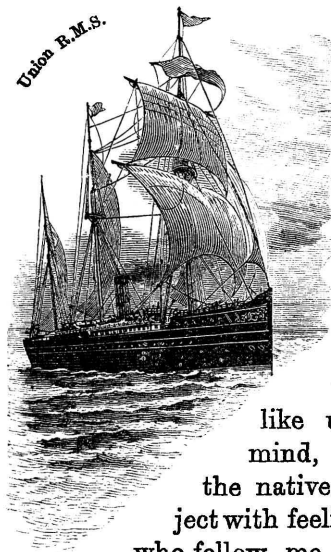


CAPE TOWN AND TABLE BAY.
(From a Photograph by Robert Harris.)

CHAPTER I.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE DISCOVERY AND COLONISATION OF THE CAPE COLONY, BY THE PORTUGUESE, DUTCH, AND ENGLISH.



THE weird tales of adventure which have been put forth from time to time regarding Africa, have succeeded in drawing such a veil of mystery over the country, that the ordinary reader has come to regard it as a region where savage and unapproachable nations live and die in a miserable state of perpetual bloodshed, strife, superstition and bondage. Sandy deserts, like unhealthy dreams, pass before his mind, and horrible rites as practised by the natives cause him to turn from the subject with feelings closely akin to loathing. Those who follow me through these pages, however, will speedily learn how erroneous and unjust such impressions are. True it is, that in certain localities some such horrors as those enumerated do occur occasionally, but they are not nearly so common or general as one might infer from the accounts of romantic and imaginative writers, who have found in Africa that convenient uncertainty so necessary to the success of their productions. It will be my task to glance

briefly and comprehensively at British, Dutch and Portuguese Africa, and then plunge with my readers into the wilder and little known, but none the less fertile regions inland, where primitive man still reigns as happily as ever did our original ancestors by the far Euphrates. I do not aim merely at writing a guide book, but rather at painting a faithful picture of the great land that is, in my opinion, destined in the very early future to dazzle the world with the magnitude of its hidden treasures and to add another empire, pregnant with resources, to our already grand and glorious one.

It must not be imagined that this desirable result will ever be fully attained without earnest and fearless endeavour on the part of Imperial citizens and Colonial pioneers, who must combine to unravel the many problems that inevitably beset the construction of a new land; and if a word or a line from my pen should chance either to encourage or aid the good work, I shall feel in a sense rewarded for the years of hardship and labour which I have spent amongst the dusky natives, who to-day stand watching the advance of that civilisation which means either a renewal of life or a war of extermination to them. Time and again the trembling balance has tended, within the past twenty years, to the latter terrible contingency; but, happily, the war-wave spent itself before it roused the hot, eager blood of those who dwell "beyond the Zulus." It is the mission—nay, the bounden duty—of every traveller, be he simple tourist or professional explorer, to strain every nerve in the work of conciliation for the double purpose of preserving some of the noble tribes of Africa, who, as will be shown presently, are well worthy to stand shoulder to shoulder with us, and to secure a field for the constantly increasing population of the great centres of the homeland.

The world is, so to speak, daily growing smaller. Far out and almost unheard of regions are now, owing to a constant and perfect system of ocean steam navigation, brought within negotiable distance. To set out for Africa is no longer

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 3

a task of severe self-sacrifice; and to settle in that country is far removed from the species of exile that it used to be. The question as to whether Africa would ever become a useful producing country is now, I think, admitted by the world to have received a final and grand answer. The fact that the Diamond Mines have added thirteen tons weight of diamonds, with a value of £60,000,000 to the wealth of the world; that within the past half-century *one thousand tons* of ostrich feathers have been shipped from the Cape, and that the Transvaal Gold Fields are daily and hourly pouring forth their golden grains at the rate of £380,000 per month, speaks for itself.

All this may savour somewhat of boastfulness, for Africa is so much my country that, like a fond mother, I am apt to revel in her rapidly increasing glory; yet an examination of statistics will prove the accuracy of my statements, which are not excessive when it is remembered that I have not mentioned other valuable productions, such as wool, mohair, arrowroot, hides, horns, ivory, copper, and half-a-hundred other necessaries of civilisation.

Having thus outlined something of the wealth of the country, we will turn to the story of the discovery of its southern extremities, and learn something of the brave hearts whose labours still echo through the "corridors of Time,"

The records of early African exploration are brimful of interest to the student of history. There is a chivalry, a romance and a fascination about them far exceeding that of other lands. Glancing back, we find that in the year 1415, this fascination still hung over the land of gold and ivory. For King John the First of Portugal having heard of the wonderful reported wealth of the African sultans and kings, fitted out armies under able generals and sent them forth with the intent to wrest some of their gold from them, for the "Glory of God and Portugal."

The accounts left by these primitive explorers form a distinct literature, while their maps and charts are veritable works of art. Gilded domes set with rich gems; vast and

populous cities, stately and grand almost beyond conception, were cast here, there, and everywhere with a lavish hand; while monsters of unspeakable ferocity barred their path and threatened them with instant death. Unicorns were everyday occurrences; wild men of the woods fought side by side with golden helmeted Amazons, of most dangerous and seductive beauty; while strange rumbling sounds and fiery mountains came in just where required. I have travelled over the same ground, and looked in vain for some of these horrors, but never an Amazon with any pretension to beauty could I find.

Whether these navigators told their stories in good faith, or for the purpose of enhancing their achievements, I will not say, for it is ill work to slander dead men; but simple justice requires that we should give them honour, for they dared grandly and died right loyally in the effort to glorify their nation and build up her power. Divested of all the romance lent by untutored minds, their labours stand to-day as a monument to valour and an example to us of a more enlightened age.

Those who have toiled through the African wilds, even with our modern appliances and comforts, know what privation means; but what must it have been to them as, clad in cumbersome armour, they struggled on and on into the unknown and the mysterious? Overhead, the sun, like a shield of fire, poured down his rays on them, while on one hand a lonely sea, and on the other, the fierce untamed natives spake only of torment, solitude or death. I have often pictured, while on my own travels, the terrible reality of the brave King Sebastian's toils, when, followed by a throng of champions, he set out on the conquest of Africa—no small task. They landed, it is said, in the very heart of the fever king's realm, described by a poet as a region

Where plains of quaking sand roll up in waves,
And unnamed rivers flow past meadow lands;
Where never man is seen, and frightful beasts
Make the night hideous with hoarse bellowings.—*Odean.*

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 5

At first all went well with them, for they were accredited by the natives with supernatural powers and attributes, but not for long; the whistling arrows and the heavy clubs soon set to work and stretched many a brave cavalier on the alien soil. Slowly but surely the end came on; visions of conquest and wealth vanished like morning vapours, and the terrible reality of defeat and death stared the survivors in the face. Provisions expended, pestilence gnawing into their very hearts—how they must have longed for a glimpse of their native land; and how they must have strained their eyes over the lonely sea in search of a sail that never came. Still, on and on, until wearied to death, they sank, one by one, and died raving in delirium and beating their breasts in hopelessness. Surely we cannot wonder that the romancers have seized on the land, and, ignoring its own inherent worth, have dashed it with the poetry and the pathos of death.

Much, if not all this distress and suffering was begotten of ignorance of the climatic requirements of the region, and of an utter lack of that conciliatory policy which cannot be too earnestly inculcated. Modern travellers have since found that even in the most deadly fever regions, care and foresight will do much to lessen, if not remove, the danger of infection; while the dusky potentates, who have been described as unapproachable, are in reality anything but bad fellows, when properly treated. I have, on more than one occasion, clasped hands with some of them in firm friendship and brotherhood.

Passing from the epoch of uncertainty, we find that later in the same century (1486), that indefatigable navigator, Bartholomew Diaz, sailed round the Cape, and named it "Cabo Tormentoso." His master, King John II., however, with truer insight, changed this name to the more promising and prophetic one of "Cabo de Boa Esperança." Eleven years later, Vasco da Gama followed him to that region, and, heading north along the East Coast, truthfully, carefully, and well explored and described the region now known as Natal, which was so called from the fact of its discovery on Christmas

Day (1497). Passing on, he added to the geographical knowledge of the world by exploring Delagoa Bay, Inhambane, Quilimane and Mozambique.

It was not to be expected that these explorers—with their primitive galleys, restricted appliances, and necessarily small force—should do much in the way of inland exploration ; that was a question for the very distant future, for we find that for about two hundred years the field of their labours lay almost fallow.

The harbours only, it appears, were visited at long intervals by occasional navigators who sought shelter in them from stress of weather : of these, Table Bay and Saldanha Bay were the most favoured ; and we read of how the commanders (named Shillinge and Fitz-Herbert) of a small English fleet landed and took possession of the South African Coast in the name of His Majesty King James the First (1620). As far as history goes that was the end of the matter, and the Hottentots, who at that time were a fine robust nation, held on their way in happy carelessness of the world beyond their magic and shipless waters.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century the Dutch East India Company obtained a Charter from the States General of the United Provinces, but it was not until fifty years later that they set about establishing a Trading Station in the vicinity of the present Cape Town (1652). At this time the Hottentots, of whom mention has already been made, were ruled over by a paramount chief or king called Manckhagon, who, in consideration of the value of four thousand reals of Eight in sundry goods and articles, sold to the Dutchmen a district extending from Lion Hill (of which more anon) along the Coast of Table Bay, with the Hout and Saldanha Bays inclusive. The Governor, if we may so term him, of this germ of a colony, was named Jan Anthony Van Riebeeck, a surgeon by profession, and a good, straightforward man by nature. A few years later he concluded another purchase, from a chief named Dhouw. This latter acquisition included False Bay and its adjacent cape, so that even thus early we

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 7

find civilisation widening and taking a firmer grip on the land.

It must not be imagined that this meant anything like a robbery of the natives, for the land really represented no value to them, and its occupation by the burly, phlegmatic and good-humoured settlers was a distinct advantage, for markets were established where they might exchange their cattle and such vegetables as they cared to raise for the necessaries and luxuries imported or produced by the whites. According to history, the most friendly and cordial relations existed between the two races.

Although Van Riebeeck was such a painstaking and conscientious ruler, he does not seem to have been either ambitious or progressive, for he made, as far as I can learn, no attempt to increase the settlement or elevate it to the dignity of a "Colony," as we understand the word. That task was reserved for a successor, named Simon van der Stell. This astute personage seems to have been the first to realise that although the Cape of Good Hope was not Holland, and home, yet that it more than matched it in fertility and wealth. The Directors of the Company, on his representations, resolved to send out a number of agriculturists, who were to obtain land-grants.

Mr. John Noble, in his interesting history of *South Africa*, tells us that, at this period (1685-8), the religious persecution of the Protestants, set on foot by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, was flooding the Dutch Republic with refugee Waldenses from Piedmont and the Italian Alps. The Dutchmen received and sheltered them in a thorough spirit of Christianity and brotherhood. As many of these refugees were "persons who understood the culture of the vine and were willing and anxious to emigrate," Van Stell's want was soon supplied and that with just the right sort of men. I will ask you to note the origin here of these folk, for later on, when we find ourselves journeying amongst their direct descendants, the present "Boers," or farmers, it will be interesting to mark the

resemblance between the old stock and their present stalwart representatives.

The terms of their settlement were liberal and kindly to the last degree, for referring to Mr. Noble's history again, we learn that "Those applying themselves to farming should be given as much ground as they could bring under cultivation ; and, in case of requiring it, should be furnished with all implements necessary and even seed, upon condition that they should afterwards re-imburse the Company for such advances, in corn, wine or other goods." Over one hundred and fifty men, women, and children, were introduced under these auspices, and, be it noted, with the happiest results.

