

Africander farmer, than in teaching what was really useful to the native. The Gospel, according to the Rev. Dr. John Philip, signified a gospel of strife, in place of a message of peace and good-will. The Hottentots were encouraged to live in laziness and idleness, many of the missionaries maintaining that, in order that their teaching might have effect, it was necessary for them not only to place themselves on an equality with their pupils and congregations, but actually to live in the same way as the savages. Some of them, therefore, married Hottentot women. Others lived in Hottentot huts, and adopted Hottentot clothing—such as it was, and what there was of it.

No wonder that the natives began to entertain the idea that many of the missionaries were fools; and, in truth, the natives were not so far wrong. It is even probable that some of the political "gospel-bosses" were knaves as well as fools. Says Cloete, who—as British Commissioner entrusted with the task of forcing on the Africanders in Natal the acceptance of this very principle of civil equality for Black and White now under consideration—was well qualified to speak impartially:—

"Appearing as I do for the sacred cause of truth, my duty compels me to say that in the period with which I am now dealing there were among those who arrogated to themselves the responsible position of teachers in the mission schools within the Colony several persons so illiterate, and so possessed by narrow-minded prejudice, that they were quite unsuited for the task of educating and training the

Hottentot youth of both sexes; while there were even some among them who, by their dishonourable intercourse with women of that race, had forfeited all that respect to which a good moral character can always lay claim." (*Three Lectures on the Emigration of the Dutch Farmers,* as translated in Stuart's "*Hollandsche Afrikanen.*")

In some of these so-called schools, the missionaries had themselves established what they were pleased to designate Courts of Justice. Here the Hottentots accused of any transgression were tried, and punishments of various degrees of severity were inflicted. Thus, within the Colony, the missionaries arrogated to themselves the functions of government. Beyond its boundaries they—with the sanction and under the patronage of Government—were disposing of large areas of territory (which were not theirs either to retain or to give away), and deciding the fate and the destiny of native races;—as if South Africa, with its Bushmen, and Hottentots, and Kaffirs, and white inhabitants, had been created by God Almighty for the express purpose of allowing the London Missionary Society and Downing Street to carry on political experiments at race extermination, which they, in their misguided zeal, deemed necessary to secure peace and tranquillity in the land.

What has become of the thirty thousand Hottentots who were in existence before the 50th Ordinance came into force as law? From what has been already said on the subject of the alteration in the law as to vagrancy, and on that of the prevalence of drunken-

ness and crime among them, the answer can be readily obtained. They have been improved—off the face of the earth. To-day there are only a few individuals of unmixed Hottentot blood to be met with here and there throughout all Cape Colony. The nation is in effect extinct. British Government—the 50th Ordinance, aided by the missionaries and by Cape brandy—has done this work of destruction.

At the period with which this narrative deals, British policy towards the native races in South Africa was shaped and outlined by the missionaries and the philanthropic societies in England, and British rule meant the application of missionary and philanthropic schemes and theories to the problems with which administrators and nominated legislators had to deal. The result has been seen in the case of the Bushman and Hottentot nations. As to the various divisions of the Abantu or Kaffir race, only one section of the Amakosa nation was under British rule in 1843. The rest of Kaffirland Proper or Amakosaland, was independent and unconquered by either British bayonets or missionaries. Pondoland, Basutoland, Zululand, Bechuanaland, Matabeleland, Mashonaland, and other Kaffir countries were to receive the benefits of British rule at a much later date, when, towards the century's close, the strong pro-consuls and the empire-extending financiers were to join hands; when the map of Africa was to be painted red and dotted over with battlefields; when the useless mask of sham philanthropy was to be cast aside. Then, after a sham investigation by an Imperial Commissioner, who subsequently confessed to

The Case of the
Kaffir Nations.

not always being in the habit of speaking the whole truth, the seal of British official approval was to be set—on a system of spoliation and slaughter of the natives more ruthless and cruel than that practised by Cortez in Mexico and by Pizarro in Peru—on a mode of warfare characterised by atrocities as barbarous as those which disgrace the annals of the gold-seeking Conquistadores of the Sixteenth century.

Time has indeed wrought strange transmutations in the course of British native policy in South Africa ^{British Native Policy of To-day.} since 1843. The same Power which then prided itself on championing the cause of civil equality for the Kaffir has, in the numerous wars undertaken for the extension and enlargement of its dominions, butchered and shot down so many thousands of all the Kaffir nations—Kosas, Fingoes, Galekas, Zulus, Basutos, Matabele, Mashonas, and Bechuanas—that the survivors may well look upon its Government as an exterminator, not as a protector. The beautiful theory of civil equality on African soil offers but small consolation and comfort to the brave Zulu or Matabele warrior whose comrades and whose chiefs now lie under that soil, whose lands and whose cattle have been taken, and who finds himself reduced to serfdom and forced against his will (by the representatives of that very Power which still boasts of having abolished slavery even in Zanzibar) to dig and burrow in the earth—in a fruitless search for that extremely fabulous gold of Ophir and Sheba, which the Dukes and Princes in London fondly imagine some day to obtain as a reward for their enterprise and patriotism.

