

# RAID AND REFORM

## THE TRANSVAAL AND ITS STORY

*A Historical Review, down to the Year 1894*

YOUNG and growing countries have but little time for the production of literature, and South Africa is no exception to this rule. Nevertheless, South Africa has produced a historian of talent, patriotism, and industry in McColl Theal. In five goodly volumes Mr. Theal has recorded for the benefit of his own and succeeding generations the history of South Africa from its earliest times in the fifteenth century down to the year 1872. It is a history full of incident and interest, clearly and truthfully written, and I can cordially recommend it to South African readers. For the purpose of this Review, however, I propose confining myself to that portion of the work which deals with the history of the emigrant farmers, who, leaving the Cape Colony in 1836 and 1837, gradually dispersed themselves over

the country to the north of the Orange River and in Natal. Previous to this date, in the early thirties, several English missionaries, traders, and hunters had visited these territories, and were familiar with the country as far north as the Limpopo. Among them were the Rev. Dr. Moffat, David Hume from Grahamstown, Captain Sutton, and Captain Cornwallis Harris, whose wonderfully illustrated work on the fauna of South Africa is so well known to naturalists and hunters. We find, however, that in 1837, Commandant Potgieter, at the head of a Boer commando, after a successful encounter with Mosekatse, issued a proclamation formally annexing a large tract of country including the present South African Republic.

While the limits of a Review will not allow of a full investigation of the causes which led to the extreme friction between the trek Boers and the British authorities, it is, I think, necessary to refer to one of the most prominent of them, as it was not only one of the original causes of the trek from the Cape Colony, but has been a constant source of irritation both north and south of the Orange River since. This has been an excessive and frequently misdirected zeal on the part of missionaries and others on behalf of the native races. To South African farmers—Dutch and English alike—who are in daily contact with these races, and who have

only too good reason to know what the real nature of the South African savage is, it has been extremely galling to have to hear from European missionaries and others constant complaints and frequently exaggerated charges made against farmers generally to the authorities in Downing Street, who, in former years, showed themselves only too ready to defer to the demands of the Exeter Hall party. That these same farmers, as a body, are nevertheless capable of dealing with the natives in a firm and at the same time considerate manner, is shown by the status of the native in the Free State. Here the first of all essentials in the treatment of natives is observed, and drink is forbidden. Such a thing as a drunken native is almost unknown in the Free State; their locations are as a consequence cleanly and comfortable, and if these things be not Godliness, they are with the savage the first true step towards it. The pious horror of Exeter Hall has not succeeded in stopping the native liquor traffic in British colonies. After the first settlement in the Transvaal fresh families continued to come in, and the districts of Lydenburg, Potchefstroom, and Rustenburg were formed, each with a separate commandant.

The district and township of Pretoria were founded in 1855. These earlier years of this northern Republic were stormy times for the emigrant farmers; their hearts were great, their aspirations high, and

in endeavouring to spread themselves over huge tracts of country they met with terrible losses from fever and from the numerous Kaffir tribes with which they came into conflict. The tragedy of Dingaan's Day, when Piet Retief and sixty-five followers were treacherously massacred to a man while on an expedition into Natal, will never be forgotten while South Africa has a history. Nor will the fate of that gallant little band of Englishmen, seventeen in number, who with some fifteen hundred native allies marched on the Zulu army from Durban to avenge the fate of their Dutch friends. Four of the Englishmen survived, the rest lay dead on the field of battle. The Zulu force was 7,000 strong, but Theal says: "No lion at bay ever created such havoc among hounds that worried him as this little band caused among the warriors of Dingaan before it perished."

The boundaries of the Transvaal Republic were at length practically determined by the establishment of the British in Natal and in the Orange Sovereignty after the battle of Boomplaats, in which Sir Harry Smith defeated the Boer force. The subsequent withdrawal from the Orange Sovereignty of the British Government against the wishes of a large number of inhabitants brought into existence the Orange Free State.

In 1844 a code of thirty-three articles was drawn

up and adopted by the Volksraad at Potchefstroom, and this was practically the Constitution in existence in the Transvaal Republic till the year 1857. At this date an event memorable in the history of the Republic occurred, an event highly interesting from a constitutional point of view, and of special interest to those—not yet citizens of the State—resident in Johannesburg. In 1857 the Republic north of the Vaal attained its twentieth year. It had increased in population, and had taken on to some extent the habits and modes of life of a settled community. Mr. Pretorius and his followers began to feel that in the altered circumstances of the State the time had arrived for a remodelling of the Constitution. Among these followers of Pretorius, these advocates for reform, it is interesting to find, was Mr. Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, now President of the Transvaal. Mr. Theal says: “During the months of September and October, 1856, Commandant-General W. M. Pretorius made a tour through the districts of Rustenburg, Pretoria, and Potchefstroom, and called public meetings at all the centres of population. At these meetings there was an expression of opinion by a large majority in favour of an immediate adoption of a Constitution which should provide for an efficient Government and an independent Church.” And again, later on, we have, in the words of South Africa’s historian,

the gist of the complaint against the then existing state of things. "*The community of Lydenburg was accused of attempting to domineer over the whole country, without any other right to pre-eminence than that of being composed of the earliest inhabitants, a right which it had forfeited by its opposition to the general weal.*"

Such was the shocking state of things in this country in 1856. It was a great deal too bad for such champion reformers as Mr. Pretorius and his lieutenant, Mr. S. J. P. Kruger, as we shall see later on. Shortly after these meetings were held, a Representative Assembly, consisting of twenty-four members, one for each field-cornetcy, was elected, for the special purpose of framing a Constitution and installing the officials whom it should decide to appoint. It had no other powers. The representatives met at Potchefstroom on the 16th December, 1856, and drafted a Constitution. I will not go into the details of this Constitution, but will merely remark with regard to it that all the people of the State of European origin—and not a mere section of them—were to elect the Volksraad, in which was vested the legislative power.

On January 5th, 1857, the Representative Assembly appointed Mr. Marthinus Wessels Pretorius President, and also appointed members of an Executive Council. In order to conciliate the

people of Zoutpansberg, the Commandant of their district, Mr. Stephanus Schoeman, was appointed Commandant-General. They chose a flag—red, white, blue and green. The oaths of office were then taken, the President and executive installed, and the flag hoisted.