Although matters were progressing in a placid and peaceful manner, the people were not without a grievance, for the Company possessed a monopoly of trade, and exclusive authority over the sale of produce. The first cloud that arose in the horizon of this primitive and out-of-the-way settlement, was the outcome of this monopoly, against which a memorial was framed and forwarded home. As soon as Stell discovered this, he imprisoned or exiled the ringleaders, and thundered his wrath in proclamations against the others. But discontent must find a vent, and the vent in this case was a gradual dispersion of the settlers towards the interior of the country, where some of them, it was feared, stood in danger of lapsing into barbarism by reason of the wildness of their surroundings.

In order to avert this, the authorities at the Cape established a magistracy at Swellendam, and appointed a minister of religion to whip in those whose eyes were wandering to the strange women of the native tribes. Fortunately but little, if any, intermarriage took place, otherwise a serious check might have been given to the civilisation of the country. Steadily as they advanced, the colonists, settlers, squatters, or whatever they might be called, displaced the complaisant Hottentots ; but met with difficulty from the Bushmen who inhabited the hills, now known as the Roggeveld, Nieuwveld and the

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 9

Sneeuwbergen; while the warlike Kafirs in the east and north-east checked their spread in those regions.

In consequence of these two hostile elements, the farmers, on the outskirts of the flying fringe of civilisation, were often in great peril. The Kafirs began to fear that they, like the Hottentots, were to be displaced by the "White-ones," and the ready spears were lifted in defiance. This had a good effect on the colonists, for it made them value what they had, and cease to covet that of others. The necessity for combination for purposes of defence had now arisen, and from it sprang the system now known in the present Republics as the "Commando." Rough and ready leaders, called "Veld Cornets," were elected; these acted as captains and organisers in the event of any outbreak or disturbance.

We will now leave the interior provinces and take a peep at the coast again, where matters began to assume rather an unpleasant aspect, for (1782) war had broken out between England and Holland. The latter country, having enough for her soldiers to do at home, could spare none for the defence of the Cape. The supply of money was also stopped, and the establishment of a paper currency was the result. This currency speedily fell in value, and great discontent broke out amongst the settlers. While some went into open revolt, others, of the better sort, took more constitutional means to obtain a reform of the whole code of laws—notably those which governed and cramped trade. Just at this juncture (1795), as though their own internal troubles were not enough, a foe, in the form of an English fleet under Admiral Elphinstone and General Craig, appeared off the Cape.

It seems that in Europe an alliance had been entered into between the Prince of Orange (who had found a refuge in England) and the English, against their common enemy—France. The English being fully alive to the importance of the Cape as a port of call on the Indian route, despatched this fleet to hold the post. General Craig bore with him a letter from the Prince of Orange to his "good people." But the afore-

said good people regarded the epistle of the refugee William with anything but respect, and refused to allow the British forces to land. Marshalling their little army, which numbered about one thousand whites and three thousand blacks, under able and brave officers, they prepared to do battle. Forts were thrown up near Kalk Bay (where their remains may still be seen), and the dogs of war were loosed. After a gallant fight, in which two of the colonial officers greatly distinguished themselves, a halt was called, and negotiations entered into, with the result that the English entered Cape Town.

Thus ended the existence of the Dutch Company's power in Africa.

I will bring the early records of the country to a close as speedily as possible; but, in order to thoroughly grasp the situation, it is necessary to record the fact, that General Craig, having assumed the reins of government, proclaimed Free Trade, and other reforms: such as restoring to its value the paper currency, introducing a fresh supply of specie, and establishing tribunals of justice. Affairs were shaping well, when (1802) in accordance with the treaty of Amiens, which had been executed the previous year, the region was restored to the Hollanders, but only for a time. A governor, named Janssens, was appointed, and an honest attempt made to establish a firm and prosperous possession. Considerable difficulty was experienced in ruling the frontier farmers, who, during these changes, were leading a roisterous and independent life. Forming in gangs, like the Moss Troopers of old between England and Scotland, they lived almost entirely by the plunder they took from the Kafirs, while those dusky and wily braves, not to be outdone, waged a return war on the Whites. The governor divided the country into five counties or districts, *i.e.*, Stellenbosch, Swellendam, Graaff Reinet, Uitenhage, and Tulbagh. Magistrates (called landdrosts) were appointed, and some show of force made, in order to remove the farmers' excuse that "they were obliged, in self defence, to loot the natives." Under this *régime* much

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 11

good was done, but it was reserved for the English to do the real work of civilisation. War was again declared in Europe (1805), and a British expedition set sail for the purpose of holding the Cape, as before. After some fighting, in which both the English and Dutch warriors distinguished themselves for bravery and devotion, victory declared itself on the side of the British. The Batavian troops fell back, under Janssens, who, in response to an appeal from Sir David Baird, the English general, came to terms, and embarked for Holland. Even at this period the British Government was not alive to the wealth and importance of the Cape and adjacent territories as a colony, regarding it merely in the light of a military and naval post.

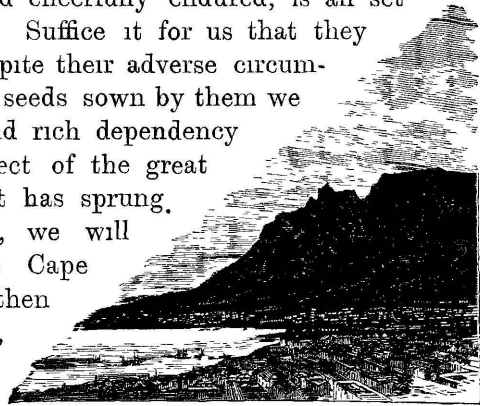
Following Sir David Baird, came the Earl of Caledon and Sir John Cradock, who did much, by the kindness and policy of their behaviour, to cement good fellowship between the settlers, who were for the most part of the old stock. New blood was sadly needed, and the introduction of colonists clamoured for. In order to show how this took place, I cannot do better than quote the following paragraph from Mr. Noble's history of South Africa, which is an invaluable book to all who desire to take an intelligent interest in the development of the country.

“Shortly after the close of the war with Napoleon the First, when trade was oppressed and emigration was looked upon as an outlet for the relief of the unemployed, the British Parliament voted £50,000 towards colonising the country. In a short time, 90,000 applications for passages were sent in, although only 4,000 could be accepted. Most of these emigrants were landed at Algoa Bay, in 1820. These may be looked upon as the ‘Pilgrim Fathers’ of Africa. The Rev. Mr. Dugmore, a son of one of the earliest settlers, has preserved to us his recollections of their arrival and the spots where they were located. Bailie's party, he says, made their way to the mouth of the Fish River; Wilson's party settled on the plains of the Waaiplaats and the Kowie Bush—right across

the path of the elephants, some of which they tried to shoot with fowling-pieces, while Sefton's party founded the village of Salem."

And so it went on, smaller groups dotted the intervals between the larger ones, each forming centres, which have since grown to stately dimensions. One unpleasant episode, which had an important bearing on the extension of colonisation, occurred about this period (1835-6). Owing to the imperfect knowledge of the natives possessed by the newly-established English authorities, considerable injustice, it is said, was done to certain of the Dutch frontier communities, who after protesting in vain against the native policy which was being carried out, resolved to strike off to the northward and establish for themselves an independent state.

These adventurers will be dealt with at a later stage of the story. Meanwhile, there is a great temptation to follow in detail the labours of the brave and enterprising settlers who remained in spite of discouragements and dangers. How they fought and toiled, and cheerfully endured, is all set down in other works. Suffice it for us that they lived and thrived, despite their adverse circumstances, and from the seeds sown by them we have a prosperous and rich dependency worthy in every respect of the great nations from which it has sprung. Leaving history now, we will take a peep at the Cape Colony as it is, and then resume our journey, for we have much ground to travel over.



CHAPTER II.



THE CAPE COLONY OF TO-DAY.

THE superficial area of the Cape Colony is 213,636 miles, or about double the size of the whole of Great Britain and Ireland.

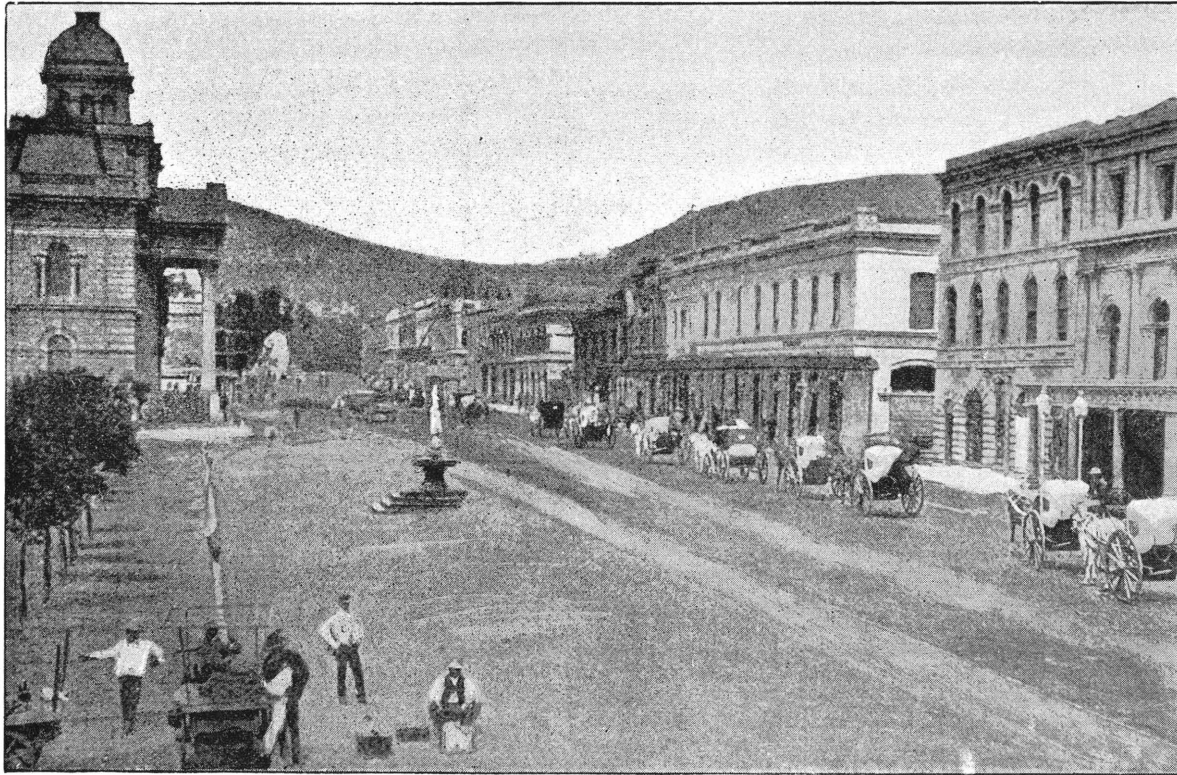
It is bounded on the east by the Umtata River, from its mouth to the town of Umtata, and from thence along the line of road separating Griqualand East from Pondoland to a point on the Umtamvuna River, touching the boundary of Natal. Thence to the Umzimkulu River, and north to the Drakensberg range of mountains, following them to the source of the Telle River and thence to its junction with the Orange River and along the course of this natural boundary to a point named Ramah, then in a northerly direction along the frontier of the Orange Free State to Platberg on the Vaal River, thence following that stream to its junction with the Orange River, and on to the sea on the West Coast. The population of the Colony, according to the Census of 1891, is 1,526,739, made up of all nations—well leavened with English and Dutch.

