lation of the Fields had chosen to revolt they could have been starved out, and brought to their senses in ten days. Below their mountains, to the east, stretched (cutting them off from Delagoa Bay) the fever and the fly; to the north and south lay the pathless mountains of Secocoeni and the Amaswazi. Only through Lydenberg could they receive help; and the presence of the volunteers on the main road effectually prevented this.

I was, however, satisfied that the diggers were anything but unanimous against the Republic, and that the disorderly party must speedily be abandoned by its more intelligent members if the quarrel were not allowed to go too far.

Leaving the troop at Kruger's Post, I went in alone to the Fields. On my arrival I found that, with tact, the matter admitted of settlement. Eighteen of the principals, at my solicitation, surrendered themselves, and were put on their trial for riot. I then bailed out all the prisoners, and succeeded in patching up matters between the editor and the magistrate. There had undoubtedly been faults on both sides; but rather than have permitted a breach of the peace, I would have removed the officials and installed myself as Gold Commissioner. Suavity and determination carried the day, and I was more pleased with the pacific settlement of the Gold Fields question, by which I put down the rising enmity between English and Dutch, than I would have been had I won ten victories over the Kafirs.[1]

The matter came up again in a month, but all ill-feeling had then died away, and everybody has ever since lived on the best possible terms with everybody else.

It was March 1st when I returned to my camp, which I speedily broke up, sending the men again to the frontier. The after-history of the Gold Fields I may as well insert here.

British government, as everybody knows, was proclaimed over the Transvaal on April 12, 1877. Just forty-two days after the rising above mentioned, Captain Clarke, R.A., went down the Pilgrim's Hill, and entered the village, escorted by the tag-rag and bob-tail, who look on free drinks as the wisest and most natural result of revolutions. He was preceded

[1] See Appendix B.

by Gunn's celebrated piper, playing a triumphant march, and was closely attended by the Glynns of Kruger's Post (two in number), who had always hitherto described themselves as "her Majesty's British subjects in the Transvaal." Champagne-corks flew in every direction, rags looked sprightly for one sunny day, tumble-down shanties put on a festive appearance, and Pilgrim's Rest was very gay as it hailed the representative of the new order of things.

The rejoicings have been short-lived. Even Captain Clarke could not turn a poor patchy diggings into a gold-field; he had no influence with the clerk of the weather. A season of drought, difficulty, poverty, and even hunger, followed swiftly upon the hour of triumph, and the population began dwindling away,—vanishing from hour to hour, as their misery and their necessities compelled them to abandon the luckless place. Their weekly post-cart—their solitary connecting-link with civilisation—was soon taken from them; and when, in February last, a fresh war broke out with Secocoeni, the Dutchmen, whom they hated, had the pleasure of seeing that no special protection was afforded to them by the new Government, while their best men volunteered and were drafted off to the fort beyond Middleburg.

Their condition as a community was, in fact, rendered worse than ever through the abandonment of Fort Burgers —the advanced post on their side of the Lulus. Between drought, war, and want of luck, Providence has dealt hardly with the diggers and the hucksters. The Kafirs have thrice since the British government was established invaded their valleys and carried off their cattle; and their numbers are reduced to less than 124 adults, who eke out a miserable existence on the scene of their former boastfulness and folly. They never had a "gold-field;" and I emphatically warn every person who may read this book, to avoid Pilgrim's Rest, Peach-tree Rush, Plum-tree Creek, Macmac, and Spitzkop as they would the workhouse. I have known respectable men, hard-working, honest creatures, sober and industrious, who have slaved and starved for many weary months on these so-called "Gold Fields," unable to obtain, day by day, more than some crushed maize or Kafir corn to assuage their hunger or keep up their strength.

The "Pilgrims," with their thirst for gold and their foolish "making haste to be rich," have been the real and principal cause of the annexation of the Transvaal, and the estrangement of its Dutch inhabitants from their English colonial brethren. God send that this may not result in anything worse than the destruction which fell like a blight on the gold-diggers themselves! As a community, they have no longer any influence, political or otherwise. Their newspaper has been prosecuted by the Government it invoked, and has happily ceased to exist.

Sic transit!

CHAPTER VI.

THE LYDENBERG VOLUNTEER CORPS AGAIN—1877.

Keeping the wolf from the door—Prospecting parties—An ambush defeated —Change of rule—Guilty or not guilty—Right or wrong—Good-bye.

At this time—the beginning of March—when the Gold Fields affair was brought to a happy and peaceful conclusion, the President wrote us a letter, in which, after thanking the corps for its services, he proposed its disembodiment. This was speedily followed by another announcing that the contract with the corps had terminated, that its pay and allowances were forthwith to cease, and that at as early a date as possible, surveyors would be sent to put them in possession of their lands. Thus the Company had fairly completed its service, and so far had earned all the rewards, grants of land, burgher rights, and other privileges included in its contract with the State. An obligation was created, which certainly is entitled to take its place amongst those contemplated and guaranteed in the following paragraph of Sir T. Shepstone's annexation proclamation,—"All the *bonâ fide* concessions and contracts with governments, companies, or individuals, by which the State is now bound, will be honourably maintained and respected, and the payment of the debts of the State must be provided for."

Up to this date no actual cash by way of pay, with the exception of the £25 advanced for our use in Pretoria, had come to hand. The men had received, as a Company, credit to a large amount; and this, through the enterprise of the representatives of Paul Henwood & Co. of London, and Percy Hope & Co. of Durban, with others, had been largely

used for the purchase of boots, belts, clothes, and other necessaries. For these supplies we had given drafts on Government as against the whole of the pay. The drafts were generally at four months, so that the system adopted by the officers of the corps benefited Government by giving it breathing time, whilst it gratified the men by supplying their necessities as they arose. Each man had a separate account, and was debited with the amount of goods received by him or supplied to his order, and the Company was at the risk of all losses by transport, damage to stores, &c., that might occur. To leave a margin sufficient to cover such possible losses, a small percentage was almost invariably added to the wholesale price of goods brought to the fort. By these means, although they had received no actual cash, the men had been kept from grumbling. There is perhaps no fact connected with their history which reflects more credit upon them than this. Although accused of being filibusters, and represented as a set of mercenary scoundrels, whose sole objects were pay, cattle-stealing, and plunder, they had voluntarily placed themselves on that part of the enemy's border where loot was utterly unobtainable; and they endured toil, exposure to danger, and sickness, in the most patient manner, neither pressing for pay, nor relaxing in discipline because of its being withheld from them by their embarrassed Government. I doubt if such self-sacrifice has ever marked the service of any irregulars and mercenaries before. The whole country lay helplessly at the feet of these men and their officers. By a word they could have gained the active co-operation of hundreds of discontented spirits, with whose assistance they might have secured their own position and even usurped the Government. Instead of that, their patience and fidelity to the embarrassed State that had accepted their services, proved a most complete and noble refutation of the calumnies with which the corps had been aspersed.

Even the disembodiment without funds was accepted with loyal promptitude. Another letter, however, arrived from Government requesting the men to be kept in hand for another month. Advantage was taken of this to make a prospecting expedition into Secocoeni's more unknown valleys lying

between Dwarsberg and the Oliphants River. Thirty-four men under Captain Reidel proceeded, with twelve gold-miners and a cart-load of tools and provisions, to the work. Guides had been obtained from the chief of the Red Krantz, but there were no roads, and hardly even any available tracks, into the district sought to be explored. On the morning of the third day the party found itself enveloped in terrific defiles, around which Kafirs began to appear, calling on them to proceed no further. They had scaled precipices, crossed steep and apparently impassable mountains, endured toils, and overcome difficulties of no ordinary nature. They were not far from a spot where they expected to find gold and gold-bearing rocks in vast profusion. But they were destined never to reach it. A great chief, not Umsoet but Masoet, barred the path. With a brother of Secocoeni's he shortly came into the filibuster's camp to hold a parley. The guides were hidden away so that he should not see them—the vengeful and treacherous nature of Kafir custom and law leading our men to suppose that their lives would never afterwards be safe if hostilities should unhappily occur.

The chief said, when the talk commenced, "Where did you people get wings from, that you fly silently over the mountains like birds?—mountains so lofty and so waterless that even the wild beasts avoid them. What do you want? This is where Secocoeni and his Kafirs keep their cattle; we think you have come as spies. Why are you not on the roads where waggons go?" Captain Reidel explained the nature of his mission; but the chief, who said he was in charge of that portion of the country for Secocoeni's herds, peremptorily forbade any further advance. Knowing that peace had been proclaimed, and that a renewal of hostilities would be looked upon with the greatest disfavour, Captain Reidel, in the exercise of an undoubtedly sound and just discretion, retreated. But this retreat was not to be so easily effected. The guides, terrified at the alarming aspect of things around, had fled, and the expedition must return as best it could; for Masoet, on being asked to point out the shortest road to the fort, plumply refused, saying, "You have flown like birds over those hills—fly back again!" Meanwhile the Kafir horns sounded in all directions; Kafir

commandoes crowned the summits of the hills, who rejoiced, shouting triumphantly, "You are now in our power; we are above and you are below!"

