

CHAPTER XXXVII.

JOURNAL OF THE TREK BOERS TO MOSSAMEDES.
(COMPILED BY W. W. JORDAN.)

THE writer of these pages was engaged on a trading and hunting expedition in the Ovampo Country in the year 1879, and while there came across the Trek Boers, whose adventures are here related. He remained in their company some time, and had every opportunity of testing the correctness of the following story of their travels, which he gathered from information given by the members of the party themselves, and partly from his own personal knowledge.

No attempt has been made to do more than offer a simple narrative of events as they occurred. The manuscript was forwarded to Cape Town in the early part of 1880, when it was hoped the publication would assist those who were generously exerting themselves to forward relief to the sufferers. Unfortunately it was sent on to Europe, and, when returned to the Colony, it was too late to serve the immediate purpose for which it was drawn up. But as so many have expressed a wish that the history of this expedition should be preserved, the writer now submits his notes to the public, reminding readers that they were written down on the spot, and have not been altered since. He believes they possess one recommendation, and that is, they form a true and faithful record of events they profess to relate.

In the beginning of the year 1874 a number of farmers in the Transvaal Republic determined to put into execution a plan which for some considerable time they had been discussing. They believed that by travelling further into the interior in a north-westerly direction they would find a country better suited to their wants, and one in which they would be able to make a permanent settlement. After due consideration, it was resolved to trek.

About the 27th of May, 1874, a move was made by Messrs. Alberts, Ochuisen, senior, and Ochuisen, junior,

with their families, trekking away as far as the district of Rustenburg.

On the 6th February, 1875, they were joined by six other families. On the 2nd and 3rd of April, the party proceeded to a place called Beerkraal, where their number was again increased by the addition of four families.

From this place they forwarded a request to their minister, the Rev. Mr. Du Plessis, inviting him to visit them for the purpose of holding service and administering the rite of confirmation, which request he at once complied with, and held service for two consecutive days in that month.

On the 14th they proceeded on their journey, and reached Witfontein, at which place they found no water, and were compelled to travel on to Holfontein, where they found water indeed, but very little of it, there being barely sufficient for their personal use and that of their horses.

They remained at this place for a short time, and then made a trek for 12 hours, outspanning in the veldt. Their cattle were now suffering very much from thirst, having had no water for 48 hours.

They proceeded from this spot to the Limpopo River, where they remained some time. While there Mr. Ochuisen lost two valuable salted horses, which were killed by lions. The farmers occupied their time by hunting game, which they found in vast abundance, especially the sea cow, buffalo, rhinoceros, and giraffe. The region abounded in lions, tigers, wolves, jackals, &c., and to keep these from attacking their cattle they had to erect strong kraals, and keep good night watches.

On the 28th of April they continued their journey, travelling along the banks of the Limpopo, the scenery of which they describe as very beautiful. On the 6th of May they despatched a deputation to Bamangwato to visit the chief of that place, and to obtain his permission to pass through his country. The deputation consisted of Messrs. G. R. Alberts, P. G. van der Merwe, and J. van Niekerk. Their mission was successful, the chief not only consenting to their passing through his country, but promising his protection while doing so. This promise he faithfully fulfilled.

On the 15th of May (1875) they left the Limpopo

River, and after travelling for three days, arrived at a small well of water, but again found only sufficient for themselves and horses.

They proceeded to Bamangwato, at which place they presented the chief with two heifers, one bull, and several merino sheep. The chief granted them permission to remain for one or two months to recruit themselves and their cattle. Here one of the party left with four wagons, and returned to the Transvaal. The remainder then proceeded on their journey, and in one day's march reached a place named Matotse. They were now on the borders of the Kalihari Desert.

At the end of May five of the party started from the camp, and travelled three days, during which time they found no water, until they arrived at a place called Inteavan, where they obtained a sufficient supply for themselves and horses. They sent their cattle to Klickama to drink, and there they were joined by the rest of the company. Five of the wagons started for a place named Meer, a station on the banks of the Okovango River, taking with them the whole of their loose cattle, numbering 1,400. These travelled on for three days, suffering much for want of water. At the end of the third day the cattle smelt the water and broke loose, rushing towards the river in a frantic state. Many stuck fast in the mud and thus perished. Others, by very great exertions, were recovered.

The Bechuanas had kraals all along the river, and slaughtered fifteen head of cattle which had strayed; the rest, after several days search, were recovered. All the members of the expedition met at this spot; the last six wagons arriving on the 6th of June (1875).

On the 20th of that month the travellers proceeded on their journey and reached Lake N'Gami. Here they set apart to Almighty God a day of thanksgiving for having preserved them through so many dangers in safety and with such a comparatively small loss of property.

Up to this time they had appointed no Commandant, although Mr. G. Alberts acted in that capacity.

A demand was now made on the Bechuana Chief Moreymi for payment for the oxen his people had stolen. With this demand he at first refused to comply, but, after

much talking, he agreed to return the same number, viz., fifteen.

The party now trekked along the banks of the Okovango River, and, while outspanned, were visited by one of Moreymi's under captains, who endeavoured to pick a quarrel with them, going so far as to kick out their fires, and carry away the wood they had collected. The Boers exercised a considerable amount of forbearance, seeing clearly that the object was to embroil them in some way with the natives, so that the Chief Moreymi might have an excuse for fining them.

While at the same place, some of the party went out for a hunt and shot an eland. By the time that this was cut up and packed on their horses it was quite dark, and a strange thing happened. One of the horses, after being packed, strayed away, and was not found until the following morning, when he was discovered tied to a tree with his load of meat untouched, but by whom tied no one could tell. The whole of the district is swarming with wild animals of all descriptions, and that particular spot covered with pitfalls for trapping wild animals of the larger growth. His escape was a little short of miraculous!

They received several letters from the Chief Moreymi forbidding them to trek further into his country, and ordering them to turn back while they were friends. He also desired them to send a deputation to meet him, for the purpose of coming to some understanding. Mr. G. Alberts visited the Chief in compliance with his message, and explained matters in a manner satisfactory to both parties.

Before arriving at Moreymi's station they had to travel through a part of the country infested by the tsetse fly. Here they lost several oxen and three valuable horses.

On the 28th of September (1875) the first six wagons left the Okovango River, and in due time reached a place named Ghanse, which place had been taken possession of by a Mr. Van Zyl, by authority of the Chief Moreymi. This spot is situated on the main road from Damaraland to the lake N'Gami. Mr. Van Zyl asserts his right to a monopoly of the whole of his hunting grounds in the district, and has turned many white people back who were on their way to these grounds. At one time he went so

far as to turn some of the Boers away. The writer of these notes were present at the time. As this is the only place where water is to be obtained for a trek of three days and nights on either side, much inconvenience and loss is occasioned by the continuance of this state of affairs.

On the 30th September the remainder of the party reached Ghanse, without any mishap, with the exception of an accident to a son of Mr. Gert van de Meyer, who, while travelling by night, seated on the front box, fell asleep, and fell under the wheels, which passed over his body, bruising him very much but without breaking any bones.

On the 6th January, 1876, they left Ghanse, *en route* for Rietfontein, where they arrived safely without any losses, but having suffered much from want of water. From this place they sent a commission to Gobabis, to visit the Chief Andries Lambert, for the purpose of ascertaining from him to whom Rietfontein belonged, as they were desirous of remaining there some time. Andries Lambert informed them that the Hottentots were the rightful owners of Rietfontein, and he gave them permission to remain there for some time to rest themselves and cattle, of which permission they gladly availed themselves.

While at Rietfontein several parties were sent out to explore the country to the North, in the direction of the Okovango River. The reports brought back were very unfavourable, the country being found to be without water and also very unhealthy.

After some time they again visited Gobabis with a request that the Hottentots would consent to their remaining at Rietfontein for a longer period than was at first intended. This request was granted, and they remained there until 1878.

On the 28th July, 1877, they received a letter from Mr. Kreling, the Commandant of the second party of Trek-Boers, whose adventures will presently be told, asking them to send all the cattle they could spare to enable his party to get on, as they were in the middle of the thirst veldt, enduring great privations and hardships. This application was at once responded to, and 183 head of cattle were sent to them. They were met at a place called Sibbiton's Drift. The joy with which this relief was received exceeded all bounds. It was easy to see that a

great weight had been lifted from the hearts of all. With this assistance the wagons of the laager were brought on to Lake N'Gami. The cattle borrowed from the party in advance were then sent back to Rietfontein, where they arrived on the 4th October, together with ten families of the main body, who now joined those who were encamped at that spot.

From this place letters were sent on to the main laager to inform them of the expedition made to the Okovango River, giving them all particulars and soliciting them to abandon all their plans of trekking along that river.

In December a party again started for the Okovango River, to visit the company under Kreling. Unfortunately they did not meet them, but were informed by Bushmen of their whereabouts. They returned to Rietfontein and reported this to Mr. G. Alberts.

They now made preparations for leaving Rietfontein *en route* for the Okovango. Fortune favoured them, as they found plenty of rain-water in a veldt usually parched and dry. After travelling several days they arrived at Debra, a fountain some distance from the river. At this place they met a party belonging to Kreling's company. They found these unfortunate people in a wretched state, the majority of them ill with fever, with their cattle lying dead in heaps all around them, having died from the effects of eating poisonous herbs. Every assistance was rendered to them with a view of relieving their sufferings. These unfortunate people were without any kind of provisions, and had preserved life by eating the carcasses of the dead oxen and such wild roots as they could find. Instead of coffee they used the root of the tree called Witghaat Boom, which, when prepared, wonderfully resembles that article in flavour.

While lying at Debra, Mr. Alberts received a letter from Mr. Kreling requesting him to visit him, as he was desirous of amalgamating the two parties into one. Mr. Alberts complied with his request, but for some time they could not come to any satisfactory arrangement. However, in February, 1878, the difficulties being overcome, the parties amalgamated, and bound themselves to assist each other, as very many of their number were by this time nearly destitute.

In July, while lying at Leeuw Pan, a meeting was convened for the purpose of electing a new leader, and Mr. G. Botha was appointed.

Eighteen families here decided to return to the Transvaal, and left the laager for Rietfontein.