The first glimpse of the Cape Peninsula which the voyager obtains, presents a characteristic specimen of the form and structure of the mountain ranges of the country. It would require the inspired pencil of a Doré, and the majestic measures of a Milton to do full justice to the vastness and

beauty of the great "Table Mountain" that rises in abrupt cliffs from the sea to an altitude of 3,852 feet. The clouds almost continually hover about its towering crests, which suggest the idea of an altar worthy of the Master at whose command they took form.

Nestling on the lower slopes of the mountain lies the metropolis of South Africa, which at first sight, owing to the magnitude of its surroundings, does not impress one with its dimensions. The mountain itself is flanked on the right by a curious-looking hill called the Lion's Head, which attains 2,000 feet or more of altitude. The continuation of this hill supplies the rest of the body of the "King of Beasts." The Devil's Peak towers on the left. This hill was called "Windberg" by the ancient navigators. It lifts its head to an elevation of 3,315 feet, and it is in the semicircular valley between this latter and the great central mountain that Cape Town is built. The delicate tinting of the rocks, and the luxuriant foliage which clothes their lower reaches, particularly, imparts a charm to the scenery, which is especially welcome after the sea voyage.

On landing, the visitor will be pleasantly surprised to find that he has not, in crossing the ocean, left either home life or home associations behind him. Jostling each other on the wharves and in the streets are to be seen a busy throng of toilers, each as earnestly "focused" on winning the almighty dollar as even the heart of the most captious advocate of civilisation and progress could desire. The brown, yellow and black hue of some of those who first meet the eye is pleasantly relieved by the homely visages of the English, Irish, and Scotch colonists, whose tongues lend themselves to all languages; for one may hear all sorts of barbarous lingoes spoken with a fine Scottish accent, or with a rollicking Irish brogue. The streets are broad and straight, having been laid out after the Dutch style; while the houses, many of which are flat-roofed, are substantial, stately, and well abreast of the times. The main thoroughfare, Adderley Street, would do no discredit to an



ADDERLEY STREET, CAPE TOWN
(From a Photograph by Robert Harris.)

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 15

English provincial city, while here and there one comes unexpectedly on an architectural pile of great beauty.

The climate of the town, though hot in summer, is pleasant, and for health is remarkably good. Hitherto, some complaints have been made, and with justice, touching sanitary arrangements; but this defect is now being remedied by means of a complete system of drainage combined with a scheme of irrigation. Amongst the public buildings of note we may mention the Houses of Parliament, which were erected at a cost of £150,000, and the Standard Bank, which cost £32,000.

There is no lack of good hotels, clubs and boarding houses to suit all classes of visitors and settlers, while rents are fair and in proportion to the scale of wages. One may live as economically there as in England, and, if desired, every requisite in the way of luxury is within call. Provisions and food are reasonable in price.

Turning from the features of Cape Town to its inhabitants, we glean from the Census of 1891 that the population is 51,083 souls, and including the suburbs, 84,903. This comprises white and coloured races; of the latter, specimens of many kinds are to be seen, Malays, Fingoes, Bushmen, Indians,



Fingoes at Home.

Kafirs, Half-casts, &c., &c., from pale sickly yellow, to a deep, funereal, and unmistakable black. Society of a most enjoyable and cultivated description is to be had, but the intending tourist or settler will do well to provide himself with letters

of introduction and other credentials, for without these, "None shall enter." This may at first appear to be an exclusive and tyrannical rule, but nevertheless it is a necessary one; and to it may be traced the freedom from reserve, and the complete kindness of the colonists to those who are admitted to their circles. The idea that, because colonists are colonists they must necessarily be either uncouth or untutored, is a theory that has been given up long ago.

In glancing over a modern map of the Cape Colony, on which all the towns, villages and hamlets are set down, the eye is almost confused by their number, and for a moment it is hard to believe that the place has, in truth, advanced so marvellously within the past thirty years, for prior to that time little attention was, as I have striven to show, devoted to the real development of the country. There are now eight provinces, which, for magisterial and fiscal convenience, are sub-divided into seventy divisions or districts as follows:—

Western Province.

Divisions and Districts.	Towns and Villages.
Cape Town.....	Cape Town, Green Point, and Sea Point.
Cape Division.....	Woodstock, Maitland, Mowbray, Rondebosch
Simon's Town	Newlands, Claremont, Kenilworth, Wynberg, Plumstead, Diep River, Retreat, Constantia, Hout's Bay, Camp's Bay, Blaauwberg Strand, Robben Island, Durbanville, Muizenberg, Kalk Bay, Simon's Town.
Stellenbosch.....	Stellenbosch, Eerste River, Somerset West, Strand, Mosterd Bay, Sir Lowry's Pass, and Fish Hoek.
Paarl.....	Paarl, Wellington, Drakenstein, Fransche Hoek.

North-Western Province.

Malmesbury.....	Malmesbury, Darling, Hopefield, St. Helena Bay, Riebeeck West, Mamre, Groenekloof.
Piquetberg.....	Piquetberg, Porterville, and Goedverwacht.
Namaqualand.....	Springbokfontein, O'okiep, Hondeklip Bay, Port Nolloth, and Lilyfontein.
Clanwilliam.....	Clanwilliam, Calvinia, Van Rhyn's Dorp, Lambert's Bay, Brandvley, and Katkop.
Worcester.....	Worcester, Ceres, Tulbagh, Steinthal, Goudini Road, Tulbagh, Bergville, Hermon, Wolseley, Prince Alfred, and Matjesfontein.
Ceres	
Robertson (pt.)	
Prince Albert (pt.)	

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 17

South-Western Province.

Divisions and Districts.	Towns and Villages.
Swellendam	Swellendam, Heidelberg, Zuurbraak, Malagas, Port Robertson (pt.)
Riversdale	Beaufort, Robertson, Montagu, and Lady Grey. Riversdale, Ladismith, and Amalienstein.
Caledon	Ladismith. Caledon, Genadendal, Villiersdorp, Greyton, Bredasdorp.
Oudtshoorn	Oudtshoorn, Cango, and Calitzdorp.
George	George, Blanco, Hopedale, Uniondale, Pacaltsdorp, Mossel Bay.
Knysna.	Lyon, Aliwal South (Mossel Bay), Plettenberg's Bay, Knysna, Melville, Belvidere, and Millwood.
Uniondale (pt.)	
Willowmore (pt.)	

Midland Province.

Graaff Reinet	Graaff Reinet, Petersburg, Aberdeen and Murraysburg.
Murraysburg.	
Aberdeen. (pt.)	
Middleburg (pt.)	
Willowmore (pt.)	
Beaufort West	Beaufort West, Prince Albert, Willowmore, Prince Albert (pt.)
Willowmore (pt.)	Klaarstrom, Laingsburg, and Steytlerville.
Aberdeen (pt.)	
Victoria West	Victoria West, Prieska, Fraserburg, Williston, Fraserburg.
Carnarvon.	Kenhardt, Upington, Sutherland, and Carnarvon.
Richmond	Richmond, Britz Town, De Aar, Hope Town, and Hope Town.
Hanover (pt.)	Orange River Station.

South-Eastern Province.

Albany	Salem, Alicedale, Bathurst, Port Alfred, Southwell and Clumber.
Bathurst.	
Graham's Town.....	Graham's Town.
Victoria East	Alice, Lovedale, Peddie, Bell, and Bodiane.
Peddie.	
Uitenhage.....	Uitenhage, Jansenville, Humansdorp, Hankey, Jansenville.
Humansdorp.	Alexandria.
Alexandria.	
Willowmore (pt.)	
Port Elizabeth.....	Port Elizabeth and Walmer.

North-Eastern Province.

Fort Beaufort.....	Fort Beaufort, Adelaide, Seymour, Hertzog, Stockenstrom,
Albert	Balfour, and Philipton.
Middleburg (pt.)	Burghersdorp, Molteno, Sterkstroom, and Ventersstad.
Somerset East.....	Somerset East, Pearston, Commadagga, Middleton, Bedford, and Glenlynden.
Cradock.....	Cradock, Steynsburg, and Maraisburg.
Tarka (pt.)	
Middelburg (pt.)	

North-Eastern Province—continued.

<small>Divisions and Districts.</small>	<small>Towns and Villages.</small>
Colesberg	Colesberg, Philipstown, Petrusville, Hanover, and Middleburg.
Hanover (pt.)	
Middleburg (pt.)	

Eastern Province.

King William's Town ...	King William's Town, Berlin, Breidbach, Braunschweig, Frankfort, Keiskama Hoek. Kei Road, Stutterheim, and Komgha.
Stutterheim.	
Cathcart (pt.)	
Komgha (pt.)	
East London	East London, Panmure, Potsdam, and Maclean.
Komgha (pt.)	
Queen's Town.....	Queen's Town, Whittlesea, Sterkstroom, Sprigg Town, Tarkastad, Lady Frere, Glen Grey, and Cathcart.
Cathcart (pt.)	
Tarka (pt.)	
Aliwal North	Aliwal North, Lady Grey, James Town, and Herschel.
Herschel.	
Wodehouse	Dordrecht and Barkly East.
Barkly East.	

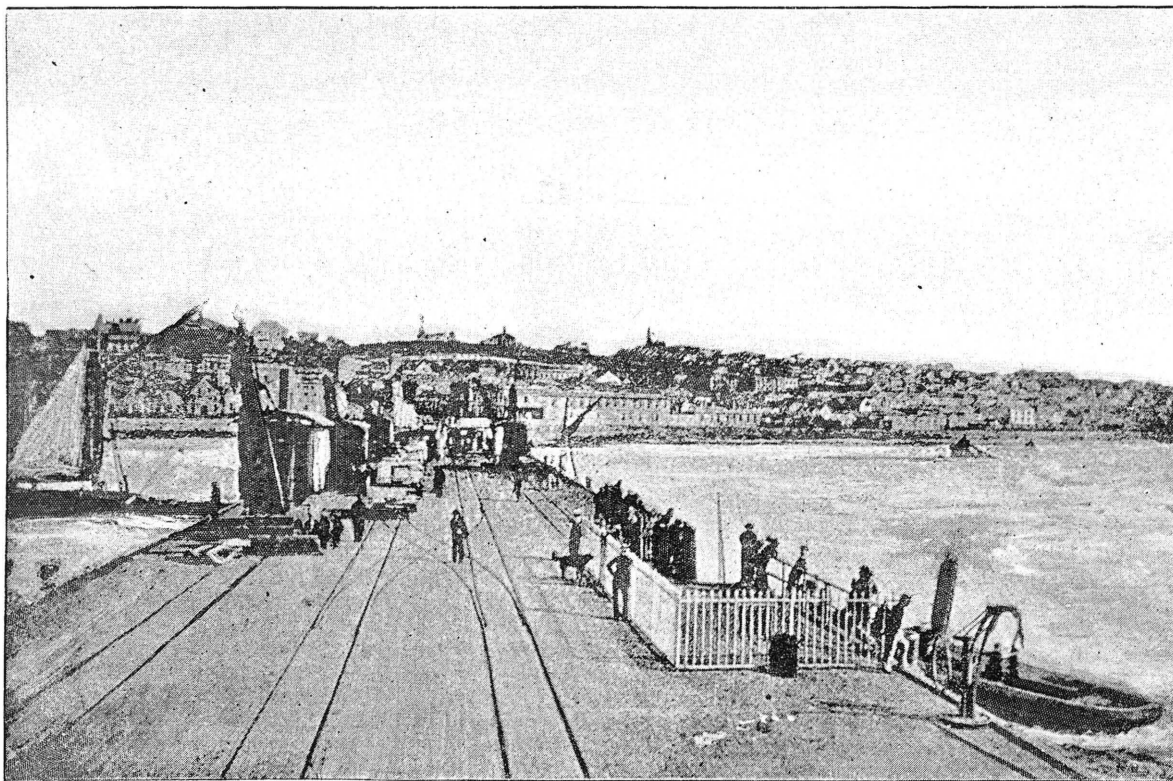
Griqualand West Province.