They, however, were reckoning without their host. Reidel conducted his march with consummate skill, taking advantage of every possible cover and position, and so directing his little force that the enemy could neither anticipate their movements nor arrest their progress. Shots were fired, but to these the stubborn German paid no attention. His object was to effect a retreat without fighting, and in this he was perfectly successful. After thirty-eight hours' constant marching, he baffled his pursuers, and reached the fort in safety.

Towards the close of March rumours circulated through the country that annexation would not be long deferred, and a hint reached me that the fort might be visited by British emissaries coming, *viâ* Secocoeni, with whose people they were in constant communication. I was at this time in Lydenberg with the clerks arranging the accounts between Government and the troop. In the end of March I commenced my last journey to Fort Burgers. Advantage was immediately taken of my absence by a worthless traitor to throw our affairs into confusion by absconding with valuable documents to Pretoria, where he calculated on ingratiating himself with the new *régime* by making groundless charges against his officers. Close to the Speckboom River I met Captain Clarke, who had slept at the fort the previous night. He was accompanied only by coloured servants, but the announcement of his name and rank in the British service had secured him a hospitable reception, given in a frank and soldierly spirit, which he ought not soon to forget. He informed me that he would be glad if I remained in the fort, as he expected to revisit it in a few days on business of public importance which had better be conducted between principals. He then rode on to Kruger's Post, escorted by Captain Reidel, and assisted by horses which we had lent him—some of his own pack-animals having broken down under his severe journey. Some few nights afterwards the sentry on the walls announced the approach of visitors. At half-past two on the morning of the 14th, bearing with him

a proclamation[1] and a couple of copies of the 'Government Gazette,' in his uniform as an English artillery officer, Captain Clarke was again admitted to the little stronghold.

The President's protest plainly indicated the only course that could be honourably adopted.[2]

The officers and sergeants were informed what circumstances demanded of them. At sunrise there was a parade; and before seven o'clock, cannon, muskets, and men were all placed at Clarke's disposal. A majority of the officers and men, believing that all their rights would be respected, agreed to serve under the new rule, and to devote their best energies to the maintenance of law and order. The oath of allegiance to the State—really an oath to support the law—was relied on as being a sufficient guarantee for every man's fidelity to lawful authority, in the hands of whomsoever it might be temporarily vested. Arrangements were made for permitting to return to their homes a part of the garrison, who left, firmly believing that ere long they would return with their families to occupy the lands guaranteed them by the Transvaal Government for services performed under the contract that had terminated with the month of February.

Here I think it but right to mention that the documents on which the Company can rely for proof that the Transvaal Government acknowledged the completion of their contract, and that the guaranteed lands were actually their property, remained in my hands until June 8, 1878. On that day they were lodged in the hands of the British authorities at Pretoria—Messrs Osborn and Jorrissen—respectively Attorney-General and Secretary to Government, undertaking that they would be placed as public deeds and titles in the hands of the Registrar of Deeds,—a course which commended itself to me as being fair to every person interested. The British Government has nothing to complain of as to the treatment of its commissioners to Fort Burgers; nor can the Republic allege any infidelity to its interests by the volunteers; as I can most truthfully state that not a penny or a promise, save the stipulations set forth in the annexation proclamation, entered into the transactions by which the only force in the Transvaal accepted the change of rule.

[1] See Appendix C. [2] See Appendix D.

Having first voluntarily requested Captain Clarke to place all the books and papers of the Company under arrest, I was summoned a short time after, along with the regimental clerks, to Pretoria to give an account of my stewardship. It was confidently believed by the enemies of the filibusters that our arrival in Pretoria and committal to jail would be coincident. At the capital, however, the Government had fortunately at their disposal the services of Colonel Edward Brooke, R.E., who sat as President of a general commission of inquiry into the affairs of the volunteers. He was, I will not say assisted, but accompanied in this duty by a yeomanry colonel and three others of various grades of inability. With admirable tact, and a display of ingenious conciseness beyond praise, the engineer officer speedily got at the facts. His work resulted in a complete vindication of the character of the corps; and although I have never even read his report on the matter, I have no doubt that it is characterised all through by an intelligent appreciation of the circumstances of danger and difficulty under which our work was performed.

Another commission, presided over by Mr Joseph Henderson, a man of business of great and undoubted capacity, was engaged in unravelling our finances. The corps had reason to be proud that its accounts, though purposely confused by a traitor, came creditably through the inquisitorial ordeal to which they were submitted at the hands of this austere and harsh, though painstaking and clever examiner. On 11th May I was informed that the Commissioners could dispense with our further attendance. I also then heard, for the first time, that on Captain Clarke's recommendation it was determined to totally disband the Lydenberg Volunteers as soon as circumstances would permit. That this was mistaken policy events have since proved. I implored the Government to keep at least twenty-five troopers together for the defence of the border, and to give confidence to the farmers who were beginning to occupy the neutral territory—but in vain; and I of course unmurmuringly submitted.

On the 30th of the same month I was again in Krüger's Post on my way towards the fort. I could not, however, bear to revisit my old home under its altered circumstances;

and instead of proceeding, I handed in my resignation and claim, which were accepted, whilst my services in some undefined capacity were retained. The men were kept in service for but eighteen days more.

It is but justice to them to publish the address they received at the time, which is the only proper acknowledgment they may ever have of their undoubtedly good service—a service rendered under the most trying and painful circumstances conceivable.

"ORDERS, LYDENBERG, 30*th May* 1877.

"MR ADJUTANT WHITE AND GENTLEMEN,—Before you separate, I feel it incumbent on me to thank you for the personal devotion you have exhibited to me during the period of my command; and in doing so I think it not unfitting that I should enter upon a *résumé* of your services, and a criticism of your conduct. Your behaviour in the field has been better than could have been expected from volunteers hastily drawn together from different sources and of various nationalities. Your readiness to obey, unquestioningly and promptly, the orders of your officers; your coolness under fire and firmness in retreat—even under difficult circumstances—deserve praise. You have borne hunger, thirst, and fatigue uncomplainingly; and your discipline has been such, that even under almost unbearable neglect, you have never given your commander one moment's anxiety. You have been thanked six times by the State for ordinary, and twice for special, services. Your treatment of the halfhostile population whom you were called upon to assist, has, notwithstanding their marked ingratitude, been characterised by forbearance and generosity. I may here advert to the fact that you served without pay, or even the hope of receiving it, from the 14th of August 1876 to the 17th April 1877; and that, although crippled by want of resources —horses and other military necessaries—you have actually performed all your officers engaged that you should do—that is, hold the fort, cover the Lydenberg district, and harass the enemy. You have faced fever in its stronghold, as well as a treacherous enemy in the most rugged and difficult part of the theatre of the late war. You have lost one captain, two lieutenants, one sergeant, two corporals, and six men—a very large number in proportion to your strength and the losses of other corps engaged on similar service; and several of you have suffered much from wounds and sickness. Let us rejoice that through your charity and valour, the bodies of all our comrades have received Christian burial, not one of them being finally left to the enemy or the desert. You have never forsaken your wounded on the field, no matter how dangerous the task of bringing them out of the power of the enemy. And here I feel called upon to mention, with the highest commendation, the conduct of those men, foremost amongst whom were Dr Ashton and Philip Ribas, who assisted your bravest officer, the late Captain von Schlieckmann, from under fire at Mahera's Kloof.

"In one thing only you have disappointed me,—you have failed to assist your leaders to carry out their original plans. We sought to obtain your consent to a deed of partnership, by which you would have

become 'a corporation,' as well as a company of soldiers. Had you done so, your finances would have been to-day in a flourishing condition, and your power could have been exercised to the direction of so large an immigration to the country granted you by the Volksraad that the great and serious difficulties of the 'settler' question could never have arisen. For reckless courage we will ever remember that Adolph Kuhneisen and Karl Haagman deserve our meed of praise. To name all who have distinguished themselves would be an impossible task, as well as an invidious one, when so many have earned honourable mention. I trust that you will ever remember to speak well of our native ally Windvogel, whose services have been priceless to the Company. Amongst the officers I have specially to thank Captain Reidel for his cordial co-operation; Lieutenants White, Bayley, and Eckersley, for their assistance both in the field and fort; and Lieutenant von Steitencron for his perfect performance of many fatiguing and dangerous duties. Amongst the non-commissioned officers, Messrs Ashley, Rogin, England, Ryan, and Degenkolw, merit especial mention. The Company should also remember that it owes a debt of gratitude to Messrs Jvy and Pearson, for having, after six months' mismanagement, taken the books in hand, and put the accounts in the clear, fair, and complete form in which they were finally presented to Government. Mr Beeton, in his department, has also deserved well of the Company.

"In conclusion, I can only say that your conduct, when engaged in the suppression of certain civil disturbances—your patience under trial and neglect—your discipline, obedience, good conduct, and freedom from crime,—have disproved the whole of the slanders circulated against you by those who said you were picked out of the 'gutter.' I have only to call on those who enter the services of the new Government, to be as faithful, loyal, and obedient to its officers, as the Company has been to its most obedient servant, THE COMMANDANT."