On the 14th a party left to explore the Okovango River to see if it would be advisable to settle in that vicinity. During their absence the main body of the laager shifted up the river to procure better grazing veldt. Mr. Charles Thomas, a Damaraland trader, who was with the laager, remained behind, as he had made arrangements with the native chiefs to allow him to hunt in their country, and had paid the chief two valuable guns and one ox for allowing him the privilege of doing so. On the evening of the 19th inst., Mr. Thomas sent a wagon loaded with goods across the river, unloaded the same, and left three men in charge, he himself returning with the empty wagon. On the following morning, in company with five farmers, he began to cross the river, but as the party neared the opposite bank, Mr. Thomas, leading on horseback, was fired at by the natives and received a shot in his thigh, the ball passing through the thigh and killing his horse on the spot. Mr. Thomas took to the water and endeavoured to make his escape by swimming back to his wagon, which was about the centre of the river, but the natives plunged in and killed him with their assegais. The men on the wagon were unable to render him any assistance as they were without their guns. These five men then returned to their own side of the river, from which they observed three white men making signs to them. They at once saddled their horses, and rode to their assistance. On reaching them they noticed a large body of natives approaching fully armed, and with the evident intention of killing the three stragglers, but before they could accomplish their object the rescuing party opened fire, killing seven of their number. Mr. R. Lewis, who was in the vicinity, arrived a few days after, and Mr. Kreling proposed sending a patrol of Boers across the river to avenge the death of Mr. Thomas. This was done with success. Five more of the natives fell, but the majority fled, abandoning their kraals, in which were found 100 muids of corn, which proved a great boon to the farmers, many of them at that

time being reduced to a state bordering on starvation. Two days after this messengers were sent to a party who had left to explore the river to inform them of the death of Mr. Thomas, and to warn them to be on their guard. The messengers, however, returned without meeting the explorers, and with the loss of one horse.

Mr. G. Alberts and his son, and Mr. G. van der Merwe, went up the river to obtain the permission of a chief named Bambacantu to travel through his country. While at the kraal of this chief they were seized and threatened with death, unless they agreed to pay the chief a salted horse and a breechloading gun as ransom. It was only by a stratagem that they escaped. They induced the chief to send ten of his men with them to pick out a horse which was at some distance from the kraal. When the Boers reached the place where they had off-saddled, they made a fire and filled a small kettle with water, leading the natives to suppose that they were about to make coffee. In the meantime one of the party caught and quietly saddled the horses, and at a given signal the whole party mounted as one man and galloped away.

The exploring party had now returned, and reported that they had found a safe and excellent route. A move was at once made from this spot. They travelled along the banks of the Okovango River, and proceeded for several days without anything particular taking place. After proceeding for some distance, the Commandant and Field-cornet left the wagons and went on to an Ovambo kraal, from which place a Damara named Snook had sent a message, stating that he wished to see them, for the purpose of pointing out to them a route by which they would avoid encroaching on the Damaras' territory.

After the meeting had taken place, the rest of the party came up to this kraal.

Here the ex-Commandant Kreling left for the purpose of hunting. He took with him four families, and promised to rejoin the main body, but this he has not done up to the present time.*

The emigrants now continued their course along the river, following the route given by Snook, until they

* January, 1880.

arrived at a place where the roads branched off to Damaraland. The rains having fallen at this point the rivers were very much flooded, and they were compelled to remain there for some time. During this compulsory detention nineteen of their cattle were stolen, but fourteen were eventually recovered.

The natives at this place showed fight, but did not attempt to cross the river. They were therefore allowed to amuse themselves to their hearts' content without interruption, as they were only wasting powder, and doing no harm. The party now trekked to a place named Wolvelaagter, where they were compelled to divide into two parties, owing to the scarcity of water. While lying at this place some Damaras brought a message that their chief Snook had been killed, and his goods taken by the Ovambos. At this time the laager was near the river, but the farmers did not wish to mix themselves up in any native quarrels, so they continued their trek to a place called Klein Boongo. Here they met G. A. and C. Erikson, E. Sabatta, Emil Tretow, and Axel Wedberg, to whom they communicated the news of the murder of Snook. A party of the laager then left, in company with the abovenamed gentlemen, with the object of recovering the wagons belonging to Snook, in which they were successful. The Ovambos fired upon them, but without effect. A few shots were fired in return, with what result is unknown.

From Boongo exploring parties were sent out in all directions in search of water, but did not succeed in finding any. They were compelled, therefore, to remain at this spot until January, 1879, depending entirely upon rain water. On the 8th January they again proceeded on their journey. They were now beset with many serious difficulties. The people suffered greatly from thirst, having trekked six days without water, and their stock of food had been exhausted long before. At last they arrived at a place called Witwater, and here fever broke out among them, lasting from January to March, during which time eight deaths took place. A great many recovered, but their sufferings were very great, as they were the whole of this time without medicine. A party went on from Witwater to Amutunie, from which place they sent back oxen

to help those who were behind, viz., thirteen families, thence they proceeded on to some salt pans.

Here exploring parties were sent out, under the guidance of Mr. G. Alberts. They first explored the country north-west of Ovamboland, but after two and a half days' ride were compelled to return, having found no water. They then took a south-west course and pushed on until they reached the sea, exploring the whole of the Koako Veldt. They reported that part of the country as being totally unsuitable for traffic, that it was mountainous and stony, badly supplied with water, and the little there was being more or less impregnated with poisonous matter, whether from natural or artificial means could not be ascertained. The discovery was made one day upon returning from opening a new pit. The party noticed some birds drinking at the pits they had at first cleaned out. To their surprise, almost immediately after some of the birds had drank, they simply fluttered their wings and dropped down dead.*

On the 10th of May this exploring party rejoined the laager.

They reported that they had thoroughly explored the Veldt known as the Koako Veldt, but found it a country wholly unfitted for agricultural purposes, or stock-raising. At Six Fountains they found plenty of water, but the land was not at all fertile, in fact not suitable for farming. On returning they had found a small tract of land, west of Ovamboland, within a few days of the Cunene River, where they could make a halt for a short time to rest themselves and their cattle, pending the discovery of a suitable place for final settlement.

On the 18th May the laager made a move, dividing into five parties, on the understanding that they should re-unite at the resting place described by the exploring party. Their object for so dividing was that in the country through which they had to travel there was a scarcity of water, which is found only in wells and pits at long intervals. They were now trekking through the Damaras' country, and were charged by them an exorbitant price for

* Not very long after, Mr. A. W. Erikson lost nineteen horses at the same spot—poisoned by drinking the water of this well.

water for their cattle, whenever it was to be obtained. This continued through the whole of their journey, they having to pay at many places an ewe sheep and half the game they had shot on the road.

On the 24th June the entire expedition proceeded and reached the resting place without a mishap, and at the present are lying there.*

On 8th July, 1879, a company of Boers started from this place *en route* for the Cunene River, with the view of exploring the country on its northern banks. They made but slow progress, having to cut roads through the bush, and did not reach the river until the first of August. On arriving at the south-east bank they heard of a large kraal of Ovambo, and sent Messrs. G. van der Merwe, G. Alberts, and J. Redelinghausen to visit the chief, and explain to him their intention of crossing the River. The chief informed them that Portuguese were living on the northern banks. He agreed to give them guides to conduct them thither. They then formed their wagon into a laager, and chose eleven men to cross the river, with Mr. P. J. Botha as spokesman. This party on arriving at the opposite bank, after proceeding some distance, came to a large kraal, the captain of which informed them that they could proceed no further until he had obtained the consent of a greater chief than himself, who lived with the Portuguese. He promised to send on messengers to obtain this permission, and by the same messengers Mr. Botha addressed a letter to the Portuguese, to inform them of their intentions. In the meantime they were invited by the captain to off-saddle and remain at his kraal until such time as an answer could be received. They consented, and the captain gave them two men to point out the place at which he advised them to off-saddle. On arriving at the spot, they found themselves on a piece of land nearly surrounded by a tributary of the Cunene River, there being in fact only one narrow outlet. This aroused their suspicions, and they kept watch by turns the whole of the night. As nothing happened, they relaxed somewhat in their vigilance; but at an early hour some of the party went out to gather wild fruit, which abounds there.

* J. L. L. L., 1880.

While up in a tree gathering the fruit, this party noticed several large bodies of natives, fully armed, approaching from all directions. They quickly descended to put their companions on the alert, but, upon arriving, found that the natives had seized all their saddles, &c., and were firing upon the rest. The farmers now found themselves surrounded on three sides by water and the fourth blocked by armed natives. Their position at the time was anything but pleasant. The river swarmed with crocodiles and hippopotami, rendering escape by that source very dangerous, if not impossible, while the natives far outnumbered them and were armed. They now placed themselves strictly upon the defensive, firing only upon those who approached too near, as their supply of ammunition was very limited. While this was going on some of their party managed to catch the horses, which had fortunately strayed down to the water. Mounting upon these bare-backed, they resolved to cut their way through the enemy. Charging furiously, and suddenly and rapidly firing at the same time, they so astonished the natives that they opened up and gave way for them to dash through, thus enabling them to reach a place of safety. On halting they missed Mr. P. J. Botha, whose horse it appears, after proceeding a short distance made a dead stop, and commenced bucking and rearing.—Mr. Botha had taken up behind him the son of the captain, who had been sent as a guide. After considerable difficulty he dismounted, as his horse would not take to the water; he then swam across holding the bridle, the native holding fast to the tail of the horse. When about half way across the unfortunate native was seized by a crocodile, and carried away; Mr. Botha, however, succeeded in reaching the opposite bank, though thoroughly exhausted.

The party who had managed to force their way through the natives, in the manner just related, on reaching their wagons, which had been left on the south side of the river, reported the death of Mr. P. J. Botha, under the impression that he had been killed. With a view of avenging his death, a commando was at once formed, and proceeded to the place where the first party had been attacked. They there gave battle to the natives, killing twenty-five of them, burning their kraals and a great quantity of corn, and

giving them a lesson they are not likely to forget for some time to come.

While in that locality they were visited by five Portuguese, with whom they were not able to have much conversation owing to the difficulty of understanding each other. The Portuguese invited them to their station, where they were received with their usual hospitality, and, upon leaving, the farmers were presented with a barrel of wine, a barrel of brandy, a cask of white sugar, and various sweetmeats. The Portuguese accompanied them a short distance, taking them to the Chief of the people who had been engaged in the attack, and told him that he would have to pay the farmers 140 head of cattle as compensation, as the Portuguese had heard that it was the intention of his people to drive these men into the river, knowing they would be certain to meet their deaths from crocodiles or hippopotami, and then they would appropriate their horses, saddles, &c., &c. The Chief admitted this, and agreed to pay one hundred head of cattle, but these the farmers would not receive, as it was less than the amount awarded, and gave him time to consider the matter. They then recrossed the river and joined their friends. Their astonishment was great at finding on their arrival that Mr. Botha had returned, having escaped as before described. They then left the river and proceeded to rejoin the main laager, which they reached on the 25th September.