Kimberley	Kimberley, De Beer's, Beaconsfield, Du Toit's Pan, Herbert, Barkly West, Pniel, Douglas and Griqua Town.
Herbert.	
Barkly West.	
Hay.	

Transkeian Territories.

East Griqualand.....	Kokstad, Maclear, Ugie, Matatiele, Qumbu, Kokstad, Mount Frere, Isolo, Mount Fletcher, Mount Ayli Umzimkulu, Port St. John's.
Kokstad	
Matatiele.	
Qumbu.	
Isolo.	
Mount Fletcher.	
Mount Ayli.	
Umzimkulu.	
Port St. John's	
Tembuland.....	Umtata, St. Mark's, Cala.
Transkei.....	Idutywa, Isomo.
Idutywa.	
Isomo.	

In a general work such as the present, it would be an impossible task to attempt anything like a detailed description of the above enumerated settlements; suffice it to say, that they are all cleanly and habitable, each possessing its own institutions and its own attractions. There is, as a rule, a great similarity about these villages and towns, and there is not such a vast difference as one would suppose between village or inland town life in the Cape and in England. At frequent intervals English and Continental Mails are delivered; and the affairs of the great outside world are as earnestly and as intelli-



PORT ELIZABETH.
(From a Photograph by Robert Harris.)

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 19

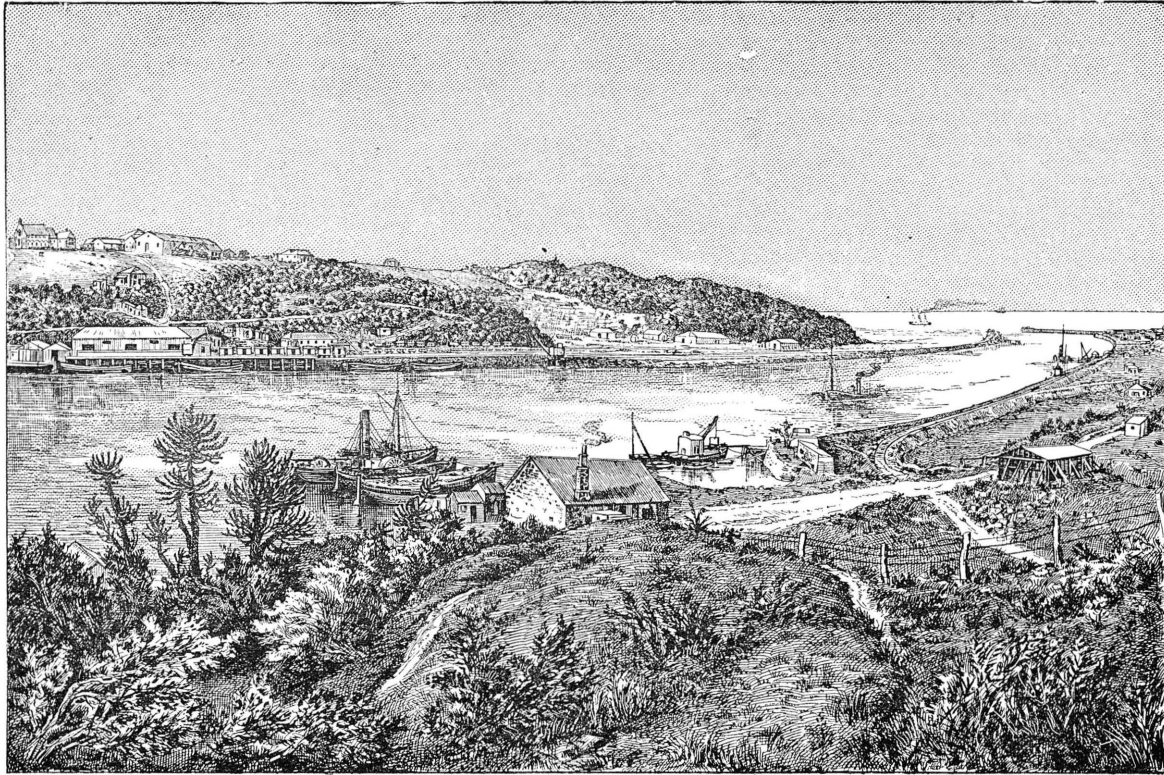
gently discussed round the fireside and in the tavern, as in any hamlet of the homeland. Many, if not all these centres, have their daily and weekly papers, while local elections and domestic intelligence serve to keep the gossips as lively and as happy as is desirable.

The Cape Colony is particularly well supplied by Nature with harbours. All along the coast, from the mouth of the Orange River on the west coast, to Pondoland (St. John's River) on the south-east coast, commodious havens are to be found; some of them are already well advanced by public enterprise and professional skill, others are by Nature fitted with all necessary requirements, and others again but await the expenditure of a few thousands, to render them of national importance. In order to carry out the necessary harbour improvements a sum of £1,602,000 was raised on the credit of the Government, and has been well spent in developing and improving the various harbours. Of these Table Bay naturally takes precedence, on account of its position, extent and natural advantages. The harbour was unhappily exposed to the fierce north and north-west gales, which at certain seasons of the year prevail in these latitudes, and scheme after scheme has been brought forward with a view to the erection of eventual shelter. At length, after much casting about, a Harbour Board was formed, and plans by that eminent engineer, Sir John Coode, adopted. The first work undertaken in this connection consisted of running a breakwater out from the shore in a north-east by half-east direction. This was built of hewn stone quarried on the spot, the quarry being afterwards transformed into an inner basin. The first load of stone was laid by H.R.H. Prince Alfred, on the 7th July, 1860. In the year 1868 this work extended one thousand eight hundred and seventy feet from the shore, and the result was most satisfactory, for it effectually protected a portion of the anchorage and dock, which at that time consisted of an inner basin of about $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres, and an outer area measuring about six hundred and

ten feet along the jetty. This portion of the work was fully completed on the 20th November, 1869, and the opening ceremony took place on the 11th July, 1870, when Prince Alfred was once again present. In commemoration of the Royal visit the docks were named after the young Prince.

But still vessels of heavy tonnage could not be considered by any means safe, and so the Harbour Board hammered away at improvements, until a patent slip had been acquired, and a graving dock of sufficient proportions added to the conveniences of the place. This latter structure, which is built on Sir J. Coode's plans, will, I am told, compare favourably with any similar structure in the world. It was opened by Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor at that time, and bears his name. Vessels of 5,000 tons burden and 438 feet in length have been docked here with ease and convenience. While the graving dock was in course of construction a timber jetty 500 feet in length and 58 feet in breadth was added to the breakwater, and at this ships may now coal. At the same time a key-wall, 600 feet in length, was constructed parallel to the breakwater, and now forms the east side of the outer basin. By these extensive and durable works the harbour has become, not only secure, but as commodious and useful as others in much further advanced parts of the world. Many other improvements are in course of progress, but as my readers are not likely to take any deep interest in technical descriptions of engineering works I will conclude by stating that the whole docks are lighted by the Anglo-American "Brush arc and incandescent light system," while well-regulated fire brigades and apparatus are kept in constant readiness. Abundant supplies of fresh water are supplied to ships at 3s. per ton.

Simon's Bay, which is situated near Table Bay, is the naval station for H.M.'s ships. There is a neat little seaport town there where ships may be provisioned and repairs carried out. The country in the vicinity is as picturesque and healthy as the rest of the Colony. Mossel Bay, which is half way between



EAST LONDON.

(From a Photograph by Robert Harris.)

The Union Steam Ship Company Limited. 21

Cape Town and Algoa Bay, is, from its position, a port of considerable importance, being the *entrepôt* for the central coast districts of the Colony. Algoa Bay is the main harbour for the midland and eastern districts. It is an open roadstead, but has good holding ground. Owing to the surf, vessels cannot come close inshore, but the discharge of cargoes is expeditiously carried out by means of steam tugs. Great improvements have also been made here recently. It having been found that during stormy weather landing operations were impeded large iron jetties were constructed, extending right out into deep water; on these are fixed steam cranes which lift cargo from the lighters and steam tugs with absolute safety and security. A scheme is at present on foot by which these jetties will be extended to a total length of 3,000 feet from the shore; by this contrivance it is anticipated that a smooth water harbour will be secured, but as the cost is likely to be about £1,000,000 sterling some time may elapse before the dream becomes a reality. The town of Port Elizabeth, which has sprung up on the shore of Algoa Bay, is one of considerable importance; in fact, it may be classed as one of the principal commercial centres of the Colony. It is connected by rail with Kimberley, Uitenhage, Graham's Town, Graaff Reinet, Colesberg, Bloemfontein and Johannesburg. It extends for two or three miles along the shore and has invaded the hill to the westward. The style of architecture is all that can be desired, while its sanitary arrangements, and consequent good health, are highly spoken of. It has a population of about 25,000, principally Whites, and forms the seaport for a vast extent of inland territory. Living expenses in Port Elizabeth are very similar to Cape Town; and, I may say here, that the same applies throughout British South Africa. A frugal traveller may live on an advance, say, of 15 per cent., on his expenditure in England. Travelling is, of course, more costly in proportion. But this is to be expected when the number of tourists is so small. Within the past ten years a very visible reduction has been

made, and each year will see matters still further levelled to English scale.

Port Alfred, which is situated at the mouth of the Kowie River, has good holding ground for ships, which, however, if over a certain tonnage, cannot as yet enter the inner harbour or lagoon.

A steam tug and lighter are always in attendance, as at Algoa Bay, and landing and shipping are carried out with despatch.

About a mile up stream there are wharves and depôts, while the Railway to Graham's Town connects with the port, and thereby imparts to it an additional importance.

East London, at the mouth of the Buffalo River, is the next harbour of note, where works under Sir John Coode have been in progress. The purpose of these operations is to remove the sand bar from the river's mouth and secure an entrance to the deep water inside the barrier. The dredger, which has now been at work for some time, has effected this purpose in a great measure, and, as a consequence, the commerce of East London has considerably increased. Although the harbours which have been mentioned are only a small proportion of those which will be developed as the country progresses, enough has been said to prove that, as a maritime region, the Cape Colony is second to none. Her chief defect in this direction arises from the fact that but few of the rivers or inlets of the sea are navigable for any considerable distance.

