

company had brought it over sea and land, and delivered it in a habitable form, with the electric light laid on, the beds made, and the corks drawn for dinner.

Certainly the growth of Johannesburg has been, without exaggeration, startling. The oldest inhabitant is a man, one may say, of yesterday. And he tells me that where the town now is, a year or two ago there were only a few canvas huts. There was no use looking in any gazetteer for an account of the town; it was not even a geographical expression. One day—it was the 20th September, 1886—Captain Von Brandis, the first commissioner, drove to the camp. A hole was dug for a flagstaff, and the flag of the Transvaal Government was run up. Then the commissioner proclaimed the territory a gold field, and the township which he proceeded to mark off he named Johannesburg.

In six months' time the development had been so rapid that Mr. E. P. Mathers wrote: "The days of paying three shillings for a bed among broken bottles and glasses on the earth floor of a canteen have passed away. There will soon, perhaps, be more hotels than may find profitable business, while three clubs and two exchanges are in course of construction." What, however, struck me as even more remarkable were the large amounts realized at the early sales of building sites. Within four months of the date of proclamation the sites sold realized £22,000. "Small pieces of ground giving only a dozen feet frontage realized as many pounds per month for ground rent alone.

One lady, the owner of a tiny corner canteen, the site of which originally cost less than £20, and the building on it say £150, was offered £1,500 in cash for the property, and a rental of £100 per month for eighteen months, three months' rent to be paid in advance. She declined the offer. She was also proffered a rental of £15 a month for a piece of ground eighteen by twenty, adjoining the whisky-bottle property, and this also she refused."

It was believed that the town would be the largest and most important in South Africa, and to it thousands flocked. It is planned into regular broad streets, and into blocks of erven fifty by a hundred feet, street corner "stands" being only fifty by fifty. There are three large squares; the main one, the market square, being the most spacious in South Africa. The town generally is being built of wood and iron, but in some parts there are substantial dwellings of brick and stone.

The hotel—the Grand National—at which I had taken up my quarters seemed to me an enormous building for the size of the town; but I recollect now that two hundred dined in the hotel daily, and though they were not all staying there a large number were; and when the "boom" comes, for which they are waiting, the hotel people will doubtless need all the accommodation they have.

Mr. E. E. Kennedy, who was, I think, in Johannesburg a few months before me, says that "on arriving in the town we had joined some bachelor friends in 'diggings' on Booyesen's estate. 'Booyesen's?' said a ship

acquaintance we met in the town. 'Oh yes, a very nice place to live at; but you get your throat cut now and then as you go home of a night.' It was a playful way of conveying the information, but we were somewhat alarmed at the suggested contingency, so we inquired of one of our chums if there was any ground for it. 'Oh yes,' said he; 'such things don't occur often, but some time ago there were three murders in one night. By jove! what a mending of locks there was the next day.' 'Was the murderer ever discovered?' 'No. It was supposed to have been the work of a Kaffir; but there's no telling.'

Mr. Kennedy adds, in his interesting little book "Waiting for the Boom," that he was never molested in any way when out at night. And this being practically my own experience during the months I stayed at Johannesburg, I am inclined to think that what fears may have been entertained were more imaginary than real.

The hotel was scarcely one's ideal of a comfortable English inn; a caravansary would perhaps be a better name for it. It was big and rough, and gathered under its roof there seemed to be people from all the four quarters of the earth. The bedroom I occupied was shared by a companionable young fellow, an artist, and it belonged to a set built exactly like soldiers' barracks, with a gallery all round, doors leading into it, and courtyard in the centre. Outside our door, about six every morning, two boot-cleaning "boys" squat to work. And

it affords one no little amusement to hear their childish laugh, and the jokes they seem to be cracking in the vernacular. One comes most carefully into our room, grins, looks round, picks up the boots, turns round and grins again, repeating the performance as though it were the greatest fun imaginable.

As the mining centre of the Witwatersrandt gold fields (White Waters' Range), Johannesburg has drawn large numbers to it. There is a large stationary and a still larger floating population. What the actual figures are I am unable to say. Indeed, it would be mere guess work for any one to say at what the population now stands. An estimate is given in the "Statesman's Year Book," which may not perhaps be far out. According to that, there are twenty thousand gold-diggers, and ten thousand people engaged in trade. The floating population is put down at a hundred thousand, and no doubt the number engaged in agriculture is very large. That there has been an enormous development goes for the saying; nearly a million in gold was sent from the mines last year, and these, so far, have been only imperfectly worked.

It is pointed out as a noteworthy feature of the town that many of the poorer classes of Boers are settling in it, and turning their attention to miscellaneous occupations. They are to be seen not only in the brick-yards, but on the scaffolding and roofs of the new houses, carrying water and building material, and eking out a living by labour of other kinds.

In the market square you meet with crowds of white, yellow, and black men; pedlars both Jew and Christian, organ-grinders, and other familiar figures. In the morning there are sales of all descriptions of produce, and the populace turn out largely to these before breakfast. Stalls bearing fruit and garden produce are to be seen on every hand. And to the Saturday market Boers in carts, on horseback, and on foot come, and it is said they often prefer paying more at the market stand for the articles they require than they could buy them for at the stores.

Nor are the townfolk cut off from amusement. They have a theatre; and one evening during my stay I witnessed a performance of *London Assurance*, by Lionel Brough's dramatic company. The death of Mr. Laurie Grey, a leading member of the company, caused a painful sensation. Being five thousand feet above the sea, and about three hundred miles from the coast, you would hardly have expected to see a circus in Johannesburg. Yet one was in the town, and doing good business. I went to see the performance with a friend. They were acting *Cinderella*, and made a special effort to charm and surprise the audience. All the lights were suddenly extinguished. The ring was transformed into a ball-room, and very pretty it looked when the electric light was turned on. Of music—perhaps I should say of a sort—there was no stint in the town. Where there was no band there would be a piano, and you marvelled how there could possibly be any tune left in the instrument, after



PUBLIC BUILDINGS, JOHANNESBURG (S.A.R.).

having been bumped about in a waggon for weeks together from the coast to the gold fields. At an earlier and rougher stage there were canteen smoking concerts, at which the banjo and the bones were the delight of the assembled miners; but though these have not quite passed away, the new music-halls with imported "talent" and the billiard-rooms are the more popular entertainments.

One discovery I made may not be without some interest. I daresay it has puzzled you, as it has me, to tell where all the old clothes, cast off at home, go to. Well, there is a great market for old clothes at Johannesburg. Heaps have been sent there, and if ever the long-awaited-for "boom" is signalled, I should say that heaps would be sent again. Indeed, I see no reason why there should not be a "boom" in cast-off garments. The natives, who are the principal buyers, are very fond of old uniforms and great-coats; and a "corner" in these articles might possibly set the ball rolling.