When the English merchants and army-contractors of Cape Town and Port Elizabeth magnify their own political importance by arrogating to themselves the *rôle* of representatives of South African public opinion, they love to sing the praises of the "flag that braved a thousand years, the battle and the breeze," and make pathetic allusions to the noble figure of Britannia leaning on her shield, and, armed with the classic trident, making "freemen of slaves."

At these Imperialist glorification meetings one still sometimes hears a great deal of all the benefits conferred on the natives by that humane and enlightened Government, whose name is synonymous with justice, and mercy, and freedom;—of the affectionate regard which the Kaffirs show for the British flag.

Let the Mashona make answer in his own words in reply to this pious fiction of the modern Conquistador.

Driven to bay amid the rocks and mountains of his native country, where the official declarations and proclamations say there is peace, he is alone with the dead—with the mangled remains of his women and children, and of his comrades in arms, whose cave-shelters have been blown up, and whose bodies have been shattered by the dynamite charges of the civilising Paramount Power. In yonder cavern, further up the mountain side, his chief, with a small band of warriors, made a last stand against the forces of the white men, surrendered on condition that his life should be spared, and was handcuffed to be led out to die—to be shot by the order of a British officer.*

* See the accounts of the death of the Mashona chief, Makoni, in 1896.

As the last surviving savage in the mountain-refuge drags his wounded body towards a ledge of sheltering rock, he glances upwards into the blue expanse of the African sky overhead—where the vultures are circling—and murmurs: “God of the white man, God of A Prayer in Mashonaland. those who are more powerful than our chiefs and our warriors! Thou, also, art mightier and stronger than our gods. God of the white man! I call Thee to witness the sufferings of my people. Formerly we were ill-treated and robbed by the Matabele; but even they raided our habitations only once a year. Even they did not take all our cattle; they never attempted to exterminate us altogether. These white people and their Government, however, which pretended to come here for our protection, have robbed and plundered and harassed us incessantly day after day; have taken our women, and forced our men to work in the mines in servitude; have seized all our cattle; and have ill-treated and oppressed our people a hundred times more than the Matabele ever did. God of the white man! look down from on high and behold the work of Thy Christian servants—the officials of the British Government!”

Then the vultures swoop down from the sky—in that land in which there is peace.

Mashonaland is not Armenia. Under the Turkish flag the violence and pillage, the murders, and massacres, and outrages, have been on a far more extensive scale than under the British South African Company; but the difference is only one of degree, after all.

The vultures get fat in both provinces.

The Matabele, the Mashona, had been told of the benefits and the blessings of British rule:—"There is a glorious Empire on whose vast dominions the sun never sets; where even-handed justice sits enthroned; where evil-doers, and ruffians, and murderers are punished; where wealth and power and influence rank equal before the law with poverty and obscurity; where the humblest and the meanest man cannot be kept in servitude against his will; where the Black man is equal with the White." Thus ran the legend when the missionaries (and the emissaries of one who is now a great Privy Councillor) first came to Zambesia.

Not a great many years have passed since then.

And now:—

There is a land where cruelties, and oppression, and tyranny, and atrocities, go unpunished when committed by the mighty; where prisoners taken in war have been shot; where sham investigations, and mock trials and acquittal of the guilty, stand for justice; where he who is powerful and wealthy enough can do unlawful deeds with impunity, while his subordinates are punished; where the man who breaks his oath—he who speaks falsehoods in order to conceal his blood-guiltiness—is a hero; where there *is* equality for Black and White—for the silent dead whose bones lie bleaching in the fierce glare of the sun; where the fiat has gone forth from the highest rulers—from the friends and the henchmen of Princes and of Dukes:—"Righteousness and justice are of trivial importance. Territory is everything."

Where is that land? Is it Cuba? Is it Armenia?

To the throne of Heaven have ascended the groans of the wounded and the dying black men who have fallen in defending their country. The relatives of the murdered white people—of the men and women who were shot by means of the weapons which had been put in the hands of the savages by Government itself—are still calling aloud for that full investigation and that impartial enquiry which has been promised. They are calling in vain for justice. The high and mighty in the distant land across the sea are accomplices in the national crime. "Territory is everything."

Yes; there is equality now. Equality on the soil of Africa.

