

cost much money, for many officials were poor at the time of Piet's visits to Pretoria, and borrowed money or got him to sign papers as security for money they owed, all of which Piet did, though with a sad heart, for he was not satisfied that these men could do what they promised. Then Hans was like a hungry Kaffir, coming time and again for advances for this and for that, without which he said the whole thing must collapse. Piet had by this time spent nearly £2,000, and had signed securities for officials to the extent of nearly a thousand more, and he stayed much in Pretoria, for he was afraid to go home and tell Katrina that nothing had yet come for all this trouble and outlay. She would say hard things of Hans Breda till Piet would begin to mistrust him, for the constant creaking of a *vrouw's* tongue makes men suspect their best friends. Then Katrina would ask questions that Piet could not answer, wanting to know why he did not sell the farm if it had so much gold, instead of letting others come and dig it. Piet tried to make her believe that it was because he was afraid of being robbed as he was when he sold his first farm to Brown, the Rand millionaire; but Katrina called him foolish, and said that she would count the money this time, which was an answer to his excuse, and made him angry that he could not think of a better.

Just as Piet was beginning to think that he had suffered enough he received news that the farm had been proclaimed. There was a big advertisement in the *Staats Courant*, and within twenty-four hours the farm and all the adjoining country had been overrun by men from Johannesburg who came to peg off claims. It was a great day for Piet, and even Katrina ceased to grumble, for she had counted up and found that the claim licences would bring in £300 a month, which was a very fine sum of money. But next day, when the Predikant had gone over the figures and made it out even more, Katrina began to abuse Piet for not having sooner had the farm proclaimed. Piet gave her a great answer full of sharpness. Said he : "I should have had it proclaimed before, but I had not talked it over with that *schelm* Hans Breda ;"—which was the phrase Katrina had always used when she spoke of Hans.





CHAPTER VIII.

MINING COMMISSIONER OF KAALKOP.

EVER since Piet Prinsloo had been able to understand the fulness of these things he had been possessed of two great desires. The first was to be a Mining Commissioner ; the other to have a township bearing his name. He had always known that a Mining Commissioner was much greater than a Landdrost, though until the goldfields were proclaimed his heart had been with a Field Cornetcy, because Field Cornets had great power over their fellows. But since he had thought on the matter and had heard Katrina's daily bewailing after money, he held the Field Cornet in small esteem, and envied the Commissioner almost as much as Katrina envied his *vrouw*. The Uitlanders cared nothing for the

Field Cornet, and even laughed at him; but it was not so with the Mining Commissioner, for he was as a king, having command of all the gold claims in his district and chances of making hundreds of pounds where a Field Cornet got only a few shillings or a stray ox or two. Besides, the Mining Commissioner was the Government man on Licensing Boards and other public bodies that controlled much money, and their *vrouws* were always richly dressed, which Katrina never ceased to call Piet's attention to.

One day, when all the claims on Kaalkop had been pegged out by people from Johannesburg, Piet went to Vrededorp to see Hans Breda, and told him how much he wanted to be a Mining Commissioner, and to have a township after his name like Kruger of Krugersdorp and Klerk of Klerksdorp.

Now, as it happened, this was the great mistake of Piet's life, and shows us how foolish it is not to be content when we have got all that we ought to want; which is another of the many curses brought upon the land by the greedy Uitlander and Hollander.

When they had smoked for a long time and drunk coffee without speaking, Hans said :

"Do you not know, Piet, that the Gold Law will not let a man be an official on a goldfield

and still hold claims? If you would be a Commissioner you must sell your proclaimed farm."

Piet did not like this, but having begun to know that such laws were made in such a way that loyal and *oprecht* burghers could break them if it gave them advantage over an Uitlander, he asked Hans if this were not so.

"Ja," said Hans, "Oom Paul is *slim* and good to his burghers. He has thought of all this, and I will show you how you can hold your farm and yet be a Commissioner. But, Piet, it will cost you a lot of money."