When intelligence of these proceedings reached Zoutpansberg and Lydenburg there was a violent outburst of indignation. At a public meeting at Zoutpansberg, the acts and resolutions of the Representative Assembly at Potchefstroom were almost unanimously repudiated. Mr. Schoeman declined to accept office under Mr. Pretorius, and a Manifesto disowning the new Constitution and everything connected with it was drawn up. The Government then issued a proclamation deposing Commandant-General Schoeman from all authority, declaring Zoutpansberg in a state of blockade, and prohibiting traders from supplying "the rebels" with ammunition or anything else.

This conduct on the part of the new Government under Mr. Pretorius appears to me distinctly adroit. Having taken upon themselves to remodel the entire Constitution of the country, they turn round on the adherents of the older Government, whom by the bye, they had not thought it worth while to consult, and promptly call them "rebels." And so you have this striking political phenomenon of a

revolutionary party turning on the adherents of the Government of the State and denouncing them, forsooth, as "rebels."

What matter for the student of Democracy does not this incident afford? Here you have the democratic spirit carried to its extreme point, to its logical conclusion. What did these hardy Republicans think? What did they say among themselves? They said, "We, the people of the country, are the sovereign power of the country; what the majority of us determine on is what we have a right to demand, is what we will have." By the people and for the people was the instinct which dominated them and guided all their movements. The old Government no longer represented the majority of the people, it must give way to the one that did. There was but one appeal; it was to the sovereign power—the people themselves. They declared for a new order of things, a new Government, and all who resisted it became in their eyes rebels, even though, as we have seen, they were loyal to the original Government of the country. Loyalty! there was but one loyalty they knew,—loyalty to the common weal, loyalty to the people of the country. "The Volksraad under the old system of Government was to have met at Lydenburg on December 17th, 1856. At the appointed time, however, no members for the other districts appeared. What

was transpiring at Pochefstroom was well known, and a resolution was therefore adopted declaring the district a Sovereign and Independent State under the name of the 'Republic of Lydenburg.'” And thus two Republics, two Volksraads, two Governments, were formed and existed simultaneously in the Transvaal. And all this without a shot being fired, each party finding sufficient relief to their feelings by calling the other party “rebels.”

In order to strengthen their position the party of Pretorius now determined on a bold stroke. They sent emissaries to endeavour to arrange for union with the Free State. The Free State Government rejected their overtures; but Pretorius was led to believe that so many of the Free State burghers were anxious for this union that all that was necessary for him to do in order to effect it was to march in with an armed force. He therefore placed himself at the head of a commando and crossed the Vaal, where he was joined by a certain number of Free State burghers. “When intelligence of this invasion reached Bloemfontein, President Boshof issued a proclamation declaring martial law in force throughout the Free State, and calling out the burghers for the defence of the country. It soon appeared that the majority of the people were ready to support the President, and from all quarters men repaired to Kroonstad.”

At this stage the Free State President received an offer of assistance from General Schoeman, of Zoutpansberg, against Pretorius, in which object he believed Lydenburg would also join. What the precise political status of Zoutpansberg may have been at this crisis I regret to say I have been unable to discover ; but the fact of the matter is, in the old days of the Transvaal they thought nothing of an extra Government or two in the country. As long as each individual white man was represented somewhere and somehow he was approximately happy. The one thing he did absolutely decline was being left out altogether, which appears to be the position, by the bye to take a modern example of the little community of some hundred thousand Europeans living on the Rand to-day. The old burgher felt his individuality and respected it ; and while powder, shot, and shouting were available to him, he asserted it. "On May 25th the two commandos were drawn up facing each other on opposite banks of the Rhenoster river, and remained in that position for three hours."

Threatened from the north as well as from the south, Pretorius felt his chance of success was small, and he therefore sent out Commandant Paul Kruger with a flag of truce to propose that a pacific settlement should be made. I can quite believe that in this graceful act Mr. Paul Kruger appeared

to great advantage. The treaty arrived at was practically an apology on the part of the South African Republic. Many citizens of the Free State who had joined the northern forces moved over the Vaal after this event. Those who remained, and those who had been previously arrested, were brought to trial for high treason. One man was sentenced to death, but the sentence was mitigated subsequently to a fine, others were fined. These fines were again still further mitigated at the solicitation of Messrs. Paul Kruger and Steyn, until it came to little more than ten pounds each. In fact, I find there was a good deal of mitigation all round at the conclusion of the various political junketings which characterised the early history of these Republics. Shortly after this event Zoutpansberg was incorporated with the Republic, and General Schoeman was appointed Commandant-General of the country. The Republic of Lydenburg followed suit in 1860, after considerable negotiations on both sides. Pretoria was then chosen as the seat of Government.

One might naturally suppose that after such a series of political disturbances as has already been recorded, the new Government would now have a peaceful and assured future. It was united, and founded on the will of the majority of the people. But the spirit of unrest was upon them. One of the principal

causes of disturbance among the Boers was undoubtedly differences of opinion on ecclesiastical matters. At this time, 1858, there came to the country a clergyman named Portma, sent out by the Separatist Church from Holland. The minister settled at Rustenburg, and there founded the first branch of what has since become a famous sect among the Dutch, both in the Free State and Cape Colony as well as the South African Republic, and which is known in South Africa as the Dopper sect. Their principal point of difference from the Reformed Church, was an objection to singing of hymns as part of the Church service. To this sect Mr. Kruger and his immediate followers belong.

In 1860, President Pretorius, then President of the Transvaal, was elected President of the Free State, whither, after obtaining six months' leave of absence, he repaired, in the hope of bringing about union between the two Republics. No sooner had he departed than the old Lydenburg party showed signs of disaffection, protesting that union would confer much greater advantage on the Free State than on them. Mr. Cornelius Potgieter, Landdrost of Lydenburg, then appeared in the Volksraad as the leader of the disaffected party. They contended that it was illegal for any one to be President of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State at the same time, and the upshot was that

Pretorius resigned. Mr. J. H. Grobbelaar, Acting President, was requested by the Volksraad to remain in office. The partisans of Mr. Pretorius hereupon resolved to resist. A mass meeting was held at Potchefstroom, and they resolved unanimously that (a) The Volksraad no longer enjoyed its confidence, and must be held as having ceased to exist. (b) That Mr. Pretorius should remain President of the South African Republic, and have a year's leave of absence to bring about union with the Free State. (c) That Mr. S. Schoeman should act as President during the absence of Mr. Pretorius, and Mr. Grobbelaar be dismissed. (d) That before the return of Mr. Pretorius to resume his duties a new Volksraad should be elected.