The names of the party who made the expedition to the north bank of the Cunene River are as follows:—Mr. P. J. Botha, E. Jordaan, J. du Plessis, P. du Plessis, J. Labuschagnia, G. van der Merwe, F. C. P van der Merwe, G. Alberts, A. Alberts, L. du Plessis, J. Grobler.

On the 17th October a message was received at the laager, from the native Captain on the north side of the Cunene River, informing the Commandant that he and his people were in fault, and that he agreed to pay 120 head of cattle. To this the farmers replied that the white man's word is his bond, that a decision once given must be upheld, that they would not take less than 140 head as originally demanded, and that until that number was paid they could not be friends.

When the writer left the Boers it was still their intention to remain at this resting place until May. At this

time they were enjoying pretty good health, and the comforts of the poorer ones were studied by those better off. In fact all seemed to go on like a piece of machinery, and notwithstanding all the trials they had gone through they did not seem to regret having left the Transvaal as they were under the belief that they, like their forefathers, were destined to be the pioneers of Africa.

A circumstance took place while this party was at the river which is worthy of mention. A Mrs. Boucher and four Boer girls went to bathe, and while in the water one of the girls called out "Help me! help me! a crocodile has got me," at the same time disappearing under the water. She was a splendid swimmer and rose to the surface again, when her companions rushed in, and caught her by the hair of the head and one hand. After a great struggle, they succeeded in drawing her out, together with a young crocodile fastened to her thigh, which released its hold when on land and got back to the water, there being no one near at hand to kill it. The wound on the leg was very severe, and when the writer last saw the young girl it was still far from being well.

This journal must now be taken back to the 29th April, 1875, upon which day the second party of Boers started from the Transvaal. They proceeded for some distance with six wagons, when they were joined by eight more, and also on the 15th May by thirty-three wagons; 25th May by seven; 5th June by eight; 15th June by eight; 20th June by ten; in July by thirty-six; and in August by twelve; making a total of 128 wagons and 1,958 trek oxen, with as near as we can estimate 480 human beings. They were now upon the banks of the Limpopo River, on reaching which the advance party sent a commission to the chief Khama to gain his permission to trek through his country. To this he consented, but upon the arrival of the last party at the river the chief withdrew his consent, sending them a letter to that effect. The Boers, however, held him to his promise, and determined to continue their journey.

A large body of people being now assembled, the party saw the necessity of choosing a commandant and making trek laws and regulations. Mr. Kreling was elected as Commandant, and Mr. Low du Plessis as Field-cornet.

They remained at the river nearly two years, and were casually visited by the Rev. Messrs. Du Plessis and Leon Cachet, during which visit baptismal and confirmation services were held.

During this period they sustained great losses ; both young and old dying of fever. Numbers of their horses and cattle were killed by lions, and many of the cattle were stolen by the natives, but for the latter they received compensation from the captain, Sitscheli.

Preparations were now made for trekking to join the first party that had left the Transvaal, whose adventures we have just narrated. But upon asking the chief Khama at Bamangwato for guides, he replied : " The first time you sent to me I gave my consent for you to travel through the thirst veldt, but upon considering the matter I have thought better of it, and would strongly advise you not to do so, for you are sure to die in the attempt, and I do not wish to be held responsible for so many deaths as will undoubtedly take place." They continued their journey, however, sustaining losses the whole of the time.

The Laager now became dissatisfied with their Commandant for special reasons, and called for a re-election, when Mr. Du Plessis was elected head and Mr. Erasmus as Field-cornet.

They now trekked along the Limpopo, following a northerly course, eventually arriving at Motlotse. While here they received notice from Khama that they were not to travel through his country. The Rev. Hebbes also paid them a visit, and endeavoured to persuade them to abandon the idea of trekking through the thirst veldt. But it was considered absolutely necessary to travel on, owing to the general sickness prevailing, and it was decided to make a move at once. They then divided themselves into three parties, and trekked to a place called Motlatse, where they re-united. From this place they decided to send forward all their loose cattle, horses, sheep, goats, &c., &c., numbering as follows : 7,536 oxen and cows, 483 horses, 1,034 sheep and bucks, thirty-two donkeys, 213 dogs, 486 fowls, ducks and geese. After having started off the aforesaid loose stock, they again divided themselves into three parties, arranging that they should travel to the first watering place, named Inkavan, allowing an interval of three days

to elapse between each party. On the arrival of the first of this party at Inkavan, they found to their dismay that there was no water. Up to that time the loose cattle, &c., &c., had been three days and three nights without water, and were beyond all control, rushing about the veldt in a frantic state. The bellowing of the cattle, and the various noises made by the domestic animals, is said to have been simply indescribable. The trek oxen now got mixed with the loose cattle, and with great difficulty were caught. The loose cattle, however, made off in search of water, and strayed in every direction. They succeeded in recovering only 326 of them at this place, but eventually they got 600 more which had fallen into the hands of Europeans. The remainder have not been heard of up to the present day.

They then commenced to clean out the pits to see if they could obtain water, as their casks were all nearly empty. They succeeded in obtaining a small quantity, enough to give their people four tablespoonsful each. The trek oxen during this time had to be kept tied fast. Through some misunderstanding, the whole of the remainder of the expedition joined them at this place, in endeavouring to reach which they had suffered great hardships. They had thrown away a quantity of goods, furniture, and even provisions, to lighten their wagons, as the roads were very heavy and sandy, and their cattle knocked up, the veld being devoid of all vegetation.

After a few hours' rest they inspanned and continued their journey, trekking for three days and three nights without water. During this time the people were compelled to drink the blood of any stray animal they could catch and slaughter, also the water contained in the stomach, and even this disgusting supply had to be served out by tablespoonsful. No pen can describe the horrors and painful scenes that took place during this trek. At one wagon you would see a family, who had by chance caught a stray sheep or buck which they had slaughtered, eagerly drinking the warm blood; while others were fighting for the possession of the paunch, for the sake of the water contained therein. The noises made by the various animals in their agony of thirst had a most unearthly sound, the memories of which will never be forgotten by those who heard them. The unfortunate men

could do nothing to relieve these fearful sufferings, but, through the whole of these trying scenes, the courage of the Afriander never failed them; they still persevered, and determined to overcome all obstacles. The majority, with patient endurance, proceeded on to Klackani on foot, taking every kind of utensil that would hold water, leaving wives and children to follow in their wagons, &c. On arriving at that place they found drink-water, and filling all their utensils, at once started back to their families, by whom they were received with the greatest joy. After quenching their thirst the entire Laager offered up a thanksgiving prayer to the Almighty for the great blessing of this precious article. By the exercise of great patience and perseverance the wagons eventually reached Klackani, not, however, without leaving many of their cattle behind them, several of which died in the yoke. At this place they filled their water casks, and got sufficient for two spans of oxen, which two spans were sent with wagons to Meer, loaded with various utensils to bring back water; the loose cattle also went with them. When they reached Meer, the cattle, with the exception of the two spans, had been seven and a-half days and nights without water, and no less than one hundred and fifty died on the road between the abovenamed places. A number of the women and children left the wagons and started on foot in search of water. In the darkness they mistook a pan (at that time reduced to mud) for water. The poor creatures made a rush for it, falling into the slimy matter, taking it by hands-full, putting it into their mouths, and endeavouring thus to quench the agony of their thirst. While at this place the missionary of Bamangwato, the Rev. Hebbes, who was on a visit to Meer, sent them two wagons loaded with water, thereby rendering them a very great service, the distance between the two places being two and a half days and nights, and that without a drop of water.

While one of their party, a Mr. Du Plessis, was out in search of water, having taken with him a spade and a tin bucket, and, after an unsuccessful search, was retracing his steps, he was confronted by a lion, which he kept at bay throughout the whole night by making a continuous noise with his spade and tin bucket. When daylight

approached the lion took his departure, much to Mr. Du Plessis' relief.

The people who had gone on with the loose cattle rested at Meer for fifteen days, and then returned back to their wagons, taking with them 256 head of cattle, which they had picked out of the 326 recovered by them, as stated a few pages back.

After struggling for two and a half months, they managed to bring all their wagons through the thirst veldt, with the exception of eight, which they were compelled to leave behind, and these, so far as they know, are there to this day. During the whole of this time their cattle only drank water once in seven days and nights.

While at Klackani they heard that a lot of their stray cattle were at Bamangwato, and sent ten of their party to fetch them. Upon arriving there they received 600 head, and heard that 400 more were in the hands of two foreigners living in the Transvaal. They at once wrote to the Field-cornet at Marico, W. H. Beukes, informing him of the fact. That gentleman interested himself in the matter and restored them.

The emigrants now made an attempt to recover the goods, &c., which they had left in the thirst veldt, but found the greater part of them missing; no doubt these had been taken by the natives. All that was left was brought out, and the party proceeded to rejoin their main body.

In the early part of August, preparations were made to leave Meer, and the first party made a start for Kurrigas Draai, at which place they arrived without any mishap. Here they remained until the whole expedition had joined them, acting up to a system adopted of sending back cattle to assist such of their party as were in need. They then proceeded on to Sibbiton's Drift, trekking in the same order. At this place a census of the laager was taken, and it was found that thirty-seven had died from fever and thirst.

From this place they sent letters to the first party, who were then lying at Rietfontein (the party of which Mr. G. Alberts was the headman), asking them to assist by sending them trek oxen. This request was at once responded to, and 183 head of cattle were sent, which proved of great service, enabling them to proceed on their

journey. They moved on to a spot well known on account of a large tree, with a hollow trunk, which is made use of by the traders and hunters as a post office, and is known by the name of the "letter-tree." At this place they were compelled to leave two wagons, having no cattle to take them along. The people, however, were accommodated in other wagons, and the journey continued along the banks of the Okavango River, towards the north. After fifteen days' travelling they arrived at an Ovambo kraal, which is under a chief named Maketto. At this kraal they found the tsetse fly abounding, and were compelled to continue on their journey through the fly district for two nights and one day, in doing which they lost several head of cattle, forty goats and sheep, and three horses. One of the latter was killed on the last night of their trek by a lion.