Piet knew this, for he had not forgotten the days in Pretoria when he did little but pay the debts of the officials who helped to get the farm proclaimed.

"Hans," said he, "you are a *slim kerel*, and know enough to be President," which speech pleased Hans much, being greatly vain of his cunning.

Then he told Piet how he should plan it all.

"You will," said he, "sell to a man your farm and rights for £50,000."

"And who will he be?" asked Piet.

"My nephew, Jan Kemp."

"But he has not a thousand *tickies*," said Piet, much surprised.

"That speech shows how little you know of

business," answered Hans. "He will be what the Uitlanders call a 'nominee,' which is a man who has no money or will of his own, and does only what he is told. He gives you no money, neither does he take your farm, for you still hold it in secret, and when people say, 'The Mining Commissioner is the owner of the land,' you say, 'It is false, for I sold it to Jan Kemp, and there are writings to prove it.'"

"But where do I gain?" asked Piet, who was not yet quick at business.

"You gain," said Hans, "by being at once the owner of the land, who receives half the claim licence money, and the Commissioner who shows purchasers where the best open claims are for a present, and has a big share in secret when companies are floated to take over the claims."

The end of it was that Piet agreed, and signed the writings that Hans got an attorney to prepare.

Once again did Piet's slippery tongue bring him trouble, for he told several people how he had sold his farm for much money. This got into the newspapers, and brought great worry, for the people to whom Piet owed money would no longer take his excuses. But he put many of them off by telling them that being a burgher, the Landdrost who tried the case must give judgment in

his favour, and those who were not new to the ways of the Transvaal were sensible and waited, but the foolish ones took Piet into court, and, of course, lost, for the Landdrost owed money to Piet, and was eager to have a share in the Kaalkop claims. But though he won, he never forgave the papers, but tried hard to have a law passed to suppress them.

The next business was to make Piet Mining Commissioner of Kaalkop, and get the township proclaimed. It was very hard and long work in Pretoria, for there were so many to whom the next commissionership had been promised, both by word of mouth and by writing. But Hans Breda knew well how to arrange such things, for it always happens that the Government promise the same office to many, and in three months Piet was made Mining Commissioner of the Kaalkop Goldfields District, and the township that was laid out was called "Prinsloosdorp," so that Piet obtained his heart's desire, though he saw not the grief and misfortune it was to bring him through the jealousy of those who deserved good fortune less.

When a township is proclaimed by the Government it is the custom to fix a day whereon the stands shall be offered for sale to the public by the Government auctioneer, and it is always a

great day. The Uitlanders from Johannesburg attend in large numbers, the great financiers send a man to buy for them, the railway runs a special train to the nearest station, and altogether it is even a greater day than *nachtmaal*.

Piet and Katrina were very happy when the day came, for they had reckoned that the stands would average £50 apiece, which would make them very rich, for there were six hundred of them, and they would bring £30,000. All of this money would not go to Piet, for so many of those officials who said they had brought pressure on the Government to proclaim the township would have to receive a share of the profit. But Hans Breda said that this would not amount to more than £10,000, as he had brought his great influence to bear to make them less greedy than they would otherwise have been.

I have said that Hans had been of great service to Piet in his plans, but I have now to show how even men like him can be spoiled by the corruption of the Hollander.

There was a goodly attendance of the public, mostly speculators from Johannesburg, for it was the season of what they call the *Landboom*, and, inasmuch as Prinsloosdorp would be the capital of the new Kaalkop Goldfields, all were eager to buy land. So the sale began, and Piet grew

gladder and gladder as the first lots of stands in the least desirable positions were sold at £40, £50 and £60 apiece. Hans Breda was bidding up the price as he had promised. Presently came the turn of the stands in the centre of the township, which are always most valuable. The bids began at £50, and the Johannesburg men bid boldly by tens; but Hans was always close on their heels until, when he bid £350, the Uitlander left off, and the stand was knocked down to Hans Breda, while Piet marvelled, being strangely puzzled. But there was greater cause for wonderment awaiting him.