The complications that ensued on all this were interminable, too complicated for us to follow in detail, but suffice it to say some of the new party were arraigned for treason and fined £100 each—another man £15—that after this for several months there were once more two Acting Presidents and two rival Governments in the South African Republic. Then Commandant Paul Kruger called out the burghers of his district and determined to establish a better order of things.

Having driven Schoeman and his adherents from Pretoria, Commandant Kruger then invested Potchefstroom, which after a skirmish in which three

men were killed and seven wounded in all, fell into his hands. He then pursued Schoeman, who fairly doubled on his opponent, and re-entered Potchefstroom. Commandant Kruger hastily returned, and at this stage President Pretorius interposed. After this followed elections and re-elections until Commandant Jan Viljoen raised the now familiar standard of revolt. He was engaged by Kruger's force, and after a skirmish, in which Viljoen's forces were defeated, Mr. Pretorius again intervened. A conference lasting six days now finally settled matters. Mr. Pretorius took the oaths of office. The Volksraad met in May, 1864. "With this ceremony the civil strife which had so long agitated the Republic ceased. When, a little later on, it was decided that all sentences of banishment, confiscation of property and fines which had been passed for political offences should be annulled, and that whatever had been seized should be restored to its original owner, there was a general feeling of satisfaction." These prolonged civic hostilities were over, but they left their mark behind them. The Treasury was empty, salaries in arrear, and native taxes uncollected. Moreover, the natural enemy of the South African pioneer, whether Dutch or English, the various Kaffir tribes both within and without the Transvaal border, were menacing the Boers. On the Zulu border for a considerable distance from

the frontier the farmers went into laager. Cetewayo was busy reviewing his troops, and in the Wakkerstroon district a commando was assembled ready to repel an invasion. In the early sixties both the Free State and the South African Republic found themselves involved in native wars. Basuto chief Moshesh was the foe whom the Free State had to contend with. Zoutpansberg was the scene of the Transvaal disturbances. In both instances the Kaffirs belong to what Theal describes as the mountain tribes of the Bantu family.

I have referred to the early history of this Republic in some detail because I think it is new to most of us, and because it is full of incident and interest for all of us. What follows is better known to the world. In 1877 the Transvaal was annexed by the British Government, and was administered first by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and secondly by Sir Owen Lanyon. Some of the principal reasons alleged for this annexation were :—"The increasing weakness of the State as regards its relations with neighbouring native tribes, which invited attack on the country and upon the adjoining British possessions." "The state of anarchy and faction that prevailed in the country." "The danger of invasion by Sekukuni and Cetewayo." "The paucity of public funds with which to cope with this state of things." Of this period of the history of

the country a good deal has been written in a book called *The History of the Transvaal* by John Nixon. The annexation at the outset appears to have been received with mixed feelings. Some strongly approved, some sullenly acquiesced, while the Volksraad sent a deputation to protest in England. Grumbling soon began among the Boers, and meetings were held.

In 1879 Sir Theophilus Shepstone, a South African by birth, and one thoroughly in touch with the Boers, was superseded by Sir Owen Lanyon. Sir Theophilus was always ready to drink a cup of coffee and talk matters over with any disaffected Boer visitor. Sir Owen Lanyon was a stiff-necked British soldier, full of fads and prejudices, and soon felt that he was completely out of touch with the Boer population. Had some constitutional assembly been formed during Shepstone's *régime*, wherein the Boers had full representation and control of their own internal affairs, and Sir Theophilus been retained in office, there are writers who think it probable that peace would have been maintained. But be that as it may, events took a different course. In the meantime, it is worthy of notice that the two great native enemies of the Transvaal, Sekukuni within their borders, and Cetewayo in Zululand, were both attacked and defeated, the former by a force under Sir Garnet Wolseley, the

latter after considerable losses by Lord Chelmsford and Sir Evelyn Wood.

In the Zululand campaign Piet Uys and a small body of Boers from the Republic did good service, Piet Uys, a brave leader, losing his life, but the large body of Boers held aloof. In 1880 affairs in the Transvaal again reached a crisis. According to Nixon, "the levying of taxes on the Boers by an administration in which they were totally unrepresented" was the principal cause. Add to this the attitude of Mr. Gladstone, who, while in opposition, had condemned in unmeasured terms the annexation of the Transvaal, and who had just now come into power, and the case for the Transvaal is an intelligible one. What followed early in 1881 is too well known to need repetition. The British forces under Sir George Colley were hurried up to the Natal frontier, and, without waiting for reinforcements, engaged the Boers and were defeated. After this the policy of retrocession was decided on by the Gladstone Cabinet, and the independence of the Republic recognised, Great Britain, in both the Pretoria and London Conventions, retaining the right to supervise treaties with foreign powers.

We have now to deal with another and important phase of this State's progress and material development. For some years previous to the date at which we have now arrived in our historical review,

gold had been discovered in the Lydenberg district, and this was followed by still further discoveries in 1883, which led to the formation of Moodie's Company and the foundation of Barberton. As the mineral resources of the country became known, new comers poured in, and with their capital and enterprise opened up the mines of that district. Prospecting went on all over the country, and in 1886 gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand district. What that discovery meant for the South African Republic we now know. From being a thinly-populated grazing country, with very little in the way of funds in its State coffers, it has become the wealthiest and most prominent State in South Africa. Its population has been increased four or five fold, and every farmer has been enriched by getting a market in the country for his produce. Farms have risen in value throughout the land; and there is not a burgher to-day who in his heart does not thank heaven for the prosperity which the capital, the energy, and the enterprise of the mining community in the country have brought him.

