rich himself along with his country.

"Meanwhile," says Mr. Bryce in his admirable book on South Africa, "the old Boer virtues were giving way under new temptations. The new Volksraad (as is believed all over South Africa) became corrupt, though of course there have been always pure and upright men among its members. The Civil Service was not above suspicion. Rich men and powerful corporations surrounded those who had concessions to give, or the means of influencing legislation, whether directly or indirectly, and the very inexperience of the Boer ranch-man who came up as a member of the Volksraad made him an easy prey."

The candour with which President Kruger publicly announced that the official salaries were calculated on a sliding scale, and would go up and down with the revenue of the Transvaal, might disarm the reproach with which we should greet such a confession from a European statesman. The acceptance of bribes or commissions is only a step further on the road of corruption. It is important that we should bear in mind the broad distinction
between the theory of public morality in our own country and that which obtains in the Transvaal. Where the general opinion regards the acceptance of bribes and the thriving on public property as not merely a venial sin but a sign of sound business instinct in its Parliamentary representatives, we need not be surprised that a Government which has been proved to be thoroughly corrupt, when judged by our standard in this matter, has yet preserved the military virtues and the passionate love of independence which in a European State we should consider, from all our experience, to be totally inconsistent therewith. We might naturally expect that a representative of the people who would take a small bribe to pass an unjust financial measure would take a large one to betray his country. Events have shown that in the Transvaal we should be entirely mistaken.

There is no need to go at great length into the history of this kind of corruption in the South African Republic, which is equally admitted by its friends and its enemies. A few instances only must be given. The rise of bribery as a method in public affairs is co-extensive with the growth of gold-mining. It was first largely apparent when the Barberton gold-fields became important. The ill-paid officials who were set to enforce the customs and other regulations accepted bribes right and left, and the contagion speedily spread through all the machinery of the constitution. The field-cornets, whose registration of immigrants was a necessary
step towards naturalization and the franchise, found a profitable source of income in forgetting to enter the names of Outlanders until their memories were jogged by suitable presents. Even the local magistrates displayed a Turkish readiness to sell their justice. The stream of gold totally demoralized the simple burghers, who had no experience of dealings with money, and were only too ready to follow the example of the shady European adventurers who taught them the lesson of accepting bribes. The growth of gold-mining on the Rand intensified all these evils, and by 1895 the whole system of government, from its highest member to its lowest, was imbued with the feeling that it behoved a man of intelligence to make his fortune while the gold lasted: a sense of the value of money and of the importance of distinguishing between the ways of getting it was as totally absent in the Volksraad at Pretoria as in the Casino at Monte Carlo. Possibly fifteen years of financial corruption are too short a time to display its proverbial effects: but recent events show that the South African Republic is one of the very rare cases in which wide-spread and practically universal corruption among the governing classes has been unable to impair the courage and patriotic spirit of a nation. The moral fibre and manly backbone of the Outlanders who gave the bribes seem to have suffered far more from the habit than did those of the Boers who took them. This is an additional proof that we must not judge the Transvaal by the moral standard of Europe, and that its public
corruption, though it has to be set forth as a cause of the Outlanders' complaints, ought not to be described in the language of high moral reprobation which would be justly applied to it in a European State.

The most glaring examples of jobbing and bribery were afforded by two Railway concessions. The Netherlands Railway Company spent money right and left to influence members of the Government who might have interfered with its profits. £124,000 was paid out before the work of construction began. The contractors were allowed to charge £23,500 per mile for work which cost £8000, and the difference went into the pockets of the Company, the contractors, and the Government. Similar methods have been in vogue all along, and almost all the members of the Volksraad who were intelligent enough to spy anything wrong were easily quieted with presents. The Selati Railway concession showed that, from 1890 to 1894, the Transvaal Volksraad was as thoroughly corrupt as the English Parliament in Walpole's time: "all these men had their price," and got it. Twenty-one members out of twenty-five accepted bribes, varying in form and value from Cape carts, American spiders, and gold watches, to shares in the Company to be floated and considerable sums in hard cash. When a public exposure of these transactions took place on the retirement of Dr. Leyds, it was the Outlanders and not the Boers who were shocked. Mr. Kruger stated in the Volksraad that he saw no reason why members
should not accept presents, and that was the general Boer attitude on the subject: the Boers only perceived national prosperity as something in which every man who could get a finger into the pie should share. In 1891 the Sanitary scandals revealed a similar state of things; public officials had taken bribes of hundreds of pounds from the contractor for the draining of Johannesburg and allowed him to cook his accounts, but they were continued in office, and the general feeling was that the meddling Outlanders were stupid people to suppose that there could be any other way of doing the business of a nation. In 1893 there were similar revelations about a sale of stands (i.e. sites on public land) for £8000 which should have realized £37,000: the difference went mainly into the pockets of the Volksraad. The dynamite monopoly is said to have brought in nearly £10,000 a year to a member of the Executive who might have been troublesome: as the mining community complained of paying £600,000 a year too much for its dynamite, this specially rankled in the Outlander mind. A long list could be made of the pickings which President Kruger and his relations have had out of the State, with the tacit and sometimes open support of the Volksraad, who held it a crime to muzzle the ox that trod out their corn. It is unnecessary to carry this list any further: enough has been said to show that the whole official body in the Transvaal—there were, of course, a minority of honourable exceptions and protesters—thought it honest and the act of a sensible man to fatten on
the plunder that could be squeezed off the dividends of the mining companies and the livelihood of the Outlanders. They are like to be justly and heavily punished by having thus provoked the loss of their country’s independence. For it was indubitably the financial grievances of the Outlanders which chiefly set them demanding the franchise and so led up to war.
CHAPTER XVI

THE STRUGGLE FOR REFORM

The time has not yet come at which the history of the Outlanders’ struggle to obtain political rights in the South African Republic can be fully written. The secret springs of action cannot be laid bare until those who manipulated them have passed away. But the strong interest which has been taken in Transvaal affairs during the past three years has led to the publication of a considerable mass of material. This, when carefully sifted, seems to afford the possibility of a narrative which, though never professing to be complete or profound, shall at least be plausible and coherent.

The outline of the reform agitation, which the raid of Dr. Jameson brought into European prominence, is plain enough. The steady increase in numbers of the Outlanders, as we have seen, compelled President Kruger, who has been the mainspring of Boer policy during the last eighteen years, to choose between giving them the whole political power in the Transvaal or none of it. So, at least, he believed: and the Outlanders were so different from the Boers in aims and ideals, methods and character, that it is scarcely possible to doubt that
he was right. And, rather than part with his independence, we must believe that Mr. Kruger was from the first prepared to fight. When he was plainly warned that his course would force him to deal with the British army, he only said that he had dealt with it once already: no Boer seems ever to have realized the true strength of the British Empire since the battle of Majuba Hill, which thus may have been really a disaster for those who won it. It was long supposed that President Kruger was bluffing, as they say at poker, and would give way sooner than fight, as he did in the matter of the Drifts. He was prepared to yield on many points for the sake of peace: but not on a point that, in his belief, directly involved the loss of Boer independence. It was hoped that he was not supported in this policy by the majority of his people, and that the progressive party of General Joubert, which ran President Kruger so close in 1893, would be largely reinforced and out-vote him when war was seen to be at hand. What an entire delusion that was is proved by the battles now being so sternly fought in South Africa, in which the Boers, not only of the Transvaal but of the Free State, have turned out as one man when it seemed that the independence of the South African Republic, as Mr. Kruger conceived it, could only be held by the sword. Like William of Orange, the country Boer, who seemed to care nothing about politics, was nevertheless ready to die in the last ditch rather than see his country in the hands of aliens.
That piece of knowledge, which we have so dearly bought, must colour the whole of our backwards survey of the recent history of the Transvaal. There is now no doubt that we must regard Mr. Kruger as the representative of his people in his struggle to keep the Outlanders from a share in the government. Right or wrong, the Boers have shown themselves unanimous on this matter. On the other side, the Outlanders, motley crew as they might seem, and differ as they may in ideals and aims, have been, in fact, equally united in their struggle for reform, though they did not see fit to appeal in their own persons, like the Boers, to the last arbitrament—that of open battle. For various reasons they all agreed in the attempt to gain the political power which seemed to all of them the only lever with which they could hope to throw off the financial and social grievances that weighed so heavily upon their shoulders. We have here to trace the stages of their ten years' struggle, beginning in agitation, growing to conspiracy, which was badly managed and harshly checked by the abortive raid, and again, after a brief hush, passing into the more active agitation, which at last drew Great Britain and the Boer States into open and fiercely-contested war.

Before passing on, one may note that the history of the Transvaal Boers themselves afforded more than one precedent for such a position. The Outlanders were driven to conspiracy by the heavy taxes laid on their industry by a Government in which
they were not represented, just as in 1880 the Boers had been driven to rebellion by the taxes imposed on them without any consultation of their Volksraad. The one affair stands on the same footing as the other: on general principles we can hardly condemn the Outlanders and praise the Boers, or vice versa. The parallel is the more remarkable when we remember that the Outlanders stood in much the same relations to the Boers as the Voortrekkers to Umsilikatsi and the other natives of the Transvaal. The ultimate appeal in each case was to the strong arm. A further parallel to the position of the Outlanders has been pointed out by one of their number, Dr. Hillier, in the summary of Transvaal history which he published shortly before the Jameson raid, among those early dissensions of the Voortrekkers which have been mentioned in the ninth chapter of this book. In 1856 Pretorius and his young friend, the present President Kruger, found themselves in active opposition to one of the Governments then existing in the Transvaal. "The community of Lydenburg," says Mr. Theal, "was accused of attempting to domineer over the whole country, without any other right to pre-eminence than that of being composed of the earliest inhabitants, a right which it had forfeited by its opposition to the general weal." The agitation of Pretorius and Mr. Kruger succeeded in breaking down this claim, and led to that union of the smaller Republics or districts into a single Transvaal State which has already been described.
The parallel between the policy of Pretorius and the action of the Outlanders cannot be carried quite so far as Dr. Hillier imagines, but it is impossible not to admit that in general outline it is rather striking.

It will be convenient first to trace the history of the Transvaal franchise, which was made more and more difficult for Outlanders to obtain \textit{pari passu} with the growth in their numbers and demands. Some consideration of the reasons why they demanded the franchise so insistently will then follow, and a short sketch of the means which they took to secure reform will bring us to the threshold of the Jameson raid, to which the next chapter must be devoted.

Before the arrival of the Outlanders in force, there had never been any particular debates upon the Transvaal Constitution, which was about as complete and as fortuitous a democracy as existed anywhere in the world. The Executive Government consisted of the President, elected for a term of five years by all the burghers, with a Council of three official members, the State Secretary, the Commandant-General, and the Secretary, and three non-official members, elected by the Volksraad. The legislative authority in the Transvaal had been from the earliest times—from the Thirty-three Articles, indeed, of 1844, which were only an expansion of Retief’s Grondwet—in the hands of a popularly elected Volksraad (a Folkmote, as Freeman would have instructed us to call it). Originally the Volksraad had consisted of twenty-four members, but the
accession of territory and other causes had swollen its numbers, by the year 1887, to more than forty. A law passed in 1882 provided that onlyburghers of the Republic might vote in the election of the Volksraad or be chosen to sit in it. Burghers were understood to be the original trekkers and their descendants, or, generally, all men who had been born in the Transvaal of white parents. The earliest law which the original South African Republic thought it necessary to pass on the subject of electoral qualification was dated 1876, when the Lydenburg gold-fields had already attracted some hundreds of Outlanders to the country. This defined the qualification for all the privileges of the burghers, including the franchise, as the possession of property or a year's residence in the Transvaal. A very similar qualification was maintained by the Orange Free State up to the present day. The policy of President Burgers was to welcome new settlers and encourage the mining industry. In 1882 the Boers were under the impression that their independence had been voted away in 1877 by many of these new burghers, and they felt that the franchise must not be granted off-hand to aliens of whom nothing was known. This feeling coincided with the beginning of the rush to the gold-fields of the Kaap. Still, the Boers were not then unwilling to grant citizenship to new-comers after a reasonable time for examination of their sentiments, and the law of 1882 provided that strangers settling in the Transvaal might be naturalized and become fully qualified burghers upon
the production of a certificate of five years’ residence, during which they had paid the taxes and obeyed the laws of the Republic. This process of naturalization, modelled on that of most European nations, which was quite satisfactory to a farmer who might cast in his lot with the South African Republic, was too slow to satisfy the impatient gold-miners, who soon began to chafe at the thought that they were regarded simply in the light of milk cows by the Transvaal Government, and to raise the ancient Anglo-Saxon cry of “No Taxation without Representation.”

For a time the Outlanders, who had as yet no proper organization, endured what they held to be their wrongs in silence. Perhaps they remembered that the new Boer system of naturalization was, on the whole, less onerous than that in force in Great Britain, and not harsher than that of the United States, although Mr. Chamberlain has declared it to be a violation of the spirit of the Convention of Pretoria. But in July, 1887, when there were about twenty-five thousand aliens in the Transvaal, mostly settled at Barberton and Johannesburg, the Volksraad passed an Act amending the Constitution in a fashion which slightly increased the Outlander’s difficulties in becoming a burgher. By this Act the number of the Volksraad was fixed at thirty-nine members, who were elected for four years, one half retiring at each biennial election. The franchise was bestowed upon (a) burghers by birth, (b) Outlanders who had resided five years in the Transvaal,
taken the oath of allegiance, and paid a fee of £25. Members of the Volksraad must be thirty years of age, and either (a) be burghers by birth, or (b) have possessed the Outlander franchise for five years, be members of a Protestant Church, and reside and own landed property in the Transvaal. In May, 1888, Mr. J. F. Celliers was sworn in as Member for Barberton, being the first representative elected on behalf of the gold-fields.