"How many will you take?" asked the auctioneer.

"The whole block of twenty," answered Hans, as coolly as if buying half a load of forage on the market.

Piet grew sick and faint, for he had believed that Hans spoke truth when he had told him he was not a buyer but a bidder. Besides, how could he pay £7,000? Piet did not know that a wicked scheme was afoot to *verneuk* him, but he learned it soon.

In the conditions of sale there was a provision that if a purchaser did not pay for his stands by two o'clock, they would be again put up for sale. Now, all had been sold by shortly after one o'clock,

and there being a return train near that time, all the people from Johannesburg left. Then, when there was less than a dozen people on the spot, Hans Breda went to the auctioneer :

“I am sorry,” said he, “but I cannot pay for the stands I have bought.”

So the auctioneer, according to the rule, put up for sale all the stands surrendered by Hans, and there being no one left with money, Jan Kemp bought them all in at £10 each.

And the real purchaser was Hans Breda, who next day sold all the stands, so wickedly and cheaply purchased, for £200 each, and gave Piet not one shilling for his share.

Piet was very wrathful.

“Why did you serve me so badly?” he asked.

“Because,” answered Hans, quite unashamed, “I deserved to make a bit for myself. If I had not shown you how to ‘salt’ the ground you would not be Prinsloo of Prinsloosdorp to-day.”

“‘Salt’ the ground,” asked Piet, in amaze ; “what is that ?”

“Making it taste better,” answered Hans, with a laugh.

Then a great light burst on Piet. For the first time he understood why that prospector borrowed a shot gun, but no shot, and he knew that the gold dust had been fired into the rock on purpose

to deceive. And he was grieved, for he stood high in the Church; but he had not the heart to tell those who had pegged claims that they had been robbed, for it would have made them sore also.

"It is all the fault of letting those Uitlanders into the country," said Piet to Katrina, when he had told her all. "Such a thing would never have been done in Cape Colony in the old days."

"Nay," said Katrina, "for you had no gold claims to 'salt.' "

Since the Englisher and Hollander have been allowed to come into the Transvaal they have by their evil example done much to make our young burghers immoral and infidels. They have tried their best to shake our faith in Providence by all sorts of profane and blasphemous acts, such as shooting into the clouds to bring rain, as they did with awful wickedness in Johannesburg. That act was in itself shocking, and brought its just punishment in the rinderpest. But what made it worse was that some infamous Uitlander wrote to a Johannesburg paper that a wounded cherubim with a broken wing had been picked up in the *veld* near Johannesburg, the hurt having been done by the bursting of the shells fired into the sky. Now, I do not for one moment believe that such a wounded cherubim was found as described, but

there are a large number of ignorant but religious Boers who heard the story, and it made them very angry with Paul Kruger that he did not prosecute the men who caused the guns to be fired. Then there came out of it another trouble, for it was reported that the cherubim with the broken wing was being taken to Oom Paul at Pretoria, and that the waggon would pass through Mulder's Drift. The result was that nearly two hundred Boers rode six and even ten hours to see what they had often read of in their Bibles, but when they got there no waggon was found. The Johannesburg papers said they were a large Boer *commando* marching on Pretoria to compel Paul Kruger to grant reforms to the Uitlanders. Now, as all the Boers who rode out were Kruger men it was hard that they should be thought to be friendly to the Uitlanders. Still, it was not easy to explain why they had all ridden so long and so far, for they were ashamed to own that they came to see a cherubim whose wing had been broken by profane Uitlanders. So they went back very gloomy and angry that they could not think of a proper excuse. Within the next month four Field Cornets and several minor officials who were with the party were discharged for being suspected of sympathy with the Uitlanders, and when the Predikant of the Dutch Reform Church at Booms-

dorp preached one Sunday about cherubims, most of the Boers left the church, and there was a great uprising against the Predikant, whom they sought to have removed.