Upon arriving at a piece of open ground they rested for a few days, at the expiration of which they again started, travelling along the banks of the river towards N'Gami. Upon their arrival there the Chief Moreymi visited the laager and asked the commandant to give him one of the young farmer girls for a wife. As may be supposed he received a very sharp reply to his request, and was given distinctly to understand that white people do not intermarry with Kafirs. The commandant then asked his permission to trek along the river, to which he replied that there was no road along the river but what was infested with the tsetse fly. The commandant then said he would explore the river, and judge for himself. The laager was put into motion, and they journeyed for two days, when they again halted. Here Mr. Low du Plessis left the main body of the laager, with thirteen wagons, *en route* for Rietfontein, which he reached after eleven days' trekking, being fortunate enough to obtain plenty of rain water on the road.

On the 9th October the remainder of the party moved on to a place named Muispan, where symptoms of fever began to be observed among the people, and several died. The survivors, trekking from this place, proceeded on for three days. They then made a halt, and, while there, received a letter from the chief Moreymi, in reply to a demand for payment of thirty head of cattle as recompense for oxen and horses lost when passing through his country

owing to their having fallen into game pits, &c. With this demand he refused to comply, and with reference to a threat conveyed in the same letter, that in the event of his refusing they would help themselves from one of his posts, which was close at hand, he replied that he was quite prepared to protect his own property, and that if they wished to fight he was ready. In reply to this the commandant informed him that he also was prepared, but advised the Chief not to undertake the commencement of a war, as they had not come into his country to shed blood.

After this Moreymi, the Chief, sent them a white ox as token of friendship, requesting that it might be slaughtered and the flesh distributed among the laager, so that each might get a small piece, adding that for the future they might travel in any direction they thought proper, without molestation on his part, or that of his people. The ox was, however, not received by the commandant, which turned out to be fortunate, as on the following morning it was found dead, with every indication of having been poisoned.

At this place five more of the party died. Exploring parties were now sent out, and on their return reported having found a large pan of water, to which the entire laager trekked. On reaching the pan they found it to be rainwater, and not likely to last them more than three or four days.

On the fourth day they trekked towards the river; but while on their way rain had fallen; and acting upon a report brought in by some of their party that the pan they had just left had now an abundance of water, they retraced their steps, and remained there for eight days.

The laager now divided into two parties, the one making for the river and the other for the desert, the latter depending upon rainwater. After travelling for a few days they arrived at a place called Haakdoorn, and there remained some time. From this place they sent back four of their number to see how the party who had trekked towards the river were getting on, but only one reached there, the horses of the other three having died from the sting of the tsetse fly.

From Haakdoorn they made a trek for three days, and arrived at a large vley called by them Grootvley. While

there one of their party (Hans Harvertier) died through eating poisoned apples. The messenger above mentioned, who had succeeded in reaching the other division, now returned, bringing with him the whole of the party who had trekked towards the river. They again divided into two parties, thirty families starting once more for the river, and the remainder for a large pan of water, which they named New Year's Vley, which place was reached after three days' travelling. Leaving this place after another three days' trek, they arrived at Kalkpan, which was full of water. Exploring parties were sent out, who, on returning, reported having found water at a place called Rooibokiaagte, to which the whole laager trekked, arriving there after five days' travelling. At the expiration of fifteen days a party of fourteen wagons detached themselves and proceeded towards the river, the main laager trekking towards a place called Buffelsfontein. During the whole of this time they suffered very much from fever and hunger, the men being unable to hunt owing to illness, and the people, therefore, being compelled to subsist on roots and wild herbs.

It was now deemed necessary to ascertain how the party of thirty families, who had left the main body first, were getting on. Upon coming up to them, it was found that they had suffered great hardships, and twenty of their families decided to rejoin the main body, ten remaining at the river. They had lost all their cattle by the tsetse fly.

On the 10th February, main body trekked from Buffelsfontein, and after five days reach "Vogel Pan," so named on account of its variety of waterfowls. Thence they proceeded to "Cream of Tartar Pan," from which place a prospecting party was sent out, who, on returning, reported having found a place named "Debra," where M. G. Alberts and his party were staying, all suffering greatly from the effects of fever. They now journeyed for three days, and reached a place called "Sandfontein," and remained there eighteen days, during which time five of their party died of fever, and a great number of their cattle from the tsetse fly. They then proceeded to "Debra," a march of three days, and there found Mr. G. Alberts and his party whom they joined. During their stay at that place nineteen more of their people died from fever.

We now turn to the party who detached themselves from the main body with fourteen wagons, at "Groot Vley." This party, after three days' travelling, arrived at a place called "Grootfontein," where they remained one month. Here a young man, named Wm. Prins, while out hunting, was cruelly murdered by Bushmen. This murder was discovered in the following way :—The mare ridden by the unfortunate young man was followed by her foal, which returned the next day to the laager alone. Suspicion was aroused, and the spoor was taken up and followed, when the body of the murdered young man was found, stripped of all clothing, and pierced with assegai wounds. Death must have been instantaneous. The mare was also found dead, pierced with assegai wounds.

This party had now lost all their cattle from some disease totally unknown to them, and were consequently unable to continue their journey. They sent messengers to the Laager at Debra, asking for assistance, which was promptly rendered, and their wagons brought on to that place.

While lying at Debra, a message was received from the party with the ten wagons at the river, reporting that all were very ill of fever. Cattle were sent to them at once to bring them out; they were found in a most deplorable condition, such as no pen can describe. One and all of them were reduced by fever. Some of their native servants were dead, and the remainder laid up. As no one was able to hunt, these poor people were reduced to a state of starvation, many entire families tasting food only once every third day, and then only getting roots brought to them by natives, which had to be eaten raw, as no one had strength to kindle a fire. From the different wagons, the moanings and cries of men, women, and children could be heard calling out for assistance, which no one was able to render. Then again were heard the shouts and ravings of unfortunate men or women, who in their delirium had got out of their wagons and had strayed into the woods, there to die, as no one was able to assist them to get back. At another spot were men and women, who, for the time, had got slightly better of the fever, and who were trying to cut pieces of flesh from the carcasses of oxen that had died, and were endeavouring to cook the

flesh for their children, the little ones ravenously devouring the food, and parents and children trying to satisfy the cravings of hunger for a short time before being released by death.

As soon as possible their wagons were inspanned, and trekked along the banks of the Okovango River until they reached an Ovambo kraal, owned by a chief named Endara, who behaved very handsomely, giving them plenty of food, and furnishing them with guides to take them on to Elephants Pan. It was at this Pan that Messrs. Van Zyl, jun., P. J. Botha, and Lourens, killed 103 elephants in one day.

They remained there for some time, suffering greatly from fever, forty-three of them having died. The names of the deceased were C. Labuschagne, wife and four children; J. Labuschagne, wife and two children; Gert du Prins, wife and one child; P. de Prins, wife and three children; P. de Bruin, wife and three children; J. von Voere, and two children; L. Knotze, and three children; P. J. van Rensenberg, wife and three children; G. Koekermoer, and four children; P. von Voere, and two children. These unfortunate people were buried in their clothes by the natives—their surviving friends, twenty-two in number, being too weak to perform the last offices to the dead. Two of the natives then left in search of some hunters, who might perchance be in the vicinity, and fortunately met Mr. Lourens and his son, who immediately went to their assistance. On their way they met Mr. Harry Boyn, who joined them in their good work, the latter particularly supplying many articles to the sick that they were greatly in need of. Mr. Lourens then sent out people in search of the main laager, to inform them of what had happened. They met Adrian Kruger, one of the hunters of the laager, whom they informed of the calamities that had taken place. He at once started with his wagons for the spot, and brought the whole party out to the main laager, lying at Debra. Oxen were then sent to bring their wagons in, and an effort was made to make the graves of the deceased as neat as possible.

All the members of the Expedition were now together.

As the writer left the *Trek Boers* at this place, he does not consider it necessary to continue his notes to a later

period. Accounts of what happened subsequently will be found in the columns of the Cape newspapers. It is sufficient to say here, that when the inhabitants of Cape Town heard of the terrible hardships which these unfortunate people had gone through, and were made acquainted with the perilous position in which they were then placed, relief expeditions were immediately organised, towards which the colonists liberally contributed. The expedition, under Mr. Haybittle, succeeded in bringing relief to the sufferers, for which they were very grateful, and which no doubt saved many from death. When the writer left, the majority were reduced to the bare clothing in which they stood, and he was informed, upon visiting them afterwards, that when the party returned who had gone to Walwich Bay to bring up the food and comforts forwarded from Cape Town, they found that all left in the laager were down with fever, some nine or ten had died during their absence, and but for the seasonable supply from Cape Town nearly the whole would probably have perished. In September, 1880, this party consisted of fifty-seven families, numbering 270 souls, with fifty servants who had accompanied them from the Transvaal, and sixty-one wagons drawn by 840 oxen, they had 2,160 head of cattle, 120 horses, and 3,000 sheep and goats, and with these started for Huilla in the Portuguese territory, where they are now settled. The Portuguese have granted them farms, permitting the Boers to appoint their own officials and make their own regulations, subject always, however, to the authority of the Portuguese Government.

The following documents and notes alluded to in the foregoing pages may prove interesting to the reader :—

No. 1.]

August 4, 1875, Lake N'Gami.

To the Trekboers.

This letter is to inform you of a message of the Captain Moreymi, to learn the particulars of your coming into my country to hunt, with your own permission and strength. I now give you notice to quit my country by the same route you entered it, and if you insist upon coming into my country, then come and see me first, as it is necessary

for people to gain my permission, so if your intentions are peaceable then come and see me, or go back while we are friends.

(Signed) Capt. MOREYMI,
Lake N'Gami.

No. 2.]

August 17, 1875.

To the Trekboers.

DEAR FRIENDS,—I send you this letter to inform you that I am in receipt of your message. I am glad to learn by it that your intentions are peaceable, I do not wish to expose or compel you to travel in the fly country, but will see that your wagons get a good standing place. I would then wish three of your party to visit me, so that we can speak to one another, for in days gone by many hunters have come into my country, and now there seems to be a rupture in my country, so come to me and I will speak to you as friends.

(Signed) MOREYMI, in Peace,
"Lake N'Gami."

No. 1.—Reply.]

The Laager, 18th August, 1875.

To Captain Moreymi.