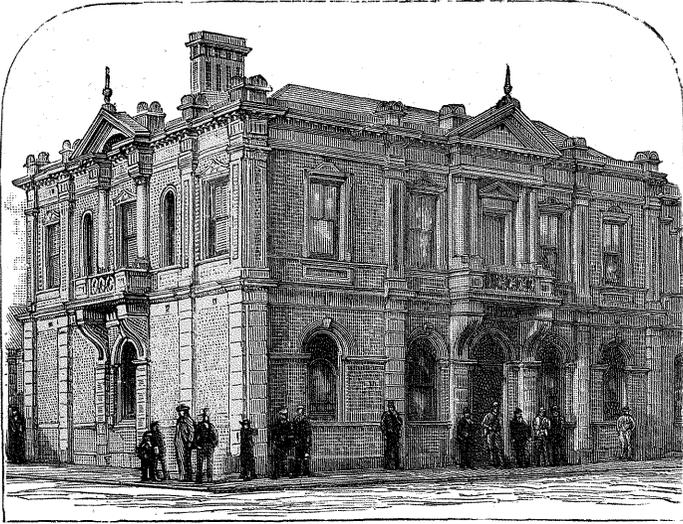
Speaking of great-coats reminds me of the heavy rainfall I witnessed. Every one wore top-boots and waterproofs; the town was deluged, the water falling in torrents, and rushing over the place in small rivers. But after it was over we were all thankful, the air having been cleared and freshened, and the water required for use improved. The rain-water was a godsend, for the town's supply was greatly complained of. It was so discoloured that a lady diver at the circus refused to perform in the diving tank. The water is drawn from wells sunk only a few feet, and the

colour in the bath suggested weak coffee. This has now, I believe, been remedied, the joint-stock company established to supply Johannesburg having erected efficient filtering reservoirs; and so far as I am able to judge the public feeling is decidedly in favour of the supply being in the company's hands rather than in those of the Government. There is plenty of water in the neighbourhood, and now that there is good pumping machinery to get it to a sufficiently high level, there should be no uncertainty as to the supply.

This is of course assuming that guarantees have been taken that the reservoirs and distribution will be maintained adequately and properly safeguarded. The Sanitary Board have, no doubt, their hands full; but why not increase their staff, and arm themselves with stronger powers? When visitors complain that the sanitation is not all that it might be, and especially that slops are thrown out on to the veldt, they are not likely to remain long in the town. And this is all the more to be deplored in that the climate of Johannesburg—at the bracing altitude of five thousand feet—is one of the finest in the world.

I found a difficulty in realizing that it was December. Even at night one was glad to open doors and windows. I daresay some of my friends at home pictured me sitting over a roasting fire, snugly enjoying a winter's evening tale. According to the almanack it was the shortest day. But really it was midsummer, and more than once I enjoyed a swim in a wooden swimming bath of clear, cold

water. The air, however, was not always dry; sometimes it was saturated with moisture and trying, and the wet on the rainy days made the ground so heavy that ox-waggons have had to be dug out of the holes in which the wheels had sunk. Another trouble was the dust. It blows about in thick clouds; you sink ankle deep in it in the streets, and in your hair and your clothes you carry about with you a considerable sample. But where is there a place on the face of the earth without drawbacks?



THE BANK OF AFRICA, JOHANNESBURG.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHANNESBURG.

NEED I say that the talk of the town was of gold? At the hotel, in the streets, everywhere you went, the subject uppermost was gold. I was not interested pecuniarily in any of the mines. I was not an engineer or a prospector, and I had not visited Johannesburg to dig or to speculate; but I heard so much of gold and gold-mining, and the fortunes that had been made and also lost in the two years preceding my visit, that naturally enough I began to inquire how it had all been brought

about. I found no difficulty in getting people to talk; the difficulty was rather in checking the flow of talk, so full were those one met with facts and figures relative to the gold fields.

I was told that in 1854 gold had been found in the Witwatersrandt. This, I should perhaps explain, is the name given to a large tract of country in the Transvaal, stretching from Pretoria to Potchefstroom. It is composed of open ranges of hills of slight elevations, seamed here and there with watercourses. It has been described as not unlike a rolling prairie, and the veldt which covers the surface makes travelling in the region extremely rough. Witwatersrandt (shortened to Randt) means the "White Waters' Range;" and as it is likely to become as prominent in our language as that blessed word Mesopotamia, I make no excuse for giving here what I am told is its equivalent.

Of the first discovery little is known; indeed, it was not till 1884, or thirty years after, that gold in this connection was mentioned again. Then the firm of Struben Brothers, finding gold on one of their farms, erected a five-stamp battery. The results from this led to further prospecting, and the discovery of the Confidence Reef. This showed assays of nine hundred and thirteen ounces of gold to the ton; and at a public exhibition, held at Pretoria in July 1885, Mr. Struben asserted that the Randt fields would prove the largest in South Africa. It was found, however, that the Confidence Reef could

only be traced a short distance, and also that the mining gave but poor results.

By no means discouraged the prospectors continued their labours, and at length the news reached Pretoria "that rich gold had been found in the neighbourhood of Gatsrand, that the bodies of gold-bearing ore were regular and ran for miles, and that they would carry a large population and lead to immense industry." Colonel Ferreira inspected the neighbourhood of Gatsrand for the Transvaal Government, and reported favourably. The line of reef was traced satisfactorily; and in the following October the Government decided to proclaim nine farms on the Randt as a public gold field. The farmers, however, were not shuffled aside without consideration. Reserved to them was the right to take up for themselves a *pro rata* area according to the size of their farms. The lands thus reserved with certain rights of water were secured to the farmers, and in all instances they retained on these private lands their homesteads. The rest of the ground was then thrown open at the rate of one pound per claim per month, one-half of which went to the farmers who had owned the land, and one-half to the Government. There was a rush of diggers and speculators; traders and tradesmen followed, people from all parts began to shoal to the Randt, and in a twinkling the foundations of the town of Johannesburg were laid.

According to the author of "Golden South Africa,"

Johannesburg owes its creation to Hope and Outside Capital. And this, I should say, is pretty nearly the truth. Certainly an enormous amount of English money has been sunk in the town and the gold fields of the district. And whatever "boom" promoters may say to the contrary there has been very little return so far for the stockholders' money. There is, of course, no telling what may happen in the future; but it must be admitted that the gold fields—well, for the moment—are disappointing; that is, though containing gold-bearing ore, the cost of extracting the gold is more than the value of the metal. I am speaking of the Randt gold fields generally. It may be that in some instances gold is being got out at a profit; but I should say that this is extremely unlikely, having regard to the high cost at which gold-mining machinery is put down at Johannesburg, and to the high rates paid for unskilled labour in the mines.

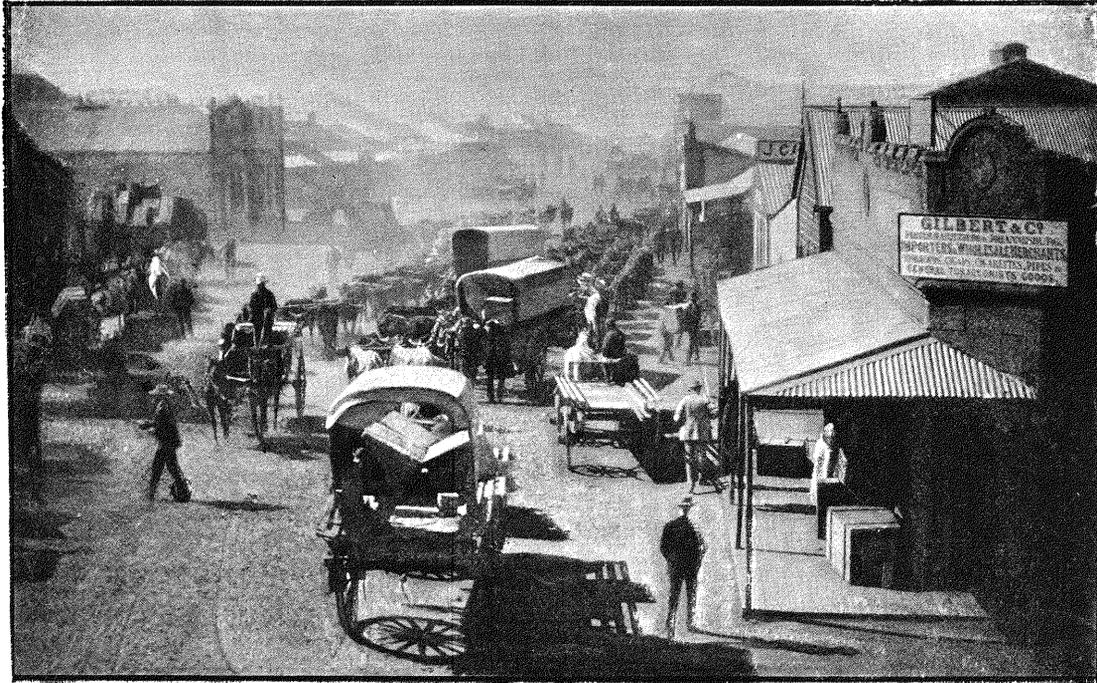
The truth is that the mine owners and managers have been extravagantly sanguine. And, on the other hand, investors have been astonishingly hopeful. It was believed that a great gold-bearing region had been discovered. Nor has this been altogether falsified; but sufficient stress was not in the first instance laid on the fact that this region was nearly three hundred miles beyond a railway terminus, and from eight hundred to a thousand miles from shipping ports. What was placed before the public was the result of crushings. And good care was

taken that these crushings should be of a sensational character.