The railway system of the colony is in a most advanced and prosperous condition. There are three main systems, *i.e.*, the Western, the Midland, and the Eastern. The first mentioned starts from Cape Town, touching at Beaufort West, 339 miles, thence to De Aar Junction, 500 miles, where it is joined by the Midland system, thence on to Kimberley Diamond Fields, 647 miles from Cape Town, and onward to Vryburg in British Bechuanaland, a total distance of 774 miles. It is about to be carried on to Mafeking, a distance of 98 miles further, and

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 23

branches to Simon's Town, Sir Lowry Pass and Malmesbury, and a loop line touching Stellenbosch, spring from the first-mentioned system. The Midland system starts from Algoa Bay (Port Elizabeth) in three separate branches, viz., (1) To Graaff Reinet, 185 miles. (2) To Cradock, 182 miles; Middelburg Road, 243 miles; Colesberg, 308 miles; De Aar Junction, 338 miles, where it joins the Western system, as above stated, and goes on to Kimberley, 484 miles. At Colesberg it branches off northwards to Bloemfontein, 449 miles, and thence on to Johannesburg, 713 miles. And (3) to Graham's Town, 106 miles, with many intermediate stations. The Eastern system starts from East London and runs to Queenstown, 154 miles; Sterkstroom, 190 miles; Burgersdorp, 244 miles; and now touches Aliwal North, 280 miles, this being the terminus of the system, but at Burghersdorp it branches off to the west, joins the Northern line from Port Elizabeth and so onward via Bloemfontein, 401 miles, to Johannesburg, 665 miles. A junction line from Stormberg Junction to Middelburg Road connects the Eastern and Midland systems. A branch, 6 miles in length, runs to King William's Town, 42 miles from East London. A private line has been started by a company, from Graham's Town to Port Alfred, 43 miles, and is now opened throughout; and another from Worcester on the Western system to Montagu, 42 miles.

Before passing to other matters it may be well to state that the most direct route to Kimberley, the chief centre of the Diamond Fields, is from Cape Town, by rail throughout, a distance, as already mentioned, of 647 miles. An express train leaves Cape Town at 1.15 p.m. every Thursday, conveying first-class passengers through to Kimberley, and arriving there at 9 p.m. on the following day. A return express train leaves Kimberley at 5 a.m. every Tuesday and Saturday, arriving at Cape Town at 12.30 p.m. next day. An ordinary train, each way, leaves daily (Sundays excepted), and conveys passengers of all classes. The fares on this line are:—From Cape Town to Kimberley, 1st class, £8 1s. 9d.; 2nd class, £5 7s. 10d.;

3rd class, £2 13s. 11d. The free allowance of luggage to each passenger being 100 lb., 50 lb. and 25 lb., according to class. These fares are, of course, liable to alteration. The journey from Port Elizabeth to Kimberley may also be done by rail throughout, the distance being 485 miles. A fast train leaves the Port every Monday, conveying first-class passengers, and arriving at Kimberley at 9.35 p.m. next day. A return train leaves Kimberley every *Saturday* at 5 p.m., arriving in the Port at 6.40 a.m. on *Sunday*. An ordinary train (each way) daily conveys passengers of all classes. The fares from Port Elizabeth to Kimberley are:—1st class, £6 1s. 3d.; 2nd class, £4 0s. 10d.; 3rd class, £2 0s. 5½d. Free allowances for passengers' luggage are similar to those on the Cape Town line. These fares also are liable to alteration, as are the arrivals and departures of the trains. Accidents on the Cape Colony railways are of extreme rarity, great care being exercised in the selection and appointment of officials. The rolling stock is exactly similar to that of an English line, while the travelling is as comfortable. At most of the stations, refreshment bars are provided, where the usual and historic sandwich, or hard-boiled egg, may be indulged in.

The produce of the Cape Colony presents a feature of absorbing interest to every intelligent visitor. Since a very early period in the Colonial history, wool has taken an important place. We learn from published statistics that in the year 1831, the total quantity of wool imported into the United Kingdom from English colonies, was 11,859 bales. In 1892, the imports from the Cape alone amounted to 70,335,193 lbs., of the declared value of £2,029,093. The total imports of wool from the Cape 1877 to 1892, both inclusive, amounted to 787,480,867 lbs., representing a value of £32,323,705.

By these figures it will be seen that the Cape Colony and adjacent territories, are well adapted to the requirements of the sheep farmer.

Ostrich feathers form another of the Cape's principal exports. While the birds from which the feathers were col-

lected were only to be found in a wild state, and obtained after long and tedious hunting, it is not to be wondered at that the export was inconsiderable. This difficulty was overcome by Mr. A. Douglass, of Heatherton, who, by his adaptation of the "Incubator" to the requirements of ostrich eggs, succeeded in hatching and rearing the birds. Owing to this most valuable departure, the export in 1870 rose to 28,786 lbs., valued at £91,229. After this encouragement the industry rapidly developed. In 1875 a census was taken of the Cape Colony, and the return showed a total of 21,751 birds, as against 80 at the beginning of the decade; and so it went on increasing until, in 1882, which was an exceptionally successful year, the exports amounted to 253,954 lbs., valued at £1,093,989. 1888 was still more successful as far as quantity is concerned, the export in that year having reached 288,568 lbs., but the value had fallen to £546,230. In 1892 the quantity was 257,027 lbs., and the value £517,009.

Raw materials form the staple of the exports; but a considerable amount of labour and capital is employed in manufactures for local consumption. The production of wine, brewing of beer, and distillation of spirits, are recognised industries. In the vicinity of Cape Town there are seven or eight breweries; while in certain districts the cultivation of hops is being successfully carried on.

Cabinet making, waggon and carriage building, tailoring and shoemaking, iron-founding and engineering, are to be classed amongst the important industries of the country. Soap making, biscuit baking by machinery, and the production of all sorts of jams and jellies from the rich and varied fruit-supply of the region, are also regarded as promising arenas for the enterprise and energy of the colonists. Guano islands occur off the coast, and give occupation to about 400 boats and 2,000 persons, and yields an annual rental of £7,110 a year to the Cape Government; while the quantity and value of the cured fish exported in 1892 was 2,629,321 lbs., worth £16,722. Salt-pans also occur in many of the divisions, and great quantities of that commodity are annually produced.

It will be remembered that, in sketching the early colonisation of the Cape, mention was made of the introduction of certain refugee emigrants from France in 1685-8, who were learned in the culture of the grape. These settlers produced their first vintage in 1689. The industry went on steadily increasing until, in 1880, the statistical returns of the vineyards show that there were about 60,000,000 vines in the colony. There is no return of the present number of vines, but, notwithstanding the ravages of the Phylloxera the quantity of wine and brandy produced appears to suffer but little diminution. In 1892 the output of wine was 5,325,270 gallons, and of brandy, 1,278,812 gallons. As a technical treatment of the subject would be out of place in this handbook, I will content myself by enumerating the kinds of grapes which thrive there. According to Baron Von Babo, the principal are—

1. The Common Green Grape.
2. The Hannepoot.
3. The Stein Grape.
4. Red Muscadel.
5. White Muscadel.

In addition to wine—brandy, raisins, and the fruit themselves are extensively exported. The amount of land under vines is computed to be about 21,000 acres.

In 1872, the Cape Colony obtained the boon (?) of Responsible Government, though the Crown has still the sole right of appointing Governors and of exercising a veto on all such legislation as may not be considered conducive to the general well-being of the Empire. The Ministry or Cabinet, together with the Head of the State, form the Executive Council, which consists of a Colonial Secretary, an Attorney-General, a Treasurer-General, a Commissioner of Crown Lands, and a Secretary for Native Affairs. All these Ministers have permanent Under-Secretaries.

The Legislature consists of two houses—*i.e.*, the house of Assembly, numbering 76 members, and the Upper House,

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 27

numbering 22 members, who are entitled to be designated "Honourable."

The defence of the Colony is in the hands of permanent and volunteer forces—comprising Cavalry, Artillery and Infantry—in all about 5,974 men, who form the nucleus of an army of friendly natives, who are always available and form a fine fighting force.

The religious and educational advantages of the Colony are numerous and well cared for. The combined congregations as far as can be learned, number 788,546 of which 373,046 are of European extraction and the remainder coloured nations and tribes. The denominations are Dutch Reformed Church, Wesleyan, Church of England, Congregationalists, Independents and London Missionary Society, Moravians, Rhenish Mission, Roman Catholic, Free Church of Scotland, Baptists Lutherans, French Reformed Church, Free Protestant and Hebrew and Mahommedans. There are many Christian Missions at work amongst the tribes, and good earnest work is being done, though the seed sown in these days will, very likely, not bear fruit until the next generation. Every encouragement is given to the natives to improve their condition, and much labour and capital spent yearly on the noble work.

Educationally speaking, the Cape Colony is something more than merely abreast of the times. Considering the difficulties and discouragements to be overcome in a new country, it is marvellous that so much real solid work has been and is being achieved. This happy result is to be traced to the unanimous way in which the Government works with the people.

The Governmental expenditure in this department ranges from £145,000 to £150,000 a year; of this amount the colleges, of which there are five in connection with the University of the Cape of Good Hope, absorb £8,000; the Public Schools, £39,000; the Mission Schools, £21,000; and the Aborigine Industrial Schools, £18,000. In 1892 there were 1,366 schools open, and 72,347 children on the books.

The scenery of the Cape Colony is, in many parts, grand and romantic in the extreme. On the Sneeuwbergen range of mountains there is a spot known as the "Valley of Desolation." Here vast masses of rock have been tossed and torn by natural agencies into a thousand fantastic shapes. Viewed under favourable circumstances, one could almost fancy the place a fit home for the mysterious creatures who exist only in the fervid imaginations of those romancers to whom reference has been made in an earlier stage of this volume. Amongst these tumbled and irregular masses of basaltic rocks herds of baboons dwell in undisturbed security. Some of these animals are almost as large as men, and, though not especially dangerous, are not such as one would elect to "meet by moonlight alone."

There is a case on record of a traveller who, encountering a gang of them, shot at and killed one of their number. Instantly the others showed fight, and, but for his presence of mind, would have played havoc with him. Seeing the hopelessness of coping with such numbers, he instantly fell to the ground, and lay there shamming death. The creatures, after handling him roughly for a few moments, passed on, and left him to his own devices, which may be summed up in instant and inglorious flight.

Deer of various kinds are to be had, but this question will be dealt with when, in the course of our journey, we win our way to the wilds and encamp in the untrodden places.

In order to exhaust the picturesque beauties of the Cape Colony, we should have to review the greater part of the country, for there are—excepting on the great plains—but few districts without especial scenic charms. The tourist will find himself literally bewildered by rival claims of beauty, which, after all, is a matter of taste, both humanly and geographically speaking, for that which charms one, will not affect another. In penning such a volume as the present, unless a full and consecutive survey be given, it is perhaps as well to abstain, and allow the traveller to select for himself the spot best calculated to meet his views and purposes.

CHAPTER III.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND MINERALS OF THE CAPE COLONY.