This scheme, although it cannot be said, from the Boer point of view, to have been anything but a liberal offer, was far from satisfying the political aspirations of the Outlanders. Their dissatisfaction found various forms of expression, some intemperate, some carefully measured. Amongst the latter must be reckoned the formation of the Transvaal Republican Union at Barberton in 1887. Its aims were much the same as those of the far more powerful organization founded at Johannesburg five years later. It is of little importance to us except as the first sign that the Outlanders were already meditating the political campaign of the next decade. About the end of 1887, Sir Donald Currie announced, during a visit to Johannesburg, that he had the authority of the President to declare that some adequate form of representation in the Government would speedily be offered to the Outlanders. There can be little doubt that at this time Mr. Kruger, who had seen the shadow of bankruptcy too near to be pleasant, was still honestly anxious to encourage the gold-mining industry, which had already more
than tripled the income of the State. The fact that he was re-elected to the Presidency, by an overwhelming majority, early in the following year, strengthened his hands; if he had then taken a generous course of action all would have been well. But the deep-rooted Boer distrust of the foreigner was now to be reckoned with. The rapidly increasing number of aliens, to which it was not easy to foresee a limit, encouraged the fear that any reform in the method of naturalization might, before many years were over, make the new-comers the real and constitutional masters of the land for which the Boers not unjustly felt that they alone had toiled and suffered. Both at Barberton and Johannesburg the Outlanders' anxiety to obtain the franchise had been clearly shown; it was naturally construed as a desire to obtain the chief power in the State. From this moment President Kruger changed his views and policy with respect to the Outlanders. Up to 1888 he had been merely glad of their money; now he was dominated by fear of their demands. It was too late to close the gold-mines and expel the Outlanders; while to shut the country against further immigration would be so flagrant a breach of the Convention as to provoke war with England, which Mr. Kruger and his people wished to avoid at any price short of their independence. He did not see that he had already gone too far to retreat; he was confident in his own willingness to beat the Outlanders at the game of diplomacy, and he entered upon that course of policy which is in part responsible for all
that has since happened in the Transvaal. Then it was that the President conceived the unhappy idea of offering the Outlanders the shadow of political rights at the same time that he put the substance still further out of their reach.

To this end he devised his now famous plan. In June, 1888, he submitted to the Volksraad a scheme for a Second Chamber, which was "to have authority and power to make laws and enactments having reference to mining works and diggings, and to consider other subjects which the First Chamber might refer to it as the law should further determine. The laws and enactments passed by the Second Chamber were to become law, unless the opinion of the Government should be different, or when there were petitions against them, or when members of the First Chamber desired to take these matters into consideration themselves." The First Chamber of the Volksraad was to remain in its then condition, except that, after the passing of this Act, no naturalized citizen would ever be competent to vote for or sit in it; and thus the period of residence that qualified for naturalization might be reduced to two years, since it would only carry the right to representation in the Second Chamber.

The origin of this ingenious but unhappy scheme was to be seen in the fact that the President, in his introductory speech, made repeated references to the great influx of population, whereby the originalburghers would soon be in a minority. He went so far as to state that the new-comers in a single year
had been four times as many as the former inhabitants of the State, though he can here have meant only the enfranchised portion of the inhabitants, who numbered something over twelve thousand at the census of 1890. Some discussion was followed by the postponement of this scheme for a year. In 1889, it was again brought forward, was approved "in tendency," and referred to a committee, on whose report it was ordered to stand over for yet another year. Meantime the Outlanders became more and more outspoken in their demands, until the Boers came to regard Johannesburg as a centre of disaffection, and the roughest of the aliens returned the compliment by mobbing the President on his second visit to Johannesburg, and trampling under foot the Transvaal flag.

In the course of 1890, when the result of census alarmed the Volksraad at the growing numbers of the Outlanders, the Second Chamber scheme became law, but not in its earlier and more reasonable shape. It was hedged about with restrictions which made this a mere talking chamber, and must deprive its deliberations of all weight with the Government, by giving them no higher status than that of suggestions on which the President and the First Chamber might act, if they thought fit. The First Chamber, which was reduced to its original twenty-four members and given all the legislative power, was in future to be elected only byburghers who had votes already, and their descendants born in the Transvaal, whilst all registered residents of two
years' standing, who were over sixteen years of age, and chose to be naturalized, had votes for the Second. At the same time a loop-hole was left through which the Outlanders might crawl to full burghership: candidates for the Second Volksraad must be aged thirty, members of a Protestant Church, residents of four years' standing, owners of land; they must take the oath of allegiance to the South African Republic, and pay a fee of £5. Ten years thereafter they became eligible for full burghership, which was transmissible to their children. What the Outlanders thought of this concession may be guessed from the fact that in October, 1894, only about five hundred of them had taken the trouble to be naturalized, and most of these were officials, who were legally compelled to do so. At the same time there were over eighteen thousand full-fledged burghers, mainly Boers.

Laws were passed on the franchise question in 1891, 1892, and 1893, which made the matter rather harder to understand, but introduced no real alteration. But in September, 1894, a new amendment of the constitution, which superseded all previous laws, had the effect at once of making it easier for aliens to be naturalized, and of putting any real political power still further out of their reach. It was enacted that the First Chamber of the Volksraad should be elected by and from first-class burghers only, the Second Chamber by and from first and second-class burghers conjointly. First-class burghers were defined as white men who had resided
in the Transvaal before May 29th, 1876, or who had taken an active part, on the Boer side, in the War of Independence (or, it was added in following years, in the Malaboch war of 1894, in the suppression of the Jameson raid, in the Swaziland expedition, and in certain other native wars), and their sons from the age of sixteen. Second-class burghers included all the naturalized Outlanders and their sons, born in the country, from the age of sixteen. Naturalization, now that so little importance attached to it, could be obtained after a registered residence of two years, by taking the oath of allegiance, and paying a fee of £2. The President and the Commandant-General were to be elected by first-class burghers only. It was added, as a sop to Cerberus, that a second-class burgher might become a first-class burgher after twelve years if he were then thirty years old, and if the majority of burghers in his ward would agree to signify in writing their desire that he should be fully enfranchised, and if the President and Executive had no objection, and if the First Volksraad would pass a special vote to grant the full burgher rights. The sons of aliens born in the Republic took their fathers’ status: they might be naturalized at eighteen and become first-class burghers, by a similar vote, ten years later. In this way it was hoped that the Outlanders would be contented with promises and peradventures, whilst any possibility of their ever swamping the Boers at the polls was securely put out of the question.
There was a large minority among the Boers themselves at that time who had the political wisdom to discern that measures of this kind were akin to Mrs. Partington's struggle against the Atlantic, and must be futile in the long run. A strong party followed General Joubert in his consistent opposition of President Kruger's general anti-English policy. It is said to have included many of the best and most enlightened among the Boers, and gained ground rapidly in the years that followed the revival of Johannesburg. Its adherents declared that the gold-miners had, on this occasion, been encouraged, if not actually invited, by the Government, pointed to the obvious fact that the revenue derived from the gold-mines had risen by 1894 to nearly a million sterling, and urged alike the injustice and the inexpediency of squeezing the milch cow too far. At the Presidential election of 1893 Mr. Kruger's majority against General Joubert was a bare eight hundred out of a poll of nearly fifteen thousand. The renewed protest which the Outlanders raised against "commandeering" and taxation without representation, in 1894, found an echo in many Africander breasts, although the ill-judged appeal to Lord Rosebery permitted the President again to hold his favourite bugbear of English interference before their eyes.

If the Outlander agitation had been confined to purely constitutional methods, it seems possible that it might have been crowned with success at no very distant date. The grievances which we have now to consider were admitted to be such by a great
number of Boers, and it was generally felt in the Transvaal that something must be done for the Outlanders, who were supported by both English and Africander opinion throughout South Africa, when the extraordinary fiasco of Dr. Jameson united all the Boers in a common fear of national subjugation, as it divided English and Dutch opinion in the Cape Colony. Right up to the time of the raid, however, there was no outward sign of any intention on the part of the Outlanders to supplement agitation by conspiracy. Their two leading organizations, the Chamber of Mines and the Transvaal National Union, were careful to advocate purely constitutional methods. Of these bodies the Chamber of Mines was the older by nearly three years. It was founded in October, 1889, by the chief members of the mining industry at Johannesburg, for the purpose of giving corporate expression to their complaints and requests to the Government, and of suggesting legislation on points affecting the gold-mines. For nearly ten years, as Mr. FitzPatrick observes, it was busily engaged in representing to the Volksraad "the existence of abuses and grievances, the remedies that were required, and the measures which were felt to be necessary or conducive to the progress of the industry in particular, or the welfare of the State in general." Among the main achievements of the Chamber of Mines must be reckoned the codifying of the gold law, and the appointment of the Industrial Commission of 1897. To some extent the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines may be called the
Parliament of the Outlanders: it served this purpose far more truly than the ghostly Second Volksraad at Pretoria. It always made a point, however, of abstaining from politics as such.

That part of the business was left to the Transvaal National Union, founded at Johannesburg in 1892. This body, as one of its leading members has told us, represented the whole Outlander community in its struggle for reform, being "formed of men drawn from all classes who felt that the conditions of life were becoming intolerable, and that something would have to be done by the community to bring about reforms which the legislature showed no signs of voluntarily introducing." Mr. Charles Leonard, a solicitor in good practice at Johannesburg, was the Chairman and mainspring of this body, which was chiefly drawn from the middle and professional classes. The large capitalists for some time held aloof from it, being very shy of anything which might give the Transvaal Government a pretext for confiscation, and hoping to make better terms for themselves by keeping in favour with Mr. Kruger. For this reason, as for others, the capitalists were not popular among the majority of the Outlanders. The working classes dreaded them, as the would-be enslavers of white labour by the introduction of the same system of company serfage—the compound system—which had long been in force at Kimberley. "They do not like President Kruger," said a very competent and impartial observer; "but they dislike the capitalists more."
They know that their position would be infinitely worse under them than it is under the Boers, and that, however prosperous the mines might prove, whatever dividends might be paid in Europe, the prosperity and freedom of Johannesburg, as a city, would disappear, as that of Kimberley has done.” This probably explains why Johannesburg was never ready to appeal to arms. The working classes, who would have formed the backbone of a revolt, were acutely suspicious of the motives of the Reformers, and declined, with good reason, to risk their lives in order to increase the wealth of a handful of millionaires. Thus the Transvaal National Union was, for the first three years of its existence, essentially a middle-class movement. Its chief ostensible actions were to hold public meetings, and to petition the Volksraad for the extension of the franchise; its latest petition, that of 1895, contained more than 38,000 signatures, which were admitted to be practically all genuine; that is to say, the greater part of the Outlander population was desirous of receiving the franchise, to the extent of petitioning for it. Some doubt existed as to how much further the desire would carry them.

The desire for the franchise in itself can be supposed to have actuated only a few of the Outlanders, who included very few abstract politicians. With the great majority of them it was simply a means to an end: and the ends were not always the same. The vague object of the working class was what it has always been in all countries—less work and more
pay; there were not wanting ingenious politicians to explain that these desirable objects were sure to follow on an extension of the franchise and its proper use. The capitalists were credited with the simple desire to increase the profits of their gold mines, which were heavily taxed under the Boer rule. The National Union alone, of the three classes of Reformers, explained its objects clearly. They were defined by Mr. Leonard in the manifesto whose publication closely preceded the raid, as "(1) The maintenance of the independence of the Republic, (2) the securing of equal rights, and (3) the redress of grievances." The manifesto of the Union ended with the exposition of the Charter which its members desired to obtain in the following terms:—

"We want—

"(1) The establishment of this Republic as a true Republic;

"(2) A Grondwet or Constitution, which shall be framed by competent persons selected by representatives of the whole people, and framed on lines laid down by them;

"(3) An equitable franchise law, and fair representation;

"(4) Equality of the Dutch and English languages;

"(5) Responsibility to the Legislature of the heads of the great departments;

"(6) Removal of religious disabilities;

"(7) Independence of the courts of justice, with
adequate and secured remuneration of the Judges;

"(8) Liberal and comprehensive education;

"(9) Efficient civil service, with adequate provision for pay and pension;

"(10) Free trade in South African products."

This manifesto closed with the question, "How shall we get it?" which was proposed for an answer to a public meeting originally fixed for December 27th, 1895, but postponed when the manifesto was published to January 6th, 1896. Everybody knows why that meeting did not take place.

We are bound to accept this manifesto as representing the aims of the great body of the Reformers. But it has been made clear that the leaders were actuated by less noble motives. Mr. FitzPatrick, the secretary of the Reform Committee, who cannot be suspected of misjudging them, gives the following version of the language which they used after the raid to a well-known politician who inquired what they really wanted:—

"The one thing which we must have—not for its own sake, but for the security it offers for obtaining and retaining other reforms—is the franchise. No promise of reform, no reform itself, will be worth an hour's purchase, unless we have the status of voters to make our influence felt. But, if you want the chief grievances, they are: the Netherlands Railway Concession, the dynamite monopoly, the liquor traffic, and native labour, which together constitute an unwarrantable burden of indirect taxation on the
industry of two-and-a-half millions sterling annually. We are not a political, but a working community, and if we were honestly and capably governed, the majority of us would be content to wait for the franchise for a considerable time yet. . . . That is the position in a nutshell."

Nothing could be plainer; the grievances for whose removal the leading Outlanders were conspiring and almost willing to fight consisted in the annual deduction of two-and-a-half millions sterling from the profit of their gold-mines. That, according to Mr. FitzPatrick, whose book is understood to be as official in authority as it is ably written, is the real cause of the Transvaal trouble. That is what our gallant troops and the equally courageous Boers are now fighting and dying for—two-and-a-half millions sterling off the dividends of Mr. Beit and his friends. For the credit of the Outlanders, one can only hope that, when no secrets are hid, the future historian will find that Mr. FitzPatrick has strangely misjudged his friends. At present one cannot pronounce his account of their cynical confession to be inherently improbable. Let us look again at the grievances mentioned above. We have already described the railway monopoly, with its inflated rates and bad service, and the dynamite monopoly, which was estimated to cost the gold-miners £600,000 annually more than the market-price of that useful commodity. The liquor monopoly was disliked because it depended on the consumption of the Kaffir labourers, and by tempting them to get drunk deprived their employers
of their services for much valuable time, and so hindered the production of gold. The complaint as to the supply of native labour simply meant that the wages paid to Kaffirs in the Transvaal gold-mines were from two to four times what they were in other South African States, and that the natives were allowed to throw up their work when they chose, and actually to stand out for the high wages. It was calculated that a reduction of £1 a month in native wages would add £650,000 per annum to mining profits, and this was one of the boons which the franchise was to bring in its train.