The assays also were, I am told, prepared for public consumption. "Too frequently," says Mr. Mathers, "I fear assays have proved a delusion and a snare. I have heard of men who, more familiar with the shape of a pewter pot than a crucible, have done some very expert swindling in the assay line of business. A little office, a few bottles of coloured liquid exposed above a heavy window blind—that is the stock-in-trade. A cigar and a snooze on a couch fill up the time supposed to be spent on the assay; but who during a company floating boom would not willingly pay ten guineas for a certificate that a 5 dwt. property sampled 2 oz. 7 dwt. 13·47833 grs.?"

Then stories such as the following were put into circulation. "A digger, it was said, had struck a small leader which was far away from any habitation. He followed the lead up, and at a depth of thirty feet came on a rotten reef three to six feet wide, full of gold. He worked by himself, and every few months he would cover up the shaft, bury his tools, and take a trip to Europe or round the world. When he got through his money he came back again and worked a few more months, and then made for another tour. He was away on his third tour when his shaft was discovered, and the secret was out."

Other and still more wonderful stories were told, and I am afraid were believed; and when to the figures of the



STREET SCENE, JOHANNESBURG (S.A.B.).

sensational crushings and the imaginary assays reports wildly exaggerated were added, investors overlooked the cost of carriage, and rushed to put their money into the gold fields. Then began the great South African gamble. Companies multiplied, and every device to which the unscrupulous could resort to inflate prices was adopted. I saw a list the other day of Witwatersrandt mining companies, and, roughly totalling the capital, found that it was between fourteen and fifteen millions sterling.

To Johannesburg brokers, speculators, storekeepers, and so forth shoaled to make their fortunes. It was not, it is true, so easy to get there. There was the Cape passage to pay for. Then the railway journey of six hundred and forty-seven miles to Kimberley, and a coach drive from Kimberley to Johannesburg of two hundred and eighty-five miles. Somehow a crowd of gold hunters got there, and each in his own particular way set to work. Syndicates were formed, and new schemes launched by the score. After a morning's drive to the mines the new-comers would declare there was a brilliant future for Johannesburg. Of gold-mining probably not nine out of ten knew anything; but they could pick up the jargon of the mines, and reel off for hours their views. A sharp, pushing, striving lot they were on the whole, and their activity and often recklessness created great bustle and excitement.

Prices rose rapidly, the banks readily advanced on scrip, and everybody seemed to be making money. But

not in mining. You would find the mine owners and the managers on the exchange. No doubt somebody was left in charge of the properties; but it was expected by the investing shareholders whose money was sunk in plant and mining rights that directors and responsible officials would be attending to their duties instead of spending the best part of the day in share-mongering.

The Stock Exchange was then in the old building. It was there that the last "boom" was worked, and where the most exciting scenes of 1888-89 were witnessed. Mr. E. E. Kennedy, who was a member, thus describes the Johannesburg Exchange: "To a man fresh from the London Exchange, where an individual is chaffed for a whole day if he wears a very loud neck-tie, a gaudy pair of trousers, or something very special in waistcoat, and where it would simply be seeking the destruction of the offensive article to walk in with any hat on your head but the time-honoured and universally respected chimney-pot, the costumes of the Johannesburg Exchange were a rude shock. In the matter of hats they wore every kind of head-gear *except* the chimney-pot. There were helmets, deer stalkers, cricket caps, and even a Tam-o'-shanter. The weather was cold in the early morning, so there were many ulsters, some of remarkable design and colour; there were men in riding breeches and top boots, who carried a hunting crop, and looked as unlike stockbrokers as anything we could imagine.

"We found afterwards that among the members were

men who had been storekeepers, canteen-keepers, lawyers, policemen, farmers, ostrich feather dealers, clerks, boot-makers, one or two defaulting brokers from London, and there were some who were said to have been dealers in old clothes, and a good many of them looked as if that was their natural calling. There were men from Kimberley



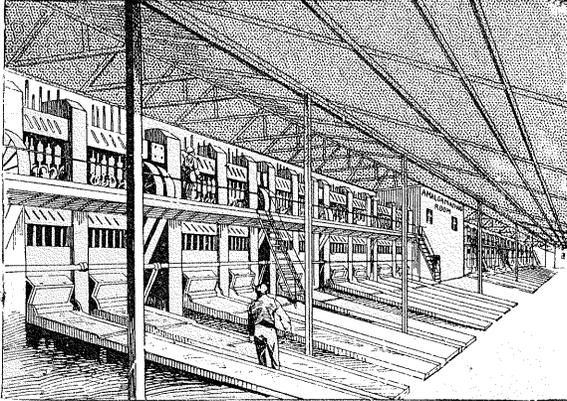
too, some of whom were known to have taken the degree of I.D.B., which in South Africa is recognized as a past-master's degree in the art of roguery."

There were six or seven hundred members of the exchange, and while the market was rising money was flying about in all directions. The speculators were at work reckoning on making up their pile. Nothing was easier than to get a pocketful of money. The banks would discount your promissory notes smiling, or advance almost

up to the hilt on scrip. It seemed as though they were ready to accommodate anybody with an over-draft; and need it be said that those who were operating in the share-market availed themselves of the kindness of the bankers to a very large extent? This was all very well while the belief lasted that the crushing at the mines would run to an ounce or two of gold per ton. The question was, How long would it last? It was expected that the output of gold—about thirty-five thousand ounces—would rise higher and higher, till it figured for the month at one hundred thousand ounces, which was certainly a comforting expectation. For then there would be another boom, and prices would go up Heaven knows how high. The over-drafters would sell out at the top of course, and settle with the banks. They would then go home chucking money about like lords, and on their arrival buy landed estates. There was much extravagance in the air just then, as the over-drafters and their backers soon found. The output, so far from rising, actually showed signs of falling, and this notwithstanding a spurt made to show up well for the Paris Exhibition. The banks took note of this, and they began to ask for more security; then the run down in the market began. It had at last dawned on the people that the mines were not paying their way, and that they never would until the cost of carriage to and from the coast was reduced, and extravagance and incompetence in the working were replaced by skill and economy.

The shrewder men had foreseen the collapse, and unloaded their holdings, much to their own advantage in the "boom" of 1888-89. So that those who had bought them, in the belief that another "boom" was coming, found themselves in difficulties when the banks put on the screw. And this they did in obedience to instructions from headquarters. There was great grumbling, as may be imagined. It was declared to be harsh and unnecessary, that the output from the mines would rise to five figures, and that the next Johannesburg "boom" would "astonish creation." But it was all to no purpose, and the over-drafters who could were obliged to pay up. Those who could not went to the wall.