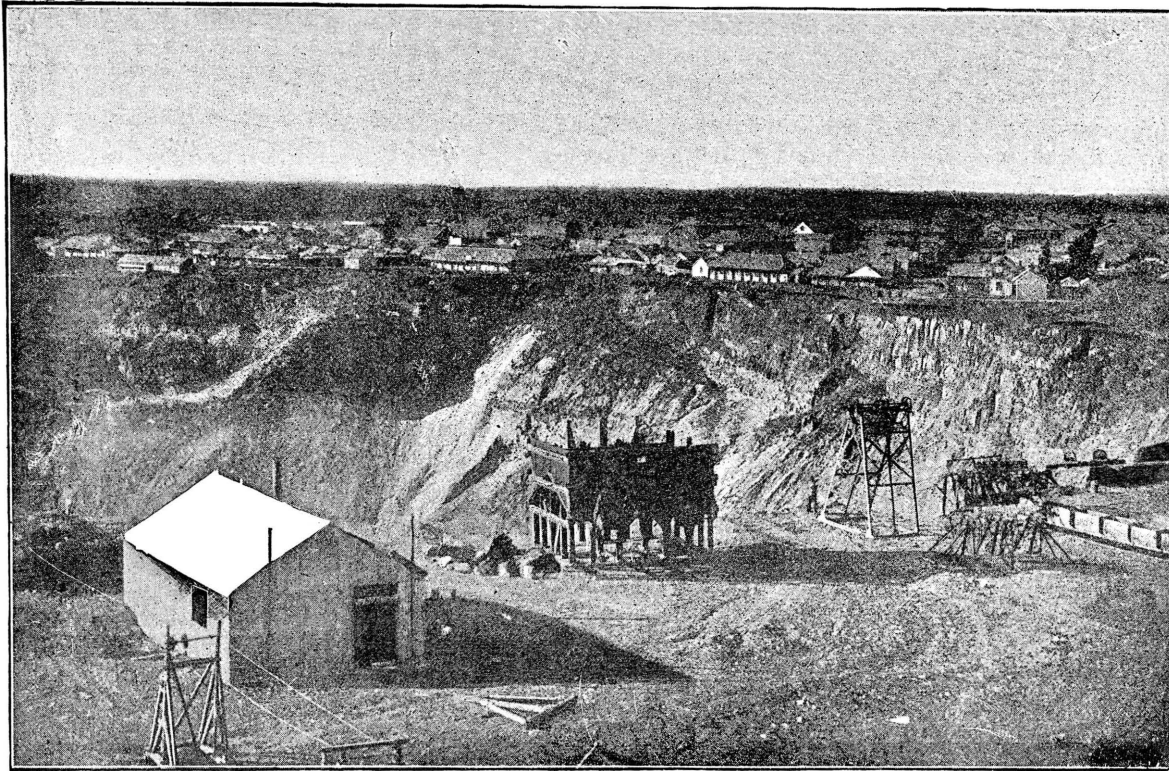


THE physical geography of the Cape Colony, and indeed of all South and South-east Africa, can be best described as consisting of a series of steppes springing from the sea coast, and gradually rising to an altitude of about seven thousand feet, where large, open, and almost treeless plains, form the principal features. Table Mountain we have already described. The Winterhoek (6,840 ft.) forms one of another range further inland, where it forms the chief watershed of the west. The vine-growing valleys of Stellenbosch, Paarl, Drakenstein, Wellington, &c., are located on the seaward slopes of an irregular chain of mountains, that extend from Cape Hangklip, near False Bay, northwards through Namaqualand to the Orange River. The next, or Zwarteberg range, which may be classed as third in the series, encloses on one side Kannaland Karoo, Tradouw, and the district of Ladismith, while on the other it bounds the "Great Karoo." The same range extends eastward, and attains an altitude of about 6,000 ft. The Great Karoo is not, properly speaking, a desert, except in exceptionally dry seasons, when the herbage becomes parched and dry. Behind this region there rises a ridge of table-topped hills, known on the western side as the Roggeveld and Nieuwveld Mountains, and on the eastern as the Sneeuwbergen. From the central range of the latter mountain, an arm turns off to the eastward, where it is known as Tandtjesberg, Zwagershoek and Boschberg. These form a junction with the Great Winterberg Mountains (7,000 ft. in

height), and thence sweeping on along the heights of the Katberg, Elandsberg Gaikaskop, the Hogsback and the Amatolas, terminates in the Buffalo and Kologha ranges in King William's Town division. This grassy and open plateau stretches still further northward, where it rises by another steppe to the Stormberg Mountains in the district of Wodehouse, Aliwal North and Barkly. It then joins the Drakenberg Mountains which attain an altitude of 10,000 feet above the sea. These will be described in succeeding chapters.

The geology of these mountains has been the subject of much study by those who have spent time amongst them, and their nature is fairly well known. Briefly, we may sum them up as being, on the mountains nearest the seaboard, of palæozoic or primary formation, pierced in places by intrusive rocks. Clay slate, sometimes broken through and altered by granite, forms the underlying nature of the whole of the southern districts.

From the Oliphant's River, northwards as far as Bushmansland, the prevailing formation is granite and gneiss, and it is in this region that the rich and valuable Namaqualand copper mines are situated. On the south side of the Colony, at George and Knysna, metamorphic rocks occur. Here also are quartz reefs, but there is little hope of a payable and valuable gold field being developed. The Government Inspector of Mines, in his report for 1891—(that for 1892 is not yet published)—states that sixty-one tons of ore crushed gave an average of only 2 dwts. per ton; and that the total output for the year was 406 ozs. He further states that whereas in 1890 there were 968 registered claims, in 1891 all had been abandoned but 71. He does not say that there are no payable reefs on these fields, but it must be evident to all that great caution should be observed by the inexperienced gold hunter in casting his lines in the region. No really extensive finds have yet been made, and careful inquiries, prior to an investment of either capital or time, cannot be too strongly urged. At the foot of the Zwarteberg range, which is regarded as of the Old Red Sandstone period, there is a lime-



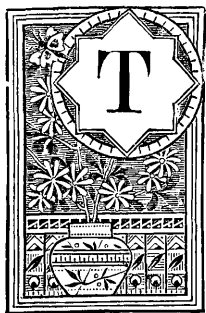
KIMBERLEY, Mine and Town.
(From a Photograph by Robert Harris.)

stone formation, which is said to belong to the Namaqualand schists formation. Here are situated the famous Cango Caves which have been described, by those hardy mortals who have visited them, as of almost supernatural beauty. One may walk for long distances under crystalline arches, or beside snow-white stalactical columns, some of which are 70 feet in height and nine in girth. In the torchlight, they glitter and sparkle as though strewn with diamonds. The first cavern measures 600 feet in length, 100 in breadth, and 75 or 80 in height. The second, which is a veritable fairy chamber, is slightly smaller but infinitely more beautiful, its walls being draped by airy-looking imitations of lace, caused by the filtration of lime through the rocks. As yet, these caverns are but partially explored, but when they are thoroughly known it is commonly believed that they will rival the world-famed caverns of Elephanta in India.

The copper mines of Namaqualand have already been mentioned. It is written that, as early as 1685, the existence of this mineral was known, but that want of fuel and suitable appliances deterred the settlers from working the mines. These objections do not apply now, and the industry is being vigorously prosecuted. The quantity of ore raised in any one year practically depends upon the state of the copper market in Europe, and therefore the returns show considerable fluctuations in the export. In 1882, 19,669 tons were sent home; in '83, 22,705 tons; in '84, 20,148 tons; in '86, 28,429 tons; in '88, 40,023 tons; in '90, 32,674 tons, and in '91, 23,691 tons. The mines find work for about 2,000 persons. Another important item in this connection is coal. Seeing that vast woodless regions occur here and there in the Colony, the fuel supply is one of vital interest. In the districts of Albert, Aliwal, Wodehouse, Xalanga, Maclear, vast deposits occur. At Molteno and Indwe the seams have been worked for years, and the construction of railways to the vicinity of the mines is rapidly bringing this necessary article within the reach of

CHAPTER IV.

GRIQUALAND WEST AND THE DIAMOND FIELDS.



THE history of Griqualand West forms a story of especial interest to both the statesman and the traveller. In 1854, the region belonged to the British Orange River Sovereignty. It was partially occupied by a Grique chief named Waterboer. When the Sovereignty became an independent Dutch Republic, discontent was evinced by the natives, who fretted under Dutch rule, and, in fact, never acknowledged it. At first, no attention was paid to their protests, and seeing that the region occupied by them was an open, bleak and inhospitable one, it is not to be wondered at that the British Government paid scant heed to their complaints. But, when a traveller, named O'Reilly, in 1867, found on a Dutchman's table amongst a lot of "pretty stones," a $21\frac{1}{4}$ -carat diamond, worth £500, affairs assumed a more serious aspect. Both Waterboer and the Free State claimed possession of the Diamond Fields, the discovery of which followed very soon after O'Reilly's "find." In 1871, Waterboer ceded all his rights to the British Government, and in 1876 the Free State relinquished *its* claim for a money payment of £90,000. This, as the event proved, was a wise and statesmanlike policy; for assuredly, had the region been allowed to continue much longer as a sort of no-man's-land, trade and commerce would have suffered, and the prosperity and develop-

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 33

ment of the country have been retarded for an indefinite time. For two years but little was discovered, though the fact was established that the banks of the Vaal River were rich in precious stones.

In 1869, a Dutchman purchased a stone from a Griqua native for £400 worth of goods, and immediately sold it for £10,000; its value to-day is estimated at £25,000. This stone was called the "Star of South Africa," and is at present, I learn, amongst the jewels of the Countess of Dudley. The fame of the "Star" sent a rush of diggers of all sorts and conditions to the bleak plains of Griqualand, where terrible hardships were endured, and tragedies enacted which have found their way into the romances and literature of the century. In the latter part of 1870, or the beginning of 1871, the deposits were located between the Vaal and the Modder Rivers, and immediately a camp was formed. Men swarmed in from all directions, the camp became a town, and eventually, the town a city. The result is, as I stated in the opening section, that jewels to the weight of *thirteen tons*, and of a value of £60,000,000 have been produced. Kimberley to-day is as well appointed a city as any in the world, and as one strolls through its broad open streets it is hard to realise that, but a few years ago, the spot was to all intents and purposes a desert.

Geographically, Kimberley lies, as was stated while treating of the Cape Colony system of railways, 647 miles from Cape Town, and 484 miles from Port Elizabeth (Algoa Bay). Its communication by rail with these two sea ports has considerably altered and improved the condition of the town and region. All the luxuries that the heart of man can desire; all the requirements of life—let it be in what sphere it may—are met and supplied here. So much has been written and in such various directions, that any detailed and lengthy description or guide to the place is almost unnecessary. The town is situated on an open wind-swept plain, and is as strictly controlled as that of any old and long-established land.

There are four mines, viz., Kimberley, Dutoitspan, De Beer's and Bultfontein—the latter being proclaimed in 1882. At first the demand for claims, or plots of ground for mining purposes, was so great as to necessitate division and subdivision of the tiny patches measuring only a few feet in superficial area. Many diggers who had paid the customary license of 10s. per month for their then unproved lots, disposed of them, in a few weeks, for £100. The value went on increasing until, in about ten years, these 10s. plots attained a value of £10,000 to £15,000 each. The mines are now practically controlled by two large companies, and find employment for many thousands of miners, overseers, clerks, share brokers, store keepers, and perhaps a few rogues.

The diamondiferous soil or clay forms a most interesting geological study. About one hundred or one hundred and fifty feet below the surface, the body of the matter changes from a soft loamy earth of a yellowish colour—which crumbles speedily when exposed to the air—to a hard, slate-coloured mass. When this discovery was made, a panic seized the community: the news flashed over the world, and the wise-aces, who had been propounding lengthy theories on the instability of the deposits, nodded their heads sagaciously. The old reproach, that for years has been extant, of South Africa being simply a country of samples was revived, and a check administered to the industry, but not for long: the new stratum was soon proved to be the real matrix, the former having simply been altered by atmospheric agencies. Confidence being re-established, the development was rapid and healthy.

The method of recovering the diamonds from their lurking-places is simple, being laid down somewhat on the line of "the survival of the fittest." The "blue clay" is first pulverised by atmospheric agencies, and then passed through rotary washing machines, where the lighter particles are washed away and the heavier remain. Statistics show that in the eighteen months ending December, 1884, the Kimberley mines produced 2,837,603 carats of diamonds; while the River diggings yielded 42,804 carats.