When the struggle for reform is regarded from a distance, we see embroidered on its leaders’ banners a motto which reads as the good old Anglo-Saxon battle cry, “No Taxation without Representation.” When we approach the fray more closely, it resolves itself into the rather different proposition, “Give us representation, and there shall be no taxation on our gold-mines.” That, as far as we can see it yet, is the real inner meaning of the Outlanders’ struggle for reform. It is quite true that the Boer Government was inefficient and corrupt. It is quite true that Johannesburg was not so well governed, so well drained, or policed, or schooled as Manchester or Glasgow. The tales of Boer oppression have been disposed of, however, by the testimony of a thousand independent witnesses, headed by the verdict of Sir William Butler that the Rand was incomparably superior to the Californian or Australian gold-fields in all the elements of orderly government. They
are of the same order as the fraudulent appeal to Dr. Jameson to come and save British women and children from the brutalities of the Boers. Johannesburg has never been free from crime, but the argument that it was subject to oppression in the sense in which Armenia and Cuba understood the word has been given up, in spite of the collection of isolated cases with which Sir Alfred Milner was misled into filling a Blue Book as typical examples. There is no occasion to palliate the faults of the Boers nor to minimize the Anti-English policy of their President. It is only fair to add that it is clearly proved that Mr. Kruger was perfectly right in his presentiment that the aim of the Outlanders was to get the government of the Transvaal into their own hands, and that the leading motive of the most influential if not the majority of them was simply and plainly the desire to increase their dividends. So long as they confined themselves to constitutional and peaceful means in working to this end, not much can be said in reprobation. Money-making is not the highest business of life, but we have good authority for saying that there are many occupations less innocent. When the task of making money comes to involve false pretences and highway robbery in the individual or armed conspiracy and filibustering in the crowd, however, the moralist has a good deal to say. In the next chapter we shall see how the entry of the great capitalists amongst the Reformers brought about this scandalous development.
CHAPTER XVII

CONSPIRACY AND RAID

We now come to the most remarkable act in the whole of the Transvaal drama: a singular union of daring almost criminal in plan and incompetence almost farcical in execution. In 1895 a new actor made his appearance upon the scene. This was Mr. Cecil Rhodes, then the popular Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. He was generally regarded as one of the most remarkable statesmen then alive, who had shown his powers of organization, his devotion to an Imperial ideal, and his magnetic influence over men, first in making a colossal fortune at the diamond fields, and then in adding to the British Empire a huge slice of South Africa, which was in common gratitude named after him Rhodesia. Mr. Rhodes was the most powerful and most admired man in South Africa at that time. The ramifications of his huge fortune gave him a finger in every financial pie from Cape Town to the Zambesi. He was known to be dominated by no selfish motive, but by the Imperial ideal of a compact South Africa united under the British flag, in which the two obstinate Boer States, one of them strongly anti-English, were
bound to be an offensive interpolation. He was largely interested in the Rand gold-mines, which stood to gain so much by any change in the Transvaal Government. At the same time he was believed to be satisfied with his wealth, and to regard money rather as a counter in his game of Empire-building than as a thing to be fought for in itself. His friends and enemies alike believed in his ability and his star, and it was common to hear him spoken of as the Napoleon of South Africa. In the affair of the Drifts he had come into close co-operation with the new Secretary for the Colonies, Mr. Chamberlain: and Mr. Schreiner, who spoke for the Africander Bond, the political association of the Cape Dutch, had backed up the two in their intention to coerce Mr. Kruger by all necessary means. It is no wonder that the Transvaal Reformers, despairing of redress by constitutional methods, turned to Mr. Rhodes as the one man in South Africa who had the power to help them, and the magnanimity not to demand the lion's share of their golden spoil.

In the course of 1895 an important change took place in the nature of the Outlanders' struggle for reform. The capitalists joined the movement which had until then been confined to the professional and middle class. The Transvaal National Union had seen its petitions greeted with "hob-nailed mirth" (as they were inclined to call it) in the Volksraad, whilst their only practical effect had been to produce the law of 1894, which put the franchise for ever beyond the reach of the bulk of the Outlanders. At
the same time Mr. Kruger’s support of the Netherlands Railway Company in the matter of the Drifts, and the new legislation which confirmed the dynamite monopoly and the other financial grievances under which the gold-mines laboured, showed the great capitalists that they would gain nothing by trying to curry favour with Mr. Kruger, who (as they at last began to see, with surprise and indignation) was too ignorant an old Boer to perceive that the cause of civilization and progress was inextricably bound up with the advancement of their dividends. They were still convinced, however, that the working men of Johannesburg were conscious of that great fact, and would cheerfully risk their lives in order to obtain such political power for their employers as would enable them to raise their profits by lowering wages without any fear of a strike. This proved to be a misconception; but the fact remains that in the latter part of 1895 the capitalists and the middle classes of the Outlanders came together in the common desire to capture the Transvaal Government by intrigue or force, and that both parties believed that the great mass of the Outlander population would follow without fear wherever they led.

The chief controllers of the Rand capital were Mr. Rhodes and one Mr. Alfred Beit, a wealthy speculator who had made his head-quarters in London. Both these capitalists now took a leading part in the Reform movement, Mr. Rhodes through his brother Colonel Frank Rhodes and the American Mr. J. H. Hammond, and Mr. Beit through
Mr. Lionel Phillips. Mr. George Farrar, a large mine-owner, appears to have represented the rest of the Rand capitalists, and Mr. Charles Leonard, as Chairman of the National Union, represented the middle and professional classes. These five men, with Mr. Rhodes to back them, now entered, with considerable misgivings, which they tried to alleviate by hoping that the Boers would not fight for Mr. Kruger, upon the dangerous path of a conspiracy to upset the Transvaal Government by fraud and force. Mr. Beit, whose dubious part in the conspiracy was far from picturesque, need not be considered further. Mr. Rhodes, who has been acquitted by common consent of mercenary motives in the reprehensible part which he played, was the mainspring of the following events. It is not yet possible fully to apportion responsibility for the various acts of the conspiracy, although the Parliamentary and legal inquiries which followed the raid and the business-like habits of the conspirators in keeping copies of all their compromising documents have thrown much light upon the story. As far as one can make out, Mr. Rhodes saw that the Transvaal under Boer government would always be a stumbling-block in the way of the South African Federation to which he aspired. He was willing to take any means, fair or foul, to remove it from his Imperial path. When the conspirators who wanted to upset the Boer Government in order to make more money out of their gold-mines communicated their views to him, and assured him that they were backed for various
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reasons by the great mass of the Outlanders, he saw at once that the success of their scheme would be a long step towards his ideal, and he readily came into the conspiracy, of which his great ability gave him the real though not the nominal leadership. It is very probable, from what we know of the man, that his plans would have succeeded, had not the rash movement of Dr. Jameson "upset the apple-cart," as Mr. Rhodes graphically put it. The zeal of the conspirators was too much hampered by an anxious care for their own skins to allow them to repair this blunder, and Mr. Rhodes suffered the proper penalty of his descent to unworthy means, in consequence of his first failure to judge the temper of his instruments.

The plan of the conspiracy originated—we do not yet know where or with whom—in the summer of 1895. Whoever opened the negotiations, there is no doubt that the serious inception of the enterprise depended on the adhesion of Mr. Rhodes, who spoke with threefold authority. As managing director of the Consolidated Gold-fields, he could claim to have a large stake in the South African Republic. As Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, on the best of terms with the High Commissioner and the English Colonial Secretary, and trusted by both parties at the Cape as the Heaven-born statesman who was to federate South Africa by peaceful and honourable means, he seems to have hoped that success in the Transvaal would conceal the traces of his share in the action, or at least blind people
at large to its questionable nature. Perhaps it would have been so: who shall say?

"Treason doth never prosper. What's the reason? Why, when it prospers, none dare call it treason."

We shall see directly that Mr. Rhodes had taken care to have a plausible reason for his interference. Lastly, as managing director of the British South Africa Company, whose territory marched with the Transvaal on the north and west, he had the unfettered control of a considerable armed force, which he could keep at a convenient post on the border without exciting much remark. Without the support of Mr. Rhodes in this threefold capacity the conspiracy would hardly have been undertaken. The other conspirators had no desire to stand a siege from the Boers or to face an English law court. Their plan was that, if by a coup de main they could get momentary possession of the sinews of war, Mr. Rhodes was to come to their help by sending in an armed force sufficient to overawe the Boers and save them from unpleasant consequences, whilst he was to pacify the High Commissioner and the British Government, whose subjects most of the leading Outlanders were, by assurances, which would be believed from a man of his high position and reputation, that they had only acted in self-defence against a tyranny like that of the Turks in Armenia or the Spaniards in Cuba. To that end a letter of invitation, without a date, was written in November, 1895, and given to Mr. Rhodes's lieutenant.
in command of the Chartered Company's forces, in which the grievances were recapitulated and it was added that, in the event of conflict, "thousands of unarmed men, women, and children would be at the mercy of well-armed Boers." This was signed by the five leaders, Messrs. Leonard, Phillips, F. Rhodes, Hammond, and Farrar. It was to be used when necessary.

The plan of the Outlanders was simple and ingenious. At this time the Boers had nothing in the nature of a regular army; against any attack they relied on the old-fashioned commandoes. The arms and ammunition of the State, with which these commandoes would be armed, were all kept in the magazines of the fort which had been built out of the Outlanders' taxes at Pretoria. The plan of the leading conspirators was to seize this fort by a sudden attack. "Circumstances," one of their chief colleagues tells us, "favoured the plans of the Johannesburg men. The surrounding wall of the fort—a mere barrack—had been removed on one side in order to effect some additions; there were only about a hundred men stationed there, and all except half a dozen could be counted on as being asleep after 9 p.m. There never was a simpler sensational task in the world than that of seizing the Pretoria fort—fifty men could have done it. But there was more to be done than the mere taking. In the fort there were known to be some ten thousand rifles, ten or twelve field-pieces, and twelve million rounds of small-arm ammunition;
and it was designed to seize the fort and the railway on the night of the outbreak, and, by means of one or two trains, to carry off as much of the material as possible, and destroy the rest." Thus on the morning after the attack Johannesburg would be armed and in a state of defence, whilst the commandoes of the Boers would be reduced to their sporting rifles—then less common and less useful than in 1880—and such ammunition as they kept by them. Still, the Outlanders did not mean to risk anything: at this stage word was to be conveyed to Mr. Rhodes, who would at once send in a force sufficient to hold the Boers in check whilst the Outlanders took possession of the Government. Dr. Jameson, who had already covered himself with laurels in Rhodesia, both as a military commander and as an administrator, was chosen by Mr. Rhodes to head this force. He paid a visit to Johannesburg in September, and arranged with the leading conspirators that he should maintain on the frontier a force of fifteen hundred mounted infantry, with a sufficient number of Maxims and field-guns, as well as fifteen hundred spare rifles and their ammunition for the Outlanders. Rifles, Maxims and ammunition, were meantime to be smuggled into Johannesburg—the moving of arms without permits being forbidden by the Transvaal law—so that when the day of action came, the conspirators could muster nine or ten thousand armed men, without relying on the extra guns and ammunition which might be carried off from Pretoria.

So far all seemed to be well calculated, from
which we may perhaps infer that Mr. Rhodés had helped in the planning. Opinions on the morality of the scheme depend, of course, upon the view which is taken of the Outlanders' grievances and their rights against the Boers. At the best, the scheme was armed rebellion; at the worst, it was flat burglary, with a dash of highway robbery and filibustering. The reader may take his choice. But, whatever be the moral verdict, the practical one is that such a scheme, adequately and swiftly put into action by brave and resolute men, would probably have succeeded, at least for the time. Recent events incline us to doubt whether the Boers would have been so easily overawed as the conspirators hoped, or whether the Cape Dutch would have viewed the success of such a revolution so complacently as Mr. Rhodes assured his allies that they would. Very probably temporary success might have been followed by a civil war in the Transvaal, if not throughout South Africa; if Mr. Kruger had escaped, it undoubtedly would, and there seems to have been no plan for seizing his person. But at the time the scheme promised well.

Unfortunately for the money-bags of the conspirators and the fair fame of Mr. Rhodes, there was one fatal flaw in these arrangements. The leaders of the Outlanders were not men of action; and their financial experiences had left them with a rooted disinclination to trust anybody else. Thus they had a glimmering of their true relationship to Mr. Rhodes, and suspected, as seems indeed to have
been the case, that he was prompted to help them by his own political plans rather than by the financial grievances from which he suffered in common with the other gold-miners of the Rand. They were also very loath to take the irretrievable plunge, and had the strange idea that, if they solemnly warned the Transvaal Government that something underhand was going forward, they might gain all they wanted by working upon its fears. Thus, after the general plan of the outbreak had been decided upon, there followed two or three months of the most curious private shilly-shallying and public vapouring on the part of the conspirators. On the one hand they worked the machinery of the Transvaal National Union to hold meetings and inspire the friendly newspapers to the effect that something must soon be done to redress grievances which fifty thousand Outlanders would endure no longer. They talked much in public about liberty being more than life, and death preferable to dishonour. By this means they inflamed the suspicions of the Government without at all working upon its fears. At the same time they were engaged in long discussions as to the details of their scheme, and, above all, the constitution of the new Republic. They had a shrewd suspicion that Mr. Rhodes intended to hoist the British flag at Pretoria and convert the Transvaal into a British colony. That would not have answered their purpose at all, and the conspiracy was nearly declared off because of the leaders' fear that they might, in the sequel, come under the British Government,
which they were so anxious to exchange for citizenship of the South African Republic. When they were reassured on this head, new discussions followed, which seemed to be designed to put off the moment of conflict. But in this they had reckoned without their host. Mr. Rhodes had no intention of being befuddled by the men with whom he was playing his game. The conspirators who had called him into council and invited his help were not able to throw him overboard again when they chose. It was probably their attempt to do so which, directly or indirectly, caused all their plans to end in so poor a fiasco.