There were some, however, in the books of the banks so heavily, that it was thought it would serve the banks better to keep their heads above water than force them to a settlement. I heard it said that one over-drafter, who, in the first instance, had begun operations without capital, owed so much when the market ran down that his bankers, rather than let him go to the wall, arranged to pay him £1,000 a year until prices recovered. Happy over-drafter! His bankers should, of course, know better than any outsiders what his securities are likely to be worth. But one would have thought the over-draft wouldn't be much reduced by keeping the debtor in clover till the next "boom" was sprung upon the town.



THE 100-STAMP BATTERY OF THE JUMPERS' GOLD-MINING COMPANY.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GOLD FIELDS.

ABOUT the time of my arrival mining shares had depreciated from 30 to 40 per cent. Those who could locked up their scrip, and went off for a holiday. Some returned to Europe, and have been waiting ever since for the reaction. Others went up country, or arranged to spend a month or two on the coast, hoping that they would be recalled to resume active bargaining on the exchange.

After visiting the scene of much interesting work, the 100-Stamp Battery of the Jumpers' Gold-Mining Company, an opportunity offering, I went down the shaft of the May Deep Level, a mine about nine miles from Johannesburg. It was a prospecting shaft, sunk three hundred

and forty feet ; and a bucket having been placed at our disposal we prepared to descend. The accommodation seemed to me risky, for the bucket was only two feet in diameter by two feet six in depth, and there were three of us going down. The manager, however, assured us that if we only held on by the chain and thought nothing about it we should land all right. So into the bucket we stepped. With our legs inside and our bodies resting on the rim of the bucket the descent was commenced. The manager, who was with us, lighted a bunch of composite candles, and it was well he did, for the light overhead became smaller and smaller, till it entirely disappeared. A smart shower fell into the shaft, wetting and cooling us, but doing no harm, waterproofs being on our backs. Dropping through dynamite smoke from a blasting operation, we heard the chant of the "boys" mining, and the next minute or so touched bottom. Then into a pool of water the bucket splashed, and we scrambled out to survey the mine. In the dim light, with the water dripping overhead, I am afraid I was unable to follow the courteous manager's explanations. The gold reef was there no doubt, and I was quite prepared to believe there was plenty of it ; but this was because we were told so by the manager. The "boys" were working stripped to their skins, with no other covering than wide-awake hats. Our survey lasted only a few minutes, and then, reseating ourselves in the bucket, we were drawn up to the top of the shaft.

I should not of course judge other people by my own experience, but it did occur to me that I was as competent to form an opinion on gold-mining as an investment as certain financial reporters were, who had seen no more of a mine than I had, but who talked as though they could tell the contents of a mine blindfolded. There are, I should think, about a hundred different mining properties in the Witwatersrandt gold fields. To visit even a fourth of these and investigate the working of each could not be done in a flying trip; but were it possible to inspect the whole, unless you were a mining expert with cat's eyes, the chances are that, so far as you could judge yourself from what you saw, you would be no wiser at the end of the survey than you were at the beginning.

Let me not be misunderstood. I am casting no reflection on those active and enterprising spirits to whom the inspection of a score or so of mines before dinner would be child's play. They may be able to tap the secrets of a mine by simply looking in, and, if so, they are splendid reporters; but I confess that I utterly fail to see how it is possible, aware as I am that mining secrets are reserved for the directors. These, let me tell you, are as strictly withheld from visitors—in particular from newspaper visitors—as are the secrets of the stable in racing. You may be able to collect a good deal of useful opinion from mine to mine, and you may get something near the cost of output; but, as regards the value and extent of the gold-bearing ore, there may be many guesses, but no disclosures.

Having said this, I ought to add that investors are not left entirely without guidance. The *Pall Mall Gazette* published an account of the Randt gold fields, the facts and figures in which were obtained from W. Y. Campbell, the Vice-President of the Chamber of Mines. This gentleman is an authority on mining values, and the information which the correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette* reproduces may be regarded as trustworthy. After explaining that the gold is carried in a conglomerate called "banket," he goes on to say that this conglomerate is a sedimentary deposit that once lay sandwiched with other successive deposits flat along the floor of an inland sea or lake.

"On that floor under water, as higher areas were gradually denuded, there was laid down first a pebbly layer, then a sandy layer, then another pebbly layer, and so on—one for every line of banket reef which is found to-day along the Randt. It is, in fact, just like a coal field, only more tilted up. Then came some force from below, broke up the floor, and turned at least one great strip of it edgewise up to the surface, when of course the layers, instead of being one above another, show only as so many narrow reefs running along side by side."

These reefs are the gold-bearing stuff on the gold fields of the Witwatersrandt. And the question is asked, What is the extent of these reefs? In reply the writer says that "where the reefs were first struck it was supposed they went straight down. Great was the disgust of those

who held certain of the claims along the line of out-crop to find that lower down the whole series began dipping away from the vertical. The angle of dip along the line varies considerably, but the average angle is forty-five degrees. Now by the admitted theory of 'sedimentary deposits,' what can this mean but the turned-up strata reverting to their original flat position? This was unpleasant for the holders of narrow properties just along the line, but it is the best hope of the deep-level claims, which at once were pegged out three deep alongside, and of the Randt as a whole.

"The reefs which run along the Randt are located into four series, the most important being that known as the 'Main Reef' series. This consists pretty uniformly of seven reefs, the general average of gold per ton from which is from 12 to 15 dwts. This series as a whole is the richest of the lot. A mile south of it lies the poorest, the 'Bird Reef' series, averaging only 4 to 5 dwts.; a mile south of that again the 'Kimberley' series, thicker in body, and yielding from 8 to 10 dwts.; and last, two or three miles farther to the south, the 'Black Reef,' to which no accurate yield can yet be assigned.

"The amounts which I have given as the average of gold per ton are in each case the amounts actually being extracted by the machinery now in use—that is, only about 50 per cent. of the gold that is in the ore. With better machinery, and with the addition of chemical to mechanical processes, the companies claim that, like other

companies elsewhere, they will be able to raise that 50 per cent. to 90. Certain 'concentrates' representing 2 per cent. of the ore that is crushed are now being saved by some companies from among the 'tailings' which run to waste through their machines. These concentrates are now awaiting the treatment which is to raise the golden average by 40 per cent. Let us be very mean, and allow them only an ultimate total of 60 per cent.; let us even cut them down to the 50 per cent. that they now get; let us neglect all other series but that of the Main Reef. In length, that series has been traced from east to west for more than fifty miles. In depth, it has been proved, as far as shafts have yet been sunk—in the middle, at the far east, and at the far west—from 300 to 400 feet. The breadth of each reef, and the gold that is coming out of it per ton, I have given on the best authority. There are seven of these reefs; there are 18 cubic feet of banket to the ton; and gold is worth about 3*s.* 9*d.* a pennyweight. If you have plenty of time, and a very large slate, you can cipher out for yourself what an immense mass of the precious metal, even on the most grudging basis, lies in the Randt awaiting conquest. The gold is there—not in chunks to be had for the asking, not in richness which would repay the cost of bringing machinery in balloons; but in such enormous quantities as mankind will not readily give up the hope of winning from their rocky envelope."