And yet, what is the political status of the mining men in the country?—the men who provide four-fifths of the revenue, and who have poured wealth alike into the coffers of the Government and the pockets of the farmers. Their position is that they

are allowed to have neither part nor lot in the government of the country. In thus enriching the country it is true this community has materially enriched itself; but wealth is not everything, and it is as demoralising for the Boers as it is for the mining population that all political rights should be withheld from the latter. Men amongst us are reproached for merely getting all the money they can together and then leaving the country. In the first place this is true of only a small minority, and who can blame them for leaving? Entirely shut out from public life, what has the country to offer them to induce them to remain? In any large community there are always a few men in whom the instincts of public service are so strong as to inevitably lead them to become public servants of that community,—men who feel themselves capable and anxious to serve the public, and who for the most part, let the motive be what it will, serve them faithfully and well. Year by year such men as these are driven from this country by the existing state of things.

There is a question which arises in one's mind after this brief review of the history of the country which I think one may fairly address to the Government and burghers of this State: Are they to-day meting out to us the political justice which they have ever insisted upon from the State for themselves?

What induced them or their fathers to frame a new Constitution at Potchefstroom in 1857? The feeling that the majority of the white inhabitants were not properly represented in the Government of the country; the feeling that the community of Lydenburg were attempting to domineer over the whole country without other right to pre-eminence than that of being the oldest inhabitant, a right which it had forfeited by its opposition to the general weal. What was one of the principal causes which led them to throw off the British yoke in 1881? The objection to being taxed by an Administration in which they were unrepresented. Are we not labouring under all these disabilities to-day? The one retort to this is that we are Uitlanders. That is to say, that in a country not yet sixty years old, in which the population has been formed almost entirely by immigration, in which the President himself is an immigrant, the mining community, who have been coming in for at least fifteen years past, and have done more in developing the material resources of the country in that time than was ever conceived in the wildest dreams of the earlier inhabitants, are foreigners. What proportion of the burghers of this State were actually born in the country?—this State, which owes its prosperity and its progress alike to the continuous stream of immigration. The President at least was not born

here. The fact is that what was originally a Republic, and what we hope to see once more a Republic in deed as well as in name, has, by continually tinkering with the franchise law, become an oligarchy.

I have had some little difficulty in obtaining the information with regard to the various alterations in the franchise law, but I am indebted to Mr. Charles Leonard for the following. I gather that originally every white man had a vote. Subsequently every white man not born in South Africa had to pay £15 to get the vote. Later, in 1874, strangers who had no land in the country had to live here one year to get the vote. The acquisition of land qualified them at once. Next, in 1882 burghership could only be obtained after living in the country and being registered on the field-cornets' books for five years and paying £25. In 1887 the law fixed fifteen years and the payment of £25.

In 1890 the Second Volksraad was established. The inestimable boon of a vote for this body, whose decisions are liable to revision by the First Raad, is obtainable after being resident two years, taking the oath and paying £5. At the same time the law was altered to permit admission to the right to vote for the First Raad after ten years, and to become a member after fourteen years. In 1893, without reference to the people, the law was altered so that

we are virtually excluded for ever. The law was confirmed in 1894, and there was added a clause by which children born here cannot get the vote unless their fathers have taken the oath, an oath which, remember, deprives a man of the citizenship of the country he came from, and offers him something less than half citizenship of this in return.

The tendency of this legislation is perfectly clear ; it is from making the franchise difficult to making it impossible for the inhabitants of the Rand. We are growing old as the years go by, and if the Raad wishes to be logical and consistent it will assuredly next Session pass a Bill excluding the grandchildren of Uitlanders. We have sketched the growth of this State from its earliest days to the present time.

*Note.*—The above paper was published in Johannesburg in the *Star* in December, 1895, and contains at the conclusion a statement of the position as it then appeared.

“THE ORIGIN AND CIRCUMSTANCES  
OF THE INCURSION INTO THE  
SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC OF AN  
ARMED FORCE ”

“LET no one,” says Machiavelli, “who begins an innovation in a State, expect that he shall stop it at his pleasure or regulate it according to his intention.”

And Machiavelli, who lived in the early days of the small Republics of mediæval Italy, and who had witnessed their intrigues, their corruption, and their decay, knew whereof he was writing.

There seems to be a Nemesis, some mad but watchful Fury, that waits on political reform, that sees with jealousy its every movement, and tarries not in her pursuit.

To Englishmen of this generation, reared in the free air of Anglo-Saxon liberty, she exists but as a shadow—to Machiavelli, the child of political corruption, tyranny, and intrigue, she seemed as some dark spirit of destiny brooding for ever over the freedom

of mankind. Have students of evolution, the philosophy of history, all the science of the ages, discovered any inexorable law of nature? or must we regard it as the irony of fate, whereby all small Republics, as far as history knows them, beginning with those of Greece and including those of mediæval Italy and of South America, inevitably end either in perpetual faction strife, in oligarchy, or in tyranny? That which was founded on the instincts of justice and freedom seems to engender licence, and the greed and ambition of the few govern the destinies of the many. In South Africa the Transvaal during the few decades of its existence has been no exception to the rule.

Despising Anglo-Saxon civilisation, yet with no civilisation of their own to fall back upon, the Boers have hovered between savagery and the civilisation they have in vain endeavoured to forsake.

Having a language, a patois with "neither a syntax nor a literature," the sons of the wealthy are sent to English schools and universities, and English books almost entirely fill the shelves of every library in the country, thus showing that in their hearts they appreciate the civilisation they affect to despise.

Ten years ago the influx of new comers began to settle on the Rand. And as this influx increased and advanced with ever-gaining strides, the Boers

realised that the world and civilisation were once more upon them. In spite of all the opposition that patriarchal prejudice could muster, railways usurped the place of the slow moving ox-waggon, and in the heart of their solitude a city had arisen; while to the north and to the east between them and the sea were drawn the thin red lines of British boundary. The tide of Anglo-Saxon civilisation—that strong ever-flowing current, on whose bosom all barks are borne as freely as on the open sea—had swept around and beyond them to the banks of the Zambesi and to territories even further north in the interior of a continent of whose existence they were but dimly conscious. A primitive pastoral people, they found themselves isolated, surrounded—“shut in a kraal for ever,” as Kruger is reported to have said,—while the stranger was growing in wealth and numbers within their gates. Expansion of territory, once the dream of the Transvaal Boers, as their incursions into Bechuanaland, into Zululand, and the attempted trek into Rhodesia, all testify, was becoming daily less practicable. One thing remained,—to accept their isolation and strengthen it.