One of the men who laughed much at the story of the wounded cherubim was Nick Grobler, he being a great infidel, as was proved by his burning sulphur over his mealies to keep away locusts, which are sent as a punishment.

But one of the greatest proofs of the grief that awaits the wrongdoer was supplied by the great and rapid growth of Prinsloosdorp, and this in spite of the jealousy and wickedness of Nick Grobler, who tried hard to make his own Vrededorp better and more prosperous than my father-in-law's *dorp*. Although Schoonspruit was twenty years old when Prinsloosdorp was proclaimed, and had the best water supply and the largest Reformed Church in the district, yet as soon as Nick Grobler listened to the voice of the infidel Hollander and tried to bring Piet Prinsloo to ruin, his *dorp* grew small and Piet's larger. First came the great schism in the church, brought about by Nick's daughter going to a dance during *nachtmaal*. Nick refused to see that she had done a great sin, being a teacher in the State school; and when the Predikant reproved her and dismissed her from her post, Nick, instead of being

humble and contrite, impounded the Predikant's cow for grazing on his farm, and put up the Sanitary Inspector to analyse the milk sold by the Predikant, and finding it half water, Nick fined him the full penalty. This was very bad, but he did worse. He gave leave to the owner of a skittle alley to put up his gambling tent on the market square during *nachtmaal*, so that the young Boers gambled for and lost the money given them to put into the collection box, and stayed away gambling instead of being at church.

When Piet Prinsloo heard of this he was stirred to great anger, and publicly declared that Nick was in league with the owner of the skittle alley and received half the profits from money that rightly belonged to the church. Of course, he could not prove this, though I have no doubt it was true, so he had to sign another apology and pay £10 to the *Kerk* fund.

So while Nick Grobler was daily chastened for his wickedness, Prinsloosdorp grew and flourished like the green bay tree. There was a jail, four white canteens and seven Kaffir canteens along the line of reef; and Piet, being chairman of the Licensing Board, had great opportunities for making money. The jail being always full of Kaffirs, he had as much work free as he wanted for his garden and his farm, which was a very

great consideration when Kaffirs wanted £4 a month. Nick Grobler tried to make trouble out of this for my father-in-law, but, digging a pit, he fell into it himself.

It came about in this way :

Vrouw Keet was talking with Nick's girl Kaatje, saying she wondered how Nick could keep so many Kaffirs unless he improperly used the prisoners.

"My pa does nothing of the sort," said Kaatje ; "our Kaffirs only cost us their *skoff*."

"Then I wish you would tell me how it's done," said *Vrouw Keet*.

So Kaatje told her.

It was the old trick that is largely used all over South Africa by the Boers to punish idle and impudent Kaffirs ; but Nick used it to escape paying them their just wages, which, though right when a Boer is poor, becomes a scandal when the man who does it is a Landdrost and can pay for services.

A day or two before the Kaffir's month was up, Piet would find a pretence for being very angry with the Kaffir, and would tell him that on the last day of the month he would give him twenty-five lashes, hoping that the boy would be frightened and run away without waiting for his wages, which they mostly did. But when the

new Pass Law was made, the boys were afraid to leave without their passes, for if caught they would be flogged for having none. So they would stay and take the flogging from their *baas* rather than lose their money and get a flogging at the jail besides.

But Nick was a match for this. He would give the boy his discharge pass and an order to take to some distant Field Cornet to give the bearer twenty-five for laziness and impudence. He would explain the letter to the Kaffir, and start him off early in the morning. It was very rarely that the boy delivered the letter to the Field Cornet or came back for his money!

Thus it came that Nick Grobler paid no wages to his boys, yet always had plenty of labour, for he promised them £4 a month, which was the mine wage.

Mrs. Keet told this to me and I wrote to the *Critic* about it. What was better, we caught one of the boys with the flogging order, and Nick was thoroughly exposed. But he got free labour just the same.

The thing that made Piet even richer was a great and clever plan which Hans Breda showed him.