The next step taken by the Government was to forward to Pretoria all the arms and military stores from Fort Burgers, leaving the north-eastern border utterly defenceless in the event of an attack from any quarter. Very strong representations, however, secured for Lydenberg 1 gun and 66 rifles, 25 of which were, by Captain Clarke, lent to the Gold Fields community, who were subject to ill-defined fears, probably the effects of remorse of conscience. I shall now deal with the after-treatment of the volunteers by Government—a treatment which nothing can palliate or justify. In doing this, I make no attack upon Sir Theophilus Shepstone, whose valuable time had to be hourly devoted to the consideration of more important questions. Whatever wrong has been done proceeds entirely from the little views of little men, whom the unfortunate circumstance of the connection of the new Government with Natal brought into office.

A very large number of the volunteers had sold their farm rights for ridiculously disproportionate sums as they were mustered out. These, of course, should be disallowed, as a few of these sales only were completed with the formalities required by the Dutch Government. One bad boy sold his "right" for £2, 7s. 6d.; while the highest price obtained on any of these occasions was £20. These sales were all, as a rule, contrary to the laws of the corps, which provided that farms should be sold subject to the production of substitutes, who would perform the five years' border and occupation duty contemplated by the law, gazetted October 28, 1876. But still a very large number retained their certificates, announced their willingness to fulfil the occupation clauses, and expected to be put in possession of their property. Than this proposition nothing could be fairer. Government could insist on a five years' occupancy of the neutral and conquered territory, in the face of which it would have been comparatively easy to them to have bought up the rights of the individuals, fairly and openly, for what they might be worth when tested along with all their servitudes and inconveniences.

This course, unhappily, did not commend itself to the little men I have referred to. They devised a scheme called the "bonus" arrangement, and then, denying that the war had been brought to a successful conclusion, repudiated *in toto* the land-claims of the corps, offering to each man £20, for which he was to sign the following receipt:—

"*I hereby acknowledge to have received the sum of £20 sterling from Captain Clarke, R.A., his Excellency's Special Commissioner for Lydenberg, being the bonus allowed by Government to Private —— on his discharge from the Lydenberg Volunteer Corps.*"

This receipt was readily signed, as it said nothing about the lands. In Pretoria, however, men on signing were asked to give up their land-certificates, which some of them did. The bonus is now held to be a complete settlement of all claims against the Government. By this, *bonâ fide* purchasers have been defeated; the border, which would have been protected by a corps of military settlers, left utterly undefended; and much discontent created. Secocoeni was also, by this

foolish measure, led to believe himself unconquered, and was enabled to reoccupy territory from which his people had been banished during the war.

The result is now patent. Government has had recently to pay as much as 6s. per man per day cash, and all found, for a police force, and £10 a-month each to volunteers, to go over the old ground, although, I am sorry to say, not in the old way or with the old success. Thus ends the history of the Lydenberg Volunteers, who were really not volunteers at all, but the properly enlisted soldiers of the little State which has ceased to exist. Many of the men have since rendered good service to the new Government; and, as I think I mention elsewhere, a majority of those who have fallen with honour under the British flag belonged to that corps which Government last year got rid of so cavalierly.

CHAPTER VII.

TRANSVAAL RESOURCES.

Land-sharks—Professional mine-salters—Artistic swindling—The reason why—Agriculture—A happy home—Princely profits—What we can grow—Statistical—Stock-farming—Profit and loss—A shameful gold-swindle—Our mines—Glacial action—Sculptured stones.

WHEREVER one goes to, throughout South Africa, excepting always the western provinces of the Cape of Good Hope, a man is apt to have forced upon him, sometimes by well-meaning men, but oftener by rogues and fools, or by fussy and over-sanguine persons, most deplorable accounts of neglected riches, of unexplored and unworked mines, and of most pitiably and unaccountably undeveloped sources of wealth which are represented as abounding on every side. In the Transvaal especially the stranger is wearied by the endless parade of resources: to-day it is a gold rush; to-morrow it may be cinnabar; yesterday it was cobalt; last month it was lead; and in a year hence it may be coal or iron. Some people seem almost to have "minerals on the brain." By some people I undoubtedly mean those who impudently speak of themselves as "the people"—the good-humoured, lazy, cigar-smoking, brandy-and-water-drinking shopkeepers, agents, waiters on Providence, barmen, and loafers, comprising the unproductive class, whose sole idea of progress is a something grand and sudden, by which things generally will be doubled in value about twice a-month.[1] Now these fellows, as a rule, have no property,

[1] "In the English colonies in South Africa at any rate, there are a set of people who answer to the mean whites of the Southern States of America. A large portion of OUR people are more or less vagabonds." —FROUDE.

and indeed many of them are the veriest idlers that ever deluded themselves into the belief that they were men of business, by having an office and several private brandies-and-sodas in it every morning. Some of them, however, have land; or rather, which is just the same thing in their estimation, they have "land-certificates" and transfers in considerable numbers; but the farms concerned are either in possession of the natives, located in the fly and fever countries, unsurveyed, claimed three deep, or non-existent except on paper.

Other fellows of this class, and decent men too in their own way, have land which they are colourably entitled to represent as their own, but for which they have never paid a shilling, and the possession of which by them is neither beneficial to the country nor to the farms in question. These men, of course, invariably speak of themselves as "capitalists." I shall briefly describe their line of proceeding. Say it is reported that land is likely to rise in value, an annexation is taking place, or troops are going to some town where their advent had never been even dreamed of before; or a man has found a little bit of gold, and is beginning to kick up a stir about what, with sublime hopefulness, he at once calls a new gold-field. The speculator, borrowing a trap and begging a bottle of brandy, rushes off to the scene. It is of no consequence to him whether the gold has been found, the troops are really in motion, or even that the annexation idea may not have been already abandoned. He may make something, but he cannot lose, as he does not intend to invest any of his own capital, unless his brass may be called such in the speculations, which, in the most cheery and jaunty manner, he alludes to as "the swindle" and "my little game."

Arrived on the scene, he gets from perhaps a dozen or more farmers, the refusal of their properties at what no doubt is then a fair, or perhaps even more than fair, value for the land. This refusal may hold good, according to the tale he has worked up for the occasion, for three, six, or even twelve months. With the papers in his pocket he now returns to his office or his hotel lodgings, as the case may be, and gets inserted into the Government paper for the

time being, an account of the high value of properties in "the rising district" he has just left. He speaks of them changing hands at enhanced rates, as if his refusals were purchases. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the operator fails to sell, even within the specified time. In one case, perhaps, he catches a flat, to whom he transfers one of his refusal farms at an advance of a couple of hundred pounds over the price he himself had promised to give for it. These operators contrive, in fact, without any investment of money, to obtain a temporary right of disposal over property, by which they are sometimes enabled to cheat both buyer and seller during a fictitious rise occasioned by their own puffing and false statements.

Now to these—the busy bees of speculation—add a few shopkeepers, legitimate holders of lands taken on mortgage, or in payment for goods, and the large class of semi-respectable persons to be found in all new countries waiting, like Micawber, for something to turn up; mix with these, miners in search of work, and liquor-dealers anxious for fresh openings for trade, with an enthusiastic discoverer, or perhaps a professional mine-salter,—and you have the exact class that is continually blowing the trumpet of the Transvaal mineral resources.[1]

I have mentioned "professional mine-salters." This phrase I had better perhaps explain.

There are in the Transvaal, as well as in all new countries, unscrupulous persons who make their living by discovering minerals, and by prospecting generally. Some of them have been known as water-finders. These go about from farm to farm in dry and arid districts, pointing out, of course for payment, where springs must be dug for and wells sunk; but they invariably contrive that the work indicated will be extensive enough to enable them to leave the district before their pretensions can be fully unveiled by results. One of these men, a sailor, many years ago, travelled through Victoria West, and a portion of the Karooveld, with a quadrant and several other important-looking instruments, by means of which he professed to discover hidden fountains and

[1] "The English trade and speculate, but do not care to cultivate the soil."—FROUDE.

streams that, if dug down to and exposed to the light, would flow for ever. Having once slept in the same room with a well-sinker, or by some similar easy-gained experience, he calculated on guessing, with at least occasional correctness, where water might possibly be found. A confederate went before him who effected a double purpose. He glorified and puffed the merits of the advancing charlatan, and at the same time picked up from each farmer an accurate knowledge of all the moist and spongy places, where peculiarities of vegetation indicated the existence of springs on each "plaats" (farm). This information he of course communicated to the water-finder, whose seemingly accurate knowledge procured him at once the respect and confidence of the Boer. After a considerable amount of taking levels, squinting through glasses, and instrumental demonstrations of various kinds, the farmer was duly informed, for a consideration—sometimes not an inconsiderable one—when and where he must dig for the great necessary of life. The poor victim went to work, and the swindler passed on his way rejoicing.