Wealth, population, a position among the new States of the world had been brought to them, almost in spite of themselves, by the new comer, the stranger, the Uitlander. What was to be the attitude towards him politically? Materially he had

made the State—he developed its resources, paid nine-tenths of its revenue. Would he be a strength or a weakness as a citizen—as a member of the body politic?

Let us consider this new element in a new State—how was it constituted, what were its component parts? Was it the right material for a new State to assimilate? Cosmopolitan to a degree—recruited from all the corners of the earth—there was in it a strong South African element, consisting of young colonists from the Cape Colony and Natal—members of families well known in South Africa—and many of them old schoolfellows or in some other way known to each other. Then the British contingent, self-reliant, full of enterprise and energy—Americans, for the most part skilled engineers, miners and mechanics—French, Germans, and Hollanders. A band of emigrants, of adventurers, and constituted, as I think all emigrants are, of two great classes—the one who, lacking neither ability nor courage, are filled with an ambition, characteristic particularly of the British race, to raise their status in the world, who find the conditions of their native environment too arduous, the competition too keen, to offer them much prospect, and who seek a new and more rapidly developing country elsewhere; and another, a smaller class, who sometimes through misfortune, sometimes through their own

fault, or perhaps through both, have failed elsewhere. Adventurers all, one must admit ; but it is the adventurers of the world who have founded States and Kingdoms. Such a class as this has been assimilated by the United States and absorbed into their huge fabric, of which to-day they form a large and substantial portion. What should the Transvaal Boers have done with this new element so full of enterprise and vigour? This had been for the last ten years the great question for them to solve. Have they desired merely a political monopoly for a passing generation of men from the very nature of their lives and training but poorly qualified for the sole control and conduct of the affairs of a rapidly developing country—or have they desired to lay the foundation of a permanent State, a true Republic, that might be sustained and upheld by those very principles of democracy which inspired and guided the Boer voortrekkers in the State's foundation? Hitherto they had steadily and with ever-increasing determination sought only political monopoly. Enfranchisement, participation in the political life of the State by the Uitlander,—this means, they said, a transference of all political power from our hands to those of men whom we do not trust. “I have taken a man into my coach,” said President Kruger, “and as a passenger he is welcome ; but now he says, Give me the reins ; and that

I cannot do, for I know not where he will drive me." To the Boer it is all or nothing ; he knows no mean, no compromise. Yet in that very mean lies the vital spirit of republicanism. What is the position of the Boers in the Cape Colony ? Are they without their share, their influence, their Africander bond in the political affairs of the country ? And so it is throughout the world to-day,—in the United States, in England, in France, in the British Colonies, wherever the individual thrives and the State is prosperous—the compromise of divided political power among all classes, all factions, is the great guarantee of their well being. To this end all political evolution moves ; and whether it finds expression in a Republic or in an ancient Monarchy, "broad based upon the people's will"—will move while civilisation continues.

So trite are these reflections that one almost hesitates to record them ; and yet so many are the admirers of the so-called sagacity of the Boer—so many who take the "all or nothing view"—that a restatement of them can do no harm.

That the enfranchisement of the Uitlander would mean a complete transference of political power into his hands involves two assumptions : the first is that the Uitlanders would form a united body in politics ; the second is that their representatives would dominate the Volksraad. The most superficial

acquaintance with the action of the inhabitants of the Witwatersrand district on any public matter will serve to refute the first of these, while it is a well-recognised fact that there are amongst the Uitlanders—among the South Africans especially—a large number of men whose sympathies with the Boers on many matters would run directly counter to what one might describe as those of the ultra-English section.

The second of these assumptions—though it is continually put forward—almost answers itself. The number of representatives from the Uitlander districts under any scheme of redistribution of seats which the Boer could reasonably be expected to make would fall considerably short of those returned from the Boer constituencies.

Such was the attitude of the Boers on this vital question which led to the Reform Movement of 1895; and I have stated what I believe to be the injustice of it as regards the Uitlanders and the unwisdom of it in the true interests of the Boers.

I shall now deal with the Reform Movement itself, endeavouring to trace its real origin and object. The movement ended in a drama which attracted the attention of the world for more than a year, and to the proper understanding of which the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee of Enquiry. Before the Committee facts have been laid bare,

misrepresentations and misconception, and in some instances the injustice resulting from them, removed. And the evidence recorded, together with the reports thereon, fill 600 pages of a Parliamentary Blue Book.

The Committee appointed was constituted as follows:—The Attorney-General (Sir Richard Webster), Mr. Bigham, Mr. Blake, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, the Colonial Secretary (Mr. Chamberlain), the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks Beach), Mr. Cripps, Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. John Ellis, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. George Wyndham; and they formed a strong and able and a representative Committee of the House of Commons.

It was to the circumstances, rather than to the origin of the incursion, that the Committee devoted its most assiduous attention; and with reference to them and the degrees of responsibility for different actions attaching to different persons, its findings, the result of exhaustive examination of witnesses, are clearly and impartially stated in their Report.

The task was no ordinary one, and of the many issues involved there were some on which the Committee concentrated their attention. The reputation of the Colonial Office had been impugned; the responsibility of Mr. Rhodes had to be deter-

mined ; were the Chartered Company Directors implicated, and if so to what extent? A conspiracy was to be unmasked, a mystery to be unravelled, and to the questions which might involve this person or that, punctilious points of immaculacy in a Duke or a Colonial Office official, the Committee addressed itself with zeal, and with some suspicion of the relish which ladies bestow on a new-fledged scandal. Moreover they had amongst them a notorious gossip—Mr. Henry Labouchere.

They confessed Charles Leonard rather bored them ; but the missing cables—Miss Flora Shaw,—here is matter indeed, my masters!

They resolved at the outset to divide their labours into two parts, and the first was, in the terms of the Order from the House of Commons, to “inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic of an armed force.” Within the “origin” of that incursion, came the history of the Reform Movement in the Transvaal ; and it must ever remain a matter of some reproach to the Committee that while they accorded to Mr. Schreiner, who probably has not spent more than a month in his life within the Transvaal, no less than nearly four sittings wherein to record his political views and demonstrate his ignorance of the true Uitlander position, they confined Mr. Charles Leonard, and that under distinct

pressure from the Chairman, to less than a single sitting. He is a South African by birth, and has, no less than Mr. Schreiner, both talent and patriotism. To the question of reform in the Transvaal during a residence of several years he has given unremitting attention and conspicuous ability, and he was the man of all others qualified to record in accurate detail the history of the movement which was the principal factor in the "origin of the incursion," and which it was the function of the Committee clearly to ascertain.