I have told how Oom Hans *verneuked* Piet over the sale of the stands, which made them no longer

great friends. But one day, two years later, Hans lost the mother of his wife, and this made him feel to want to forgive his enemies. So he came to Piet, whom he had not spoken to since the sale.

“Piet,” said he, “I did you a great wrong over that *stand plaatsen* sale, and I want to show you that I am sorry.”

My father-in-law was still angry, and secretly sorry that Hans had no longer his wife’s mother to trouble him, so he replied gruffly, as if not ready to forgive him, until he heard him say :

“Piet, I want to show you how to get back that money you lost.”

“Hans,” said Piet, “you are a *verdomde schelm*, but you are *slim*. Show me how I can get back my money and we shall again be friends.”

“That is good, Piet ; you are a good Bible-reading man,” said Hans, and he went on : “You have a lot of stands on the outside of the town which are no good because they are away from the *dorp*, and nobody will go there to build houses and live.”

“That is so,” said Piet ; for he had always been angry when he thought how Hans had got the best stands and he the worst.

“Well, suppose the Government offices were to be burnt down, as big buildings often do. Would

it not be patriotic if you offered to give for *nix* sufficient of your outside stands to rebuild the offices on? And would it not make all the rest of the stands outside go up in value?"

Piet had by this time learned more business, and was quicker to see an advantage.

"Hans," said Piet, shaking hands with him for the first time for two years, "I am quite and truly glad that your mother-in-law is dead, though I was sorry when I first heard it. Now we can be friends again and forgive one another, and make some money together. Eh, *koos?*"

And they had a long *indaba* together on the *stoep*, and Katrina listened at the window and heard it all, and was glad that her man was no longer unfriendly with Hans Breda.

About three months after this talk on the *stoep*, the court-house and the office of the Mining Commissioner caught fire in the night, and, water being very scarce, the whole of the block was burned down.

Piet and Hans went over to Pretoria and offered the Government ten stands on the outside of the town on which to rebuild the public offices.

"It is making the Government a present of five thousand pounds," said Piet, to the members of the Executive, "for the old stands are worth that now for building stores and private offices."

A lot of time was spent in getting the plan through, for, as usual, a great many officials in Pretoria wanted a share in the thing for their trouble, which is only another way of saying that if they had not been considered they would have done all they possibly could to prevent the Government accepting the offer. But Hans Breda knew well how to deal with officials, having himself been one in Pretoria, so all went well. The Government offices were put up outside the town, and all that Hans had said came true, for the other stands in the neighbourhood were bought up at a largely increased price. Piet got the Licensing Board to grant licences to two canteens there, and in less than a year Piet made £7,000, of which Hans and the Pretoria crowd took only £3,000 for their share.

This great success made Nick Grobler furious with envy. He prompted the *Patriot* and other papers to make a great stir about what they called "The Prinslooisdorp Scandal," and a memorial was got up and presented to the Government complaining that it was a shame that people who had to do business with the Mining Commissioner should have to go two miles out of the town to see him. But as it is nearly all Uitlanders who have business with the Mining Commissioner, the Government took no notice, and the member for

the district said in the Raad that it was just like the Uitlander to find fault with a patriot like Piet Prinsloo, who had generously given the stands to the Government.

Thus was Piet exalted as a great and good man, and the wickedness of Nick Grobler was of no effect.

Piet had a great joy about this time in seeing his enemy humbled in the dust once again. Nick had but one daughter, Kaatje, and she was married to a Hollander, who Nick got made Postmaster of Rooidam. After he had been married to Kaatje only nine months he borrowed £500 from Nick, stole all the postage stamps and money in the office, and ran away to his own country, leaving Kaatje with her father, where she is even to this day.

And the very day that this great calamity and righteous judgment visited Nick Grobler, my father-in-law was presented with a memorial signed by fifteen burghers of the district asking him to stand as their candidate for the First Raad at the next election !



CHAPTER IX.

AT THE DOOR OF THE RAADZAAL.