The bones are all bleached white on the African veld—the bones of the black and white victims of the cupidity and greed of a cattle-annexing* association of financiers and speculators, ruled and directed by a Privy Councillor of the British Crown.

Does the widowed mother; do the sorrow-stricken parents whose sons—deceived and sent to slaughter by the Mammon Colossus—now lie in those nameless graves of Doornkop; do the white bleached bones on the hillsides of Matabele- and Mashona-land; do the victims of the Moloch of Modern Imperialism; do they all now appeal in vain to Heaven for retribution?

Hark! The bells are tolling their warning in the great echoing belfry of the temple of History. Is it only a warning? Or are they sounding the death-knell of an Empire?

* See Sir Richard Martin's Official Report.

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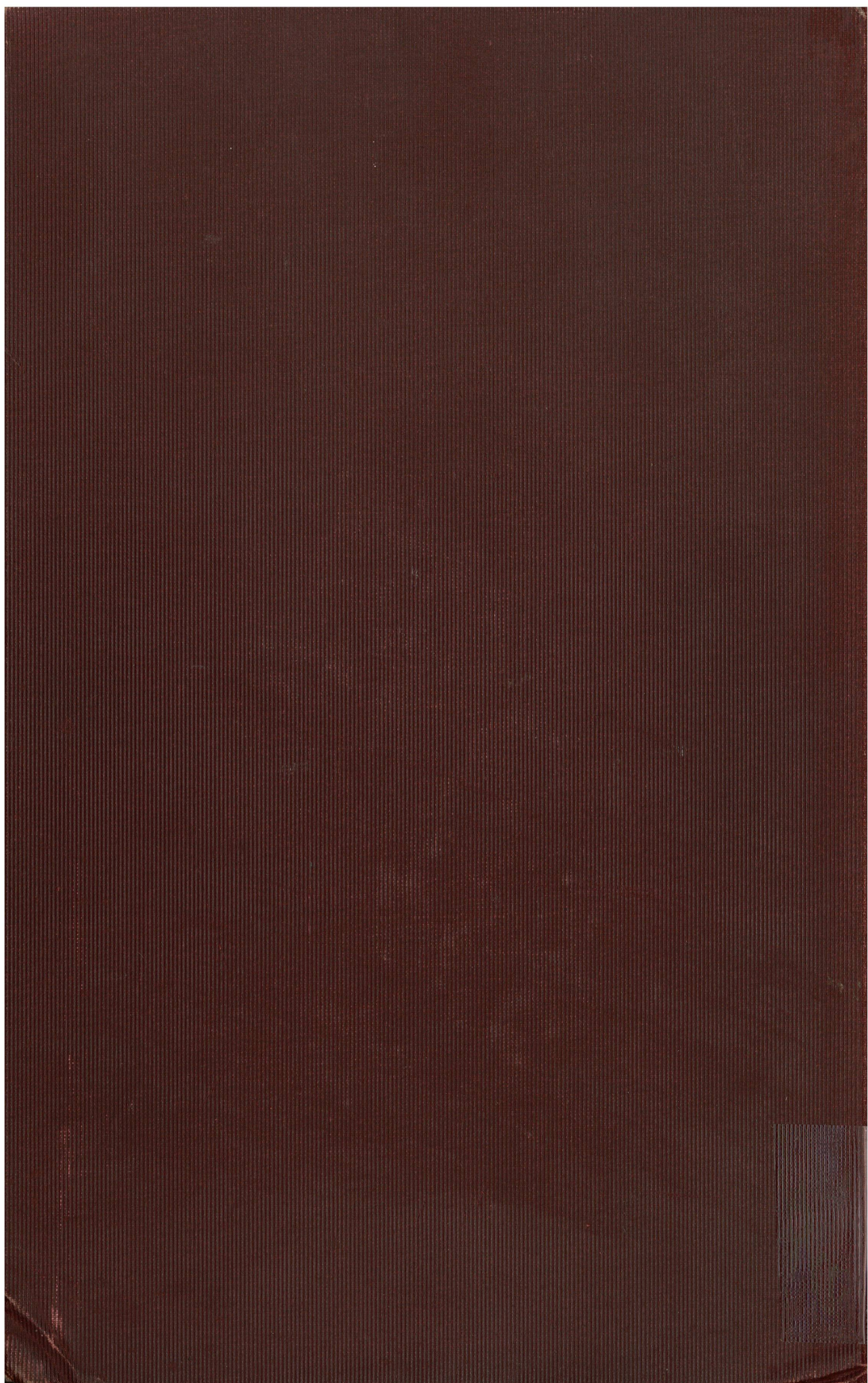
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Vol. i., p. 64, line 17.—*For* “views in favour to,” *read* “view in favour of.”



FIFTY YEARS
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J. C. VOIGT.

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