That the Committee did not deal as systematically with the "origin of the incursion" as was desirable in the true interests of the inquiry was, however, the fault of the Opposition rather than of the Government members. The Government itself being indirectly implicated through the charges made against the Colonial Office, the Government members, in their desire for the fullest inquiry, placed no check on the cross-examinations of witnesses by the Opposition members, and these form the bulk of the evidence taken.

The Opposition members did not exhibit the same impartial spirit when witnesses were being examined on the history of the Reform Movement in Johannesburg—and of this, their interruptions during Mr. Leonard's evidence, which called forth a remonstrance from Mr. Chamberlain, was a striking

instance. Mr. Labouchere's presence on the Committee, which at least in character should have been a judicial one, was an anomaly at the outset ; and his retention thereon after his retractation of, and apology for, charges made under cover of privilege in the House of Commons, seemed to the lay mind unacquainted with the ways of Parliament and its Committees, almost a scandal. The members of the Committee who showed most regard for the terms of the Order from the House of Commons were Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Bigham.

But while one cannot help regretting that the proportion of time allotted to Mr. Leonard in which to give his evidence was not greater, one must admit on perusing the official record of it that he made the most of his opportunity. With quiet persistence he told his story, adroitly evading the irrelevant questions of the Opposition, and bringing out with clearness and emphasis the main points of the position which had culminated in the disaster of December, 1895.

From the earliest settlement on the Rand down to 1892 the Uitlander had continued to hope that something like political equality on a fair basis would be obtained. In 1892 the National Union was formed, and at its meetings enthusiastic crowds attended, while speakers from among the Pretoria Dutch residents, notably Mr. Esselen, an ex-Judge of the High Court, and Mr. Wessels, a well-known

Pretoria advocate, were among those who addressed the meeting, expressing their sympathy for the desire of the Uitlander to attain to citizen rank.

From 1892 to 1895 the history of the Reform Movement in Johannesburg was practically the work done by the National Union and its adherents—unaided, and even be it said discouraged, by the capitalists, who held aloof. Petitions to the Government were sent in year after year. Resolutions calling for some amelioration in the conditions of the franchise law, the dynamite trade, education, and the courts of justice were passed both at the National Union meetings and by other public bodies—but all without avail. And not merely without avail—matters did not even stand still: they went steadily back. What had been possible when men entered the country was made impossible to them a few years later. And it was this *retrogressive legislation*, this *actual setting back of the hands of the clock*, that convinced men of the hopelessness of the position, that exasperated them even to conspiracy.

Facts showing this retrogressive movement have been set forth in Mr. Charles Leonard's printed statement, and in some sense made public; but opportunity was not given to put them clearly in evidence before the Committee of Inquiry, and thus points of the most vital importance to the subject of the inquiry have been left out of that evidence, and the actual retrogression in Boer Legislation

is not even referred to in the Committee's Report. As the Franchise Law stood in 1882, to quote from Mr. Leonard's printed statement, "it was enacted that in order to become naturalised and acquire full citizenship the new comer should have resided in the country for a period of five years, and should have been registered on the field-cornets' list for that period, and should pay a sum of twenty-five pounds." A provision, restrictive undoubtedly, but not wholly unreasonable. But mark what follows.

"In 1890 a new departure was made. A law was passed in that year providing for the creation of a Second Chamber, called the Second Volksraad, to the powers and constitution of which further reference will be made hereafter. It was enacted that aliens could acquire the right to vote for members of the Second Chamber after having been registered upon the field-cornets' list and having resided in the country for a period of two years. They had to renounce their allegiance to their own country, and to take the oath of allegiance to the Transvaal, and to pay the sum of five pounds for the privilege. After having been eligible to vote for the Second Chamber for a period of two years, the new-fledged voter, or naturalised person, as he is called in the Transvaal, became eligible for a seat in such Chamber. It was further provided in the same year

that no person who had been so naturalised could vote for a seat in the *First Volksraad* until the lapse of a period of ten years after he had become eligible for the Second Chamber.

“No one could be a member of the Second Chamber until he was thirty years of age, and it will thus be seen that under no circumstances could a man get the right to vote for the First Chamber until he was at least forty; and during the interval that had elapsed from the period of his naturalisation he would be in the position of having renounced his allegiance to the country of his origin and having rendered himself liable to all the burdens of a citizen, including military service, and that in the meantime he would be deprived of the exercise of the most important rights of citizenship. But even then no one was of *right entitled* to the franchise. He could only get citizenship after fourteen years' residence and compliance with the above provisions, if the *First Volksraad* passed a resolution admitting him, and in pursuance of regulations which have never been framed.”

“With regard to the Second Chamber it must be pointed out that this body bears no such relation to the First Volksraad as its name might at first sight imply. Its powers of legislation are strictly defined. It has no power to enforce its own acts, and no control whatever over the First Chamber.

All its acts and resolutions must be submitted to the First Chamber, which has the right to veto them ; and even if not so vetoed they do not acquire the force of law until promulgated by the President, who has the right to withhold such promulgation at his discretion. It need scarcely be added that the Second Chamber has no control whatever over the finances. It cannot be wondered that even ardent South African patriots like the late John Cilliers should have described the Second Raad as a mockery and a sham, and that the Uitlanders decline to regard it as of any real benefit to them."

A sham and a mockery indeed, a withdrawal of the substance and a substitution for ever by statute of the shadow! John Cilliers was not the only Transvaal burgher and patriot who saw with indignation and foreboding this retrogressive action. Let us take the testimony of Mr. Esselen in 1892 on the platform of the National Union. Mr. Esselen began his political career as a prominent member of the Africander Bond in the Cape House of Assembly; he was then made a Judge of the High Court in the Transvaal, and having resigned that position took an active part in the politics of the country. On the occasion referred to at a meeting in Johannesburg he said : " I agree with this movement. I may tell you I am in entire accord with the movement of the National Union, and I am proud to be

asked to say a few words. I wish to ask you whether you can give any credence to the statement of a man (President Kruger), who says he is going to unite two people, when the whole of his acts for the last ten years show it is absolutely untrue. I do not speak without knowing what I am talking about—I say you have been kept out of your political privileges, not because the people have kept you out from fear that your being granted these privileges would wreck or endanger the independence of this country, but to enable a few, and a greedy few, to rule the country for their ends.”