Other fellows, well-sinkers, have been known to contract to find water at a given depth. This they invariably contrive to do—sometimes, however, having to carry the water themselves to the well at night, when the time comes at which they have promised to show results; and as their bargains invariably are, that they should receive an instalment when water first comes into the well, with a final instalment when a given depth is reached, they always contrive to obtain one payment, if not both, even when there is no chance whatever of their honestly earning either.

Spurious gold-hunters and reef-discoverers are another class of swindlers common in Africa. Some are bad enough to discover gold when there is no gold whatever; others merely add a little foreign gold to the "prospect" at likely enough places; but there are others—well-known men—who go systematically to work, and deliberately "salt" (conceal gold-dust in) some spot showing auriferous indications. This plan is usually adopted for the purpose of selling a reef, or perhaps a farm, or, as has lately happened,

even for the grander villany of drawing attention and a rush to a district, and getting it thoroughly "prospected"—a course by which, even if gold is not found in payable quantities, a considerable amount is at least brought into and spent in the country, to the general advancement of everybody concerned. It has been said—and well said—that it is not the gold found in a digging that enriches the country, but the expenditure consequent on the search for and finding of that gold.

South African, and especially Transvaal speculators, leave out of their calculations altogether the finding, and look to enrich themselves and develop trade by the expenditure involved in the searching for minerals, whether the search be successful or not. These men rely on "spurts" and "rushes," with the accidents of mining and prospecting enterprise, to cause a speculative if not a real increase in the value of property. Therefore it is that there is so much talk about the mineral resources, not only of the Transvaal, but of other poor African districts. I am afraid to say what percentage of the English-speaking population of the Transvaal wink at, if they do not wholly approve of or encourage, this vicious system of false prospecting. I may say, however, that they are not a small minority.

When you meet a man in the Transvaal with a store, or even a couple of stores (African for "shop"), studs, wristbands, and a clean shirt, adorned with, perhaps, diamond links,—and who drives in a trap from Government House to the Club twice or thrice daily,—you are naturally led to believe that he has a stake in the country. A few such men —and but a very few—have anything of the sort. The shopkeepers, as a rule, do not even own the counters across which they sell their goods. They are merely the bondsmen, and generally a little less than the servants, of houses in the seaports or elsewhere, by which they are what is called "supported," and to whom, often, the up-country branches are always over head and ears in debt. Some of these men are deserters, refugees, and perhaps still worse; but because their hands are not marked with labour,—because "they toil not, neither do they spin, or gather into barns,"—they think themselves superior to the farmers, who, take them as

a class, are the only independent body of men, as they undoubtedly are the only producers, in the Transvaal. Of course there are real merchants and respectable shopkeepers; their names, however, are not legion, and their political influence is utterly swamped by the clamorous outcries of the knavish and greedy crew of moneyless adventurers around them.[1]

These knavish and needy persons have got up three cries of late years: one is, "Our mineral wealth;" the second is, "Our undeveloped resources;" the third is, and was, and ever will be — at least until such time as a Government obtains that will devote its talents only to the encouragement of artistic swindling — "Misrule!" "Misrule!" These are the people that hounded down the Republic, and whose outcries and letters to newspapers of late years, from every town and village and mine, have been the subversion of what the farmers considered to be their just rights of self-government. They have cried out, "Cowardice and failure!" "Slavery and cruelty!" where there were none of these things; and they were, in August 1878, as discontented with the rule of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and as great a cause of trouble in the land, as they had been in the days of Mr Burgers and his Volksraad of farmers.

I shall deal now, not with their political mischief-making, but with the resources of the country in which they live, and to which their clamour has drawn so much attention. In this view of the Transvaal I shall omit any mention of supposed sources of wealth outside of the line of white occupation.

Agriculture naturally claims first mention. The whole country consists of an unascertained number of (say 25,000) farms, of which one-third, at the very least computation, are bushveld, and another third rocky and unimprovable uplands. Of the remaining third—from want of water, and pending the construction of dams, which will cost on an average £30 sterling to every acre of irrigable soil—but

[1] "The Transvaal Republic, the Alsatia of Africa, where every runaway from justice, every broken-down speculator, every reckless adventurer, finds an asylum."—FROUDE.

one acre in every 500 is capable of immediate use for the production of wheat crops; but a very much larger portion will produce mealies, Kafir-corn, pumpkins, and the like. It may be as well to mention here that the word "dam" in Africa means *reservoir*, and not "containing wall," as it does here.

The reason of this apparent infertility of the largest portion of the country is, not that the climate is excessively dry—not that the Transvaal is subject to drought (which it is not)—but because wheat, as a summer or rainy-season crop, is subject to rust, and therefore can only be profitably grown as a dry-season or winter crop under irrigation. At one time large breadths of land were under this cereal, of which it happened that by far the largest portion lay in the fever-veld, and has since been practically abandoned.

Besides this cause for the abandonment of wheat-culture, there was the enormous expense of the waggon transport required to draw it from the farms to distant markets. This is even now so great that it ought not to be reasonably expected that Transvaal farmers, for many years to come, should attempt to produce more than is likely to be required for immediate consumption in their own neighbourhoods. Taking the year through, the average price of the transport of corn from the wheat-growing districts of the Transvaal to "Pieter Maritzburg" (Natal) will not be less than 16s. per cwt.—that is, of course, where the article is carried by hired waggons. If, on the other hand, the grower attempts to perform his own carriage, thereby earning the money which would otherwise be expended on transport, he must be absent on a journey that can be reckoned by months from his homestead and family, to the great neglect of his other and perhaps better interests. Common-sense will show that while this is the case, farmers, whether they be Dutchmen or Englishmen, are not likely to go in for extensive cropping. Circumstances occasionally arise that promote a local demand for corn at high prices, such as wars, movement of troops, and gold-rushes; but such isolated and almost accidental markets, the duration of which cannot be computed, and sudden demands, the extent of which cannot be pre-estimated with any degree of accuracy, are not likely to

encourage steady and persistent effort in any direction. Even if a railway is made leading to a port of shipment, there will still be considerable difficulties to be got over before the best parts of the Transvaal become the fields of waving grain that imaginative persons anticipate. There are dams to be built and lands to be enclosed at an expense of millions before corn cultivation and export can ever become of serious importance as a source of material prosperity for the dwellers north of the Vaal.

Pumpkins, maize (Anglo-African mealies), oat-forage, potatoes, and the like, in sufficient quantity for the needs of the country, can be grown without any marked extension of the lands at present under tillage; and the supply of these minor products and daily necessaries can be increased without involving any great additional expenditure for works of irrigation. So far as present appearances go, the Boer system of large farms, on which herds of cattle and sheep can pick up a cheap subsistence, but on each of which some small running water indicates a naturally inexpensive and convenient site for a cottage and a garden, with perhaps ten or twelve acres of plough-land, is the only one under which the Transvaal can be said to be habitable by Europeans. If English emigrants choose to select Central South Africa as a field for their labours, they must to a very great extent begin under similar conditions to those in which the Boers exist.[1]

African farming does not promise large fortunes; and enterprise will find in Africa few opportunities for extensive and readily remunerative improvements. Progress for years to come must be slow. Success is not to be achieved by rushes; and I feel myself bound, as a public writer, to warn people not to be led away by the glowing accounts of interested land-jobbers, or of enthusiastic travellers, into dreams of high farming, wonderful improvements, and immense returns in connection with any part of the Transvaal. It is a fine country to settle in, for a man of moderate expectations,

[1] "The English and Scotch in South Africa have gone there mostly to make fortunes, and to return when they are made. The Dutch alone are attached to the soil; and unless we change our ways, the Dutch must be the ruling race there."—FROUDE.

who hopes, by the exercise of thrift and energy, to leave to his family the means of comfortable subsistence, as rich peasants or second-class graziers. The emigrant must, from the first, look upon himself entirely as a settler and a colonist; and on South Africa not only as his own home, but as the birth and abiding place of any descendants he may be blessed with. No idea of the speedy acquisition of wealth, with a subsequent return to England amid all the glory and *éclat* of successful adventure, must be indulged in. If such bright anticipations are formed, they must be realised in Australasia, New Zealand, or elsewhere, for they certainly seldom can be in South Africa.

In fact, the intending South African settler, if he means farming in the Transvaal, must look to becoming a Boer—a rich Boer, a successful Boer, and a well-washed and nicely-dressed Boer; but a South African Boer, though not a Dutchman for all that. His children will learn Kafir and Dutch before they can speak a word of English; and although for generations to come they may speak of England as "home," yet in a very few years they will have become Africanders, in feelings, instinct, and prejudices. The world for them will have all but stopped. Still, if I were an English farmer with some means, but not enough to provide well and handsomely for a growing family; or a man blessed with a large family, and a capital utterly disproportionate to the position in life which they were born to, and in which I hoped to place them, I think I should go to the Transvaal—to its wider fields—its freedom from pretence and expense, its immunity from the inflexible tyranny of certain social enactments, its cheerfulness, its economy, and its stagnation. I should be very happy even in a house built of dried bricks, although the floors could not be boarded for a few years, and snakes wriggled in and out amongst the sheaves of oat-hay in the loft over the stable. My children would have health and lands to inherit, horses to ride, and ample occupation for their hands, if not for their minds; and although they did speak a little Dutch and Kafir, and perhaps visited towns only once a-year, and then for a short time, I think that, with books and newspapers, and perhaps a year or two at school, they might

grow up to be good, useful, and happy men and women. I do not think I should even regret their being Boers.