Having stated that only half the gold in the ore is got

out, the correspondent observes: "But the point is that even that half they cannot get out at a decent profit. According to the best idea I can form, the present cost of production is—For mining, about 15*s.*; for milling, about 11*s.* to 13*s.*; altogether about 27*s.*, or adding cost of development, shafts, etc., say 33*s.* or 35*s.* a ton. It follows that with gold at 3*s.* 9*d.* a pennyweight, it costs 9 dwts. to get out the seven or eight of the Main Reef. In other words, the largest and most regular mass of ore in the Randt cannot as a whole be worked but at a dead loss, and its certain wealth of gold is lying idle—a reserve property awaiting happier conditions. Till then those companies which have richer ground must keep the pot boiling with that; and even then the margin is often a matter of a pennyweight or two, which vanishes at the first touch of a refractory ore."

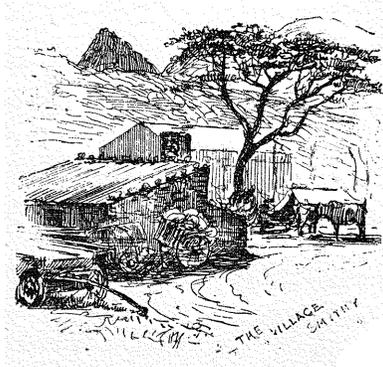
Obviously gold-mining in the Transvaal under existing conditions is unremunerative, and it is as obvious that it is likely to remain so until the high charges for carriage are lowered. "A mill which costs in England £1,000, by the time it is set up here has cost perhaps £3,000. 'Deals,' the indispensable means of propping the mine passages, cost at Durban 4½*d.* the foot; on the Randt, 1*s.* 8*d.* to 2*s.* And so on with food for men, forage for beasts, and every other thing which in the wilds of Africa must be brought from one place to another. The ton that might come by rail at £7 10*s.* costs as things are £18 10*s.* The consequence is that it takes at present

£10,000 to open up and equip properly fifteen to twenty claims. These conditions are absurd. The gold industry is crushed under the ox-waggon of the Boer."

Two facts are worth noting. One is that there are in the Transvaal the foundations of a great gold industry, and the other is that the causes which are making this industry unprofitable may be removed. And by railways. "Up on the Randt, Cambridgeshire would compare with the veldt as mountainous." So that there should be no difficulties other than money to overcome in the making of railways over the veldt. True, the Boer has so far objected. As things are he puts thousands into his pocket, earned by his ox-waggons. He thinks that his occupation would be gone were railway extensions to be made. On this account President Kruger has been opposed to railways. I say has been. But is he now?

The railway extension is all but completed to Coldstream, the border town between Natal and the Transvaal; consequently what remains to be done is the comparatively short distance to Johannesburg. There is this, however, to be borne in mind. The promoters of the Delagoa Bay scheme have priority of concession, and until their line is completed Paul Kruger cannot, according to promise, allow another railway to cross the border. Then, I believe, there is an engagement that the Orange Free State railway is to be extended to the Transvaal after the completion of the Delagoa Bay scheme. So that there are two undertakings to complete before the extension from Coldstream

to Johannesburg can be made. Circumstances, however, may force Paul Kruger to alter his decision, for even the Boers are beginning to understand that in their own interest railways should be made. For if concessions were refused gold-mining in the Randt would be brought to a standstill, and Johannesburg would be deserted. There would be no freight for the ox-waggon, no work for the Randt smithy. On the other hand, with railways running from the coast to the gold fields, prices would fall—it is believed 50 per cent.—and gold-mining as an industry could be carried on profitably.





THE BANK OF AFRICA, JOHANNESBURG, AS IT WAS IN 1837.

CHAPTER XVI.

LAST WORDS ABOUT JOHANNESBURG.

THOUGH the visitors at the Grand National were rather a mixed lot, among them were some very good fellows. Dr. Jackson, a professional man of colour, and his wife, an Englishwoman, I found really nice people—agreeable, chatty, and well-informed. Dr. Jackson, let me add, is well known in England, having passed with distinction through the medical colleges; and at Cape Town he had the finest practice, so highly were his

abilities thought of. There were some countrymen of my own—capital chums in a distant land—one or two of my former fellow-passengers, and a clever young fellow to whom I am indebted for a sketch of the first branch of the Bank of Africa at Johannesburg.

The breakfast was at eight ; and, as you may possibly find yourself in the same quarters, I may as well tell you how we fared. Well, for breakfast there was porridge for a foundation; and let me say that it is the best thing you can begin with. I preferred the tea to the coffee. Then there were eggs and bacon, fish, chops, and other kinds of relish, finishing up with marmalade. At one o'clock we had tiffin. It would do duty for a mid-day meal at home. Soup, small *entrées* of different kinds, steaks, chops, pudding, and so forth. The dinner was similar to tiffin, with hot roasts and fowls added. The *menu* is always a pretty good length, and if you saw it you would say that there was nothing more to desire ; but the dinner on paper is one thing, and as it appears on the table is another.

I am not going to complain, but I certainly expected that the salmon would not have been fished from a tin, or the fish turned out of a sardine box. But on Christmas Day all grumbling was hushed when a plum pudding made its appearance. I don't know whether it was tinned or not. But it is due to the proprietors of the Grand National to say that we enjoyed it.

Christmas pudding and strawberries and cream are not usually found together; but at Johannesburg one followed the other at the particular dinner to which I refer.

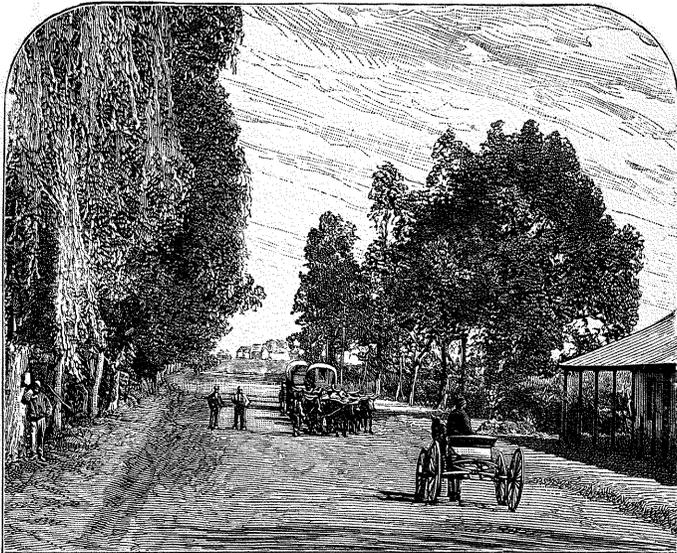
Fruit is neither good nor plentiful. I was told that the Dutch Boers were too lazy to cultivate it. Would this not afford a good opening to English market gardeners? The prices of things, in general, seemed to me high. Your washing costs five shillings per dozen, and if you remain long in the Johannesburg dust you will require a lot of washing. The dust is awful; it gets into your mouth, nose, and ears, to say nothing of your clothes. Loaf sugar is eighteenpence a pound, and drinks are expensive. A brandy-and-soda costs one-and-six, and a "go" of whisky a shilling. What a night's hard drinking would come to I have no idea.

If the fall in the share market could have been prevented, or at any rate staved off for a year or two, Johannesburg would have been famous for attractive buildings. As it is, the town causes surprise. The post office and other official buildings are built of cement, which looks like stone, and handsome structures they are. There are blocks of offices, bank buildings, and large and commodious stores, and, in a word, the equipment for business purposes astonishes you. One handsome club—the Randt—is already built, with very complete appointments of the latest date. A second—the Gold Fields Club, if anything more select—is now

building, and when completed will be a model of comfort and convenience.

The Eckstein Buildings, at the corner of Commissioner Street and opposite the Exchange, are a handsome structure of three stories, in which are offices of brokers and other business men. The Wehl Buildings are also worth a note. These are three stories high, and occupied mainly as shops and offices; and at the back is a restaurant so handsomely appointed that one is surprised to see it there. Places of worship are numerous, but very little money seems to have been spent upon them. The Jewish Synagogue is a conspicuous exception, and it speaks well for the Hebrew race that they have not been so absorbed in money-getting as to neglect the demands of their religion.