Other matters there were innumerable that attracted, nay, even demanded the attention of every thoughtful man, Uitlander or burgher, in the country during the years from 1890 to 1895. I have placed the Franchise question first—and for assigning it that position, there is, as we have seen, abundant reason given from intelligent and patriotic burghers themselves. The redress of all other evils was too obviously dependent on the redress of this one, and compared with it they became matters of secondary importance. Among them, however, were matters of such moment as an absence of municipal financial control for municipal purposes; the dynamite monopoly, an iniquitous tax on the great industry of the country; an education law, which, out of the revenue furnished to the State by the Uitlander,

provided in effect solely for the children of the Dutch; and anomalies with reference to the administration of justice whereby in the first place all juries were taken from the Dutch burghers, so that an Englishman living in the midst of a large English speaking community was not even accorded a jury of his fellow-citizens. And then, finally, a continual tampering with the Grondwet—the Constitution of the country—by resolutions hastily passed in the Volksraad which not only kept in perpetual uncertainty the position of every man in the State, but even threatened, and that in no uncertain manner, the independence and stability of that last refuge of the Uitlander, the Courts of Justice themselves.

So menacing did the position of affairs appear—even to the Chief Justice of the Republic—a man who at the last Presidential election was supported as a candidate for the Presidency—that in October, 1894, he felt it his duty to issue to the burghers, in words which will remain memorable in the history of the Republic, a solemn warning. The address was delivered at Rustenburg, and from it we shall do well to consider a few extracts: “No one who for a moment considers the condition of things in the State will deny that the country is at present in a very critical position. The unmistakable signs of an approaching change are apparent on every side. It entirely depends upon the people whether

the impending change is to take place peaceably, or to be accompanied with violence. Do not let us close our eyes and ears to the truth. The people should thoroughly understand the true position of things. I repeat what I have just said,—the non-observance of and departure from the Grondwet menaces the independence of the State.” “The country has a Constitution, and must be governed by its precepts, and in a statesmanlike manner. Let me repeat here what I said in 1892.” “How frequently have we not seen that the Grondwet, which as the Constitution ought to stand on an entirely different footing from our ordinary law, has nevertheless been varied and treated as such? Many a time has the Grondwet been altered by a simple resolution of the Legislature. By this means many a radical, and I am afraid often unwise change has been brought about in the Constitution. This objectionable and unstatesmanlike mode of procedure can no longer be followed without impairing the progress and jeopardising the independence of the State.” “The trek spirit has well nigh become extinct, the Republic has its beacons and boundaries which, with the exception of our Eastern border, can no longer be extended. In the wise dispensation of Providence everything has its proper season. It is remarkable that, although our mineral treasures have for ages existed in the

country, they have only recently been discovered and developed (by the Uitlander). It is equally remarkable that soon after we had to experience a movement (by Mr. Cecil Rhodes) which has definitely fixed the Limpopo as our northern boundary. These facts, together with the daily increasing population and the many complications arising therefrom, indicate that we must more than ever devote our attention upon our internal and domestic affairs. There is but one safe course to follow in dealing with public matters under the altered conditions,—the country must be ruled in accordance with the recognised rules of Constitutional Government.”

Further on in this same speech, the spirit in which a Volksraad Committee appointed to revise and piece together the Grondwet “devoted its attention to these same internal and domestic affairs,” is somewhat severely commented on by the Chief Justice. Referring to their labours and the new draft Grondwet submitted to the Volksraad by them, he says it “contained such important radical and dangerous provisions that, had they been adopted, I do not hesitate to say the independence of the country would have come to an end,” “the Courts of Justice from the lowest to the highest in the land would have been so affected in the independent exercise of their functions that it would simply have been an impossibility to have dispensed justice

between man and man without fear or prejudice. The altered provisions in question assign powers and functions to the Executive and the Legislature which at present belong exclusively to the Courts of Justice. The very safe and constitutional relation which, according to the Grondwet, existed between the three great powers" (Legislative, Executive and Judicial), or "departments in the State would have been so violated that the Courts of Justice would have tottered to their deepest foundations. The liberty, property, and other rights of people would have been placed in the greatest jeopardy, aye, the very independence of the Republic, which is so inseparably connected with the independence of the Courts of Law, would thereby, as I have already observed, have come to an end."

We had not been privileged to see this new Grondwet; and by some miracle we had hitherto escaped its enforcement; the Volksraad was apparently in a cautious mood, and "these dangerous changes," recommended to them by a Committee chosen to deal with the subject, were rejected. The incident is, however, sufficiently significant of the feeling of unrest which the Volksraad was calculated to engender among every section of the community.

It was in 1894 also that occurred the commandeering incident. Englishmen, although accorded no civil rights, were commandeered to serve in the

Malaboeh Campaign. Five of them in Pretoria refusing to go were imprisoned; they appealed to the High Court, but their liability to service was upheld; they were then taken under compulsion to the front. This caused the greatest indignation throughout the Uitlander community, and induced even the British Government to take action. Sir Henry Loch was despatched to Pretoria, and a pledge was given that no further commandeering of British subjects should occur. It was on this occasion that Sir H. Loch is reputed to have asked how many rifles the Uitlanders could muster.

Another and continual source of irritation not only to the South Africans among the Uitlanders, but even among the burghers themselves, was the employment by the Executive of young freshly imported Hollanders to fill so many of the lucrative offices both high and low in the State, to the exclusion of South Africans, many of whom had enjoyed the advantage of university education, who were imbued with a genuine love for the country and who naturally regarded the public offices arising out of the development of South Africa as a heritage for her sons. The Hollanders introduced by the Government were more truly foreigners to the burghers in language, in manner of life and in the type of their civilisation than even the most lately arrived Englishman. The educated South African

Dutchman is to all intents and purposes an Englishman : he reads English literature, English is his daily language, and he has the English love of athletics and field sports. To the Hollander neither the cricket bat nor the polo stick is a joy, nor is his literature that of Whyte-Melville or of Shakespeare.