During October and November, 1895, preparations were still going forward. Arms were being smuggled into Johannesburg, though in much smaller numbers than had been hoped and intended, and Dr. Jameson was quietly assembling the British South Africa Company's troops on the Transvaal border, under pretext of a punitive expedition against a native chief. A large number of the Johannesburgers had been more or less vaguely taken into the confidence of the leaders, though few had any idea of the extent of the actual conspiracy. Meanwhile the negotiations carried on by Mr. Rhodes and his British South Africa Company officials, who were managing the details of the affair with the Johannesburg leaders, were hanging fire. The question of the flag was the real stumbling-block. Ultimately the Outlander leaders made up their minds that they could do the work better without
Mr. Rhodes's open help. This conclusion seems to have had the strong support of many of the rank and file of the Reformers, who were gradually being taken into the secret. Some of these, though ready for internal revolt, were honestly shocked at the proposal of an armed incursion into the Transvaal: others saw that such an invasion was the one thing that would insure the obstinate resistance of the Boers: others, again, were doubtful of Mr. Rhodes's real intentions. Then the Reformers decided to abandon the plan already described, which was to have been carried into action under cover of the mass meeting summoned for January 6th, 1896, to discuss the manifesto and charter published by the National Union. It was never intended to hold this meeting, but there was instead to be a rising in Johannesburg on the night of Saturday, January 4th, simultaneous with the seizing of the Pretoria arsenal, the starting of Dr. Jameson across the border, and the European publication of the appeal to him to come and save women and children from the bloodthirsty Boers, which was lying ready in Mr. Rhodes's desk. This plan was now given up as too dangerous in the face of divided councils and uncertainty about the flag; and on Christmas Day Mr. Leonard left for Cape Town to break this news to Mr. Rhodes. He had no sooner started than his fellow Reformers were hard at work discussing a new plan of action, which involved an armed rising in Johannesburg, after the introduction of as many trained soldiers as could be smuggled up to the
Rand in the guise of mechanics and miners. Johannesburg was then to be placed in a state of siege, and an appeal for mediation made to the High Commissioner or to other South African Governments. It was hoped that, when the Boers saw that the Outlanders were in earnest, there would be no need to proceed to the effusion of blood, nor to risk the precious lives which were so indispensable to the production of gold and the increase of dividends.

It occurred at this time to the Reformers that Dr. Jameson might be annoyed to learn that his preparations were all in vain and that his aid would not be wanted. To avoid any possibility of his thinking that the original plan was still in force, they despatched two messengers to his camp at Pitsani by different routes. Both arrived safely on Saturday, December 28th, and delivered the urgent injunctions of the Reformers that he should on no account enter the Transvaal. This was supplemented by a similar warning telegraphed from Cape Town by Mr. Leonard and Mr. Rhodes. The next day Dr. Jameson set out on his famous raid into the Transvaal.

We do not yet know—perhaps we shall never know—the exact reasons which prompted this unfortunate move. One thing is certain: it was not taken at the instigation of the Johannesburg leaders. Their assertion to that effect is backed up by all that we know of their subsequent conduct, and especially by the fact that Dr. Jameson’s crossing
the border was fatal to their plans. They had been very unwilling to enter upon a conflict even when they thought themselves sure of capturing the arsenal at Pretoria and having nearly all the cartridges and all the artillery of the Transvaal in their possession. It cannot be supposed that they would urge a step whose first consequence would be to arm all the Boers within reach of Pretoria. Thus their immediate complicity in the raid is disproved. That of Mr. Rhodes stands on another footing. He has himself denied it; but it is obvious that the word of a man who has publicly confessed to such a system of political duplicity as Mr. Rhodes revealed to the world is no longer of much weight in a political affair. Before the raid we should all have accepted his word as readily as that of one of our own leading statesmen, as *prima facie* evidence which only the most overwhelming and circumstantial proof could rebut; but now it is only one of the circumstances of the case, and needs plausible confirmation before it can be supposed to have much value. We have already pointed out that Mr. Rhodes had no intention of allowing the Reformers to use him without paying his price. At the same time, so astute a politician must have seen, as clearly as the Reform leaders, that a move by Dr. Jameson in advance of the Johannesburg *coup de main* foredoomed the conspiracy to sanguinary fighting, if not to failure. The only ground on which we can suppose that he ordered Dr. Jameson to cross the border is that he may have believed that Mr. Kruger's policy was
really unpopular amongst the Boers, and that no armed opposition would be offered to Dr. Jameson's march. Had that been so, Mr. Rhodes would have been master of the destinies of the Transvaal, and he would have been able to dictate its future flag and Constitution. This would have been a much greater temptation than the one to which he professedly succumbed. But it is unlikely that he so far misjudged the situation, and there is no reason why we should not accept his own denial of responsibility for Dr. Jameson's impulse.

Dr. Jameson, then, must be regarded as the person actually responsible for the raid. It is clear that much had been left, as to the actual start across the border, to his own initiative. He had often heard Mr. Rhodes express his pet theory that disobedience to the letter of orders was sometimes the truest obedience to their spirit, on the principle of "Don't nail his ears to the pump." It is possible that he took the telegram from Cape Town, giving him Mr. Rhodes's orders not to move, in this sense. He has assigned as his motive his profound impression of the misrule of the South African Republic, and his honest desire to relieve the Outlanders from their terrible oppression. Unlike Mr. Rhodes, he and his little band of officers have been legally punished for their share in the raid: unlike the Outlanders, they took their well-deserved punishment without appealing for mercy. Still less than Mr. Rhodes are they likely to have been influenced by sordid reasons; Dr. Jameson was rich, and his
followers had no pecuniary interests at stake. History cannot relieve Dr. Jameson from the blame of a mad and criminal action, but his is certainly one of the cases in which punishment should wipe the slate clean, and there is no need to insist upon the guilt which he has honourably expiated. He declared, then, that he started on his own initiative. He was evidently sick of the dilatory tactics of the conspirators, as his frequent telegrams of the days before the raid demonstrate, and he was convinced that further delay would ruin his chances. He attributed his actual failure to the fact that he had waited twenty-four hours too long before starting. It was difficult to keep his troops together during prolonged inaction, which was repulsive to his vigorous temperament and wearisome to the little band of British officers who were serving under his authority. The reason which he gave for his start to Sir John Willoughby, who commanded the troops, was the Reuter's telegram received at Mafeking on Saturday, December 28th, which said that the position at Johannesburg was becoming acute, that there were secret arming and warlike preparations going on, and that women and children were leaving the Rand. Although Dr. Jameson simultaneously received messages from Johannesburg and Cape Town urging him not to start, he did not communicate these to his officers, who were as eager as he for the raid. The letter of appeal from the Reformers, which had been kept in reserve for this occasion, was read to the men as newly received by their leader,
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who managed to reconcile this proceeding with the sense of honour which we still believe him to possess, and they were asked to volunteer for the march to Johannesburg to protect British women and children. Some of them asked under what flag they were going to fight: was it the Queen or the Chartered Company that needed their services? The reply was that they were not exactly going under the Queen’s orders, but they were going to fight for the supremacy of the British flag in South Africa. Perhaps it would be wrong to see in this military rhetoric a proof of Mr. Rhodes’s intention to trick the Reformers, whom he had assured that he had no intention of interfering with the entire independence of the Transvaal, but it is clear that his allies had some warrant for their doubts. Almost all the troops volunteered to follow Dr. Jameson to the rescue of the endangered women and children. A large number of them never knew that they had given their lives for a less ennobling cause.

Dr. Jameson’s forces had been encamped at Pitsani and Mafeking, about twenty-seven miles apart, on the western border of the Transvaal. There started from Pitsani 372 officers and men of the Mashonaland Mounted Police, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Hon. H. F. White (Grenadier Guards), and from Mafeking 122 of the Bechuana-land Border Police, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Raleigh Grey (6th Dragoons). Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John Willoughby (Royal Horse Guards) was commander of the little force, with a staff of
thirteen. The troops were well mounted and armed with Lee-Metford carbines and 120 rounds of ammunition per man. They had with them one 124-pounder, two 7-pounder field-guns, and eight Maxims. The two columns united at Malmani, about forty miles inside the border. The troops had been in the service of the British South Africa Company, whose other Directors knew nothing of Mr. Rhodes's plans: their superior officers were mostly seconded from the British army. Dr. Jameson crossed the border with the Mafeking Column "in a brave moonshine" at half-past six on the evening of Sunday, December 29th, 1895. Before starting he had telegraphed to Cape Town that he was about to enter the Transvaal in order "to protect everybody while they change the present dishonest Government, and take a vote from the whole country as to the form of Government required by the whole." He also telegraphed to Johannesburg that he would start that night: this message was delivered on Monday morning. Then he ordered the telegraph wires to be cut. The misfortunes of the desperate venture here began. The trooper sent to cut the most important wire—that going to Pretoria—was so drunk that he cut the wire of a fence in mistake for it. The next error in judgment seems to have concerned the speed at which the force marched. The distance to Johannesburg from Pitsani was about a hundred and seventy miles. The men were pushed on without any intermission beyond a half-hour rest to feed
and water horses every twenty miles. When they had thus completed a hundred and thirty miles in about seventy hours, the troops were all so dead-beat as to be in no fit condition for fighting.

The story of the march is too well known to be repeated here at length. Early on Tuesday morning the force was overtaken by a mounted messenger from Mafeking, bearing letters from the Resident Commissioner to Dr. Jameson and the chief officers of the force. Each letter contained a copy of a telegram from Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner, directing Dr. Jameson to return at once, adding "that this violation of the territory of a friendly state was repudiated by Her Majesty's Government," and warning all concerned of the penalties. No notice was taken of these letters. About half-past five on Wednesday morning, January 1st, 1896, a peremptory despatch to the same effect was received from the British Resident at Pretoria, and similarly disobeyed. Five hours later two cyclists arrived with a letter from Johannesburg, written on Tuesday, in which Colonel Rhodes welcomed Dr. Jameson, told him (with his tongue in his cheek) that the rumour of massacre was not true, and that the Outlanders were not in possession of the town. It is disputed whether or not he offered to send out some men to meet the invaders: that part of the letter is missing. We may leave Dr. Jameson reading this letter whilst we glance at events in the Transvaal during the beginning of the week.
The Boers had suspected for several days that something was going to happen. President Kruger had had warnings of what was in the wind all through December, which had not prevented his taking his usual Christmas tour in the country districts. The turbulence of the Johannesburgers and the continued presence of Dr. Jameson’s force on the border had assuredly not escaped his shrewd old eyes. In the course of his journey he was asked by an old burgher at Bronkhorst Spruit if there was any likelihood of the rumoured rising at Johannesburg, and replied with one of his famous apalogues, to the effect that people who wanted to kill a tortoise had to wait until he put his head out of his shell. On Saturday, December 28th, the President returned to Pretoria, where he met several Outlander deputations asking for reforms, and said that he could promise them nothing at that moment, which was “no time to talk about these things.” The conspirators, in fact, had told their secret to the parrot, as Captain Smollett would say. The Boers did not know exactly how the storm would break, for the Outlanders did not know that themselves. But there is plenty of evidence that they knew in December that a storm was threatening, and that the soldiers whom Dr. Jameson was diligently drilling on the frontier had a close connection with the vapourings of Johannesburg. Thus when the storm actually burst it found them prepared. The news of Dr. Jameson’s invasion, indeed, caused considerable alarm in Pretoria. Even President
Kruger, who had no knowledge of personal fear, kept a horse saddled to escape on, and summoned the British Resident in the dead of night to explain that he was willing to discuss the Outlander grievances with Mr. Chamberlain in a friendly spirit. It was then thought that some determination lay behind the tall talk of Johannesburg, and the Boers believed that the Outlanders could put as many as twenty thousand armed men in the field. In spite of that belief, they sprang to arms to defend their independence. The arsenal was thrown open, the artillery horse and sent away, and a commando hurried off to intercept Dr. Jameson before he got within sight of Johannesburg.

"But by the yellow Tiber was tumult and affright." Johannesburg was thrown into a fever when, on Monday morning, Dr. Jameson's telegram arrived and was speedily noised abroad. The great mass of the Outlanders rejoiced at the news, and marched about the streets cheering "Dr. Jim" as a deliverer; but the Reform leaders were in a horrible fright. They alone knew how impotent their preparations had been; they had then received only fifteen hundred rifles, though a thousand more with three Maxims arrived the next evening. They were between the devil and the deep sea; if they did anything to help Dr. Jameson, they would incur the vengeance of the Boers and the anger of the British Government; if they did not, it was uncertain to what excesses the temper of the crowd in the streets might lead them against traitors to the cause of Reform. They soon learnt
that the Government had the news, and that Pretoria was full of armed burghers. One opening appeared to them, and they promptly constituted a Reform Committee, with sixty or seventy members, to divide the responsibility. Many of the new members of this Committee knew nothing about the conspiracy; but they loyally took up their leaders' burden. As many men as could be armed were then enrolled for the defence of Johannesburg, and the Committee undertook the difficult task of preserving order among the excited population, which they achieved with much success. To provide for the defence of the town was a harder matter, and they received with almost effusive welcome a deputation, which arrived from the Transvaal Government on Tuesday night, to speak of negotiating. Four of the Reform leaders accordingly went to Pretoria and concluded terms. The High Commissioner had then offered his services as mediator. Pending his arrival, no hostile steps were to be taken either by Johannesburg or Pretoria against one another. A promise was added that the Outlanders' grievances would be earnestly considered. The leaders returned home with this news, and Johannesburg, with some martial grumbling that there was no chance of a fight, devoted itself to the congenial task of "sitting tight," and discussing the situation over bottles of champagne. On Thursday this cheerful attitude was suddenly disturbed by the announcement that Dr. Jameson and his whole force were prisoners in the hands of the Boers. There was added to this
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news the unofficial rider that, in surrendering, he had cursed the Johannesburgers for a pack of cowards.