At a short distance from the town a pavilion has been erected, and a fine piece of ground enclosed for athletic sports, cricket and football matches. Indeed, during the "boom" so many good and useful undertakings were started, that if mine owners and bankers could have held out a little longer Johannesburg would have become a most attractive place to live in. Let me hope that when prosperity returns as much public spirit will be shown as there obviously has been in the past.



VIEW NEAR PRETORIA.

CHAPTER XVII.

PRETORIA.

THE capital of the Transvaal is a five hours' journey from Johannesburg. Conveyances of different kinds—coaches such as I have already described, carts, waggons, and the like—are frequently going and coming, so that there is no difficulty or loss of time, if you be in a hurry, in getting to Pretoria. Booking a coach-seat, we set out a little after mid-day. There were twelve passengers inside, and

a good many outside, and on the outskirts of the town a policeman with a heavily chained "nigger" got up, adding to the topheaviness of the vehicle. The prisoner was taking his last ride, as he had been condemned to death, and was on his way to Pretoria, where the sentence would be carried out.

Speaking of this reminds me of a story I heard in the coach. It was said to be one of Baines', told at a time when a prisoner was thought more troublesome inside than outside a prison. As the story goes, a prisoner whose rations were not forthcoming at the proper time persuaded his gaoler to let him go and dine at the hotel. On returning, however, to the prison, the gaoler refused to admit him. "If this gaol," he said, "is not good enough for you, go and find a better." I was told that in those days, when treadmills or other appliances for hard labour were wanting, the prisoners were not always unemployed, for some were seen carrying about fowls, which they had been sent out to sell by the gaolers.

After the usual rough riding in parts, we would bowl along comfortably in others, and chatting and smoking we passed the afternoon pleasantly enough. At the half-way house we had a good lunch. Having hitherto been unsparing in my complaints about the food in the Transvaal, I think I should say a good word for the excellent meal we had on our way to Pretoria. With a cigar there was nothing much left to desire.

The track, however, got rougher, and, if I may use the word, more "bouldery," shaking up our livers, and making things in the coach for the time unpleasant. Then a good drive on a level road brought us to the capital, one of the most delightful towns, I must say, which it has been my good fortune to visit.

Arriving at the Fountain Hotel about six, we enjoyed a capital dinner, and made ourselves comfortable. There was a warmth about the place I liked, and the well-to-do look indicated a tolerably prosperous state of things. The truth is the Boers have thrived by the gold-seeking and the influx of English money. For the farms upon which gold had been found exceedingly high prices were given, and in consequence the value of property at Pretoria was greatly enhanced. Many of the Boers received for their farms sums of money they had never dreamt they would ever possess. Farms which but a few years previously had been bought for a mere song changed hands at startling figures.

I was told that owners had sold out at figures ranging far up to £100,000 and beyond ; that indeed so common were £20,000 cheques that many a Boer valued his farm at not a penny less than that sum, although not an ounce of gold may have been found on it. And when he makes a haul he feels no temptation to speculate with it. He must invest it in land. So when one farm is sold he goes in country to look for another, or invests his money in property at Pretoria and its neighbourhood.

The next morning I had a dip in a pretty bathing nook overshadowed by willows, and then a look round. The streets are all at right angles, lined in many places with large gum trees; while the houses, neat and cosy, have well-kept gardens in front. In one of the pleasantest roads is prettily ensconced the English Cathedral, a brick building, say some seventy-five or eighty feet long by thirty feet wide,—I should say the smallest cathedral in the world. In the centre of the market-square is the Dutch Reformed Church, which cost £20,000, and is an ornament to the town. Arriving too early for service, I walked through the paddock beyond, to a grove of lovely peach and fig trees, in which also luxuriant wild flowers were growing. The fruit was not quite ripe, but there was abundance.

I tasted the prickly pear, and it deserves its name. You must carefully envelop it with a cloth or handkerchief, and cut open to get at the fruit inside; but if ever so little a prickle gets in the finger it seems to spread to both hands, and you suffer as though stung with nettles. The more you scratch the worse it spreads; and should you use the handkerchief to your face in which the pear has been wrapped you become a picture. I venture to say that you will never touch prickly pears again.

There is a good club here, but I was comfortable enough at the hotel. My bedroom overlooked a tennis lawn (brown, not green), at one end of which were large willow trees, and verandahs all round. A friend

suggesting a drive, we drove in a Cape cart to a real Dutch farmhouse. The stolid-looking inmates, who severally shook us by the hand, gave us a welcome drink of milk, and left us to our own devices. Walking some distance, we saw a wonderful group of Euphorbia trees ("Wunderboom"), growing in a series of groups forming a circle, and looking at a distance like one tree. The path was through the orchard, in which peaches (not yet ripe), figs, and oranges were growing. On through fields of Indian corn higher than yourself, across a rivulet balancing oneself on a bamboo pole hardly three inches thick, and then emerging entered a hilly and fairly wooded country. Returning, my performance on the bamboo pole must have been amateurish, for I nearly fell in. It was fearfully warm, and we were glad to get back to the farm again, where we found our Dutch friends calmly seated exactly as we had left them. Everybody had to shake hands all round again on wishing them good-bye.

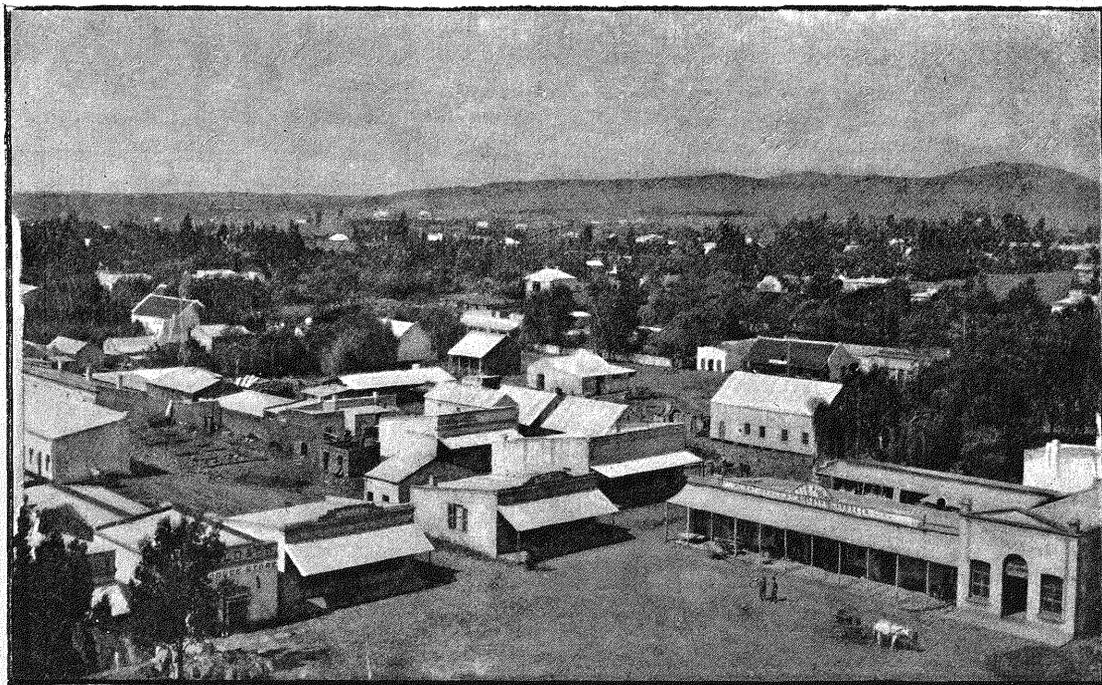
The mode of carrying black babies is in the hollow of the mother's back, and it would amuse you in these parts to see the heads of the infantile natives wobbling over the top of the blanket in which they are carried. The food the Kaffirs live on—mealy-meal porridge—isn't bad. It tastes like the farinaceous food in use at home, and is really Indian corn.