Of the corruption and abuses in the public administration I do not propose to burden this book with details. Their record has been revealed often enough ; they were, as the world well knows, one more continual source of exasperation. In the Volksraad itself it is only fair to say that there has always been a small minority of some few men who held enlightened views and a more far seeing patriotism. And among them must be remembered by the Uitlanders with some measure of gratitude such men as Mr. Carl Jeppe, Mr. Loveday and Mr. Lucas Meyer.

Before concluding our brief review of events as they occurred in the Transvaal in rapid and even alarming succession between the years 1890 and 1895, some reference to one of the most prominent, energetic and public-spirited men among the Uitlander community itself is necessary. Mr. Lionel Phillips was the senior resident partner in the wealthy house of Eckstein, and for four years 1892-95 was President of the Chamber of Mines. In common with other capitalists he held aloof from the political agitation which was proceeding under the

auspices of the National Union until towards the end of 1895. Nevertheless, as President of the Chamber of Mines, and as a private citizen he never ceased pressing upon the Government the urgent necessity for redress with regard to the material burdens upon the industry; and as a member of the Council of Education he assisted both with money and personal supervision the furthering of its end.

In 1895 the monster petition praying in respectful terms for admission to the Franchise, signed by 38,500 people, was presented to the Volksraad. It was rejected with jeers and with insult. Such then was the position of affairs in the middle of 1895. And looking back on it all, with its opposing forces of stern unbending prejudice and ignorance on the one hand, and of an outraged democracy demanding the common rights of man on the other, it was, one must admit, a scene not unfamiliar to the pages of history. And it was a pretty quarrel as it stood. At this time the sympathy of the Progressive party among the Boers themselves, including, as we have seen, that of the Chief Justice of the country, the enlightened minority in the Volksraad, and many educated burghers throughout the land, was with the Uitlander cause. The irritation amongst the Cape Colonists, English and Dutch alike, over the recent question of the arbitrary closing of the Drifts (Fords) on the main wagon roads between the Cape

Colony and the Transvaal, where they cross the Vaal River, was profound, and, as we now know, far reaching. So far had matters gone that towards the end of the year an arrangement was come to between the English and Cape Colonial Governments, whereby, in the event of what was nothing less than an ultimatum to the Boer Government not attaining its end in compelling them to throw open the Drifts, the two Governments undertook to share the expenses of a joint military expedition to the Transvaal.

The ultimatum did attain its end, and the Drifts were thrown open ; but the incident was a significant one, and will show how near England then was to a policy of "an incursion into the South African Republic of an armed force."

After the rejection of the monster petition of 1895 the men of Johannesburg realised once and for all that, whatever else might come, to look for redress of their grievances by constitutional means was about as hopeless as would be the prospects of a syndicate which had for its object the pegging out of another main reef on the surface of the moon. In some sense the time seemed ripe for action, in another and a very vital one it was not. Politically, affairs had reached their nadir as far as one could see, but financially they were far from it ; the mines were in full work, the market was buoyant, and men

were earning good incomes and big wages. Successful revolutions are usually accomplished on empty stomachs, and this element was wanting.

Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who had practically fixed the Limpopo as the northern boundary of the Transvaal, while he had stretched that of the British Empire to beyond the Zambesi; accustomed as he was to success, quick movement and rapid developments, in his great career; had, to his credit, watched with impatient eyes the setting back of the clock within the South African Republic. His chief lieutenant, Dr. Jameson, who had shared with him the labour of reclaiming from barbarism and developing Rhodesia, and whose ambition was no less than his superiors, discussed with him the desirability of some active outside pressure; and between them was evolved what is known as the Jameson plan. Mr. Beit, the capitalist, most largely interested in the mines of the Rand, an old financial colleague of Mr. Rhodes, both in the De Beers amalgamation and in the establishment of the Chartered Company, promised both his influence and his purse in support of the plan. Overtures were then made to Mr. Lionel Phillips, who was at the head of the Chamber of Mines, and Mr. Charles Leonard, the Chairman of the National Union; and, as a review of the preceding events will show, they came to them in a very tempting hour.

In the light of subsequent events it is not difficult to be wise on this question ; it is a simple and indeed an orthodox attitude to condemn both the tender and the acceptance of these seductive proposals, and to be impartial it is right we should consider the views held by a few enlightened South Africans. With the internal movement going on in the Transvaal for the obtaining of reform, they said when the Jameson plan first came to their notice in Johannesburg, the whole of South Africa and the world at large have every sympathy. The enlightened opinion among the Boers themselves is with you, and for that matter even expects a disturbance, possibly a rebellion, over the great question of the Franchise. In such a quarrel with the Government, it is doubtful if Kruger could get the burghers to take action, so strong is the sense among many of them of the anomalous position of Johannesburg. In any case the position cannot long remain unchanged, a solution must assuredly come. And if you *must* take action, rely upon yourselves, the justice of the cause, close down the mines, let the men go to Pretoria in a body and demand their rights. Any harsh measures under these conditions will be resented by the British Government, and the Boers know it ; but if you accept foreign aid, if chartered troops enter the country, the Boers will be welded as one man, all

political anomalies will be forgotten, they will see only the independence of their country menaced, the Englishmen again invading the Transvaal; the Free State will be with them; your cause will be a lost one. And these views were not without wisdom.

They were right in foreseeing the dangers and impolicy of the Jameson plan; they were wrong in expecting any substantial redress from the Boer Executive except under absolute compulsion. Both Mr. Phillips and Mr. Leonard were aware, if any men could be, of all the difficulties and the dangers of the situation. Mr. Rhodes was at that time at the very zenith of his power and of his reputation. He had shown himself a master of statecraft and diplomacy in dealing with men both in the English political and financial worlds and in South Africa, and any proposal emanating from him therefore carried with it the prestige which only one of the most able and most successful men of his generation could give it. Moreover, what a tower of strength his unique position made him,—Premier of the Cape Colony, Managing Director of the British South Africa Company, Chairman of De Beers: here was an ally indeed! The plan at this early stage was presented in a very attractive form. A force under Dr. Jameson was to be quietly gathered on the border. The Johannesburg agitation, reinforced with