Your letters have been received by our laager. I beg to inform you that our presence in your country is peaceable; all we wish for is for you to give us permission to trek through it. We wish to travel westwards towards the sea, in search of land whereon to settle, but do not wish in any way to encroach or trespass on your land or country.

(Signed) G. ALBERT,
Foreman of the Laager.

"Gibion," 9th January, 1876.

To the Trekboers.

DEAR BOERS,—I have heard that your intentions are warlike, and that you wish to take this country by war. If this is true then I say nothing, but if not true then I say to you go back, for I do not wish to have you in this

country. Nor do I wish to have anything to say or do with you, so I tell you freely that if your intentions are friendly, then turn back, as I do not wish to see you in my country. I tell you once, I tell you twice, I tell you three times, turn back.

I am,

(Signed) KLEIN KIDOO WITBOY.

No. 3.]

“Gobabis,” 31st Dec., 1876.

To the Farmers now lying at Rietfontein.

Yes I have heard that you are now trekking in search of land to settle on, either to buy or borrow, and three of your party were at “Gobabis” on Captain Adrian Lambert’s Station just before my arrival, to ask his permission to allow you the right of going further into the country, but this he refused, and he was perfectly right in doing so. So now this letter is written in the names of all the Captains of Damaraland, and the Under Captains and people, and in the names of all Hottentots in Namaqualand and their people. Well, you Boers, what land do you search for ? here is no land that we can sell, lend, or give you ; our land we require for ourselves ; so immediately upon receipt of this letter, make up your minds to go back once, in haste once, in haste twice, in haste three times, back, back back, you go to your own country, away from Reitfontein,—that is not your place, who gave you the right to live there ? and if you will not listen to this letter, and it goes bad with you, you will have yourselves to blame and not us.

(Signed) ANDREAS LAMBERT AND SAUL SHEPHERD,
Captain of Barmen, Damaraland.

Damaraland, Okahandja,
9th April, 1877.

To the Trekboers.

From time to time I hear reports that your people are coming to take my country, most of you being farmers of

the Transvaal, and that your people keep coming from the Transvaal along the "N'Impopo" River, with the intention of taking part of my country from me. I am the Paramount Chief of the whole of the country called Damaraland, with the sanction of my under captains and advisers, I protest against the actions of your people, so I wish now to inform you that I have given my country over to a man of my own choosing, and have asked the Government of the Cape Colony to send me a magistrate, so as to give my country over to that Government.

(Signed) **KAMAHERERO,**
Chief of Damaraland,
his X mark.

Witnesses :
H. Hegner,
B. B. Bjorkland.

No. 4.]

Lake "N'Gami," May 16th, 1877.

To the Trekboers.

I received your message from Roberts, and I do not know what is the meaning of it. You accuse me of turning some of your people back from here; this I have certainly done, but I do not know what you have to do with it, if I like to turn people back, considering it is my own country. In your message to me by Roberts, you threaten me with war if I dare to turn your people back. Now if you wish to fight with me I'm your Moses, ready I am; the reason I turned the men back was because they wanted to buy ground, from me, and I did not wish to sell. Now if you do not wish to make any disturbance in the country I advise you to inspan your wagons, and go back to where you came from.

(Signed) **MOREYMI,** Chief Bechuana Tribe,
Lake "N'Gami."

LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF THE TREK BOERS.

Article 1.—That the laws and regulations remain in force as long as we are trekking, or until such time as we come to a permanent stand, and each person or persons shall be compelled to abide by the same, and the right

shall be reserved of adding to or amending these laws and regulations.

Article 2.—There shall not be more than one commandant over us at a time, neither shall there be more than one field-cornet and landdrost, and all officials shall be elected by vote. Any person using bribery or other unjust means to obtain votes shall be liable to a penalty of from five to ten pounds sterling.

Article 3.—Attached to the landdrost there shall be two jurymen, before whom all civil and criminal cases shall be tried, and any decision arrived at not being satisfactory the case shall be referred to the commandant.

Article 4.—All cases tried before the landdrost to be sent in writing to the commandant.

Article 5.—It will be necessary, before any marriage takes place, to inform the landdrost so that he may publish the banns for three consecutive Sundays.

Article 6.—In case of death it shall be necessary for the field-cornet to inform the landdrost within a period of fifteen days whether the deceased left a will or not. In the case of an entire family dying, the landdrost shall investigate the case, with the consent of the commandant and field-cornet. In the case of an intestate estate the matter shall be referred to two disinterested parties, and their effects valued. Any will or testament found shall be carried out as specified.

Article 7.—The commandant is responsible for maintaining order and quietness in the camp.

Article 8.—No official shall be allowed to resign without giving good cause for doing so, and any official absenting himself during the trial of any case shall be liable to a fine as follows:—Landdrost or jurymen, 37s. 6d. to £30; commandant, 15s. to £22 10s.; field-cornet, 7s. 6d. to £21 12s. 6d.

Article 9.—The field-cornet will receive his orders from the commandant, and be responsible that no hunting, firing of guns, or breaking of the Sabbath day, takes place.

Article 10.—Each person will be expected to respect the field-cornet, and no person shall be allowed to strike or injure another. Anyone found so doing will be liable to a fine of £2 5s. sterling.

Article 11.—All murderers shall be hanged.

Article 12.—Any person found guilty of slander, of speaking evil of the women belonging to the laager, or injuring their characters in any way, shall be liable to a fine of from 75s. to £7.

Article 13.—Any person found guilty of perjury shall be liable to a penalty to be fixed by the Landdrost, according to the enormity of the case.

Article 14.—Any person caught stealing or in possession of anything not his own property shall be punished accordingly.

Article 15.—No person shall be allowed to shoot game and waste it, and any person found doing so shall be punished accordingly.

Article 16.—Each member of the laager shall respect the officials, and each official shall pay respect to their superiors in office, and in case of any dispute arising between them, three of the people shall be elected to enquire into the case. All officials shall report themselves to the commandant once every four months.

Article 17.—All civil or criminal cases shall be reported to the field-cornet, and then to the commandant, and the field-cornet shall not have power to inflict a fine for any sum exceeding 37s. 6d., and all fines when paid to be placed in the Public Treasury. The field-cornet shall be allowed to charge one shilling per hour for his services.

Article 18.—For all marriages the sum of £1 shall be paid to the landdrost, to be divided as follows, 15s. for the landdrost, 2s. each for the witnesses, and 1s. for the clerk.

Article 19.—No person shall be allowed to enter into any arrangement with any native without the sanction of the commandant, and any person infringing this rule will be liable to a fine of £50 to £100 sterling.

Article 20.—All sales of property shall be held under the administration of the landdrost, and for every £7 10s. value sold 5s. shall be charged, to be paid into the Public Treasury.

Article 21.—In case of anyone being accused of murder, an investigation shall be made, and after the expiration of four weeks a special court shall be convened, before which the accused shall be tried; any person found guilty of manslaughter shall be punished in accordance with the nature of the case.

Article 22.—No monthly or hired servants shall be allowed to quit their employers without due notice.

Article 23.—Four persons shall be chosen from the people to assist the commandant in any case of necessity.

NOTES.

Amutunie.—This is a splendid fountain, lying on the outskirts of the Damara Reserve, and is a resort for elephant and ostrich hunters. Some hunters left at this place by Mr. H. Hart, trading for Messrs. A. W. Eriksson & Co., were captured by a party of Ovambos on the 10th July, 1879; for some days these people had brought them corn beer, and appeared to be friendly, but on the morning of the 15th, while the hunters were drinking their early coffee, the Ovambo attacked them with their knobkerries, stunning them and then tying them fast. They took possession of their horses (five in number), guns, &c., &c., in fact everything they possessed, and took them on to Olukonda, the residence of Kambonde, paramount king of the Ovambo tribes. The under chief Himene reported that he had captured three Boers. The King at once gave orders to kill them, which was done.

Upon Messrs. W. W. Jordan and H. Hart reaching Olukonda, together with Messrs. B. B. Bjorklund, Skoglund, Reignonen, and Rautenan, Finnish Missionaries, they were told that the people had been killed, under the impression that they were Boers, and the chief told him that they would not allow any Boers to travel in his country, as his people were afraid of them. The horses and guns were eventually returned.

Elephant's Pan.—This is a large pan which is filled with water during the rainy season; it is situated in the centre of the hunting ground. In 1877, a party of hunters, consisting of Messrs. P. van Zyl and sons, Lourens and son, Botha, and a few others, while hunting in that vicinity discovered this pan almost dry, and reduced to thick mud, into which they succeeded in driving a large troop of elephants, where they stuck fast, and the entire lot were killed, numbering 103. Such a wholesale slaughter was never before witnessed by any African hunter.

Groot Vley.—At this place Mr. Stephanus du Plessis,

an old man, died through the effects of eating poisoned fruit.

Vogel Pan.—This is very large, much resembling a small lake. While lying there the Boers had fine sport, shooting quantities of large game and of water-fowl, such as wild geese, muscovys, water-hen and herons of various kinds. This pan is a few days' trek from the Okovango River.

Sibbitans Drift.—At this place Mr. Kreling was re-elected as foreman, and held office until the amalgamation of the laager took place.

Kalabari.—While in this locality a heifer, belonging to Mr. Van de Merwe, lived for twenty-one days without water, and is at the present time doing well.

Okovango River.—Here Mr. C. C. Thomas met with his untimely death. It has been stated in some reports that he was killed by some bastard Portuguese traders, but such was not the case, he was murdered by the natives, which is confirmed by the trek Boers who were on the spot.

Snook, Damara name Kariengembo.—This man was a servant in the employ of Europeans some years ago, when hunting in this country. Since which time he has been in constant intercourse with white men, notwithstanding which, when in the veldt, he conducted himself like a bloodthirsty savage. In 1877, while Mrs. Green, widow of the late Mr. F. Green, was in the hunting veldt, this man committed the most horrible cruelties in her presence on a Colonial man, named Frans April, and a Bushman. Snook with twenty of his followers attacked the latter with knobkerries, and stunned him, then took sjamboks and thrashed him until his body was one raw mass of flesh, then kindled a large fire and burnt him still living. The life of the former was saved by the heroic conduct of Mrs. Green, who rushed towards the scene, and threw a covering over him, not, however, until he had one eye knocked out, and received numerous other bruises. Such cruelties are now inflicted daily by the Beast Damaras, while in the hunting veldt upon the Bushmen and Berg Damaras. In 1878, while Snook was in an Ovambo Kraal with twenty of his followers, he threatened to assegai the captain, and would have done so had he not been prevented. It is not to be wondered at that the perpetrator of

many cruelties should have met his death in the manner described in the Journal. Upon Katjearene, captain of the Omaruru tribe, hearing of his death, he immediately caused forty innocent Ovambos who were living at that place to be killed. These unfortunate people belonged to quite a different tribe to those who had killed Snook, and spoke quite a different language. The massacre took place so quietly that the Europeans living upon the place knew nothing about it until it was all over.