It is now time to return to the invaders, whom we left on the way to Johannesburg. The Boer scouts first got into touch with Dr. Jameson’s force on the evening of Tuesday, and the first shots were fired at midnight. By that time the Boer commandoes had reached Krugersdorp, twenty miles from Johannesburg on the Mafeking road, and had taken up a very strong position among the low hills through which the road wound before reaching that village. Meanwhile Dr. Jameson had sent off an intimation to Johannesburg that he expected a force to meet him. Either to meet this reinforcement, or because they were misled by Boer guides, the troops then turned off the road and marched right into the heart of the Boer position. Still unconscious of being outnumbered and surrounded, Sir John Willoughby warned the Boer Commandant that, if his advance were opposed, he should use his artillery. The only notice of this threat was a closing in of the Boers on the rear of the devoted column, and Sir John opened fire. The Chartered Company’s forces, whose position was hopeless from the first, fought with great gallantry, in spite of their dreadful fatigue. They failed to make any impression on the Boer position, and had to fall back and bivouac with heavy loss, under fire. As soon as it grew light a move was made, and a running fight continued for ten miles, till the road was again blocked by the ridge of Doornkop. The Boers had
been content to harass the column without attempting to close in. A plucky assault on Doornkop failed; at the same time (8.30 a.m.) Dr. Jameson received another stringent order to desist, from the High Commissioner, and a message from Johannesburg that he must expect no help. His men were worn out; the Boers had surrounded them and outnumbered them by at least six to one; many lives had already been lost; he took the only possible course in surrendering at a quarter past nine on Thursday morning, January 2nd, 1896. The terms of this surrender gave rise to later disputes. Dr. Jameson understood that the lives of the whole force and their safe conduct out of the country were guaranteed; the Boer Commandant said that he had only promised the invaders personal security until they reached Pretoria, where their ultimate fate must be decided. In this humiliating fashion ended the raid which had been begun with such high hopes and such light hearts four days earlier. Its chief result was to unite all the Boers of South Africa in sympathy with the policy of President Kruger, and to start the Transvaal and Orange Free State on the new line of military independence which has now, in less than four years, brought them into armed conflict with Great Britain. The more immediate consequences of the raid will be related in the next chapters.
CHAPTER XVIII

AFTER THE RAID

On Wednesday, January 1st, 1896, the Reform leaders at Johannesburg seem to have been seized with a sudden panic, in which they telegraphed to the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, that they had absolute information that large numbers of Boers had been ordered to attack Johannesburg and shoot at sight all concerned in the Outlander agitation. "Matters are so serious," they added pathetically, "that we call upon you again to intervene, to protect the lives and properties of citizens who have for years agitated constitutionally for their rights." At this time they seem to have hoped that, whatever were the result of Dr. Jameson's invasion, their own conspiracy, of which it formed part, could be concealed, in the event of his failure, from the Boers; if he succeeded, from the British Government. It is not clear whether their telegram was the outcome of actual fear, or a move in this piece of strategy. Sir Hercules Robinson, who had also been warmly invited by the Transvaal Government, left the next day for Pretoria, where he arrived to find Dr. Jameson and his force in gaol. Meanwhile,
Johannesburg had been occupied by several hundreds of armed Boers, and was cowering in mingled anger and terror—anger against its unprepared leaders, and terror of the Boers' deadly rifles. At the time the true circumstances of Dr. Jameson's move were known to none outside the immediate circle of the chief conspirators, and the general feeling in Johannesburg, as in the world at large, was that the gallant invaders had been disgracefully abandoned and betrayed by the Reform leaders. It was more than a year before it was generally known that this was not the case, and still longer before the capital of the Rand lost the nickname of "Judasburg," which had freely been bestowed upon it by those who took the Poet Laureate's view of Dr. Jameson's action.

It is now clear that this censure upon Johannesburg was not altogether justified by the facts, although one cannot agree with the whole of the apology which has been made in a semi-official manner by the Secretary of the Reform Committee, Mr. J. P. Fitz-Patrick. So far as regards the main body of the Committee, indeed, and the bulk of the Johannesburgers, the accusation was extremely unfair. They had never been taken into the confidence of the leaders, and although they guessed that something was in the wind, they had never dreamed of such a possibility as an invasion of the Transvaal by an armed force. Yet when they heard that Dr. Jameson was on his way to deliver them, they almost universally rose to the occasion. It seemed to them that such a momentous step could not have been
taken without the approval of the Imperial authorities, and the large Anglo-Saxon element among the Outlanders was eager to take part in the fray. These warlike sentiments, as we have seen, dreadfully embarrassed the ill-fated leaders. Twenty thousand Johannesburgers were demanding to be enrolled as volunteers, armed with the rifles which every one—including the Government at Pretoria—understood to be concealed somewhere in the town, and led out to meet the deliverer. The Boers took for granted that something of the kind would happen, and were preparing for a desperate struggle with so little hope of success that they were as eager as the Reform leaders to employ the mediation of the High Commissioner. President Kruger had offered full satisfaction to any demand that Sir Hercules Robinson chose to make, and was prepared to fly from Pretoria if necessary. If the whole Reform party could at that moment have boasted a man fit to lead them—if Mr. Cecil Rhodes had been in Johannesburg instead of his brother—there can be little doubt that the Outlanders might have gained all and more than all that they had asked by the mere show of a determined front.

But Mr. Kruger's usual luck refused to desert him. Whilst the population of Johannesburg was toiling on earth-works and clamouring for arms, the unfortunate leaders were wildly consulting how to lay the demon that they had evoked, like the magician's luckless apprentice, without knowing the spell by which to make use of him. All their boasted
smuggling of arms had only given them two or three thousand rifles. Even with those, and the private arms in the town, a determined man could have done much. But three of the leaders were men of peace, whose highest idea of armed rebellion had been to shut themselves up in a fortified town and call in the High Commissioner to make peace, with the old cry, "Two of you hold him—one can hold me!" The fourth was no doubt a gallant soldier, but he had been led by his long association with the representatives of the millionaires to share their disinclination for responsibility, or else he was outvoted. Consequently the leaders jumped at the loop-hole, not very honourable, but technically valid, which they saw for escape from the alternative of showing fight. They forgot that, although Dr. Jameson's final move had undoubtedly been taken on his own initiative and against their distinct request, he had been placed on the frontier to help them, his invasion had been their suggestion and was an integral part of their conspiracy, and he had in his possession the undated letter in which they had begged him, two months before, to come and save their women and children from massacre. In these circumstances men with a keen sense of honour would have felt bound to move alike for the sake of their endangered ally and their own reputations. But these extraordinary conspirators seem never to have seriously contemplated any loss of life or any illegal action as a detail in the execution of their plans. When they were suddenly confronted with
a situation in which it was necessary to risk both, they promptly lost their heads. They could only put three or four thousand men into the field, and the Boers might be brave enough to attack so small a force; the High Commissioner had proclaimed Dr. Jameson a rebel, and in spite of all their efforts to take the Transvaal oath of allegiance, they could not forget that they remained British subjects. So they telegraphed for aid to the High Commissioner, they abased themselves to the President, they tried to quiet the Outlanders who wanted to fight. The news of Dr. Jameson’s defeat and the arrival of the Boers to take possession of Johannesburg must have been a positive relief to these bewildered and agitated conspirators, who can best be summed up in Attwater’s expressive language as a set of “very twopenny pirates.” The moralist may somewhat contemptuously praise their respect for the law of Britain, and their disinclination to shed blood; but it is not of such stuff that successful revolutionists are made.

For a day or two after Dr. Jameson’s surrender Johannesburg was in a state of impotent ferment. The leaders could only keep their fellow Outlanders quiet by reminding them (as was indeed the fact) that Dr. Jameson and his troops would probably be regarded by the Boers as hostages for their good behaviour. On Monday, the 6th of January—the day for which, in the irony of Fate, the mass meeting that was to carry all before it had been fixed—a message came from the British Resident at Pretoria
that Johannesburg must disarm and submit, under pain of gravely risking Dr. Jameson's life, and of forfeiting the protection of the British Government. The High Commissioner had reached Pretoria on the previous Saturday evening, but had been debarred by the Sabbatarian sentiment of the Boers from entering upon any negotiations until the Monday. He had taken advantage of this delay by telegraphing his impression of the state of things to Mr. Chamberlain. The Government, he thought, were inclined to be moderate, but the Boers showed a tendency to insist upon Dr. Jameson's execution. "I am told," he added, "that the Government of the South African Republic will demand the disarmament of Johannesburg as a condition precedent to negotiations. Their military preparations are now practically complete, and Johannesburg, if besieged, could not hold out, as they are short of water and coal. On the side of Johannesburg, the leaders desire to be moderate, but the men make the safety of Jameson and concession of the items in the manifesto issued conditions precedent to disarmament. If these are refused, they assert that they will elect their own leaders, and fight it out in their own way."

After this very fair summary of the situation, Sir Hercules Robinson added that he foresaw great difficulty in avoiding civil war in the Transvaal. But he had reckoned without the diplomatic genius of the old President, and the pacific tendencies of the Outlander leaders. Mr. Kruger was clearer-
sighted than the High Commissioner, and the reports which his emissaries brought from Johannesburg, as well as the communications which his delegates had held with the Reform leaders, had by now shown him the true state of affairs amongst the Outlanders. Essentially a man of action, he saw that if Johannesburg had been going to fight it would have been in arms already. The Outlander bubble was pricked, and he proceeded to take up a very different attitude from that which he had adopted a week before, when the combined threats of invasion and rebellion had forced him to send for the High Commissioner, and to promise "mountains and marvels." He had by this time eight thousand burghers in arms around him, and was practically certain that the Outlanders would never come within range of their deadly rifles. So he changed his tone, and used the safety of Dr. Jameson and his men as a counter in his wily game. It has already been shown that there was some dubiety as to the terms on which they surrendered. Whatever had been promised to them, they were secluded in gaol, and could not assert their rights. Mr. Kruger at once announced that he could not answer for the forbearance of his infuriated burghers unless Johannesburg made an unconditional surrender. Sir Hercules Robinson, with the approval of Mr. Chamberlain, advised the Outlanders to accept this ultimatum, and on Tuesday, after an interview with the British Agent, Johannesburg agreed to give up its arms. It was difficult to persuade the Boers that the two or three thousand
rifles, which were accordingly handed over, represented the whole basis of the Reformers' bragging, and only the High Commissioner's threat of war prevented a consequent attack upon the town.

President Kruger then began to consider his reprisals on the men who had attacked his Government. On the night of Thursday, January 9th, all the members of the Reform Committee on whom the Boers could lay their hands, sixty-three in number, were arrested, and lodged in gaol. The task was easy for the Boers, for the leaders had had the kindness to hand in a full list of their colleagues at the Pretoria conference. It is interesting to note that, among the sixty-six members of the Reform Committee, thirty-four were of British nationality, seventeen were Africanders, eight Americans, two Germans, one Australian, one Swiss, one a Hollander, one a Turk, and one a Transvaal burgher. Four of the five leaders were netted in this haul; the fifth, Mr. Charles Leonard, was safe at Cape Town, whence he escaped to England before the Transvaal's extradition treaty with the Cape Colony could be put in force. The English Government declined to give him up. Dr. Jameson and his men were then handed over to the High Commissioner for transport to England. President Kruger, who had undoubtedly the right by international law to execute the leaders of the raid as filibusters taken in arms and guilty of murder, and who insisted that no guarantee had been given for their lives by his commanding officer at Doornkop, was generally praised at the time for
his moderation in abdicating the right to punish the raiders. As Mr. Arthur Balfour observed, his generosity was "not the less to be admired because it was coincident with the highest political wisdom." The juggling with the life of Dr. Jameson was not equally consistent with a keen sense of honour, but the reader ought by this time to be well aware that it is unjust to judge the Boers by a European standard. Dr. Jameson and his companions were duly sent to England, where the chiefs were promptly tried for their flagrant breach of the Foreign Enlistment Act, and punished with sentences of imprisonment as first-class misdemeanants, varying from fifteen to five months. In addition, the officers were deprived of their commissions in the British army. Public opinion of all shades considered that this punishment in the case of the subordinate officers was excessive, and the commissions were returned to all but Sir John Willoughby. And now, as the sagas say, the raiders are out of the story.

For reasons of policy, President Kruger had allowed the actual raiders to escape him. But he and his burghers were sternly determined to have their revenge out of the Outlanders who, in their view, were the direct originators of the whole trouble. The members of the Reform Committee were accordingly put on their trial for high treason on April 24th, 1896. In the mean time there had been much feverish negotiation between the leading conspirators and Mr. Rhodes in the hope of urging the High Commissioner and Mr. Chamberlain to interfere to prevent
the trial. The Reformers themselves were under the impression that they had disarmed Johannesburg under the promise of an amnesty to all concerned, and looked upon their prosecution as an act of vengeful treachery, against which they demanded that England should protect them. Soon after their arrest the High Commissioner had informed Mr. Chamberlain that he did not see how England could interfere in what was undoubtedly the legal right of the Transvaal Government to try conspirators within its borders; but he had urged moderation on the President, "so as not to alienate the sympathy, which he then enjoyed, of all right-minded persons." All that Mr. Chamberlain could do was to gain the privilege of bail for the prisoners. The trial was held by a certain Judge Gregorowski, imported for that purpose from the Orange Free State, since the Transvaal Judges had been concerned in the putting down of the raid as members of the Executive. In spite of this air of impartiality, the trial appears to have been a tragical farce. Some arrangements had been made between the prisoners and the Government, whose exact nature is not clear. But the Reformers seem to have agreed to plead guilty, and to have understood that, in consideration of thus saving the Government the trouble and expense of a prosecution, they would be let off with nominal sentences. They had again strangely misjudged their opponents. The leaders duly pleaded guilty of high treason, the others of lèse-majesté, in having taken up arms and conspired with Dr.
Jameson to attack the independence of the State. It had been supposed that the Judge would be guided by the law of the Thirty-three Articles, in which the penalty of treason was a moderate fine and banishment, supplemented by a law passed in 1895 which confiscated the property of the convict. This latter provision might have sufficed if the millionaires who had instigated the conspiracy had been within reach. To the general amazement, the four leaders, Colonel Rhodes and Messrs. Phillips, Farrar, and Hammond, were condemned to death under the Roman-Dutch law. The other prisoners were sentenced to two years' imprisonment, a fine of £2000 each or a third year in default, and three years' banishment thereafter. The question of confiscation was in all cases reserved.

It seems to be clear that there was never any intention of carrying out the capital sentences, which were simply pronounced in terrorem, to show any future conspirators what might be their fate. They were, in fact, commuted two days later to sentences of fifteen years' imprisonment. Even so, the Transvaal Government had overshot the mark. By neglecting the High Commissioner's advice to be moderate (for no one can doubt that the Judge was but a tool in the hands of the President) they had alienated public sympathy throughout South Africa. The treatment of the prisoners, which was so brutal as to drive one of them to suicide, added to the general disapprobation. The Boers were still
at the stage of civilization at which they thought that a prison was not intended to be a bed of roses; but the Reformers, who were so far in advance of their age as to believe that revolutions should be made with rose-water, were not unjustifiably indignant at their harsh treatment in Pretoria Gaol. At the same time, their supposition that they were worse off than other prisoners seems to have been unfounded. Protests from both Dutch and English throughout South Africa poured in; Mr. Chamberlain added his voice to the pleas for mercy; and the President, who was quick to notice how the wind blew, changed all the penalties into fines, after some undignified haggling with his prisoners about what was practically their ransom. The four leaders paid £25,000 each for their liberty, and the others £2000. Each man had to sign an undertaking that for three years he would take no part in Transvaal politics, under pain of banishment; in the case of the leaders the term was fifteen years. Colonel Rhodes refused to sign, and left the country; Mr. Phillips broke his pledge by writing an article in an English magazine, and was banished; two of the subordinates, with obstinacy worthy of a better cause, refused to make any terms with the perfidious Boers, and stayed more than a year in prison, until the President pardoned them without conditions at the Diamond Jubilee, whereby they saved £2000 each, and earned much applause. And the land had peace for about three years.
CHAPTER XIX

THE IMMEDIATE RESULTS

We have now to look at the wider consequences of the raid. For a moment it seemed possible that it would lead to international complications. The German Emperor, on the first news of Dr. Jameson’s defeat, sent President Kruger a telegram conveying his sincere congratulations that “without appealing to the help of friendly Powers,” the Boers had succeeded in maintaining their independence against attacks from outside. It was felt, both in England and at the Cape, that the words quoted were something more than mere rhetoric. It was remembered that for many years Germany had been coquetting with the Transvaal. In 1877 Sir Bartle Frere believed that Germany was ready to accept President Burgers’ invitation to protect his country, if England refused the task. In 1884 the Transvaal delegates, including Mr. Kruger, visited the old Kaiser, and were received by him with marked favour and sympathy. The clever but unscrupulous State Secretary of the Transvaal, Dr. Leyds, was even then at Berlin, ostensibly in search of health, but really believed to be negotiating alliances. The
British Government, with the nation and the colonies unmistakably at their back, said "Hands off!" to his Imperial Majesty. Two small German men-of-war had been ordered to land marines at Delagoa Bay. A British Flying Squadron, any ship of which could have blown the two German vessels out of the water, was at once commissioned for special service. The hint was taken, and no more was heard of German intervention. The only practical result of the Emperor's telegram was that he lost his annual holiday at Cowes for some years; which was quite sufficient punishment for what was probably rather an indiscretion than an indication of policy.