THE causes which made a chance for my father-in-law to stand as candidate for the First Raad were brought about by the folly of Hendrick Walker, member for the Groot Plaats District. He was a Colonial of English descent, and though he had married a Boer *vrouw*, he was not to be thought as good as a true Transvaaler.

He thought himself very *slim*, yet when he took presents for his votes he would boastfully speak of it in canteens, and wrote many foolish letters saying how much he wanted for his good services when concessions were being voted upon.

Piet Prinsloo always mistrusted Walker because of his *Rooinek* name, and he was very joyful when he got hold of a copy of a letter Hendrick

had written to a Hollander at the time that Kaalkop was proclaimed a goldfield, promising to get him the Mining Commissionership if he gave him £20 per month.

Being a patriotic burgher, Piet resolved to make a plan to punish Hendrick, not so much because this half *Rooinek* had tried to injure him, as for the reason that he had wished to benefit a Hollander at the expense of a son of the soil who had bled for his country.

Piet said nothing until the requisition had been signed. Hans Breda had the getting of it up, and, as we afterwards found, many of the names on it had been written by Hans himself, so that he might keep the ten shillings that Piet was prepared to pay each burgher who signed freely.

When the requisition was published in the papers, Piet went to Pretoria, and saw Hendrick Walker in the Raadzaal.

“Have you come for my seat?” said he, when he saw my father-in-law looking round the chamber.

“Ja,” answered he, “I am tired, Hendrick, and want to rest in the Raadzaal.”

“But why would you push me out? I have never done you harm.”

“Not when you tried to get a Hollander as Mining Commissioner of Kaalkop?”

"It is a big lie, such as the devil himself tells," said Hendrick, turning very white.

Piet said nothing, but took out the copy of the letter, and let Hendrick read it.

Again he swore it was a false thing, but when Piet told him things that were in other letters, Hendrick no longer denied.

"You are a *slim kerel*, Piet," said he; "so let us make a plan that shall pay us both. You are a rich man, but I am poor. Why should you get me out of the Raad, where I make so little compared to other members, who can get what they want for their votes."

"That is because you have a *Rooinek* name. The other members vote against you, and you carry small weight. I could make ten times what you do."

"Perhaps," answered Hendrick, "but things are not what they were. Those *verdomde* papers find out so much that they have frightened people who would make us presents. Last session I got less than £500. If the Schoonspruit-Plaatskop railway concession goes through I am to have £1,000 in cash and one thousand shares. I will give you the shares if you let me keep my seat in the Raad."

Hendrick knew that Piet was strong in the district, and could push him out if he would, for

he could afford to pay higher for votes than he. Besides, he was greatly afraid of the letters, though he did not know that Piet did not have the originals, only copies, for the owner wanted £500 for them.

So the two had a long *indaba*.

"Look here, Piet," said Hendrick. "If you become a member of the Raad you may no longer be a Mining Commissioner—it is against the law that officials sit in the Raad. Which would pay you best—to take money from the Uitlanders and stand in with their company schemes, or draw £2 per day, and have to live in Pretoria at a cost of nearly £10 per month? If you will let me stay on I will give you, in addition to the shares, £20 a month, for I think we shall have a good year, as so many concessions and other favours have to be granted and well paid for."

So it was agreed that Piet should keep the letters as security for the £20 per month, and at the last moment, when it was too late to put up another candidate, he was to retire from the election, and leave Hendrick to walk in unopposed. And it was so done.



CHAPTER X.

PIET PRINSLOO'S LAST TREK.

THE events which led to the retirement of my father-in-law from the Mining Commissionership of Kaalkop, and the numerous undignified charges made in connection therewith, are too fresh in the public memory to need more than a very brief reference.

I have sometimes thought that the remarkable series of misfortunes that followed the re-election of Hendrick Walker for the Raad, was a providential chastisement on Piet Prinsloo for permitting a man like Walker to remain in the Raad, even though the £20 a month was faithfully paid up.