Africa will and must have a future, and with that future the descendants, both of Boers and Englishmen, can well afford to be content. There are openings for sheep-farmers on the Transvaal Highveld, as well as on the barren-looking plains of the Free State. A man in time may even have ten or twelve thousand sheep, which will clip 3 or 4 lb. lighter, and 6d. a lb. worse, than Australian sheep of the same age. A man may have a comfortable home, twenty or thirty acres of plough-lands, a decent house, and be able to pay £100, or perhaps £200 per annum for a schoolmaster and a governess,—and all this may be obtained from small beginnings by a very small capitalist indeed; but the sensible immigrant must not hope for better or greater things than these. If he does, he will certainly be disappointed. There are men in South Africa whose ideas are too great for the circumstances of the country, and who will not see, in the pride of their wonderful knowledge, and in the enthusiasm of their undoubtedly honourable though misdirected zeal and ambition, that it is not the Boer that has made Africa what it is, but Africa that has formed, moulded, and constrained the industrious Dutchman to be the apparently unprogressive and ignorant farmer the world recognises him to be.

Of course, if roads are opened, markets created, and millions spent on the development of the Transvaal, the country will offer a widely different future, an almost boundless field, for the employment of the energies of the industrial and the agricultural immigrant. Then there will be not only hopeful prospects, but certain wealth for cotton as well as wheat growers, copper-miners, and gold-diggers, with all the countless trades that follow in the wake of enterprise. But I must say that at present I see no prospect of the speedy bringing about of such a state of things; therefore let the merely speculative keep away from the Transvaal, for as yet that little world is unprepared for their advent.

There is one class of investors, however, who can, even now, do well by turning their attention to laying the foundations of future fortunes in South Central Africa. These

are men with sufficient means to purchase blocks of ground suitable for immediate settlement. In the Transvaal there are large and fertile valleys, which, if divided into allotments and peopled by a race of small cultivators, would repay the investment a hundred-fold in ten years. Here and there throughout South Africa, settlements peopled almost entirely by Germans are to be found; where cultivation, which might almost be called "high," is carried on—where the necessaries and even comforts of life abound—and where compact, and consequently progressive, communities, are already existent.

Formerly the greatest names of England seem to have been connected with schemes of colonisation and settlement. In the West Indian Islands, on the continent of America, and elsewhere, princely estates were created, and the foundations of almost princely fortunes laid, by Englishmen already possessed of both rank and wealth in their own country. It is much to be wondered at that somewhat similar processes are not taking place at the present day. Every "new man" cannot have, be he ever so wealthy, large estates commensurate with his fortune or his ambition within the narrow limits of Great Britain and Ireland. In South Africa, in the Transvaal especially, such estates are to be acquired at a comparatively small outlay; and with assisted emigration, tree-planting, and proper subdivisions into farms and allotments, such estates would become, in a very few years, just sources of legitimate pride and princely profit to their proprietors. There are many specialties that would repay the investment of capital even to-day in the Transvaal, chief amongst which will be found to be tobacco-growing, beet-cultivation, with the manufacture of beetroot-sugar, and the formation of plantations of trees to provide fuel and timber, which, always scarce, will soon become priceless.

Lydenberg district, especially Origstadt and its vicinity, was famous for growing the best wheat in Africa; and the country generally thereabout, if proper sanitary measures were taken by the inhabitants, offers one of the finest fields for agricultural production in the world. The Waterfall Valley produces a native indigenous cotton, as well as some of the best subtropical fruits that can be named. Grapes,

oranges, loquats, and even bananas, ripen in the open air; and the soil produces both the ordinary and sweet potato, different kinds of pumpkins, maize, Kafir-corn, imphi or sweet reed — a species of wild sugar-cane — whip-sticks, and various kinds of timber. In some parts of the Lydenberg district, especially Kruger's Post, very fine oak-trees have been successfully planted. The blue gum, seringa and poplar, with weeping willows and rose-trees, thrive everywhere; and though sugar averages eightpence a pound, and sometimes fetches as much as a shilling, beet-root-cultivation, which is eminently suitable to both the climate and the soil, and which is capable of indefinite expansion, has not yet been attempted except experimentally.

As I have said before, the Boers look with no favour on the lower grounds because of the horse-sickness, the unsuitability of the country for sheep, and former losses and sufferings of families from fever. The Lydenberg country, or at least a portion of it, is reputed to be rich even in the precious metals; and gold has been more or less extensively sought for, three "placers" having yielded a large amount of that metal; but the great wealth of the country will, I hope, in the not distant future, if proper lines of communication are opened with the coast, prove to be copper.

North of the line of the main road from Lydenberg to Pilgrim's Rest, virgin copper, as well as copper ore, has been extensively found. I shall return to the questions connected with the future development and opening up of the country, when, later on, I deal with the vital question of railroad communication.

The whole district of Lydenberg, stretching as it does from Vaal River to Secocoeni's, and from Middleburg to the Drakensberg, is at present very sparsely inhabited; and yet some parts of this country resemble in many ways Wicklow in Ireland, and the best parts of Wales. I was extremely interested in hearing from a florist, Mr Mudd of Cambridge, whom I saw there searching for ferns for an august personage, that he constantly met with ferns and other plants similar to those of the British districts I have mentioned. Lydenberg, which is as large as a principality, contains within itself, perhaps the widest variety of climate to be

found in any one district in the world; besides which, towards Delagoa Bay, it affords immediate access to the splendid hunting-fields—fields for large game—that extend between Drakensberg and the Indian Ocean. Indeed almost everywhere there is to be found a fair supply of game within easy reach of the hunter. A distinguished general and keen sportsman, who made a tour of considerable length through the district last year, has, I am sure, no reason to complain of his success among the larger game, although he may have much to say against the means of transit.

A recent writer seems to doubt the existence of accurate statistics, either of production or population, in the African republics. Had he made further investigation he would have found that a yearly census is taken by the "field-cornets," from which can be gathered not only a correct estimate of the population existing in each ward, but a carefully compiled estimate in detail of the amount of land under cultivation, with the number of cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and even fowls, on every farm in these countries. The author to whom I refer has ventured to doubt the correctness of the numbers given him respecting population in the Free State, and has also referred rather slightingly to Mr Jeppes's statements regarding the wheat produce of the Transvaal. If he had extended the range of his inquiries a little farther than he seems to have done, he would have learned that an annual register is kept of population, and that he could have ascertained, by reference to the books of the Colonial Surveyor, relating to tolls on bridges in Natal, how many waggon-loads of produce passed from the Transvaal to Pieter Maritzburg in any given year from 1868 to the present hour. So accurate are the field-cornets' returns of population, stock, and cultivation in the Transvaal, that in a single month, were it needful, ample and correct statistics, affording the fullest information, could be provided by the Secretary to Government. The some holds good of the Orange Free State; and I have no doubt the President and his officials are prepared at a minute's notice to produce complete detailed lists of the burghers of the several wards and districts of the State, with a tabular statement of their ages, property, qualifications, and possessions of every sort.

Should the interest in the resources of the Transvaal aroused by this work demand further satisfaction, I shall be happy to lay before the public the amplest and fullest details on these subjects.

Pending the introduction of capital and immigrants, the Transvaal is a poor country, for whose occupation and development the Boers deserve infinite credit; and they ought rather to be admired for their energy and enterprise (which in twenty-five years have turned a desert into a habitable country) than sneered at because their clothes and their hands are not so clean as those of the brain-workers and literary men that adorn our European civilisation.

For present purposes, I think I have said enough of the Transvaal and its resources, from an agricultural point of view. As a grazing country for large stock the Transvaal is simply passable. I have made most minute inquiries from farmers in nearly every district, and I cannot find any who have not complaints to make of a want of success, which is equally noticeable in Natal and the other South African colonies. Herds, except under the most favourable circumstances, do not seem to increase in anything like a fair ratio. The stocks of most farmers, apart from wars and other exceptional causes, have not permanently yielded even the natural increase—much less that which might have been expected in a country which has not been subject to the desolating droughts that have so frequently decimated the herds of the other colonies. I have asked the question point-blank of many farmers, What increase have you to show in your breeding-cattle for the last ten years? The answer almost invariably has been, "No increase." This is generally attributed to calf-sickness and lung-sickness, which have proved fatal to seven out of ten of the breeding-cattle and young ones on an average of years in most districts. Still, the herds have been kept up, and farmers have made a profit by the sale of oxen, and should have calculated as income the value received during these years from spans of bullocks working in the plough and the waggon.