What detracts from your enjoyment here, if you be a man of business, is the slowness of the transit. At home

people cannot imagine, with railways always at every turn, what it is getting about in the Transvaal. In particular in removing goods the delays seem never ending. Cases despatched from Port Elizabeth in November had not turned up here in February, having been three months on the road. No one, however, seemed surprised, and it was no use grumbling. One had just to wait and smother impatience. Whether it be the climate that takes the energy out of the people, or the natural turn they have for taking things easy, I know not; but it seemed to me that time was no object at all to them, and that they made it a rule not to do to-day what they could put off till to-morrow.

The delay, however, enabled me to see a good deal of the place and the surrounding country.

The House of Legislature is in the market-square, but I had no opportunity of being present at a sitting. Mr. Mathers describes it as follows: "At nine o'clock in the morning a little boy runs up a flag at the pavement corner. This is the national flag. It has, as it happens, three horizontal strips—red, white, and blue. The combination has not been unknown in Pretoria before; this time there is a stripe down the side, the colour of this particular line being green. What signification, if any, the green stripe has alongside the English colours it is not for me to say. Weather-worn wooden rails partition off the verandah of the Parliament House into a space like a sheep pen. On the wall of this pen is fixed, at a



VIEW OF PRETORIA (S.A.R.).

distance from prying eyes, a large black board, and on this are tacked what were once State papers. The documents are in various stages of decomposition from long exposure, and the amount of printed matter still left of each ranges from a tiny dingy morsel fastened by a tack to some dirty torn leaves left fluttering in the wind. The subject-matter of each is hidden under the dust of ages.

“A bell rings at nine o'clock, and the fathers of the land—most of whom have been smoking a morning pipe on the verandah—saunter in to business. Listening to the minutes is dreary work, so the fathers may be left for an hour or two. Drop in by-and-by and you will see them all seated at two green baize-covered, horse-shoe tables in a narrow apartment, sixty-five by twenty feet by fifteen feet high, the ceiling being nailed canvas, and the bare walls a clean whitewash with a blue dado.

“At one side of the room on a green carpeted dais, and at a raised desk also covered with green baize, sits the President in his green sash of office, showing prominently on his big black coat. Above him is a little canopy, the drapery of which—the national colours—serves also as a border to surround an oil-painting representing the arms of the Republic. By the President's side sits the Chairman of the Raad, Mr. Klopper, the member for Rustenburg, who wears a toga. He is the first ‘commoner’ in the land. At the feet of Oom Paul, seated at a little table of his own, is Commandant General Joubert, a

popular and mighty man of valour, who, it is imagined, casts covetous eyes on the chair above him.

“The President taps the desk in front of him with a little hammer when he wants silence, and the whole scene when in repose—which it sometimes is—suggests a well-ordered auction sale, the President quickly asking for bids, while the company sit demurely studying what might be catalogues.

“But just now they are following the reading by the Clerk of the annual report of the Superintendent of Education. The question of the teaching of the higher branches of music springs suddenly to the front, and that enlightened member Mr. Birkenstock gets on his feet. He proceeds to argue vigorously in favour of such tuition, and he says that what he had heard in some of the schools reminded him of the ‘symphonies of Beethoven,’ which he begged to remind his fellow-members he understood. But his fellow-members would have none of it, and there were sounds of dissent, which in the Transvaal Volksraad consist of guttural ejaculations and the shuffling of heavy feet on a matted floor.

“The President calls Mr. Birkenstock to order with raps on the desk from his hammer and his fist, and the monotonous reading of the educational report goes on until somebody moves and carries an adjournment of fifteen minutes for a smoke. The members get thirty shillings a day when serving their country in this way; but the esteemed wife of one of them thinks it a great

shame that her good-man does not get more than the others, as he speaks more than they do. It is believed there would be no objection to voting him an allowance to speak less."

At the time of my visit a new House of Parliament was being built.

President Kruger, who is sixty years of age, was born in Cape Colony, whence, when ten years old, he trekked with his father and mother into the Orange Free State, thence to Natal, and finally to the Transvaal, where the family ultimately settled. At seventeen Kruger was appointed Assistant Field-Cornet, and at twenty became Commandant of a district. Thirteen years later he was created Commandant-General of the Transvaal, and under President Burges became Vice-President, finally being elected President in 1883.

Perhaps a word about the South African Republic, which is the official title of the Transvaal, may be useful here. The Republic was originally formed by part of the Boers who left the Cape Colony in 1835 for Natal, but quitted that colony on its annexation to the British Crown. In 1852 the independence of the Transvaal was recognised by the British Government. In 1877, however, the Boers finding their own Republican Government impossible, it was put an end to, and on April 12th, 1877, it was annexed by the British minister for the Crown.

Two years later—that is, in January 1879—disaffection

in the Transvaal added to public anxieties, and it became obvious that the Boers desired independence again. After the Majuba Hill disaster, it was announced in the



PRESIDENT KRUGER.

House of Commons that the following terms had been agreed to :—(1) The suzerainty of the Queen over the Transvaal was to be acknowledged ; (2) complete self-government was to be given to the Boers ; (3) control

over foreign relations was reserved ; (4) a British resident to be at the future capital ; (5) a Royal Commission, consisting of Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir H. De Villier, and Sir Hercules Robinson, to consider provisions for the protection of native interests, etc. The convention was ratified by the Volksraad, October 1881. The British suzerainty, however, was much restricted by a convention in 1884.

Statistical knowledge being as yet uncultivated in the Republic, it is difficult to collect any accurate information. The country has five times the area of Natal, and a white population large and increasing. Although the native population is estimated to be twice as numerous as that of Natal, its presence, scattered over so wide an area, does not attract observation, as do the native races in the contiguous colony.

The discovery and development of the Transvaal gold fields could not have possibly happened at a more critical and opportune moment for both the Transvaal and the Government. Five years ago the finances of the Republic were in so bad a condition that the gravest fears were expressed by local politicians as to the possible consequences. They remembered what had happened nine years previously, when the financial affairs of the country had drifted into a similar condition of confusion and bankruptcy ; and they dreaded, if they did not foresee, the possibility of danger to their regained and dearly purchased independence.

Fortunately for the Republic, the dogged persistency of gold-seekers from Natal, and the subsequent operations of speculators from that colony, the Cape, and Kimberley, rescued the Government from the embarrassments that beset it, and all at once converted an impoverished into an overflowing exchequer. It has been reckoned that in January 1887 the receipts from special gold sources at Barberton and Witwatersrandt in the month had reached an amount of £15,000 respectively, representing an income for the month larger than that derived from other sources. It is true that since then the gold fever has passed away; but it is the opinion of those capable of judging that successful gold-mining is only a question of time, patience, energy, and well-directed effort. When adequate machinery has been erected, when railway facilities have been extended, and when proper amalgamations have been effected, there is no reason why the Transvaal should not become as great a gold region as any in Australia.

Periodically the market-square is crowded with Boer waggons, whose owners have trekked in to celebrate their *Nachtmaal* (Communion), of which it is their habit, in company with their wives and children, to partake four times a year.