It may be that Nick Grobler, by means of mole-like planning, contrived to bring about the undoing of my father-in-law; but whatever the

cause, he, all at once, became the target at which the bullets of the unjust and sinfully jealous were shot without ceasing. First, he was accused of making a big profit out of the mealies sent by the Government for the starving Kaffirs in his district. Those who say these things do not know so well as Piet Prinsloo that a Kaffir despises a white man who makes him gifts ; therefore it was that he made them pay what they could afford for the mealies. It has been untruthfully said that he had charged as much as £10 for a bag. This I can emphatically deny, since the highest price paid by any Kaffir to my father-in-law was £9 10s. It is useless to attempt to point out to prejudiced people that if the Kaffirs had not been made to pay for the mealies they would have held the Government in low esteem, and spent the money in buying cattle that were certain to have died from the rinderpest.

The great final blow came when the Government, acting, doubtless, under the advice of certain Hollanders, who are like the lion, ever seeking whom they may devour among the sons of the soil, appointed a new and unnecessary official, whose very existence is an insult to the burghers who serve the State. He is called an Inspector of Public Offices, and, like the secret spy and jackal that he is, he creeps round the

kraal and springs in at the most unexpected hour, demanding the books, if there be any, and a full explanation of every *tickie* that may be missing.

One day he arrived at Prinslooosdorp without any warning, and found that, by the omission of some stupid clerk, Piet had not sent in about £350 of claim and licence money. Although there were I.O.U.'s for most of that amount signed by my father-in-law, this inspector refused to acknowledge them, and reported the matter to Pretoria.

Piet, always quick with his tongue, said what he thought of a Government that would suspect its oldest supporters, and ask them to account for money as if they were ordinary servants. He let it be understood in Pretoria that he would exert his influence against the President at the forthcoming election in the Kaalkop District, so the Government wisely let the matter drop.

But influenced, I doubt not, by Nick Grobler, the *Patriot* took the matter up, and made such charges against Piet that some of the burghers began to think there was something in them.

Week after week all sorts of scandalous stories were printed about Piet, and even of myself. Most of these stories I have given the true version of, so that honest men can see there was no ground for the wicked and malicious charges of

the writers. Piet was quite prepared to leave the charges alone, deeming it undignified to enter into explanations with Uitlanders. But there were Hollanders in Pretoria who hated Piet Prinsloo because he had never spared them, and had rightly done his best to get them pushed aside for sons of the soil. They brought great influence to bear upon the Government, and Piet was ordered to prosecute the editor of the most wicked of the papers that had made charges against him, namely, *Land en Volk*. Piet had been told in confidence that if he let the Public Prosecutor loose on the editor he would be certain to run away; so my father-in-law swore an information against the man, who, instead of running away, printed the summons in his paper, under the heading

“GOT HIM AT LAST,”

which shows how bold this class of man grows when left alone by a too merciful Government.

Piet consulted with me and other friends capable and honest enough to advise him, and he decided not to continue the prosecution; not that he feared the result, but because so many innocent people would be dragged into the case, and mentioned in a way that would cause them great annoyance.

“Sarel,” said my father-in-law to me, “I have served the State for forty years; I have bled for

my country, and I have lent it money, and yet the Government insults me by counting my cash. They further insult me by wanting to count the cash that has passed through your hands—you, my own son-in-law, whom I myself raised from Market Master to Public Prosecutor. If we sat quiet under this insult, Sarel, people would say we deserved it. Let us leave the country. I have long wished to see if Rhodesia is as good as they say it is. We will buy a farm on the border, so that if the *Rooineks* again invade the Transvaal from that side, we shall be on the spot to fight them, and so prove that, though our country has treated us so ill, we are still patriots. And, Sarel, if they are too strong for us to fight, we can hurt them in another way. We can sell them our transport cattle and our forage, and so spoil the Egyptians by getting their gold."

And thus it came about that we *trekked* northwards.



Prinsloo
of
Prinsloo
dorp

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