In England and South Africa the immediate consequences of the raid were less easily disposed of. That unfortunate and wicked piece of work set on foot a train of negotiation between Great Britain and the South African Republic, which has now ended in war, after nearly four years of recrimination on the one side, and unavailing protests on the other. It is not necessary to go deeply into the details of those negotiations which preceded the end of 1898, as they had no practical outcome. It will be sufficient to glance at their most salient points. Immediately after the raid Mr. Chamberlain, who in his brief tenure of office had already seen himself on the verge of declaring war with the Transvaal on the Drifts Question, perceived clearly enough that some external influence must be called in to appease the troublous conditions of the South
African Republic. So he drafted a Constitution, giving local autonomy to the Rand, which would, as he hoped, satisfy the just demands of the Outlanders without threatening the independence of the Boers. He sent this out to the High Commissioner as soon as the belligerent feeling which had been evoked by the raid began to give signs of dying away. Unfortunately the scheme had the usual luck of attempts to hold the balance evenly between two contending parties, and was rejected with contumely by both the Transvaal Government and the Outlanders. Still more unfortunately, the scheme was published in London before it was received in Pretoria, and this specimen of the "new diplomacy" evoked a storm of anger in the Transvaal. Mr. Kruger felt that the bad management of the conspirators had placed him in a position of injured innocence, which gave him and not Mr. Chamberlain the right to demand concessions. This was true in so far as none of the malpractices alleged against his Government could be supposed to equal in moral or legal turpitude the conduct of the raiders, whilst he could urge what was totally lacking to his opponents, the prestige of success, as well as the rights of self-defence.

Accordingly the Transvaal President in turn formulated a list of concessions which he expected to receive from the British Government as solatium for the fright which he professed to have received, and had undoubtedly felt for a few hours, from the outbreak of the conspiracy. In the first place, the Convention of London was to be superseded, as
"injurious to the dignity of an independent Republic," by a treaty of amity and commerce, as between nations of equal standing. The President further demanded guarantees against future raids, and compensation for the past one, which developed later on into the notorious claim for £877,988 3s. 3d. for actual outlay, and a million sterling for "moral or intellectual damage." He also required certain additions of territory, and finally insisted on the revocation of the Charter of the British South Africa Company, whose forces Dr. Jameson had so unjustifiably led to attack him. He offered no concession of any kind in return. The consequence of this demand, and the curt refusal to entertain it which came in reply, was to strain relationships between the Transvaal and Great Britain. Mr. Chamberlain invited President Kruger to come to England and discuss the situation in a friendly spirit; but the wily old President had no intention of doing that. Strong irritation was felt at his delay in replying to the invitation. Ultimately the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee, chosen from both sides, to investigate all the circumstances of the raid. The Report of this Committee laid bare most of the secrets of the conspiracy, which have been already displayed. It entirely exonerated the British Government from any suspicion of complicity in the attack on the independence of the Transvaal, such as alone could have justified President Kruger's insulting demand for guarantees from Mr. Chamberlain that it should not occur again. Unfortunately,
at the same time, it gave new ground for the suspicions which some people had been muttering at home, and which became openly vocal in the Transvaal. All the persons responsible for the raid had been legally punished except one; and he was the chief offender. Dr. Jameson and his officers had been imprisoned in England; the Outlander conspirators had been punished, the comparatively innocent with the completely guilty, at Pretoria. But the arm of the law was not long enough to reach Mr. Cecil Rhodes, fallen though he was from his once high estate.

On the subject of Mr. Rhodes's share in the guilt of the raid, as it was proved by the evidence—including his own very candid admissions—taken by the Select Committee, nothing can be better said than the recent pronouncement of Mr. Lecky, who is one of the three or four chief living English historians, and speaks on such a matter with the greatest weight. It may be admitted, in Mr. Lecky's view, that something was to be said for the motives of Mr. Rhodes, which were neither selfish nor sordid. But as to the means which he thought fit to use in the pursuit of a creditable end, there can be only one opinion.

"When holding the highly confidential position of Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, and being at the same time a Privy Councillor of the Queen, he engaged in a conspiracy for the overthrow of the Government of a neighbouring and friendly State. In order to carry out this design he deceived the
High Commissioner, whose Prime Minister he was. He deceived his own colleagues in the Ministry. He collected under false pretences a force which was intended to co-operate with an insurrection in Johannesburg. Being a director of the Chartered Company, he made use of that position without the knowledge of his colleagues to further the conspiracy. He took an active and secret part in smuggling great quantities of arms into the Transvaal, which were intended to be used in the rebellion, and at a time when his organs in the press were representing Johannesburg as reeking with spontaneous indignation against an oppressive Government, he, with another millionaire, was secretly expending many thousands of pounds in that town in stimulating and subsidizing the rising. He was also directly connected with the shabbiest incident in the whole affair, the concoction of a letter from the Johannesburg conspirators absurdly representing English women and children at Johannesburg as in danger of being shot down by the Boers, and urging the British to come at once to save them. It was a letter drawn up with the sanction of Mr. Rhodes many weeks before the raid, and before any disturbance had arisen, and kept in reserve to be dated and used in the last moment for the purpose of inducing the young soldiers in South Africa to join in the raid, and of subsequently justifying their conduct before the War Office, and also for the purpose of being published in the English press at the same time as the first news of the raid, in order to work
upon English public opinion, and persuade the English people that the raid, though technically wrong, was morally justifiable. Mr. Rhodes is a man of great genius and influence, and in the past he has rendered great services to the Empire. At the same time no reasonable judge can question that in these transactions he was more blamable than those who were actually punished by the law for taking part in the raid—far more blamable than those young officers who were in truth the most severely punished, and who had been induced to take part in it under a false representation of the wishes of the Government at home and a grossly false representation of the state of things at Johannesburg.”

This man, who in the eyes of the Boers was beyond any other responsible for the raid, was left untouched by the law. We can see reasons why he alone should not be brought to trial. His services to our Empire in the past, and to the cause of civilization in South Africa, had been manifold and distinguished; and in matters of high politics something can be said for the doctrine, impracticable in private life, that great virtues may be set off against great crimes. Further, Mr. Rhodes had been more heavily punished by the loss of power and influence in South Africa than such a man could be by any legal tribunal. He had resigned the Premiership of the Cape Colony and the management of the Chartered Company; he had suddenly become a nobody in the land which he had captured from barbarism, and a hateful foe to the party that, a year before, would have followed
him through fire and water. It is possible that we may guess the depth to which the iron had entered his soul, though he still met fortune with a smiling face, by the splendid recklessness with which he exposed his life among the revolted Matabele—a feeling something akin to that which again took him to share the fortunes of Kimberley when that town was threatened by the Boers.

But to reason thus was not in the Transvaal mind. The Boers argued that if a man did wrong he should be punished; if Mr. Rhodes went free, it could only be that he had friends more powerful than the law. When they found that he was still allowed to remain a member of the Queen's Privy Council, and Mr. Chamberlain declared in the House of Commons that Mr. Rhodes had done nothing dishonourable, but had only made "a gigantic mistake," they began to ask themselves whether, if the raid had been successful, England would not have congratulated its authors on a splendid success. They had read Mr. Chamberlain's telegram to the High Commissioner on the news of Dr. Jameson's start, repudiating the raid, but adding that "there might have been some excuse for this unprecedented act if the Government of the South African Republic had first been overthrown, or if there had been anarchy in Johannesburg." Not unnaturally, they interpreted these words, written by Mr. Chamberlain in ignorance that the possibilities which he mentioned had formed an actual part of the conspirators' plan, as showing that if the conspiracy had been successfully carried
out—if the Pretoria arsenal had been seized and Johannesburg had risen before Dr. Jameson started—then the Government of Great Britain would have applauded the act and confirmed the conspirators in their possession of the Transvaal. Much evidence for the existence of this view amongst the Boers during the last two years might be adduced; it will be sufficient to quote the simple and touching letter from General Joubert which was received by an English friend of his after the present war had actually begun. In it he says:

"I have prayed much, and many prayers have gone up to the throne of God from all over South Africa to avert this war; but Mr. Rhodes and his parasites demand our blood. I had always hoped that the war would be averted, but now it is as if I heard the British Agent asking what Mr. Chamberlain would do if he did not go to war with the Transvaal—for the Africander Bond at Cape Colony would then be greater than Mr. Chamberlain. So what can we do? What is there to be done in our land? No franchise, no redressing of the Outlanders' grievances, nothing will avert this war. Our prayers, our granting of the franchise have been in vain. Even if we were to wash Mr. Chamberlain's feet, that would be in vain. No, the Africander Bond has put Mr. Rhodes out of Parliamentary power, and this is enough. The Transvaal must be suppressed."

When the Transvaal Government had once made up their mind that Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Rhodes were in accord as to their South African policy, and
further came to suspect that they had been in collusion before the raid, no negotiations were likely to be successful. We had to pay the penalty for that English misgovernment and misdealing with the Transvaal in the past which had made its inhabitants singularly disinclined to accept the word of an English statesman. We shall see directly how Mr. Chamberlain himself formed suspicions of the Boers' intentions which were very possibly as baseless as their own doubts of his honesty. It is with reluctance that we come to the conclusion that the war which now promises to be so sanguinary was in great part the immediate outcome of a mutual distrust and misunderstanding between the Transvaal President and the Secretary for the Colonies; but, so far as we have yet the means of forming a judgment, no other conclusion seems to be possible.

The chief and most lasting consequence of the raid, we are thus led to perceive, was to embitter feeling between the Transvaal and Great Britain, and so to pave the way for war. In South Africa it also caused a remarkable cleavage and rearrangement of political parties. At the Cape the Africander Bond, which had previously been devoted to Mr. Rhodes, started away from him as if some Ithuriel's spear had suddenly revealed a demon under the noble form. Mr. Schreiner ultimately came into office as the leader of a united Dutch party, against which the men who still professed to admire Mr. Rhodes, or saw their account in inflaming racial enmities, ranged
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themselves with some of more honourable motives. Happily for our Empire and our good fame, the great mass of the Cape Dutch knew England sufficiently well, and had the springs of loyalty deeply enough rooted in them, to refuse to regard the quarrel of the Transvaal Boers and the Outlanders as a ground of racial war. The generous way in which Mr. Schreiner signalized the Diamond Jubilee by the offer of a battleship to our fleet is not forgotten. Possibly when his attitude in the present crisis is fully appreciated it will be equally praised. With the Boers of the Orange Free State things were different. They, too, had their recollections of English misrule. They remembered how we abandoned them when the Basutos threatened them with extinction, and how we plundered them of their diamond fields. They asserted the ties of blood which bound them to their kindred across the Vaal. One of them thus graphically expressed their feeling to Mr. H. C. Thomson:—"If my brother gets drunk, is he not still my brother? I may put him under restraint myself, but I will not permit any one else to do so." More influential members of the community made the warning still plainer. President Steyn said to Mr. Thomson, "We don't want to fight, but you have taken the Hinterland away from us. We have nowhere left now to which we can trek, so if you attack us, we must die where we stand." President Kruger said, "If I see a lion—and the British Government is a lion—I try to get out of his way; but if he attacks me, I will
defend myself, though I have only a penknife in my hand, and, by the grace of God, I will prevail." When the investigation of the House of Commons Committee took a line so friendly to Mr. Rhodes and so unfavourable to the Transvaal that it seemed as if the Government of the South African Republic were the party arraigned, the Orange Free State only drew more closely to its brother State. What annoyed its thrifty burghers more than anything else, according to Mr. Thomson, was that the threatening English attitude compelled them to spend a hundred thousand pounds—more than a quarter of their annual revenue—upon armaments which they could ill afford. For arming was now the order of the day in the Boer States. They felt that the appeal to the sword was drawing nigh; and their confidence in the protection of Providence did not hinder them, any more than it would have hindered Cromwell, from believing in the efficacy of Krupp guns and Mauser rifles. The South African Republic continued steadily importing guns and ammunition of the latest type during the next three years, until its annual expenditure on its war department and the purchase of explosives rose to nearly three-quarters of a million sterling, whilst of the additional million which was devoted to public works a great part went in the construction of a chain of forts guarding Pretoria and overawing Johannesburg. There is a certain grim humour in the fact that it was still the gold-miners of the Rand who supplied the millions that were thus
disbursed for the weapons with which they were to be kept from asserting their grievances.