The Union Steam Ship Company, Limited. 35

The province of Griqualand West is divided into three electoral parts, *i.e.*, Kimberley, Barkly West and Hay. Its area is about 17,000 square miles, the greater part of which is suitable for sheep farming.



CHAPTER V.

PONDOLAND AND THE PONDOS—ST. JOHN'S RIVER SCENERY— TRANSKEI.



WE must be grateful to the fates that govern the geographical distribution of the kingdoms and states of Africa. After wandering through the fertile and home-like regions of the Cape Colony, where trade and commerce, national activity and social progress, are in as active operation as in other and older lands, and after peeping at the busy toilers in the Diamond Mines, it is a grateful change to turn, for a space, to the comparative silence and restfulness of Griqualand East, Transkei, Tembu and Pondoland. Here we have a veritable dream realm of Arcadian beauty. Away in the westward, lifting their grand castellated cliffs 10,000 ft. into the sky, loom the Quathlamba or Drakensberg Mountains. From a very early period these solitudes have been regarded with superstitious awe by the natives. Circling round their crests, the lightnings flash and hiss, while the reverberating voice of the thunder wakes the "Spirit Voices" of the caverns, and calls into the air a thousand unaccountable sounds, at which the simple savages, whose minds are the reverse of scientific, cross their hands over their breasts and marvel.

Amongst the time-worn cliffs, the wizards, those master minds of savage life, brewed their charms and uttered their incantations, while now and then the mysterious "white robe" of snow fell from "none knew whither."

The whole region from these mountains, right to the sea on the south-east coast, consists of a mingled mass of mountain valley, forest and meadow. Flashing rivulets leap from rock to rock, tossing themselves over the chasms, or shining still and clear in the quiet pools.

The wonderful fertility and beauty of these districts, their warm balmy airs, and their beautiful semi-tropical foliage, are to be traced to the generous airs borne down on them by the trade winds of the Indian ocean, together with the strong current of heated water which pours through the Mozambique Channel, and along the coast. The two principal rivers in this vicinity are those of St. John's and Umtata. The former has especial claims on the interest of the English-speaking world, from the fact that a small but determined and brave community of Britons are endeavouring, and that with marked success, to establish a home and build up a colony there. In addition to this, the place is grandly beautiful, and well worthy the attention of the poet, statesman, tourist, traveller and colonist. I propose to deal in considerable detail with this section of our work, because, in the first place, the region has never, to my knowledge, been prominently brought before public notice, and in the second, it will serve as a pleasant interlude to the study of Natal and her history, where facts and figures of an extremely practical nature are dealt with.

A few years ago, the district which is now divided into Griqualand East, Tembuland, Transkei, and Pondoland, was ruled over by one independent and powerful nation called the Ama-Pondo. In extent it measures about 15,000 square miles, and possesses a sparse, migratory population of about half-a-million. Owing to tribal conflicts, the upper portion (Griqualand East) became almost depopulated, and was called "No-man's-land." Certain Griquas (a tribe of half-bred

Hottentots), emigrated to it from the Orange Free State, under a chief or captain named Adam Kok, who ruled them in a sort of way, until he died from injuries received by being run over by a waggon, in 1876. The district was then formed into an English Magistracy, in order to protect the remnant of the people; and I have it, on good authority, that this was one of the best managed territorial movements ever carried out by the English in Africa.

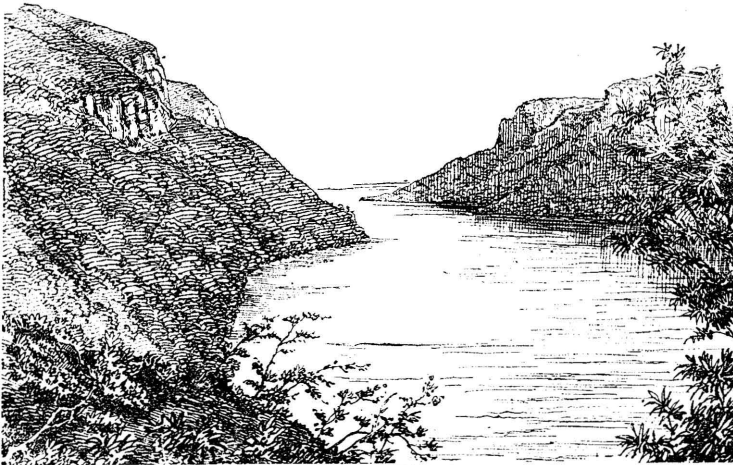
Tembuland and the Transkei, which are now provinces of the Cape Colony, with a white population of 6,217, and over 330,000 natives, were occupied by sections of the Pondo tribe called Tembus, who by their quarrelsome and improvident behaviour, had so reduced themselves, as to be altogether unworthy of independence. The only part of the district which retains even a semblance of independence, is Pondoland. In the capacity of Special Correspondent for a daily newspaper, I have made several visits to this country, and on each occasion came away with higher hopes for the future of the place, as a field for European colonisation. The St. John's River, which flows through the centre of the country, is broad and deep and navigable for small craft for a distance of twelve miles from its mouth. The territory on its banks, which bears that name, was purchased some few years ago by the Cape Government from the paramount chief of Pondoland. Their purpose in doing so was, I am told, to secure the port and close it against the smugglers, who by supplying goods, such as liquor, guns and powder to the natives, were injuring their physique, and by arming them with deadly weapons raising up a danger for the future. A railway from Port St. John to Maclear, a very thriving little settlement in the Kokstad district of Griqualand East, was authorized by the Cape Parliament in 1891, but has not as yet been taken in hand. St. John's River territory may be approached overland from the Cape Colony, *via* the Transkei and Tembuland; but in order to enjoy the full beauty of the scenery one must enter it from the sea, where the first objects to greet the eye are the romantic-looking "Gates of the River," as the two huge mountains that watch over

the plains are called. Towering up in abrupt reaches to an altitude of 1,800 or 2,000 feet above the sea, they strike the visitor with a feeling of the keenest pleasure. Round their lower reaches are a number of low grassy hummocks, from behind which long stretches of dark forest extend inland until the many-coloured cliffs burst through them, and towering on to still higher altitudes, stand clear-cut and vivid against the sky.

On either side of the "Gates" the coast continues to give promise of picturesque beauty and fertility. About a mile to the southward of the river, Cape Hermes juts into the sea, which is churned white against the masses of dark conglomerate rock that fringe the coast. To the northward these rocks continue, while, just behind them, the rounded and verdant slopes of "White's Hummock" and "Porpoise Point" promise something in the way of open grass land. The foliage, as seen from the deck of a steamer, gives but a poor idea of the wealth of palm and fern to be seen ashore. But few signs of civilisation are visible, and those few of a primitive and homely nature.

As usual, there is a sand bar at the mouth of the river, but, as it carries a fair depth of water, it forms but a slight obstacle to entry. Once across this, the full glory of Nature—pure, simple, and unadorned—greet us. On the occasion of my last visit, the rising sun was just tinging the east, when the brave little exploring vessel (the *Lady Wood*) forced her way through the surf and swept into the broad and still lagoon. Under guiding signals from the shore, we steamed up stream for about a mile, and brought up at the "Needles," a pile of crystalline rock, upon which a tiny little galvanised nest of a custom-house has been built, a temporary wharf of bush poles had been constructed, and upon it we very gladly sprang. While the men whom I had brought with me were landing the expeditionary stores and setting up the tents, I walked off with one or two of the settlers to view the village, which is situate at the foot of one of the "Gates," or towering mountains. The settlement

consists of about fifty neat little unpretentious cottages, a church, a jail, and a fort. The settlers, who muster about 100, were all pictures of health, while the ground seemed to be fertile and well watered. Behind the custom-house and across a clearing, were a couple of hotels, while several unfinished buildings close to them told of lively enterprise and hope. After making the acquaintance of such settlers as happened to be about, I returned to my camp and rested for an hour. Then setting out in a southerly direction, towards Cape Hermes, I passed the stockaded fort, which was garrisoned by a company of Cape Infantry, at that time under the command of Capt. Sprigg (a brother of Sir Gordon



Umzimvubu River.

Sprigg). Holding my way still further, I soon surmounted the heights of the Cape, and turned to note the wild and beautiful prospect. By this time the sun had crept round to the west, and was flooding the distance with that rich yellow flare, which adds breadth and softness even to a commonplace scene. But there was nothing commonplace here. Like a map, spread out before me, lay the upper and the lower "Gates," for on a closer study of the formation of the hills, they must be so divided. On the

right-hand side could be seen a vast natural tower of rock standing alone, as though built by Titan hands. The cavity between it and the mountain mass, further eastward, is called the "Devil's Bite." Nearer still, almost beneath me, the breakers from the bar dashed themselves against Porpoise Point, or went rolling in on the tawny sand, while their deep roar came up to me now and again softly and musically. Away in the extreme distance, delicately rounded hills swept into the haze, where the herds of game lay at rest, or the broad-winged eagles sailed slowly in mid air with never a sound to startle them, save the rippling of the brooks or the wind through the trees.

Next evening, having engaged boats, I embarked with the four trusty natives, who had shared my travels for years, and who had become endeared to me by many a perilous journey and hard campaign. Heading up stream, we soon found ourselves floating on a liquid mirror. The mountains on either hand come close up to the edge of the water, and in some places the thick tangled masses of foliage overhung the banks and formed Venetian arcades. As the sun set the wind fell, and the glassy water, taking the tints of evening, reflected the mountains and sky with such fidelity as to render it difficult to tell substance from shadow. At the first bend of the river, and right in the centre of it, is situated a low black rock, which is sacred to the name of "Jefferies." It appears that this worthy, who was a "sea cow" (hippopotamus) hunter, had heard that a fine specimen of that species of game was in the habit of taking its nightly swim here, so swimming off with his rifle, he lay in wait one night for the arrival of his prey. Before very long the monster came swimming down stream; scarcely had it set foot on the rock than Jeffries opened fire, and a long and tough battle was the result; at length, in his haste to reload, the hunter dropped his powder-horn into the stream, and victory, of course, was declared on the side of the "sea cow." Jeffries took to the water, intending to swim ashore, but the

enraged creature overtook him, and one crush of its mammoth jaws ended the matter.

Passing on, we swept round a little cape, and found ourselves in what appeared to be a broad open lake. By this time the starlight was glancing on the river, affording just enough light to reveal the triangular fins of several prowling sharks, who, doubtless attracted by the paddle song of my men, were following us. Before very long the moon rose, and shed a light almost as bright as day over the wild and lonely scene.

On the left-hand side of the river, which, by the way, is called by the natives Umzimvuba (Place of Hippopotami), towers the western "Gates," in a sheer cliff of about 2,000 feet altitude. The sukerbosch trees that fringe the summit could be seen faintly outlined against the sky, while now and again a suspicious rustling in the forest near at hand, gave us timely warning of the presence of some of the prowling leopards for which the spot is celebrated. It was from the heights above mentioned that the ancient Kings—and the present chief of Pondoland, for the matter of that—cast those accused of practising magic to the disadvantage of their neighbours; many a score of unhappy wretches have been hurried out of life here, as the crushed skulls and fractured bones found, now and again, at the foot of the cliff testify.