Only the better portions of the Highveld are free all the year round from horse-sickness. With the exceptions of New Scotland and Wakkerstroom, the Transvaal is not in any

sense a horse-breeding country, and the horses bred in these districts, it must always be remembered, are as liable to perish of the disease called horse-sickness when they are exposed to its influence in the Bushveld and low-lying divisions, as if they were foreign or imported stock. Sheep can hardly as yet be said to have had a fair trial, it being only within recent years that the value of the Highveld as a sheep-walk has revealed itself. On all new soils sheep must be thoroughly acclimatised before results can be even approximately guessed at. I have consulted a friend, Mr Cornelius Van der Berg, residing near Standerton, on the subject. He, with a number of relatives and friends, migrated from the county Weenen, in Natal, into the Transvaal Highveld, in the beginning of the winter of 1870. He himself became the purchaser of two farms—one pasture, and the other a winter farm of considerable extent on the Pongola River. These he stocked with 170 head of cattle, 17 breeding mares, and 750 ewes, all in good condition. He had also with him a considerable number of Angora goats. The result of his settlement is that he has lost thirty per cent of the cattle, all the horses, all the goats, but gained in eight years forty-five per cent on sheep. The experience of all those who accompanied him is, with one exception, nearly similar. This exceptional case shows an increase in the value of stock, in the seven years, of £1700 on an original outlay of £400. All these people, however, it must be remembered, have been able to exist, defraying expenses by their wool, assisted by the produce of the small patch of land they had placed under cultivation, and the income they had earned by their "trek" and working stock. This is not a very great result, but, at all events, it maintains Van der Berg and his friends in the only position which I claim for them—that of substantial proprietary peasants.

I shall now turn for a short space to the much-boasted mineral resources of the Transvaal. The Gold Fields I have dealt with at very considerable length elsewhere. I shall, however, for the benefit of speculators, detail an act of rascality, the exposure of which will, I hope, tend to check enterprise of a similar sort. There was a reef showing a "prospect," discovered in 1874, which it will suffice for my

purposes to call the "Labrador" reef. Now, in 1877, a couple of gentlemen, with an eye to the development of the country, visited Pilgrim's Rest, inspected the Labrador reef, and bought it for speculative purposes, giving for it £300, for which they took a receipt for £3000, to give a fictitious value to their purchase. Their plan, of course, was to get up a syndicate, to whom they would transfer their claim at its fictitious value. Whether they have succeeded or not I cannot say; perhaps they effected some other object. Speculators of this stamp nearly always have a double purpose in view. The spreading abroad of the report that £3000 was given for this reef undoubtedly tended to raise the value of farms in its vicinity, and this may also have been within their intentions. That there are in the Transvaal genuine and workable auriferous reefs I do not deny. Gold exists in many places throughout the country, and is certainly to be found in payable quantities in many localities, of which "Blaauw Bank" is the most noteworthy. This really valuable property—the reef, not the reported alluvial —has not received the attention it merits. Of "alluvial diggings," in the great, wide, profitable meaning of the word Gold Diggings, there is none in the Transvaal proper. It was stated by a distinguished traveller that he had seen on his journeys pieces of yellow metal lying on the surface of the ground, which the Kafirs compelled him, when he attempted to pick them up, to replace on the ground, saying "that their chief did not want white men coming into his country to dig holes." The traveller's tale was perfectly true,—the place was the valley of the Oliphants River, below Secocoeni's country; but the metal was copper—pure virgin copper—of which I have seen specimens picked up exactly in the way described by Captain Clarke, R.A., and other gentlemen.

There are in many places in Africa small deposits of gold, which would be called in Mexico "placers;" but these will never carry population, and when discovered ought to be given as concessions to the finder, instead of being divided out in claims. Were this done, such places could be worked out quickly by companies formed for the purpose. The mistake about the whole matter prevalent throughout all South

Africa is the use of the big word "gold field," where the little ones, "pockets," "placers," or "diggings," alone are applicable.

Other minerals the Transvaal has, of which iron, coal, and copper are the principal; but none of these can be made of the slightest value until railways or tramways are constructed to bring them into connection with each other and with the coast. Cobalt also exists, and is worked in a feeble sort of way. It is unlikely that the Transvaal will ever be enriched by its export of this metal. There is also lead, and no doubt the lead-ore contains a percentage of silver. Immense quantities of lead have been dug out, smelted, and got to market. The Boer Government did all in its power to encourage this industry; but the high prices payable for transport, with the limited demand amid so small and widely scattered a population, when added to the first cost of production, forbade any hopes to be entertained that the enterprise can be even moderately successful. People must remember that the Transvaal is a very distant province indeed, and that its capital can only be arrived at after a most exhaustive uphill land journey of 400 miles from the sea, the great highway of the world's commerce. If rich in minerals, these can never be rendered available for profitable working until the country is put in connection with the sea. It is very doubtful whether it would be worth while to make a railway from the Transvaal solely on account of its alleged mineral wealth. My opinion is, that that wealth is vastly overestimated, and that the Transvaal is destined, like the Free State, to be at least for many years merely the mother of flocks and herds, and the abiding-place of a healthy, hardy, and respectable race of proprietary peasants.

It will be interesting to geologists and others to learn that the entire country, from the summits of the Quathlamba to the junction of the Vaal and Orange rivers, shows marks of having been swept over, and that at no very distant period, by vast masses of ice, from east to west. The striations are plainly visible, scarring the older rocks and marking the hillsides—getting lower and lower and less visible as, descending from the mountains, the kopjies stand wider apart; but wherever the hills narrow towards each other, again

showing how the vast ice-fields were checked, thrown up, and raised against their eastern extremities.

I may here mention, as the most fitting place for it, the occurrence of some very remarkable sculptured stones along the banks of lower Vaal River, which do not seem to have as yet attracted the attention they merit. These sculptures are sometimes of considerable size, and are well executed, having evidently been cut with instruments of very superior temper. My attention was first attracted to them by Mr Kidger Tucker, claim agent of Kimberley, to whom I would refer inquirers, and from whom possibly could be obtained drawings of the more noteworthy. One of them, which he showed me at Riverton, was cut into the face of an enormous monolith of greenstone, the surface of which was blackened and glossy from aqueous action, the waters which had passed over it for ages having evidently been largely impregnated with iron. This work was an image of the sun, surrounded by rays, and argued the possession of very much skill in the use of stone-cutting instruments by the sculptors. Other avocations prevented me from investigating further. I have no doubt, however, that attention being once drawn to the subject, it will be followed up by those who delight in such inquiries.

Another subject of interest for speculators of a scientific turn of mind ought to be whether the whole of the Kalihari desert north of Orange River, and west of the great main road leading *viâ* Kimberley and Kuruman to the interior, must remain uninhabited. I can only say that, in a journey made in search of silver in the district between Prieska and Victoria West, in 1874, I found a number of Cape Colony farmers who seemed to consider the so-called desert likely to turn out not only habitable, but valuable. My books, containing notes on this and subsequent explorations, both north and south of the Orange River, have unfortunately been burned. Were this not so, I certainly should feel inclined to add to this book a chapter on the mineralogy of the northern border of the Cape Colony. I shall merely state, in a general way, that gold is more likely to be found in payable quantities from Prieska to Kinnairdt than in any other part of South Africa. Some alluvial gravels, occa-

sionally capped, are to be met with on the summits of the mountains close to the Orange River. Lead and silver are also to be found; but not, as I think from their surroundings, under circumstances likely to prove immediately payable. Diamonds undoubtedly exist along both banks of the Orange River, as low as Englishman's Drift, and for a considerable distance on either hand. The Cape Colony Government does not seem very anxious to develop its mineral resources. My partner and myself sent, by post-cart, in July 1875, specimens of lead and silver, smelted and unsmelted, from "Banghoek," not far from the Brak River, for the inspection of the Secretary of that Government, the receipt of which was never even acknowledged.

CHAPTER VIII.

WILD AND HOSTILE KAFIRS.

Boundary-lines—The Zulus of Zululand—Ecclesiastical opinion—Polygamy —The Amaswazi—A white chief.

DESIRING as I do to present in each chapter, as far as may be possible, a complete picture of some one portion of my subject, I shall here devote considerable space to the wild Kafirs, whose name has been made use of to justify or excuse every aggression upon Boers (as well as upon English colonists) that has occurred within my memory. Bounded on the south by the Tugela, and on the east by the Indian Ocean, is a long and irregular strip of diversified country, flanked on the Transvaal side by the Drakensberg and Lobembo mountains, which may be rudely defined as the backbone of South Africa. These mountains vary in elevation at different parts, ranging from 4000 to 10,000 feet. From these inland summits, the country, very broken and rugged at first, gradually falls away into the more level grounds of the Central South African plateau. This plateau, whether it be called Orange Free State or Transvaal, is essentially the land of the Boers. It, of course, is not everywhere level; but many enormous breadths of it present prairies and plains of great size. Across and skirting this plateau run the large streams flowing from east to west, that, uniting below the Diamond Fields, form the great Orange River. The most northerly tributary, or perhaps more properly, branch, of this stream is called the Vaal River, — and it constitutes the southern boundary of the Transvaal. Immediately to its north—and still, be it remembered, on the western side of the backbone—stretches east and west over a vast area,

the Highveld, a plateau averaging 5000 feet above the sea-level. This plateau has a northerly as well as a westerly and southerly watershed. More than one-half the streams from it, after flowing to the north and north-east, sometimes for longer and sometimes for shorter distances, unite into rivers, finally turn entirely eastwards, and flow, through gaps in the backbone, down to the Indian Ocean. The country to the right, between the backbone and the sea, will be seen on the map to be rugged, broken, bushy, and apparently well watered. The great range of mountains presents a very steep face towards the sea, and from it thousands of streams descend, through its foothills, into the country at its feet. These also form rivers, and run into the Indian Ocean.