It is hardly necessary to add that up to the beginning of 1899 no steps were taken by the Government to relieve the Outlanders from their burden, although the Reformers themselves appear to have been surprised that this should have been the case. On the contrary, nothing was done to interfere with the dynamite monopoly, in spite of the fact that its bad management was shown to be directly responsible for the disastrous explosion which wrecked a quarter of Johannesburg and killed about a hundred people in February, 1896. The Netherlands Railway Company made no sign of lowering its rates. Other corrupt jobs seem to have been carried through as openly and as shamelessly as in the days before the raid. One important concession, indeed, the Government of the Transvaal did make to public opinion, and to the unceasing protests of Mr. Chamberlain. In the course of 1897, it appointed an Industrial Commission to inquire into all matters affecting the mining industry, and to take evidence upon the alleged grievances. The Commission was formed of Boer officials, with a member of the Executive Council for Chairman. To the scarcely concealed amazement of the Outlanders, who could with difficulty be persuaded to give evidence before the Boers, whom they despised in council as much as they feared them in war, it did its work in a most able and impartial manner. It went thoroughly into all the questions of the mines, and investigated the
grievances of their owners without fear or favour. Its report is a most valuable document, as showing that the financial grievances of which the Outlanders complained really did exist in impartial eyes. The Commission adopted most of the suggestions that the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines had been making for years past, and made a series of recommendations for giving effect to them. Unfortunately nothing came of this apparent commencement of good government. The report of the Commission was handed over to a Committee of the Volksraad for consideration. It seems that the corrupt influences which had for so long been at work were too strong for the Committee. The sharers in the dynamite monopoly and the officials of the Netherlands Railway Company bestirred themselves to burke further inquiry, and nothing more was heard of the Commission's report. In the beginning of 1899 Mr. Kruger even laboured to get the dynamite monopoly extended for fifteen years more, in the teeth of a despatch from Mr. Chamberlain which warned him that his action in this matter amounted to a direct breach of the Convention of London. His blunt disregard of this warning seems to have been the last straw, and the long-suffering Colonial Secretary thereupon entered upon the new and more vigorous course of intervention in the affairs of the South African Republic which it will be the business of the next chapter to narrate.

Before passing on to consider those negotiations which directly led up to the war of 1899, we must
take a cursory glance at some other less important events of the three years that followed the raid. We must note, in passing, some important changes in the *dramatis personae*. That firebrand, Dr. Leyds, resigned the post of State Secretary in 1898 in order to become a kind of travelling Ambassador or Pleni-potentiary for the Transvaal on the Continent of Europe, where he was not likely to do very much harm. His place was taken by Mr. Reitz, formerly President of the Orange Free State, whose appointment was a symbol of the growing union between the two Boer communities. In 1898 the place of the amiable but weak Sir Jacobus de Wet as British Agent at Pretoria was taken by Mr. Conyngham Greene, who proved himself to be equally firm and tactful in a most delicate and difficult position. More important than any of these changes was the appointment of Sir Alfred Milner as Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa in the place of Sir Hercules Robinson, the late Lord Rosmead, who had been worn out by the terrible strain of the crisis, in which he had crowned his long and valuable career with the laurels of the preserver of peace. Sir Alfred Milner, whose excellent work in Egypt had made his name familiar in English ears, was sent out to the Cape as a strong man and an Imperialist statesman who had yet broad enough sympathies to preserve the confidence of all parties. It would be premature to attempt as yet to pronounce upon his labour in the two following years; but it must be said that he was singularly
unfortunate in giving the Boers throughout South Africa the impression that his mind had been captured by their opponents. His critics accused him of allowing his tour through the Cape Colony to be converted into an electioneering campaign in favour of Mr. Rhodes, and it was a necessary consequence that he ceased to be a persona grata with Mr. Rhodes's political opponents, who were accustomed to see that statesman's personal charm do good work for him, but thought that the representative of the Queen should have held aloof from its influence. There seems to be a fatal spell in the atmosphere of the Cape which makes it impossible to prophesy what any man exposed to its influence may do. If not the grave of reputations, as poor Colley called South Africa, it must at least be admitted to be a very Circe among countries, whose charms scarcely any Odysseus can encounter unchanged in aspect.

Among the native relations of the Transvaal State during this period there must be mentioned the annexation of Swaziland, which was finally completed, after some years of gradual progress, in 1898 with the replacement of native by Transvaal laws. Towards the end of the same year there occurred a war with a powerful chief called Mpezu, in the mountains of the north-west, who refused to pay taxes. On this occasion the Boer commando behaved with great gallantry, and captured the chief's stronghold after severe fighting.

We have now to relate two affairs which alarmed
the Outlanders more than anything that had happened since the failure of the raid. In February, 1898, the quinquennial Presidential election was held. This time there was no question of Mr. Kruger's secure place in the hearts of his countrymen. Instead of the close struggle which he had had with General Joubert in 1893, he enjoyed a hollow victory which showed that the raid had confirmed him in power as the only man who could keep the ship of State off the rocky lee shore which was looming ominously in the distance. Mr. Kruger received 12,858 votes, as against 3753 for Mr. Schalk Burger and 2001 for General Joubert. The first use which the President made of his newly confirmed power was to carry through the contest which had been going on for some months between him and the Chief Justice of the Transvaal. This was partly a constitutional question which is still rather vague, and partly a trial of the President's absolute power, as to which there was left no doubt whatever. The nominal question at issue was raised in 1897. An Outlander named Brown brought an action against the State for damage caused to him by the illegal rescission of a mining proclamation. The Government took a precedent from "Alice in Wonderland," and passed a special law to declare themselves free from any liability in this matter. Chief Justice Kotze, who tried the case, declared this new law to be illegal, as contrary to the Grondwet or fundamental law of the Constitution, set it aside, and gave judgment for Brown. President Kruger at once
retorted by getting the Volksraad to pass another law which required all Judges of the South African Republic to undertake to respect and obey any laws which the Volksraad chose to pass, regardless of the Constitution. The Judges all declined to do any such thing, and the Bar supported them. Legal business was at a standstill, when the Chief Justice of the Cape Colony intervened and arranged a compromise, by which the Judges undertook not to question the new laws for the moment, on the understanding that their independence should speedily be guaranteed. Mr. Kruger had no sooner been re-elected than he proceeded to break this agreement. The Chief Justice stood on his rights and the Constitution, and was promptly dismissed without compensation under the law of 1897. Mr. Gregorowski, who had tried the Reformers in 1896, took his place. The Boers did not seem to mind; but the Outlanders felt that they had suffered a new blow in seeing the very courts of justice made subservient to the autocratic President's will.

Lastly, one must allude to an affair which, in the electrical state of the atmosphere, caused far more noise than its intrinsic importance seemed to warrant. A powerful and turbulent English workman, named Edgar, involved himself in a Johannesburg street brawl on the evening of the 18th of December, 1898. He knocked down a man whom he supposed to have insulted him, and left him insensible on the ground. The police were promptly called, and pursued Edgar to his house near by. The exact circumstances of
what followed are still in dispute, but it is clear that the police broke in the door, and that one of them shot Edgar dead in the passage on the plea that he resisted and attacked them. The policeman was at once arrested and tried for culpable homicide before a jury of burghers, who acquitted him. This case aroused a great deal of ill-feeling among the Outlanders, who asserted that their lives were all in danger from such policemen. No other case of the same kind appears to have occurred in the history of the Republic, and it may be imagined that the political relationship of the Boers and the Outlanders lent especial importance to what was at worst the crime of a single man, and clearly not a typical instance of oppression, since the fatal shot was followed by the instant arrest of the policeman who fired it. In New York or Paris such a case would excite no more remark than any other homicide; in Johannesburg it inflamed public opinion once more to a really dangerous temperature.
CHAPTER XX

BRITISH INTERVENTION

It remains to consider those negotiations between Great Britain and the South African Republic during 1899 which led up to the war now raging. To one looking back upon them, it may seem that war was the only possible solution of the questions at issue; but this was not generally apparent until quite lately, although it may have been clear enough to Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Kruger. The real questions underlying these negotiations were that of the continued independence of the South African Republic as a Boer State, and that of the supremacy of Great Britain in South Africa. Mr. Kruger, as we have seen, was determined not to grant the franchise to the Outlanders, because if he did so, they would swamp the polls and capture the government; and not only his own burghers, but the Boers of the Orange Free State were prepared to take up arms in this quarrel. Mr. Chamberlain, on the other hand, was at last determined to assert Great Britain's supremacy throughout South Africa, and her right in the last resort to be obeyed in this matter by the Transvaal Government.

The key of the situation from the Boer point,
of view is given by the language which President Kruger used to Sir Alfred Milner at the Bloemfontein Conference in the middle of 1899. In other countries, he admitted, the obtaining of the franchise need be hedged about by none of the restrictions which he continued to impose upon Outlanders; indeed, in the days before gold was discovered there in large quantities, citizenship had been easier to acquire in the Transvaal than in any European country. But now the case was quite different. "I am not surprised," he said, "that in other places the men would only have to wait a year to get it (the franchise), because there are millions of old burghers, and the few to come in cannot out-vote the old burghers; but, with us, those who rushed into the gold-fields are in large numbers and of all kinds, and the number of burghers is still insignificant; therefore we are compelled to make the franchise so that they cannot all rush into it at once." After the events of 1895–96, indeed, it was so apparent that the real object of the Outlander millionaires was to capture the government for the sole purpose of increasing their profits, that the Boers could take no other view than that the grant of the franchise meant the loss of their independence. They felt that the new campaign in which England's assistance had now been invoked was the sequel of the conspiracy and the raid which they had successfully withstood three years before. With this conviction in their minds, it was hardly likely that English negotiations could fail to be abortive.
On the other hand, Great Britain, represented by Sir Alfred Milner at the Cape and Mr. Chamberlain in the Colonial Office, who were backed by the majority of the nation, had made up her mind to assert her supremacy and gain the franchise for the Outlanders at any cost. Various reasons contributed to strengthen this determination. For one thing, it was felt that the relations between this country and the South African Republic were so unsatisfactory that they must be set upon an entirely new footing, no matter though it took a thunder-storm to clear the air. "The state of continual complaint on the one side, and of unwillingness to give redress on the other," said a clear-sighted and impartial critic—"of incessant wrangling and disputatio—could not be indefinitely prolonged except at the cost of great loss of dignity and influence to Great Britain and of permanent disquiet and instability in South Africa." Both the High Commissioner and the Colonial Secretary had been persuaded by the voluble tongues of the Outlanders that there was real oppression in Johannesburg; Sir Alfred Milner went the length of describing the Outlanders in a State paper as "helots," and filled a Blue Book with sporadic examples of Boer injustice, which it much amused the average Johannesburger that he should present as typical incidents of daily life. That mischievous body, the South African League, which was subsidized by the money and played the game of the Rand millionaires, easily imposed its views on Sir Alfred Milner, in spite of the Acting Governor
Sir William Butler's warning that it was "necessary to receive with caution, and even with a large measure of suspicion, statements emanating from the offices of that organization." The policy which this League publicly urged in and out of season, to the effect that the Outlanders would not rest until they were made supreme in the South African Republic, angered the Boers all the more because they believed that it had been accepted by the High Commissioner and the British Government.

Mr. Chamberlain, who was always a strong believer in the wisdom of taking the public into diplomatic confidence, made a public declaration in the House of Commons, after war had begun, of the motives by which his policy, beginning in peace and ending in war, had been actuated. After the delivery of the Boer ultimatum, on reviewing the negotiations in the light of the knowledge that the Boers would fight for their independence, he had come to the conclusion that war had been inevitable from the first. But he had never believed this before, and he declared that he had been actuated throughout the negotiations by the most earnest desire for peace. We learn that the object of his policy was twofold—the protection of British subjects wherever they were oppressed, and the maintenance of Great Britain as the Paramount Power in South Africa. Mr. Kruger had opposed him on both these points; the President of the South African Republic was unwilling to relieve the British Outlanders of their grievances, and much more unwilling to admit that
Great Britain had any right to force him to do so. Mr. Chamberlain believed that the preamble of the Convention of Pretoria, declaring the Queen's suzerainty, was still binding on the Transvaal State, and he came to suppose that the Boers' aim in throwing it off was not only to assert their own independence and claim the position of a sovereign international State, but to drive Great Britain out of South Africa altogether, and extend the boundaries of the South African Republic from the Cape to the Zambesi. This ideal, which had been that of Pieter Retief the Voortrekker, and perhaps also of the first Pretorius, was then perceived by Mr. Chamberlain to be the ideal of every Boer in the Transvaal and the Free State. At the moment when he saw this, he also realized that the Transvaal had become, through the continuous armament of the three years following the Jameson raid, the most powerful military State in South Africa. Great Britain was then in no condition to cope with Mr. Kruger's available forces; if he should declare war, and the Cape Dutch should rise to join him, the British forces then in South Africa would be driven into the sea. From that moment it is hard to see how Mr. Chamberlain can have hoped any longer to preserve the peace. The grievances of the Outlanders then fell into a secondary place in his view of the situation, and the assertion of British supremacy in general, and suzerainty over the Transvaal in particular, became his primary object. If that could be achieved by a mere show of force and the threat of using it,
well; if not—well also, though not so well. From that moment he felt, as Mr. Kruger had felt since 1896, that the true question at issue was not the position of the Outlanders, but the trial of the supremacy of Great Britain against the independence of the Transvaal. With that in view he began to shift the ground of negotiation and to pour troops into South Africa as rapidly as was possible without exciting too much remark. That was in June, 1899. At that time, it will be seen in the outline of the negotiations that is now to be given, the British and Transvaal Governments were nearly in accord about the Outlander franchise. From that moment, without apparent reason, they drifted further and further apart until the actual breach was made into which so many lives and so much treasure are now being poured in the hope that such sacrifices will fill it up, as the heroic self-devotion of Curtius is said to have filled up the gulf in the Roman forum.

In March, 1899, the train of negotiations which was to lead to war was opened by Sir Alfred Milner's sending home a petition to the Queen from more than twenty thousand Outlanders, who complained that they had not been allowed to become citizens of the South African Republic. This petition recited the usual grievances: it declared that the Transvaal Government was corrupt, the taxes high, the Outlanders unarmed and without constitutional means of redress. The petitioners asked for the help of Great Britain to remove their grievances, and, in some mysterious way, to enable them to obtain
the franchise of the Transvaal and yet remain British subjects. This, of course, was a clear request that the Transvaal should be put on the footing of a British colony, and was the first public appearance of the suzerainty, of which so much was afterwards heard. At the same time, President Kruger seemed to be willing to grant some reforms. In a speech on the Outlander franchise, he reiterated his real reasons for withholding it, which were that he feared to see the old burghers swamped by the new and the Transvaal turned from a Boer into a British State. Still, he thought that he saw his way to gradual enfranchisement of the new-comers pari passu with the growth of the old burghers. He then proposed to reduce, from fourteen to nine years, the term which the law of 1894 had fixed as the shortest within which an Outlander could become a first-class burgher, and he held out hopes of still further reductions in the future. This speech was clearly meant to open the door to negotiations with the British authorities, who were now definitely understood to have taken up the cause of the Outlanders. Sir Alfred Milner at once accepted the challenge. He pointed out that the President's proposal, unbacked as it was by any guarantees, could not be considered adequate; but negotiation was fairly begun.