On the right hand, towering high into the air, loomed the eastern "Gate," called by the natives "Echoban." This forms a portion of the tower mentioned a short time ago, in connection with the "Devil's Bite." Whether his satanic majesty ever really stayed for refreshment here, is not a question of especial interest to us just now, but the idea of its being demon-possessed seemed to me not at all an unlikely one, when, as our boat swept under its shadow, the silence was suddenly broken by the harsh yells and deep booming barks of a herd of baboons, whose slumbers had been disturbed by our advent. As they seemed reluctant to retire, I pulled a trigger on one, and managed to bring him down, whereupon the

others redoubled their uproar and retired. Landing, we secured our prize, which was of large size, measuring nearly five feet from toe to crown. As the night was becoming clouded, and I wished to see the country clearly, camp was pitched here, and a tranquil rest obtained, for the indignation of our friends, "The Children of Toasi," as the natives poetically call the baboons, soon subsided,

Next morning, at earliest dawn we moved on again. After about three miles, the river narrowed slightly, and the hills toned down from their wild grandeur to something more promising in the agricultural line. At this part, *i.e.*, about eight miles from the sea, is situated Banana Point, or Cape Difficulty, called by the latter name because of the baffling winds which swirl round it, rendering progress by sailing boat almost impossible. Calling a halt here I pitched camp for a day or two, in order to explore the vicinity.

The foliage of this promontory is composed almost entirely of wild banana (*Stalitzia Africanus*), mimosa and waterboom trees. In the reeds by the river edge, the weaver birds have built their nests by the thousand, and keep up a constant chattering that is not at all disagreeable. On the other side of the stream, the bank rises into a picturesque and interesting cliff of white quartz, which may prove to be gold bearing, but I had not the means of testing it with me.

At this point a tiny stream, clear and limpid as crystal, joins the main river; following on foot the course of this tributary, in a south-westerly direction, I chanced upon one of the sweetest glades imaginable. Giant trees stood about it on every side, their limbs interwoven and bound together by trailing creepers, from which flashed a veritable glory of azure, violet and white convolvulus flowers. The earth was strewn with large irregular masses of rock, over which soft moss had spread; while bracken, maiden-hair, and other varieties of ferns, formed thickets shoulder-high, through which I had to force my way. Being thirsty, I stooped by the brook to drink, but recoiled in disgust on tasting the water,

which proved to be highly charged with sulphate of soda and salt. I afterwards learned, on inquiry amongst the natives, that the river is looked upon as a great "medicine place," and that by bathing in it, scurvy, ulcers, and wounds may be quickly healed, while rheumatic pains and lumbago are invariably cured after repeated ablutions. The only drawback to one's full enjoyment of the spot is the knowledge that leopards, and other gentry of that ilk, are equally fond of its quiet seclusion; and that while wandering and dreaming through the grateful and dimly-lighted arcades of the forest, the eyes of more than one of these tawny and treacherous felines are probably following and noting every movement. Another drawback is to be found in the presence of good old St. Patrick's pet aversion, *i.e.*, snakes; black and green mambas, of sizes ranging from two to ten feet, gracefully removed themselves in a most complaisant manner from my path, while tiny lizards, with flame-coloured heads, scuttled about in all directions.

I noticed some remarkably large scorpions about; one in particular, which I killed, measured four inches, and showed any amount of fight. I do not know whether it is usual for these reptiles to make any noise when enraged, but this one gave utterance to a very distinct and clearly-defined hissing and grating sound.

One might travel for weeks in this vicinity, and then leave half its beauties unexplored. Night overtook me before I struck the main river again, so I had, perforce, to bivouac in the forest. Next morning, I rejoined the men, and embarking, we pushed on for another five miles, when Mr. White's settlement was gained. This enterprising colonist is doing a good work in Pondoland, and by all accounts has firmly established himself in the good graces of the natives.

The river, at this point, separates into two channels, forming thereby an island of about ten acres in extent; here, also, the weaver birds have settled in vast flocks. These busy and intelligent little creatures are of a bright chrome-yellow

colour, and are about the size of the English martin; they live on grain principally, and build most wonderful nests, which they roof in, and then by way of finish, add a long pendant tube, up which they have to climb in order to enter. The natives call them "amahlogohgo," *i.e.*, the chatterers, and whenever a couple of women fall out and begin to recite poetry—or something else—at each other, they are invariably likened to "our feathered friends." The description is so fitting and comical, that, as a rule, the "row" is brought to a hasty close, and the *usual laughter and good humour* is restored.

Leaving the river at this stage we struck inland for a few days shooting, and while engaged in wearily wading through the long grass and tangled woods, had several interesting encounters with the wild denizens of the land. The country continues as fertile and as grand as ever, all it lacks being men to cultivate it, for it is but sparsely populated. In some of the native gardens I saw maize stalks measuring ten feet in height, while the cobs or heads of corn were large in proportion.

It was while shooting in this vicinity, that the sound of our firearms reached the royal ears of Umquekela, the king of Pondoland, and a couple of couriers came down to warn us to prepare for a royal visit next day. After regaling the messengers on venison, which was all I had, they returned, and next day, sure enough, the king appeared. He was a thin, bleary-eyed looking creature, whose wasted limbs were swathed in the ample folds of an old overcoat. Mounted on a pony of Gothic and sombre aspect, "His Majesty," followed by a score of footmen bearing rifles and spears, approached the tent, and dismounting seated himself on a convenient stone. After the first greetings were exchanged a deep and dismal silence fell on us. I knew that his mind was in the act of evolving the best and surest way of raising a gift. Presently his mouth-piece, a jovial-looking and wily barbarian, shattered the silence by saying, "Yebo! white one, we all welcome you ;

the king delights in Englishmen and his territory is ever open to them." "The king is wise," was my answer. Whereupon silence crept over us once more, but the thirsty soul of the anointed one (for Umquekila loved gin) could not brook any further diplomatic or stealthy advances; he came right to the point. "See, white one," said he; "I come to bid you welcome. You walk over my hills, you drink and lave in my streams, you sleep in the shelter of my forests, you kill and eat my game; yet never a gift or a payment worthy of mention do you make. Let us be friends." "And am I not the king's friend?" I enquired; "Have I come here as an enemy; if so, where are my warriors?" "Let your words be fulfilled in a gift. In your native land, the rivers are of gin—so I hear—and blankets are stripped from the trees like bark; you partake of my rivers and trees, let me share yours also." Knowing how useless any attempt to disabuse his mind of this idea would be, I simply replied that "My native land was distant, I could not carry its rivers in my pocket, and further, that my blankets were all done." Once more a silence fell on us, and for a space the king sat wrapt in sorrow and overwhelmed with despondency.

Heaving a long and deep sigh he rose at length and remounting his steed rode away without saying farewell. Some months afterwards the poor old fellow died of excessive drinking, having first, however, lost the respect of his nation, which numbers 90,000. The country is at present ruled over by Sigcau, his heir, and is in a fair way to become a prosperous and happy state, under the British flag.

About a week after this I moved to another part of the country, and pitched my camp on a wooded plain close to the river. On the first night of our arrival in the new camp, while engaged in developing some photographic negatives which I had taken of the scenery, I heard a rustling in the reed-brake at the back of the tent. Thinking that it might be a jackal in search of a stray dainty, such as one of my jack boots, I crept round and hurled a geological specimen, weighing about


a pound, at the spot. To my surprise, a large leopard sprang away with a rasping snarl, and vanished in the woods. The creature had, in its curiosity, actually crept to within twelve feet of my seat at the tent door. Next day we indulged in a grand and successful leopard hunt.

I may say here, that the Pondo tribe or nation is a docile and peaceable one; they are good labourers and faithful followers, though not as honest as the Zulus, or daring as the Swazies, whose acquaintance we will make when the course of our travels brings us to their country. As I have stated, the nation numbers, as nearly as I could gather, 90,000. They are polygamists, and barter their women, like other African nations. Their language is kindred to that of the Zulus, and like it, is most expressive and musical. Their ideas of a future state are hazy and undefined. A pumpkin or a goat, enjoyed in the present, in a Pondo's opinion, range high above all the future happiness which the missionaries are so earnestly expounding. They are, in fact, a practical and material minded race. Their great luxury is tobacco, which grows in the land most luxuriantly, and there attains, in my opinion, a better flavour than in either Natal or the Transvaal. The territory of St. John's is normally only a small strip, measuring about ten miles by two or three miles along the river bank. Small land-grants are given to intending settlers by the Resident or Administrator, who is appointed by the Cape Government. The law of the country is Roman-Dutch, like that of the parent colony, while the natives are carefully handled and kindly treated.

The tourist will find in this vicinity an ample and little-known field for his energies and mettle, which must be of the best; while the sportsman may, in the forests, plains, and rivers, revel in almost every department of the hunt. Roads have been constructed right through the country. Hotel accommodation is very scarce; but to make up for these disadvantages, he will find that a rough and ready hospitality is the rule of the land.

CHAPTER VI.

A SKETCH OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF NATAL.

HE Port of Natal was a Christmas gift to the world, for, as I have already shown, it was discovered by Vasco de Gama on that holy festival day, in the year 1497. Like all other Christmas gifts, it is delightful. With a climate similar to that of Pondoland, which we dealt with in the last section, it possesses all the comforts of civilisation and the charms of well-bred society.

Before proceeding to review its features and institutions, perhaps it may be well to glance briefly at its past history, for I have noticed that when our knowledge of a person or place is superficial, our interest is apt to be fleeting.

As an Imperial dependency which is daily rising to higher levels of usefulness and distinction, Natal is well worthy of most serious attention at the hands of all classes of readers, whether they be intending emigrants, tourists, sportsmen, gold hunters, or stay-at-home folk. After the eventful Christmas morning, nearly four hundred years ago, the country lay untouched and unexplored, except by some English sailors who, in 1683, were cast away near Delagoa Bay, which is about 325 miles to the north of Durban, and eleven hundred odd from the Cape of Good Hope, for the Port of Natal is 810 miles north of that place. These men, in their wonderful walk, saw much of the country, and on their arrival at the

Cape trading settlement, made a most favourable report on it. Three years later, in the same century, the *Stevenisse*, a Dutch ship, was wrecked on the coast ; and the sailors, after building a boat for themselves from the wreckage, sailed to the Cape, where another favourable report was made, which resulted in a slight exploration of the region. In 1721 an attempt by the Dutch to found a trading station there failed. We next hear of the slave-traders availing themselves of the commodious harbour and teeming native population.

It appears that considerable physical alterations have taken place in the port since these early times ; for instance, the Umgeni River, which now enters the sea four miles further to the northward, was said to flow into the head of the bay, and that the present " Bluff " was in fact an island, with a narrow channel between it and the mainland, at or near Isipingo. Whether this be so or not is a matter of small moment, for the present state of affairs is very satisfactory. From published reports of that period we learn that the " country was teeming with cows, calves, oxen, steers and goats ; while in the woods, elephants, rhinoceros, lions, tigers, leopards, eland and other deer, as well as buffalo, hippopotami, wild hogs, wolves, hyænas, and hosts of smaller creatures, such as a species of civet, wild cats, otters and ant-bears abounded.

About seventy years after these reports were made—that is to say, about the year 1800—we learn that the native tribes in this region were numerous and powerful ; while further north, " a few days' march," a mighty nation, named the Amazulu, were daily rising into power by conquests achieved under their brilliant emperor Chaka.

Before long, the attention of this warrior was turned to the region now known as the Colony of Natal; and with one fell swoop he cleared it of cattle, and left behind him desolation, death and misery. The few survivors of the shattered tribes led lives of misery in the woods, while the marauding parties of the victorious Zulus moved about destroying gardens, burning villages, and generally playing havoc with