Cunene River.—The Boers struck this river about the Cataracts, some seventy miles from its mouth. They describe it as a beautiful river, the sound of the Falls being so great that it is almost impossible to hear anyone speaking within a distance of 500 yards of them. Hippopotami and crocodiles abound in it. They killed about forty of the former, which they cured and made into splendid bacon and hams, which proved a great boon to them.

Letters.—Only a portion of those received appear in the notes to this Journal, the remainder being in possession of Mr. Kreling, who has not been seen since he left the laager as before stated.

Names :—Throughout this journal the names of places have been given as they were known to the Boers, who in most instances named them after some local peculiarity. A few of the native names are appended. It may here be mentioned, as to the spelling of the farmers' names, that though differing from the spelling in the Colony, the form has been followed which is adopted by themselves.

DUTCH		DAMARA.
Bambacantu	means	Bammagandu.
Wolve-laagter	„	Omaranba Ombongu
Wit-Water*	„	Omitenjo.

Origs-Pits.—This is a place within three days of the

* It may be interesting to the philologist to know that in this region, as indeed northwards throughout Africa, the proper names are, in many cases, couched in language exactly similiar to the Zulu—for instance “a Wolf” is here called “Ombongu” which, in Zulu, would mean “a Roarer” as “Omitengo” i.e. “White Water” would, in Zulu, be “Amat’nja” i.e. “dog’s spittle.” Allowing for errors in spelling.

Cunene River, a spot mentioned in the Journal as a place where the birds died after drinking water, and where Messrs. A. W. Eriksson & Co's hunters, who were there in September, 1879, lost seventeen horses in three days; also Mr. W. W. Jordan's party, and many of the Boers were great sufferers.

Kobabis.—This is a place occupied by Hottentots, and situated on the main road between Damaraland and Lake N'Gami. It is well supplied with water from a large fountain constantly running. The traders travelling in that direction are compelled to water their cattle there, and never escape without being plundered by gangs of these people, who carry on a systematic robbery, using threats and violent language to attain their object, particularly when there are only one or two white men with the wagons at a time. Many of these robberies have been made public; the last that occurred in 1879—when Mr. Geo. Robb, proceeding to the Lake on a trading trip for Messrs. A. W. Eriksson & Co., was plundered of goods to the value of about £500—and although these repeated crimes are well known to the representative of the Colonial Government in this country, nothing has been done to root out or exterminate this nest of outlaws, for they are nothing else.

Rietfontein.—This is the place where the first party of Trek Boers remained two years. It is a fine place, having two large open waters on it, and is reported by the Boers as being convertible into two splendid farms, but not more.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SUFFERINGS OF THE WANDERING BOERS.

(*Cape Times*, Sept., 1879.)

ON Thursday last the sufferings of the hapless migratory Boers who four years ago quitted the Transvaal in order to seek a new Canaan somewhere towards the West Coast of this Continent were brought to the notice of the House of Assembly. The story told was simply harrowing in its delineation of human endurance, so harrowing that it must have been surprising to most persons that the distress of these unfortunate wanderers had not previously been urged upon the attention of the Government. Now, however, that their case has been advocated, the Government will probably see their way not merely to co-operate with private effort, but to take the lead and to show how effort should be directed. The following appeal for help was circulated yesterday in the House of Assembly :—

In 1875 about 300 Burghers, discontented with the then existing *régime*, and perhaps also impelled by the spirit of emigration, left the Transvaal with their families in search of new pastures. Travelling towards the west through the Kalahari they suffered great privations, and died in scores of fever, thirst, and want of provisions. In their wanderings they were broken up into several sections. Small parties are still at Lake N'gami and elsewhere in the interior, but the main body has reached the borders of Damara and Ovampoland, close to the Atlantic coast. Quite recently they were visited by a trader, who tells us that only seventy men and 300 women and children—the latter mostly widows and orphans—are still alive, whilst hundreds, mostly children and men, have succumbed. Government officials and traders in those parts agree in setting forth their condition as most pitiable and calling for immediate help. The men maintain a precarious existence by hunting, and the suffering and privations they have endured are plainly visible from their emaciated frames and

their scanty and tattered clothing. In April last one of them wrote from Ovampoland :—

Dear Parents,—I must inform you that we are in great distress ; if the Lord does not help, we must perish altogether. We are here in an unhealthy climate. Fever is raging amongst us, and a great part has died. We stand here in the “Thirstland” by some wells. Our cattle and sheep are almost all dead. Some have still a span of oxen, but the greater part cannot go a single pace further, and we see no way of escape. The worst of all is the sore famine. From the Crocodile River we were in continual thirst up to this day ; but I hope that our God will save us from this wilderness of hunger, care, and sorrow.

An elephant-hunter, totally unconnected with these unfortunate people, writing to a mercantile firm in Cape Town, gives the following harrowing description of their sufferings.

The matter I refer to is the troubles and hardships which have befallen the Boers, who trekked from the Transvaal Republic some years since, resulting in great indigence and privation to most, if not all of them, and to a very large number in a bitter death. I had no conception of the hardships they have and are still undergoing until a few days since, when four wagons arrived here from their laager containing five families of these poor people. A hunter, Mr. ———, and a trader, Mr. ———, who had been in the country where the Boers are now living, likewise arrived here at the same time. They have related some of the trials and woes of these poor wanderers, although not a fraction of the hardships which they have undergone, which would be an impossibility, and a more bitter and heartrending story it has never been my lot to listen to.

As we are all aware, many of the trek Boers were well-to-do people, and it is hard, indeed, to see them now poor and sick, standing and dying, in trouble and distress, without wishing to hold out a helping hand and to invite every feeling man to contribute his mite to the relief of the poor sufferers.

In the first place, since leaving the Crocodile River, their cattle have been dying of sickness and thirst and getting lost, and since their arrival in this country, not a few of them have lost every living thing they possessed through eating

of a poisonous bush which grows in that country. Many have not as much as a dog or a fowl left, and the few who have managed to save a little have still lost so many that they are forced to abandon a large number of wagons. As many as five respectable families have been forced to travel in one wagon, and many more are totally unable to move in any direction. Food they have none, and numbers have died of starvation. Fever has also made its ravages, and to crown the woe and distress, many children, driven by hunger to eat earth, have died almost immediately.

Others have taken to eating berries, and many have been poisoned through eating of fruits and berries of which they knew not the qualities.

I have heard of instances in which putrid carcasses of dead cattle have been eaten by people already weak and emaciated through sickness and hunger, and have caused fearful suffering. Altogether 160 men, women, and children have fallen victims and succumbed to such hardships, and a more bitter and heartrending state of affairs it would be impossible to imagine. In one instance a person comes across eight or ten wagons, occupied by perhaps one or two women and a few children, with not a man left and not an ox, cow, horse, or other living animal to live from, looking starvation and death in the face, and praying for a speedy release. Again, you approach a number of wagons, and find a few sick men, women, and children, scarce able to crawl about, with nothing to eat, no medicine, and no one to pay them any attention, awaiting the inevitable result with what fortitude Heaven may grant them, and striving to hope for some change for the better.

Here a child is being carried to its grave, there an old man lies dying; here five or six of all sorts are given up as past all hope, there a mother, or perchance, father, listening and watching the death throes of an only remaining child, here a few raving for food, there another frightening away the birds of prey from some putrid carcass, that he may regale himself on what a wolf would pass in disdain. All this makes up such a picture of horror as, may God grant, we shall seldom have to witness, and still less seldom to be in the midst of.

Every trader and hunter has done his individual best to relieve such distress, but it is but like a drop in the ocean,

when one compares the means of remedy with the complaint.

Under these circumstances these undersigned have been constituted into a committee to bring the needs of the poverty-stricken and famishing "Trekboeren" to the notice of the public. It is proposed to send relief from Cape Town, either *via* Walwich Bay or Port Rock, a small inlet some 200 miles north of Walwich Bay. Probably a coasting vessel will have to be chartered and freighted with provisions and clothing. If a landing can be effected at Port Rock, communication with the Trekboeren would be easy.

The committee of the Paarl have already collected a sum of £430, but this will be insufficient to carry the above proposal into effect. £1,300 or £1,400, at least, is wanted.

The undersigned therefore confidently appeal to your sympathy and beneficence for relieving the distress of our unfortunate countrymen. They trust that those who so readily succoured the widows of the brave soldiers of Isandula and even Chinese when they were dying of hunger, will cheerfully open hearts and hands for the relief of widows and orphans of their own countrymen who are in peril of death. The circular is signed by Messrs. P. Marais, M.L.C., W. P. de Villiers, V.D.M., M.L.A., L. H. Goldschmidt, M.L.A., F. Rutherford, J. G. Steytler, D. P. Krynauw, J. I. de Villiers, D.A. son, J. H. Hofmeyr, jun., M.L.A.

Under the circumstances here set forth, the plain duty of Government is to charter a steamer at once with food and other necessary supplies for these poor people, a small exploring party being organised to land on the coast at Port Rock or elsewhere and find the Boer encampment. It is a matter of no importance whether these people owe the flag of England or the flag of the Fiji Islands. The question has nothing to do with flags. There are men of European race starving within reach of our relief, and while that condition obtains we may well afford to dispense with politics. The emigrant Boers have, we understand, the greatest antipathy to British authority. So let it be. We trust that they may find our charity more acceptable than our politics. If a small steamer is to be procured she should be chartered, provisioned, manned, and dispatched without a day's delay.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CONTINUATION OF THE ADVENTURES OF THE TREK-
BOEREN.

(From the *Cape Times*.)

A TERRIBLE TALE OF DEATH AND SUFFERING.

(By *J. J. Debrits, one of the Trekboers.*)

On board of the *Louis Alfred*,
Table Bay, 12th January, 1880.

MR. EDITOR,—With pleasure do I comply with your request to give an account of our trek out of the Transvaal through Africa to the West Coast. It only grieves me that I cannot write well, though I rely on your kindness to improve my language and spelling.