One of the pleasant walks in the vicinity is to the Fountains along the bottom of the hills by a stream all the way. Beautiful wild flowers and ripe figs tempt one to linger. As you saunter along you come to a spring

bubbling up from the sand, and here for the first time in the country I had a drink of cold, clear water; for this you had to go down on hands and knees, dipping your nose in to get it; and it was most refreshing laving one's face and hands in the cool water, though, to tell the truth, I got a nasty crick in my neck in bending down.

At the office of the Government assayer you may see some remarkable specimens of gold-bearing ore. There is banket assaying from a half to ninety-two ounces of gold to the ton. Blocks yielding silver and copper, in one case fifty-eight per cent. of copper, and five hundred ounces of silver to the ton. There are also samples of sulphate of antimony giving eight ounces of gold to the ton, and a considerable quantity of silver. There is a sample of silver lead from Bronkhorst Spruit, showing seventy-two ounces of silver to the ton, and scores of specimens of gold quartz and coal. No one can visit Mr. Dawson's laboratory without being impressed with the fact that in the Transvaal there is great mineral wealth, as yet barely touched.

In the Volksraad there used to be, and no doubt are still, some very amusing scenes. On one occasion, says Baines, the progressive party wanted to pass some measure for the opening and improvement of the country. Their opponents, who were in a minority, resolved to "put the drag on." And this they did by bringing to the front a long-forgotten statute, that all members should sit attired in black cloth suits and white necker-

chiefs. This had the immediate effect of disqualifying so many that the business of the House could not be legally conducted. An English member, however, who lived next door, slipped out and donned his Sunday best, with a collar and tie worthy of a Christy minstrel. Sending his coadjutors to his house to be rigged out from his accumulations of old black suits and white ties, they soon reappeared on the scene, and the sitting was resumed with an array that completely dismayed the anti-progressionists.

Here is another of Baines' stories, worth, I think, repeating, though in no respect relating to the Volksraad. A well-known medical man, who prided himself on his knowledge of thirteen or fourteen different languages, was interpreting into Dutch for an Englishman, when some dispute arose.

"Oh!" said he, "it is impossible to translate your barbarous idioms; try me with some piece of pure English." The witness immediately gave:—

"She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm in the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek."

The interpreter got on very well till he came to the last line, which he rendered thus:—

"Vreet op Verdomde Wang."

"I did not say damned cheek," interposed the witness.
"The word is damask."

“ Oh ! ” said the interpreter, “ ‘ damaged ; ’ then it must be rendered thus :—

“ ‘ Vrest op haar Vernielau Wang.’ ”

To say that the Court was convulsed with laughter would be superfluous.

It was after I left Pretoria that three men were brought there under arrest from Johannesburg, charged with taking part in the destruction of the Transvaal flag during President Kruger's visit to the gold fields. The charge was afterwards found untenable, and the men were discharged ; but, inasmuch as they had been arrested in the dead of the night, and marched secretly to Pretoria, though it was obvious that at least one of them, an Englishman, was innocent, it may be inferred that the Fathers can be very unpleasant when they like. The pulling down of the flag was a foolish act, and those who did it did wrong ; but why punish the innocent to save the trouble of an inquiry on the spot ?

The streets are properly macadamized, and the customary sluits and drains, which were formerly at either side of the roads, have been covered in. The barracks for the State artillery and the gaol occupy a prominent position.

One of the excursions from Pretoria is to Bronkhorst Spruit, the scene of an engagement between the Boers and the British troops in the war of 1880. The drive is one of eighty miles, a long distance to travel out of one's way ;

but in a light mail-cart, with good horses, the ground may be got over in seven or eight hours. Driving out of Pretoria, you pass by trees and fields and rose hedges that remind you of scenes in English country life. As you bowl along, the country looks fresh and green. It undulates for miles in grassy plains, here and there diversified by ranges of hills. About halfway the out-spanning on the veldt enables you to stretch your legs ; the rest of the distance is completed comfortably between five and six in the afternoon.

Crossing Bronkhorst Spruit, the ground gradually rises ; and on the right-hand side of the road, dotted here and there with mimosa and thorn trees, an eminence is formed, which was the point of advantage taken by the Boers in intercepting our troops *en route* from Lydenburg, and about to concentrate in Pretoria. The occurrences of that eventful day have been thus related by Dr. Matthews : "The 94th Regiment, together with camp followers, numbering 267 souls in all, forming a cavalcade a mile and a quarter in length, was slowly dragging its way to Pretoria, when, on approaching Bronkhorst Spruit, at about half-past two o'clock in the afternoon of December 20th, 1880, certain mounted Dutch scouts were seen galloping along the top of a ridge near by. These men brought a message, requesting Colonel Anstruther, who was in command, not to advance any farther pending an answer from Sir Owen Lanyon to an ultimatum which had been sent him. This he refused, when without

further ado the Boers, about five hundred strong, opened at once a murderous fire upon our men, who were totally unprepared for so sudden an attack. Down the bullets rained like hail ; and our men, who lay on the ground without a particle of shelter, were picked off with deadly precision, until Colonel Anstruther, himself mortally wounded, and most of his officers *hors de combat*, seeing the day was lost, surrendered to the Boers, after a fight lasting just twenty minutes."

After inspecting the ground and the relative positions the Dutch and English occupied during this short but disastrous fight, we visited the two principal places where our fallen soldiers lie buried. The larger of these we found enclosed by a high stone wall, about eighteen yards long by twelve yards broad, and shaded by two beautiful mimosa trees. Here lay the last remains of fifty-eight non-commissioned officers and men of the 94th Regiment, and one non-commissioned officer and one private Army Service Commissariat, killed, as the tombstone erected to their memory states, in action on December 20th, 1880. In another and smaller graveyard the officers who fell are buried. Neat little crosses at the head of each grave showed the burial-places of Lieutenant-Colonel P. K. Anstruther, Captain T. McSweeney, Captain N. McLeod Nairns, Lieutenant H. A. C. Harrison, and E. T. Shaen Carter, Transport Staff.

The long drive back to Pretoria is usually relieved by resting at some of the Dutch farms, where excellent fruit

and milk may be had. The farmers, though they may appear uncivil, are not so in reality. Their patience is at times greatly tried by strangers. Some take unpardonable liberties. What would English farmers say if stage passengers entered their gardens, and not only helped themselves to the fruit, but smashed trees, and made a playground of the place? There would be a scene. Well, the Dutch farmers have been caused so much annoyance by mean and vulgar strangers that it is scarcely surprising that the traveller on entering a Dutch farm notices that he is sometimes received with cold looks and scant courtesy.

Having brought my visit to a close, I left Pretoria during the most continuous rain-storm I ever witnessed. It began about six or seven a.m., and in most of the streets the water rolled down in torrents, until they seemed like rivers. Crossing them in some places was quite an impossibility, and my friends tried their best to dissuade me from starting, and some said the coach was sure to be stopped by the floods; but, my determination being unshaken, at ten o'clock I started in a full coach for Johannesburg. Conversation naturally turned on the possibility of the flooding of Six-mile Spruit, as, should this be at all passable, the rest of our journey would be assured. As we arrived within sight necks were eagerly craned out of windows, and we were gladdened by the news that it could be forded, which I had already much doubted, seeing that on our way we had passed several

waggon stuck fast in much smaller "rivulets," or spruits, as they are called here. We proved to have crossed not a minute too soon, as the coach which tried the passage next, within about an hour, was stuck fast, the male passengers having to swim to land, the coach being ultimately pulled out by a team of oxen. I had heard of numerous accidents in crossing these swollen spruits, but was never so near being in one myself as upon this occasion.

On arriving at Johannesburg I booked a seat in the coach for Natal.