

FORM OF VOORTREKKER MEMORIAL

A GREAT SHRINE 130 FEET HIGH
ON A HILLTOP IN 30 ACRES
OF LAND

The Voortrekker memorial, symbolising the Great Trek, the battle of Blood River and the devotion of Afrikaner women, will be on view, in miniature, at the Empire Exhibition, below the rockery.

Mr. E. G. Jansen, Speaker of the House of Assembly, and chairman of the Voortrekker memorial committee, inspected the model at Milner Park to-day with Mr. J. J. Scheepers, secretary of the committee, and Mr. Gerard Moerdyk, the architect, who revealed to a representative of The Star for the first time the form the memorial will take.

It has not yet been decided where the memorial will be situated, nor has the total cost been estimated. It will be erected as soon as possible, and should be completed within five years.

The basic idea of the memorial, Mr. Moerdyk explained, was to erect a beautiful shrine inside a laager.

Round the memorial, which would stand in an area of more than 30 acres, would be the same number of wagons as were used for the laager at Blood River—58. They were to be built in "life size"—8ft. by 15ft.

No more typically Voortrekker idea could be interpreted than the laager, said Mr. Moerdyk, for not only did it serve in time of battle, but wherever the Voortrekkers camped, they formed a laager.

ON A HILLTOP.

The memorial will be placed on the crown of some suitable hill, and the site to be decided in October. The centre position of the bottom of the shrine will feature the Voortrekker woman and mother, protecting her children.

"The importance of having the Voortrekker woman in the design," Mr. Moerdyk remarked, "is because the outstanding achievement of the Voortrekkers was to settle a white civilisation in South Africa.

"They did something which no other nation did in this country. And it was because they took with them their wives and families. It is for this reason that the Voortrekker mother is given pride of place in the memorial."

On the other side of the woman is a model of the wildebeest. The reply to the question "why was not an ox shown?" was that the ox as a unit did not form a good background, whereas the wildebeest was decorative.

sculpturesque and typically South African. The other reason was historical.

Before Retief was murdered, there was a big commotion outside Dingaan's kraal. In reply to Retief's question, the native chief said it was his "regiment of wildebeest." Hence, the sculpturing of a wildebeest is to be symbolical of the danger to which the Voortrekkers were subject—the women in particular.

INSIDE THE SHRINE.

Inside the model shrine is a hall which, in the real memorial, will be 100 feet square and include four arches that, if completed, would form perfect circles. There will also be two domes, an inner and an outer. In the upper dome will be an opening for a shaft of light to filter in and illuminate a sarcophagus of Retief and his men. A crypt will also be made for a large number of monuments illustrating events from Voortrekker history or the laagers for which they strove.

Round the walls of the hall will be a frieze in bas relief, across which will be depicted by leading artists many of the great and tragic moments of the Great Trek. The departure from the Cape will be shown, as well as such incidents as the visit of Retief to Dingaan, the massacre, the Battle of Flood River, and the founding of a republic.

Between the two domes will be a blue light for illumination, and people will be able to climb stairways to examine the beauty of the designs and the domes, and to look across the countryside for miles from a height of 130 feet.

LIGHT GREY GRANITE.

The memorial will be built of light grey granite, which abounds in South Africa, but there will be no trace of any known European architecture, except that the basis of it will be geometrical. The motif will be triangular, which is almost inherent in architecture in the Union.

There is also to be a platform from which artificial light will, if necessary, be sprayed, and arrangements are being made to floodlight the building.

Outside will be "gardens of remembrance," and sufficient room for a congregation of 10,000, which will probably gather at the memorial on December 16, of each year.

The model at the Exhibition will create a great deal of public interest and give an excellent idea of the ambitious plans of the Voortrekker Committee.