This whole country to the right of the ranges, but north of Natal and the Tugela River, is Kafirland. The portion nearest to Natal is occupied by the Zulus, whose power extends along the coast itself almost to Delagoa Bay. It must be remembered that the Portuguese settlement at Delagoa Bay is small, poor, and unhealthy, and that it exercises no real influence upon east-coast savagery, amidst the vast mass of which it resembles a pin's head in a main sewer. Perched on the Drakensberg in a cave country, and a little south-west from Delagoa Bay, occupying a district resembling Wales in some respects, are the Amaswazi—a people numbering about 6000 males, of the same race, but deadly enemies to the Zulus. These Swazis live actually in the Transvaal proper, and have for years faithfully served the late Republic. With the tribes directly north of Delagoa Bay I shall not deal. They have no connection whatever with the subject this pen is engaged on. Lydenberg is the north-eastern border district of the Transvaal, and overruns the termination of the Highveld in that direction. Where the land of this district breaks away from plateau into low country and bushveld to the north, we again meet with Kafirs; but this Kafirland, by treaty with Sequati, should be bounded by the Steelport River from a point in its course opposite the southern end of the Lulu Mountains to its junction with the Oliphants River, and thence along that stream to its debouchure through the great backbone mountain. Secocoeni's country was a reserve, but not an independent state.

The western boundary of this Kafirland, after running along the western plateau skirting the Lulu range, strikes the Oliphants River opposite the village marked Mafefer. It then runs east along the north bank of the Oliphants River to the 32d degree of S. lat., along which it should proceed northward to the Limpopo. For the rest, following a line of nearly a thousand miles in length, with a general westerly direction, finally bending southward, the whole Transvaal is surrounded by Kafirs. The only great distinction between these Kafirs and those on and east of Drakensberg, is that the tribes of the east are all Zulus or Kafirs proper; those of the north, west, and east, are of the Bechuana race. Far north of the Republic, however, but separated from it by Bechuanas and peaceable tribes, dwells another Zulu nation called the Amandebele. These are a powerful people, occupying an enormous territory, but who have had no important conflict with the Boers since they fled into the land they now occupy.

Having, I think, now roughly but plainly stated how the Kafir tribes enclose the Republic, I shall deal with the most important points in relation to them and their neighbours the Boers.

First in importance come the Zulus of Zululand, alleged to be the fiercest and best warriors in Africa. They are at present united under one king, have a fixed government, which may be briefly described as a despotism tempered by polygamy. Their numbers have been vastly exaggerated, and their prowess in war magnified by interested persons for purposes which, I trust, the whole course of this narrative will tend to expose. They were a conquering people until 1840, when they were utterly and thoroughly humiliated by about four hundred farmers, armed with flint-lock guns and pocket-knives, who attacked the majority of the nation with the assistance of a small minority under one of its chiefs—the brother of the reigning king—whom they, the farmers, then declared and appointed king of the Zulus. Since then, excepting raids against the Amaswazi and other neighbours, the Zulus have done nothing to justify the reputation for skill and courage in war which South African tradition, fostered by the intrigues of cunning self-seekers, has secured

to them. The Red Kafirs of the Cape Colony, who, under their undoubtedly brave and experienced chiefs, Kreli and Sandilli, have been recently utterly destroyed by the colonists and soldiers, with a total loss of only fifty on our side, are as much braver and better men than the Zulus, as Tartars are to Mongolians, or New Zealanders to either. The Zulus, however, have a peculiarity on which sufficient stress has not been laid by political scribblers and colonial press men. They cannot be converted. They are an utterly impracticable, polygamous, pagan race. The Rev. Mr Thomas, in page 346 of his excellent book on 'South Africa,' after ten years' work amongst the Amandebele, who are the very best of the Zulus, says, in regard to his long and weary labours: "It would have been very pleasant and satisfactory to have been able to enumerate instances of positive and direct spiritual results. Nor would it have been less pleasing to Christian friends at home to read the accounts of such. But, unhappily, I have no such bright stories to relate, nor has our mission been a success—if, indeed, by that is meant a number of people crying out 'Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?' or even a church formed; for we cannot boast of such glorious things in the Amandebele country." Again, at page 415, this excellent and truthful writer says, referring to those same northern Zulus,—"We cannot speak of direct or evident conversion in any one instance."

His experience exactly tallies with the result of inquiries I have made as to the possibility of converting any Zulu. I remember well, in 1869, asking the Right Rev. Dr Allard, who had been most successful amongst the Basutos, why his priests had neglected the great open field for them amongst the Zulu Kafirs of the coast. He told me "that it was useless; they were lost in paganism and polygamy." He had known a Zulu made worse, but never better, by teaching. The Rev. Father Barrett, O.M.I., of Maritzburg, stated subsequently that his was a similar and equally sad experience. In June last I asked the Roman Catholic pastor of Durban, who has now laboured for twenty-one years on the coast, how many Zulus he had improved by his religious instruction; he said, "Not one." I also spoke to the lady-superior of the convent at Durban—an Irish lady—one of the dis-

tinguished and devoted sisterhood over whom Mrs Somers (Mother Scholastica) presides at Rathfarnham, near Dublin, what she thought of the Zulu mission. At the same time I asked permission to make use of her answer. She said: "When I came first to this country I was most hopeful and earnest in my desire to do good amongst these people. It is impossible, and will remain so, unless God changes them very much."

. I know it is said that Zulus have been converted; but so far as my own experience goes of them, they are a nation of liars, and have only been converted into more expert and greater liars. Now these barbarians have by degrees been permitted to fill Natal up with refugees from the cruelty of their king, or who had left his country and come under British protection to avoid the arduous military servitude to which they were subjected at home.

In Natal, consequently, Zulu politics are of importance, and the Zulus, both within and without Natal, constitute a real danger to the 22,000 white men, women, and children, who are compelled by vicious laws almost to encourage, as they certainly are to permit and protect, the fearful polygamy and female slavery of those most abandoned and impracticable pagans. It is stated, and with some show of reason, that Sir Theophilus Shepstone a few years ago had attained to a wonderful degree of power over the barbarous races in Natal. This power had to be fostered and strengthened by a policy that played off one savage against another—that made Pagadi an instrument to destroy Langalibalela! and the power of the Zulu king, a terror to all the chiefs and sub-chiefs south of the Tugela. In the same way the whole of the Natal Kafirs threatened Cetywayo, whom Sir Theophilus actually went into Zululand to visit, and whom he added to the anointed kings of the earth. This king, as is alleged by the Boers, has for years been encouraged to seek causes of quarrel with them.

The Boers laid claim to a piece of territory which was equally claimed by the king. It lies between the most northerly corner of Natal—the westerly border of Zululand—and the late Republic. I do not say that there is any truth whatever in the allegation so made against Sir Theo-

philus Shepstone by the people whose country he has, rightly or wrongly, added to the empire of England. But it is a very unfortunate circumstance that this annexation was accompanied by Zulu demonstrations, which at the same time were put forward, along with other matters, in vindication of the policy by which the Natal Native Secretary forced himself on Pretoria. It is still more unfortunate that the Right Rev. Dr Colenso has produced a witness—one Magema Mahala—who asserts most positively that the Zulu king considered Sir Theophilus a possible ally against the Transvaal, and that at the critical period of annexation. Now I do not believe in the Zulu power at all. They have 30,000 warriors more or less, organised on a regimental system; but their first appearance on the great plateau of the Transvaal would be their last on any battle-field.

This very organisation, with the reputation they have got among silly people for unconquerable valour, would lead them to instant destruction, at the hands of even very inferior numbers of mounted Boers. That the Zulus would be formidable enemies in their own country I have no doubt. Even there, however, they would be found to be no better or braver than other savages, and perhaps, from their inexperience, not even such dangerous enemies as the Basutos, who have frequently fought with the whites with varying success during recent years. The Zulu nation is a bugbear, and the sooner Bogy is got rid of the better.

An aged Transvaal farmer, speaking of this matter to an officer some time ago, said: "Profane people and blackguards often say that the devil is necessary to the existence of the parsons. If things go on much longer as they have been going for years past, political scoffers will say that the Zulus serve the Shepstones in much the same way." There can be no doubt whatever that the farmer merely echoed public opinion. South African politicians keep up a sort of domestic devil for everyday use. His name is Cetywayo.