As regards the causes that led to the step taken by me in joining the trek, they are shortly these, so far, at least, as they concern myself: When in 1876 the Transvaal burghers were commandeered to fight Secocoeni, I found myself amongst the commandeered. On my farm nothing had as yet been put in the ground. And as no one could be got to go as my substitute, there was nothing for me but to go on the commando. My wagons and cattle had also to be given up for the use of the commando. In my absence my wife had to plough in order to obtain sufficient food for the year. I returned from the commando, having lost several of my cattle on the way. I went to the field-cornet of Mooi River, in whose district I lived, with the view of obtaining compensation, but I was informed that nothing could be done in the matter. Under the old law compensation could be obtained for damage to what had been lent, but there was nothing mentioned about this in the new commando law. It appeared that wagons and oxen were commandeered at the owners' risk. I was so struck with the unrighteousness of this mode of proceeding that I felt myself impelled, with all my belongings,

to join the trek for which a party of Boers were already prepared, and with them I then threw in my lot.

It was on the 2nd March, 1877, that we left the Transvaal. Our party consisted of 600 souls, large and small, with at least 100 wagons, under the commandantship of Lawrens du Plessis. Arrived at Crocodile River we remained there for a fortnight. Our troubles commenced here. A large proportion of our people were affected by fever, and of which about seventy-five died. Just when we were about to start, the missionaries of Bamangwato arrived at the laager to tell us the Kafir Chief January had closed the road and had said that the Boers had come to take his land. We were thus placed on our guard, and had already arranged to attack the Kafirs in case they came in our way and attempted to turn back the laager. We nevertheless proceeded without any further difficulty. After that we reached Klogie. Here Commandant du Plessis assembled everyone and asked them the question: What shall we do now? Shall we all go forward together, or shall we divide the laager into sections and then go on? Then our party answered, we shall call cousin Jan Greyling and ask him. The commandant sent for him, but Greyling sent his answer that he was not the commandant. Everyone nevertheless persisted that he was to come forward, and at last Greyling appeared. The commandant then asked him: What shall we do to make the best arrangement, because, cousin Jan, you went over the country with the commission, and so you must know it best; because you know that we stand on the verge of a dry land, and here are also many souls; say what you think of the matter? Cousin Jan Greyling's answer was: Every man must put "his shoulder to it and keep up" (or some similar expression, meaning that everyone was to look after himself): Those who love me will follow me and not thirst. Whereupon Greyling trekked forward with forty-five wagons. The remainder, under Du Plessis, followed him the next day. We had now arrived in the first dry land, and it took us ten days to trek through it. The seventh day we arrived at a large "pan," named as pronounced "Enkawaan," and about 600 yards broad. It was the place where Greyling said there was water. We certainly got water out of a pit, but it was so little that it had to be

doled out all round in cups, and a cup a day could only be allowed. We suffered here greatly. It was a wilderness—nothing but bushes and heavy sand. We sought all round for water. So when, for instance, we came to a small “pan” in which nothing was found but thick mud, the people undressed themselves, put the mud in their shirts, and sucked out the water in this way. To that must be added that in this same small “pan” 80 dead cattle were laying. It was at Enkawaan that we had lost all our horses and cattle, and the condition of the poor brutes was something pitiable. They were so affected by thirst, they all ran hard away from the place to what seemed to them to be water, but which was no water, and in the race some of them fell dead. They leapt over the fires that were being made, also looking at it as water, and licked the tires of the wheels. Those sitting by the fires had to fly before these animals, the oxen phased them away from the wagons, and one had to do one’s best to get out of the way. The mortality amongst the cattle was so great that they lay in heaps under the trees, where they had been placed for shelter from the heat. Under a tree one could count from eighteen to twenty-eight dead.

Through the loss of all our cattle we had to leave all our wagons behind at Enkawaan, with their loads, just as they had been loaded, and had to proceed on foot, without a mouthful of food, three days thereafter after arriving at Klakani. On the way we met some of our cattle that had run away from Enkawaan, and we had to cut some of their throats and to squeeze out the contents of the stomach to keep the children alive, whilst the men and women had to drink the blood. We had some brandy with us, and some of the women that drank of it nearly died. We had a little vinegar, but when we drank of it we thought we should die from a stomach on fire. The vinegar burnt sometimes so badly that those suffering would make a hole under a tree and then lay with their stomachs on the cold earth to lessen the thirst.

At Klakani we were only through the first dry land, after a ten days’ trek from Klozie, and we actually got water. Our loss in lives now amounted to about 100.

From Klakani we went to Meers River, J. Greyling having become our commandant. The above river runs in

a north-westerly direction into Lake N'Gami. It had been the arrangement that all should come together at this river, and that spans of oxen should be made up to bring the wagons out of the dry land to Meers River. Having arrived at this river, Commandant Greyling assembled everyone to see how many head of cattle we still had. Besides the strayed cattle that had been found, we had obtained some by bartering with the Kafirs along the Meers River. In answer to the question of the commandant we could only hear of one saying he had but five oxen left, of another that he had but retained eight, &c. When the commandant had ascertained all this, he said to those who had still one or two oxen left, that they were to give them to those who had none. So we struggled and were at last able to bring in from Enkawaan about forty of the wagons. At Klakani only my wagon remained behind. It was at Meers River that a chief named Maremmi would not allow us to proceed further. Later on he sent us a white ox, as a sign of peace, but Greyling, thinking that perhaps the animal was poisonous, refused to accept it; and the chief also refused to take it back, so the ox remained three days where it had been brought to, and then it died, and all the vultures and jackals that eat of the carcass also died. The animal was poisonous, and the suspicions of the commandant were well grounded. The matter was left thus, and we could proceed on our way unhindered. Proceeding up along the river we came to a place where the river turned off. Here we remained to look for game, but had very little success. We buried two of our number that died of fever. It was terrible to watch their sufferings. The nose rotted away, and the mouth down to the throat.

After that we went to Plattedrift, and there we again delayed. I can assure you that we suffered much here from hunger and illness. The native captain sent us word that we were to trek. The commandant sent back an answer that he was not to be in such a hurry, as the people were very ill, but as soon as they were better we should leave. The illness attacked us still more, and we had to delay longer. Three days after that we had received the message from the "captain," he sent us another. He informed the commandant that if we did not leave within

four days, that he (the captain) would let his people drive us away. The commandant answered that if the captain meant it he could come with all his people to drive us away. The captain sent thereupon a Kafir to the laager to ask the commandant who had sent him this message? The commandant answered, the captain. The Kafir said then: No, it is not so. Then there was again quietness with the Kafirs. We buried four of our number here, and later on four children and two adults. Travelling on, we came to a great plain, when the water was scarce. Here we again buried a man. The whole day we had to trek without water. It was also thirst land. We were delighted to get water again at a turn in Meers River. Here we exchanged our big oxen for young ones, getting two young ones for a big one. In this way we could get away better. We had to pluck and grind here berries to boil them in water for the children. In the thirst land we went out hunting, but there was very little game to be found. We shot two elephants, so we had a little meat. The elephants that were shot were far from the laager, so we could not carry all the meat away. There were many Bushmen, they murdered a young man; they had shot him with bow and arrow, stabbed him with assegais, and then partly cut him up. The young man's horse came galloping to the laager, whereupon the people immediately went out to look for him. They were overtaken by night and had to sleep in the veld, as they could not follow the spoor of the horse. The Bushmen shot upon the people, but the latter put their fires out so that the Bushmen could not see them. The blacks thereupon fled, as they were afraid that the Boers would surround them. The Boers followed them the next day, and recovered the body of the young man. The Bushmen nevertheless escaped. They had taken away the gun of the murdered man.

From Plattedrift the laager came to an old Bastard, who asked us how we fared, and on our telling him, he did what he could for us. We were delighted to meet some one who could understand us. He brought us to a Kafir captain, when, through exchange, we got five muids of Kafir corn. At this place we buried seven persons who had died from fever and poisoning. The poison came from

a certain kind of fruit, very pretty and very tempting to look at. Some ate of it, driven to do so by hunger, and as it afterwards turned out, with fatal consequences. It was only discovered to be poisonous after the dogs had eaten of it and died.

We then arrived at Lake 'Ngami, where we remained five days. Here much illness prevailed, owing to the great extent of country covered by reeds all along the banks of the lake. These reeds were decaying, making it difficult to reach the water, and owing to this decay, caused a poisonous exhalation. Those affected by it got worse until we reached Makobus River (where we afterwards halted), where they died.

The Makobus River, otherwise called the Cheshongo, is a branch of the Okavango River. Here we remained some time by a Bechuana kraal, and lost a lot of cattle. We thought of finding game here, but it had been driven off by the natives. It was here that a party under Gert du Plessis left us.


We left this for a "pan" situated in the hills. Here we delayed because we could not proceed owing to our people being so ill. The oxen got some sort of disease with which we were not acquainted. The heart of the animal got yellow with thick layers of flesh round it; the heart, the liver, and the other internal parts of the body were full of yellow water, and the liver in addition was swollen. We had to eat the flesh of these diseased animals in order to keep alive, as we could obtain no game. With this meat we had to eat "krimmetart," a fruit resembling a cocoanut, but sour, and full of small pips. Even this fruit was scarce. We then went to the Buffelspan, where we shot buffaloes and a quantity of lions. The lions had caught two of our horses.

Proceeding we came afterwards to a reedvley, where we found but little water, and that bad. We were pitifully situated here; we had not even a mouthful of food. We had to cook the roots of reeds to eat, and also for the same purpose we knocked down the best parts of the bark of the thorn trees. A large party of Boers then left to go hunting. They remained away for three weeks, and shot two camels, two gemsbucks, and two buffaloes.

We then went further. A number of our people were ill. Children of nine years had to act as leaders, whilst the mothers drove. We went further up "Makobus River." We tried to catch fish, but there was nothing to be caught. Along here we lost lots of people. In one grave alone were nine persons, and in half-a-day from there fourteen more, old and young. The wives who had lost their husbands had to drive the wagons themselves. Some of these people got worms on their bodies. You can imagine they had been long bed-ridden as it were, and the sore places were filled with worms. I can't describe everything. . . . You see thus how we were situated, to leave all our goods and thus to go out. It was pitiful to behold, and then the Bushmen came and destroyed the things that were on the ground; coffee and sugar, mixing them with sand. After that we reached "Okavango," and, as you already know, here several families to the number of thirty, amongst them also Commandant Greyling, turned back in order to return to the Transvaal. The last that I heard of this party was that they had just trekked from the neighbourhood of Ghanzi. At the Okavango, Botha was nominated in the room of Greyling, and the expedition thereupon trekked through Waterberg; they were prohibited by the Ovampos from going through their land, towards their temporary location.