By way of letting all parties concerned know what the British attitude was, at the beginning of May Sir Alfred Milner telegraphed home a long and important despatch, summing up the situation,
which was immediately published as a manifesto of the Government's intentions. The High Commissioner's language was throughout such as to imply that he felt deeply for the sufferings, with faith in which the Johannesburgers had filled his mind. He began by recapitulating the Reformers' grievances on the familiar lines. To those already mentioned he added a new one, "the personal indignity involved in the Outlanders' position of permanent subjection to the ruling caste, which owed its wealth and power to their exertion." He wrote in moving terms of the way in which the British were despised and insulted by the Boers, until his readers had visions of a social degradation comparable to that of the negro in the United States. It will be well here to quote the opinion on this point of one of the fairest and most able of the special correspondents who visited Johannesburg in 1899. His conclusion on the "helot" question was as follows:—

"As for general liberty and even licence of conduct, it exists nowhere if not in Johannesburg. Every luxury of life, every extravagance of behaviour, every form of private vice flourishes unchecked; every man and woman—except coloured folk, who do the work and don't count—says and does what seems good in his or her own eyes. The helot wears his golden chains with insolent composure of demeanour as he feasts in the sumptuous rooms of the Rand and the New Clubs, or lolls in the rickshaw which, drawn by the toiling Kaffir, bears
him to his luxurious home. The entire wealth of the country, drawn from the bowels of the earth by Kaffir labour, passes easily into his hands, with the exception of a toll taken by the Government, which he resents as if it were the fruits of the toil of his own hands; in a land of simple-mannered, plain-living farmers, he alone has material luxury and the leisure to enjoy it. As for the official insolence upon which my ship-companion fell back as the solid grievance, nothing of it was observable. People sometimes told me that the Zarp* answered Englishmen uncivilly when they tried to talk in Dutch—the only language the Zarp understands—and that other officials put impediments in the way of Englishmen transacting business unless their palms were greased. This may be so; the country Boer drafted into the police force is certainly ignorant, probably rude in manner, and more than possibly corrupt. But to suggest that out of such matters intolerable grievances can be constituted is a bold defiance of common sense. So far as the evidence of a casual visitor is permissible, I may say that I experienced none of that incivility of matter or manner in dealing with postal and other Civil officials which English people expect in France or Germany. My sober judgment, formed upon careful consideration of the kind of Englishman who is working up these grievances, is that this insolence imputed to the Boer simply consists in his

* A policeman of the South African Republic, so nicknamed from the initials of the force in Dutch, Z.A.R.P., on his uniform.
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assumption of equality and refusal of that deference or recognition of superiority which the British have come to expect in other parts of South Africa. Britishers coming from the colonies are accustomed to despise 'the dirty Boer' and to regard him as a social inferior; in the Transvaal they find him in power and refusing to accept the role of inferior; hence their indignation."

The same writer added that there was no place on the continent of Europe which could, in practical freedom of action, speech, and publication, be compared to Johannesburg in 1899. We quite believe this to be the truth; one would be sorry for an Englishman who should speak openly of the German Emperor in a Berlin café, or on the Jungfernstieg at Hamburg, as the Outlanders of the Rand freely talked in all public places of President Kruger and his "corrupt oligarchy," without let or hindrance from the Boers. The talk of social oppression seems to have been little more than a political cry, which served its purpose in inflaming English public sentiment against the brutal Boers. The financial grievances, the dynamite monopoly, the railway rates, the corrupt officials, and so on, were real enough, though Sir Alfred Milner laid less stress on them than upon the other plea in which he was persuaded to believe. The fact that the Outlanders were content to ask for the franchise, and confident of their own ability to right their wrongs with its aid alone, lent an air of constitutionalism to the movement. The cry of "No Taxation without
Representation," which had so often been heard in the Transvaal, was again made to do duty. The High Commissioner went on to summarize his suggestions for reform in the following important paragraph:

"The true remedy is to strike at the root of all these injuries—the political impotence of the injured. What diplomatic protests will never accomplish, a fair measure of Outlander representation would gradually but surely bring about. It seems a paradox, but it is true, that the only effective way of protecting our subjects is to help them to cease to be our subjects. The admission of Outlanders to a fair share of political power would no doubt give stability to the Republic; but at the same time it will remove most of our causes of difference with it, and modify, and in the long run entirely remove the intense suspicion and bitter hostility to Great Britain which at present dominate its internal and external policy."

The wisdom of publishing this despatch in full must seem to be extremely doubtful, if peaceful success in the negotiations was really desired. Mr. Kruger, as we now know, had made up his mind that he would fight sooner than give any real share in the franchise to the overwhelming numbers of the Outlanders. The last sentence of the paragraph just quoted from Sir Alfred Milner's despatch could only be taken by the President and his advisers to mean that the British Government was resolved to get the Outlanders such a share, in the undisguised
hope that they would then become the most powerful party in the State, and would merge its independence in union with the British Empire. We can only conclude that Mr. Chamberlain had either entirely misconceived the real character of Mr. Kruger, and the extent to which he could command the support of the Boers, or had made up his mind that war was inevitable before lasting peace could be secured in South Africa. Whichever alternative we adopt, it is not surprising that the negotiations were not successful. In Mr. Chamberlain's reply to Sir Alfred Milner's despatch he declared that the British Government hoped that the publicity which had been given by them to the Outlander complaints would induce the Transvaal to give way. This would incline us to the first alternative, did not his own declaration in Parliament give colour to the second. Probably his real motive was a mixture of the two. The Colonial Secretary trusted that Mr. Kruger was bluffing, and would give way in the matter of the franchise as he had given way in the matter of the Drifts, forgetting, or not caring, that the one question involved national independence in Mr. Kruger's eyes, whilst the other was only a matter of finance. It is singularly hard for many of us to realize that there may exist more powerful motives to action than those which have a financial basis. If, however, Mr. Kruger would really fight sooner than yield the only thing which would satisfy the Outlanders, then it may reasonably have been felt
that open and bloody war would be better than the perpetual and undignified bickerings which had gone on since Mr. Chamberlain assumed office.

In the same despatch Mr. Chamberlain affirmed the intention of the British Government to carry through the reforms which the Outlanders demanded. He based his right to interfere in the internal affairs of the South African Republic on three grounds: the Convention of London, which had provided for equality of rights amongst all white settlers in the Transvaal; the position of Great Britain as the Paramount Power in South Africa, and the maintainer of the pax Britannica, which was threatened by the condition of the Transvaal; and the national obligation to protect British subjects even in a foreign country. He concluded by suggesting that President Kruger and the High Commissioner should meet and discuss the whole state of things in an amiable spirit, with a view to removing the Outlander grievances and establishing a permanent friendship between Great Britain and the Transvaal State.

Meanwhile the other South African Governments, who all viewed the menacing state of affairs with grave concern, had endeavoured to use their good offices to preserve peace. Mr. Schreiner, the Cape Premier, was bound to be placed in a position of singular difficulty and pain between the forces of his loyalty to the Queen and his sympathy with the Boers in the event of war. He personally endeavoured to persuade Mr. Kruger that resistance to Great Britain must be in vain. As one of the leading statesmen of
the Africander Bond, himself of Dutch descent, Mr. Schreiner was able to speak for the whole of the Cape Dutch, and it was not without reason that the Colonial Office publicly expressed its thanks in July to him, and to his unofficial colleague, Mr. Hofmeyr, for the part that they had taken in impressing a peaceful complexion upon the councils of the South African Republic. The President of the Orange Free State, who already foresaw that in case of war his country would inevitably be involved in the quarrel, arranged an informal conference at Bloemfontein between Mr. Kruger and Sir Alfred Milner. It was then that the Transvaal President made his already quoted declaration that the franchise could not be freely given to the Outlanders without their becoming the chief party in his State, which must in his view lead to the speedy loss of Boer independence. But, short of that, he was prepared to do much for a friendly understanding; the pickings of corruption might be dear to the Boer official mind, but they were not worth fighting for. Sir Alfred Milner disclaimed any desire to interfere, directly or indirectly, with the independence of the Boers, though his language must have seemed insincere to those who had read his May despatch, and who considered Boer independence and a commanding British element in the Transvaal as incompatible. President Kruger then first suggested arbitration on the whole dispute. The High Commissioner refused to discuss anything but the franchise, and the conference closed with no result
but that of strengthening each of the parties to it in a conviction of the necessity of firmness.

During the next month, however, negotiations went forward with an air of approaching settlement. Mr. Schreiner and President Steyn were using all their influence on President Kruger to persuade him to offer a reasonable measure of enfranchise-ment. Ultimately affairs came to a position in which Mr. Kruger professed himself willing to grant the franchise to all Outlanders who should have been in the Transvaal for seven years and would take the oath of allegiance; this measure was to be retrospective. Sir Alfred Milner stood out for a reduction of the term to five years, and the details of the plan and its guarantees were felt to be unsatisfactory. Still there did not seem to be an insuperable difference between the parties, and before Parliament was prorogued in August, Mr. Chamberlain assured the House of Commons that a peaceful and satisfactory solution of the problem would in all probability soon be found.

But a new cause of dispute now arose. In his despatch of July 27th to the High Commissioner, Mr. Chamberlain stated that no controversy could be allowed as to the interpretation of the preamble of the Convention of 1881, which governed the articles substituted in the Convention of 1884. We have already seen that the Boers believed that this preamble, with its enunciation of the Queen's suzerainty over the South African Republic, had been repealed by the Convention of London; their lack
of familiarity with diplomatic language and methods is sufficient to account for their mistake. This question of the suzerainty had been raised several times since the raid, but had never been fully discussed or definitely settled. At this juncture, however, the mere suggestion of British suzerainty, which they did not fully understand, but which they believed to be much the same as British supremacy, and quite inconsistent with their independence, stiffened the backs of the Boers. This was all the more natural because the South African League, whose adhesion to the cause of the millionaires and the ex-conspirators was common knowledge, had all along been publicly urging the High Commissioner to insist upon the suzerainty, and stand no nonsense from a subject State. When the Colonial Secretary also took up this cry, it seems to have been felt in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State that war was inevitable if the Boers wished to retain their independence. It was no longer believed that the British Government was acting honestly; in the light of the Boers’ sixty years’ experience of British Governments, we can hardly be surprised at this. Mr. Kruger and his countrymen then made up their minds that, if they yielded on one point, another would be raised. Instead of frankly saying so, and asking for satisfactory guarantees that the Colonial Secretary was not working in the interests of the extreme Outlander party, they went on with the negotiations, but now in a secretly hostile spirit. Perhaps Mr. Kruger hoped that his policy of temporizing, and
wearying out his opponents, and waiting for a change in their councils, would again succeed. Perhaps he only wished to stave off war as long as possible. That he was honestly eager to avoid fighting is clear, from the fact that, after a month of ineffectual argument about arbitration, he suddenly changed his ground, and offered, on August 21st, to concede the full terms for which Sir Alfred Milner had asked at Bloemfontein—a five years' retrospective franchise, a redistribution of seats, giving the Outlander districts ten out of thirty-six representatives in the First Chamber, and the right for all burghers, new and old alike, to vote in the election of the President and the Commandant General. The conditions attached to this offer were that the British Government should solemnly abandon all claim to the suzerainty and promise never again to interfere in the internal affairs of the Republic. Mr. Chamberlain promptly accepted this offer, but deliberately and distinctly refused the conditions attached to it. Great Britain, he said, would never abandon the suzerainty acknowledged in the two Conventions, nor limit her right to interfere for the protection of her subjects. He suggested that, if the President would adhere to his offer and drop his conditions, a conference between him and the High Commissioner at Cape Town might adjust its details. No answer was received to this proposal for nearly a fortnight—the negotiations being all carried on by telegraph—and on the last day of August the High Commissioner wired home that British South Africa was "prepared for extreme
measures." In saying this he seems to have neglected to consider the sentiments of the Dutch element at the Cape, which was unanimous in hoping and believing that, when the two Governments had been so nearly agreed, a peaceful settlement would speedily be attained.

By this time the South African Republic, seeing the suzerainty insisted on, and alarmed by the declarations of the extreme Outlanders, no less than by Mr. Chamberlain's militant diplomacy, had lost all hope of peace. Mr. Kruger now embarked upon a course which can only be acquitted of criminal rashness if we suppose that he had made up his mind to fight, and thought it wiser to do so before new British forces could be poured into South Africa. On September 2nd he withdrew his offer of August 21st, and repeated his assertion that the suzerainty had not existed since 1884. A week later Mr. Chamberlain replied in a manner which was intended to be firm but conciliatory, and would no doubt have so appeared to any European diplomatist, that the South African Republic could not be allowed the status which it seemed to claim of "a Sovereign International State," and that he was still ready, with that reservation, to accept the August proposal. On September 16th the Transvaal Government replied that the August proposal could not be considered without the conditions attached, which were an integral part of it. On September 22nd the Secretary for the Colonies answered that, in that case, it was of no use to pursue the discussion further, as the Conventions must
stand. He added that the British Government would be "now compelled to consider the question afresh, and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement of the issues which had been created in South Africa by the policy constantly followed for many years by the Republic." Meanwhile orders had been sent to move additional troops from India to South Africa, and to concentrate the forces already available in the neighbourhood of the Transvaal frontier.

It was now reasonably clear that only complete surrender on the part of the Transvaal could avert a British attack. Perhaps the British negotiators still hoped that Mr. Kruger was bluffing, or that his Boers would not follow him over the edge of war. But the Johannesburgers knew better, and all who could escape were in flight. Rumours arrived in London that the commandoes were out, and arming. President Steyn, after making a last unsuccessful attempt to play the part of mediator, announced that in any event the Orange Free State would stand by the Transvaal. On October 7th, as no reply to the last despatch had been received and the war-cloud was thickening, the British Government called out the Reserves, mobilized an Army Corps, and summoned Parliament. Meanwhile Mr. Chamberlain had sent out an ultimatum, which was anticipated by President Kruger and was never delivered. On Monday, October 9th, the Transvaal Government presented the British Resident at Pretoria with an ultimatum which insisted on a promise that all subjects in dispute
should be submitted to arbitration, and demanded the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the Transvaal border, and the assurance that no more should be landed; in default of this assurance, a state of war would exist at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, October 11th. This ultimatum was received in London, to the general amazement, on Tuesday. No answer, of course, was possible, except immediate preparation for the war, which nominally broke out the next day, and is raging on the Transvaal borders while I write. At the present moment it would be improper to speculate on the future course of Transvaal history. The reader has before him all the materials necessary for forming his own judgment. It will be the task of later years to replace likely conjecture by established fact.
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