By this same Okavango I (with my family) turned off to Mr. Charles Thomas, who took me into his employ as driver. I came to him in a very sickly condition, having for months back been suffering from fever. Through the kind attentions of the above-named gentleman I recovered, and I can safely say that the preservation of my life is due to him. It is the same Mr. Thomas that was murdered by the Ovampos. I was present. I drove his wagon. Mr. Thomas was riding a little ahead; coming down to the river the natives shot upon and killed him. I went with deceased's brother, Mr. L. Thomas, to Omaruru. I was well received and cared for by Mr. Erickson and Mr. Raven, and the kindness received from them will cause me as long as I live to remember them with feelings of the deepest gratitude. And also from Omaruru Mr. Erickson did much for us with his wagons. It was very pleasant to

me to see that there were friends in Cape Town looking after us, and for which we cannot be sufficiently grateful. I never thought again to reach the colony. Through the mercy of God I have come so far. We have had a pleasant voyage to Table Bay, and the captain and crew of the *Louis Alfred* have shown us many kindnesses, for which we are very thankful.



CHAPTER XL.

CONTINUATION OF THE ADVENTURES OF THE TREK-BOEREN.

I NOW beg to present an *olla podrida* of excerpts from various papers relating to this stirring episode of Boer History.

A gentleman writing from Damaraland (Nov. 11, 1880) : —“It may be interesting to those who so benevolently subscribed towards the Trek Boer Relief Fund to know that the Boers have now permanently settled in that beautiful tract of country known as Huilla, situate within six days of Mossamedes, west coast of Africa. Farms of 3,000 morgen have been granted to each family by the Portuguese Government. Huilla has a perfectly European climate, perpetual streams of water, rich and fertile soil, and abundance of fruit.—*Argus*.

The *Natal Mercury* of November 21st, 1881, says : We extract the following particulars from the Royal Geographical Society's Monthly Record for October, 1881, to hand by the last mail :—

Towards the end of last year the trek Boers in Damaraland, to whose position we referred in May, 1880, crossed the river Cunene, and applied for a grant of land to the Portuguese Governor of Mossamedes. The party, some 300 in all, arrived at Huilla on December 20th, and about a week afterwards the Governor, Senhor Sebastiao Nunez da Matta, signed an engagement with their leader, Mr. F. J. Botha, assigning them 7,500 acres of the uncultivated lands of Humpata (about S lat. 15°) to the east of the Serra de Cheria, and between it and the Serra da Munda. The colony of Boers settled there is named Sao Januario, after the Portuguese Minister of the Colonies, the Visconde Sao Januario. When the colony is considered to be satisfactorily established, each family will receive an extensive allotment of ground in the neighbourhood. An arrangement appears to have been entered into, whereby the Boers will be allowed the free exercise of their religion,

while at the same time they undertake to submit to Portuguese law. In order that protection may be near at hand to this colony, which promises to be of so much importance for the future development of agriculture in this region, the fort of Huilla is to be rebuilt as soon as possible. An irrigation canal was commenced in January last and completed by February 20th. It is between three and four miles long, some 5 ft. broad, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. deep, and is filled from the Rio Neve and Rio Canhanda, which are connected through the Cacolovar with the Cunene.

The *Volksstem* of March, 1882, says :—From a private source in Cape Town we learn that news from the Trekboers has been received up to October last. A Mr. Bent, an Englishman, had just been to these Boers. These people have now firmly established themselves on Portuguese territory (Humpata), having built houses and cultivated lands ; also constructed a canal of between three and four miles from a certain river, and this piece of work is such as to have astonished the Portuguese themselves, bringing the water in front of and past the Boers' dwellings. The Boers were, however, complaining of want of pasturage for their cattle, owing to the natives close by setting fire to it. The encampment has been twice attacked by the natives, but each time repulsed, and the latter seemed now to have quietly submitted to the "white dogs," as they styled the Boers. There were complaints of stock-lifting against these natives, which complaints have been made to the Portuguese Governor, but he had taken no notice of them yet, excepting in two cases, where the culprits were made to give compensation to the farmers. Mr. Bent told these Boers all the news and the result of the Transvaal war, and they were agreeably surprised. For four and twenty hours they had thanksgiving services. There are upwards of 400 men, women and children. Each man has about £40 in cash, and amounts altogether to £7,000. Statistics of cattle, &c., are also given, but these I don't remember now. Then a road is also being constructed towards the sea coast, costing £20,000. When Mr. Bent was there, it was reported that a party of 1,000 Bastards were coming up to settle with the Boers.

The *Times of Natal* of April 18th, 1884, says :—William

Chapman writes to the *Cape Times* from Humpata, District of Mossamedes, South-West Coast, Africa :—As the attention of people in South Africa has already been attracted to the Colony now in course of formation in this part of Africa, and as various accounts of the country have been given, many of which were misrepresentations, I have thought it advisable to place before the public a brief description of what St. Januario or Humpata really is ; and if it should interest intending emigrants, I shall be most happy to answer all inquiries made by letter to me. Humpata lies about eighty miles to the east of the port of Mossamedes, but the journey to that place is made with ox-wagon in six or seven days by the wagon-road, which has lately been completed. For agricultural purposes the country is highly adapted, being watered by innumerable streams, and the soil very good. All kinds of fruits and vegetables thrive well. Oxen and cows which were brought here by the Boers were subject to several diseases during the first year of their arrival here, but at present the prospects are much better, as the Boers generally admit. Goats and sheep do not thrive so well here, but there are places only two days' journey by ox-wagon from this, admirably suited for those animals. Merino sheep answer well here, and in the course of time no doubt sheep-shearing will become one of the principal industries of this colony. Horses, as well as oxen and cows, are subject to a disease here called scurvy or brandziekte. This has affected horses more than the other animals, but a cure has very lately been discovered in the shape of carbolic acid in the proportion of three tablespoonsful to a bottle of water, rubbed over the animal, which has saved all the oxen and cows upon which it has been used, but unfortunately the knowledge of the discovery came too late to the Boers, as their horses were already dead. Those horses upon which the acid has been tried have been saved. In the stables, horses, &c., are not affected. At present very few oxen, &c., are subject to the disease, and it appears that it only prevails in certain parts of the district. The natives of the country have thousands. But it must be understood that there is a large tract of country, extending far to the north of this, elevated, and very healthy, where these diseases among cattle do not prevail, and which is also

adapted to agricultural pursuits. The climate of Humpata is most salubrious, being temperate, and the seasons very much alike. Land is offered gratis by the Portuguese Government to immigrants from the Cape Colony and elsewhere, and pasturage is free. The Government is anxious that the country shall be colonised, and is doing all in its power towards its development. Some of the Trek-Boers intend leaving this country, but the greater number are in favour of remaining here, the prospects being better now, and the advantages many.

Times of Natal of April 29th, 1884, further says :—Dr. Brill, the Free State Secretary of the Trek Boer Relief Fund, has received an answer to his communication addressed to the Rev. P. Postma, Secretary of the Central Committee at Pretoria, in which the latter gentleman thankfully accepts, on behalf of his committee, the conditions imposed by resolution of the Bloemfontein committee. The Rev. P. Postma advises Dr. Brill that the Pretoria committee intend sending a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church to Mossamedes to endeavour to arrange for the unanimous consent of the Trek Boers to their again entering some civilised part of South Africa. If the Trek Boers do not come back in a body the funds raised in Bloemfontein will not, it is said, be used.

Times of Natal of July 14th, 1885, continues :—A correspondent writes to the *Volksstem* :—After all the “scramble” for new lands in Africa by the great European Powers, guided by such experienced men as Stanley and Nachtigal, the travellers, and Missionary Mackenzie, a new habitable and fertile country seems to have been discovered within the last few months. The discoverers are the Trek Boers. Finding Humpata not exactly suited to their wants, these hardy adventurers and practical people sent an exploring party to examine an upland region lying in the north-eastward. On their return to their compatriots they reported very favourably of a very large tract of country, comprising the elevated district in which the Cunene and Okovango Rivers take their rise. This new land is described as being very healthy for Europeans, having an altitude of from 5,000 to 9,000 feet above sea-level; that it is well watered, well grassed, well adapted for general agricultural and pastoral purposes, in fact

eminently suitable to the requirements of the Boers. Moreover, they think so highly of this, their new discovery, that they intend sending delegates to the Transvaal, with the object of inducing more of their fellow-countrymen to emigrate and join them ; and while all will rejoice in the good luck of these bold adventurers, perhaps it may not be amiss to place before the Transvaal public some account, compiled from reliable sources, of this new territory. The most recent information is given by Monteiro.

The same paper of October 24th, 1884, also says :—As the result of the mission of the Rev. Mr. Pelsler to the Trek Boers at Humpata, we are informed that they desire to go back to the Transvaal, notwithstanding what has been said to the contrary. The country they occupy is healthy, but beyond it are the regions where the fever is prevalent ; and even where the Trek Boers reside, many are suffering from fever. The soil is not fit for tilling without being well manured, the cattle die off, and Mossamedes is considered (the road leading to which is very difficult) the market for their produce. Many of them intend to return to the Transvaal in November next, overland, as they have not funds enough to pay for the sea voyage.—*P. E. Telegraph.*

And last by the *Times of Natal*, March 17th, 1886, goes on :—We have been requested by a number of our Dutch subscribers to publish the following :—Among the passengers who arrived at the Cape by the *Norham Castle* were Mr. Gert Albertse and Mr. Van der Merwe, who have come as delegates to the country from the Boer settlement behind Mossamedes. These gentlemen called at the *Cape Times* office the other day for the purpose of explaining the object of their mission, and stated as follows :—

“ In 1874 we left the Transvaal, and travelled by way of Lake 'Ngami, and from there across the Kalahari Desert. From Lake Ngami we went to Rietfontein, and from that place we went in a northerly direction, taking the course of the River Okovango, having rested at Rietfontein from July to December. During the whole time we moved on in short stages. We next struck in a westerly direction, and shaped our course between Ondonga and Omariru, that is to say between Damaraland and Ovampoland, reaching Kaoko on the 3rd July, 1878.