As I have stated before, north of the disputed territory live the Swazis, whose name in full is Amaswazi; and as their power comes next in Kafir estimation to that of the Zulus, I shall deal with them now. These people are of the same race with all the east-coast Kafirs, speak a modification

of the same language, use similar weapons, and are subject to similar tribal laws. They are at deadly feud with Cetywayo, and have been the subject of endless intrigues with the Kafir wire-pullers in Natal. Many years ago, when they were threatened with extermination, a Boer led them to victory, saved their lives, and preserved them as a people from destruction. Since then they may have been flattered and courted; but however much they may pretend to be influenced by the promises of the enemies of the late Republic, they never ceased to be its allies in war. Here a singular feature in their character discloses itself. They respected the man who had saved them, and amongst all the whites his voice alone had power with them while he lived. If poverty came on him it made no change in their allegiance; if he even had sunk as low as it is possible for man to sink, they would still have obeyed his orders, and striven to the utmost to gratify his wishes. This man died and left no sons of his own; but he had reared two orphans—children of his adoption—and to these, on his death, the Swazis transferred the fidelity and love they bore him. Their friendship with the whites must be manifested by and through these men only; to none other would they, or will they, listen. I have known great man after great man to visit them with presents and solicit their assistance. They would not listen to Bell; they turned a deaf ear to Thomas Burgers; and they were not even to be charmed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, who is believed to have more influence over Kafirs, and to understand Kafir character and nature better than any living man. They will say "yes," and pretend acquiescence in every proposition made to them by great men, whether English or Dutch; but at the beckoning of Philip Custar's little finger they would leave their homes to engage in the most distant foray.

This fact, known well to the Lydenberg officials, was communicated to Captain Clarke, who in the beginning of this year relied on the Swazis to assist him against Secocoeni. His Excellency the Administrator was also informed of it. Both ignored the fact. The result of this—a result patent to the whole Transvaal, and which lowered British prestige very much amongst the English and Dutch who were ac-

quainted with the facts—has been that Government asked in vain for the aid of the Swazis, which was of course promised, without any intention that it should be given.

In April last, Matatyana, a general of the Swazi king, came to Lydenberg to see the Special Commissioner. But those who were skilled in Kafir customs remarked that he did not wear his war-dress, nor was he accompanied by a retinue of armed and properly caparisoned chieftains; on the contrary, he was half naked, and appeared more as a beggar than an ambassador. Captain Clarke was in Fort Weeber, and the Swazi general went to see him there; but like Mabonk and others of the allies of the late Republic, he finally refused to assist the new masters of the country in their wars with Secocoeni. Before leaving the Swazis, who, like the Zulus, have a most exaggerated reputation for valour and skill in war, I think it right to mention that they have never proved themselves at all worthy of the character that has been given to them. They are good at a dash, and have even undertaken long and distant expeditions; but whether they win or lose the first fight, the minute it is over they make for their homes to mourn their dead or to rejoice over their victory. Like all the other savages I have known, they are incapable of sustained and continued effort in the field, and their wars are consequently merely a series of irruptions and flights. To so great an extent is this the habit of the nation, that they have been known to proceed against an enemy a march of many days without bringing with them anything to satisfy the cravings of hunger. Thus they have been twice defeated, with terrible slaughter, by Secocoeni, whose people are supposed to be a race of cowards utterly inferior to both Swazis and Zulus. Even recently I have seen the bones of lost Swazi expeditions whitening the plains of "Mosegu." These people extend for a considerable distance along the New Scotland border,—some of them live away from the tribe amongst the white people, and are entirely faithful to them. On the other hand, two petty chiefs who broke away from their home many years ago—Umsoet and Mapethle—have joined themselves to the Bapedi, and constitute, when fighting on their own ground, not the least formidable portion of Secocoeni's little nation.

CHAPTER IX.

SECOCOENI.

The present quarrel—Death of Jonathan—A critical position—White witchcraft—Amenities of Kafir war—An error of judgment—Soldiers' war-dance—A contrast.

THIS chief, whose name has been brought so frequently before the public by recent transactions, has had more or less justice done to him in my sketch of the Lydenberg Volunteers and history of the second war. He is a tall man, over the middle age, very fond of drink, pock-marked, and continually suffering from inflammation of the eyes. It would not be surprising if he is really seeking to make himself, in the eyes of the Kafirs, a great statesman and leader, as Moshesh was in Basutoland proper. Many indications tend to show that Secocoeni has all along pursued a somewhat similar course to that by which Moshesh, when he discovered a country suitable to his purpose, welded together all the scattered and broken peoples, whose power afterwards became so formidable. The chief may not be brave, but he is undoubtedly a politic and very deep-thinking man. It is a remarkable fact that during the present war his people have carefully avoided attacking the Boers, but have in every instance, save one case of shooting, which might have been accidental, confined their demonstrations to essentially English farms and locations. Whatever may be Secocoeni's reasons for the adoption of this course, it is the most interesting feature of the war. Sir Theophilus came into the Transvaal avowedly to protect the Kafirs from the Boers, and, as he himself repeatedly asserted, to prevent the Zulus from invading the Transvaal, and to stay the progress of

Kafir insurrection against white power, from endangering the peace of the essentially English colonies.

The Bapedi, however, again went to war, not with the Boers and the Borderers, but with Captain Clarke, Sir Theophilus Shepstone's special commissioner and ambassador to native races; and with the late administrator himself, the only man in South Africa who can manage the native races. This is very odd, and needs no comment. That Secocoeni is clever, as most Basutos are, is perceptible by plenty of proof. The Boers think that if Secocoeni appealed to the law courts to-morrow, and the judge acted with a due regard to his oath, it would be very doubtful whether he would not be able to prove, not only that he was not the aggressor, but that the present proceedings against him have been unjustifiable, if not criminal. Secocoeni's friends argue thus: The first question before the Supreme Court would undoubtedly be, Who is Captain Clarke; and what authority had he to make war, or to undertake hostilities either in or out of the Transvaal territory? That territory has laws which set forth precisely when, how, and by whom Commandoes are to be placed in the field, or wars undertaken. There is no such officer known to the law as Special Commissioner, nor are his powers defined by any warrant or proclamation. No war has been declared against Secocoeni, nor has the formal proclamation of the Commando law, required by the constitution, been gazetted. As this has not been done, say Secocoeni is merely a rebel, and has been proceeded against as such. In this case a still greater wrong has been committed. Legal forms and proper proceedings being utterly set at nought, Captain Clarke, who is not authorised by any published law or authority to put down rebellions, and who is acting in execution of no legal process, has caused sad bloodshed. Secocoeni can say: "I told Clarke that people under me were doing wrong,—they committed breaches of the peace and stole cattle—they laughed at me and treated me as if I was no longer a chief. Clarke went away whilst this was doing. He did not punish these people who got for me a bad name, and committed crimes in every direction. I sent to the office word that I would send Commandoes to punish these bad people; but on com-

ing back Clarke encouraged the disturbers of the peace by taking ten guns from my men and giving them to the rebels. Then he attacked my sister with a force consisting of enemies of my name and race—barbarous and bloodthirsty Zulus from Natal. I am only defending myself from unjust attacks. See! I have not meddled with the Boers, who plough and sow and go about in peace, even in the valley of Origstadt, where I am strong, and from which I have driven Mr Wainwright. I put Government's cattle together when told to do so in September. I looked for Clarke every day, thinking he would come for them; but he was away in Natal for months, during which lung-sickness came, and the cattle died. When Clarke did come, Zulus, my enemies, of whom I am very much afraid, came with him. He attacked me; he killed my people. What must I do? I asked Government to help me against the Boers. Who will help me against Government?" This is not only a statement which the Kafirs may make, but is the substance of what they were actually saying in Lydenberg on the 12th May.

Captain Clarke's friends, on the other hand, can say "that his authority is derived directly from the Crown, and that in the disturbed condition of the frontier, much must necessarily be left to his discretion; that when the best interests of the Transvaal are at stake, the action of Government cannot be impeded by local restraints; and that the Crown must necessarily hold him indemnified for all acts done in the course of his duty."

Secocoeni and his people are not to be confounded with utterly uncultivated and entirely barbarous savages. Many of them, as I have said elsewhere, are well acquainted with the use of both breeches and breechloaders. Nearly all of them have worked on the Diamond Fields. There are amongst them a great number of half-instructed Christians, among whom I must especially notice, Aaron, the brother of the late chief Johannes; Martha, the head woman of this tribe; and forty-four men—the remains of her people, who, when her town was broken up, went over to Secocoeni, whilst the other half came to dwell in the Lydenberg mission station.

It is interesting to know that the principal victim on the

Kafir side, as yet, has been "Jonathan, the preacher," who was cut off by the Government people in the Waterfall, with five or six others, towards the end of April.

As well as having some little cultivation and much cunning, Secocoeni's people have also some slight sense of honour. I would never forgive myself, nor would I be worthy of consideration as a just and impartial writer, if I did not give at least one instance of this. On the morning of the 7th February last, when surrounding Fort Burgers, 500 war Kafirs, under Secocoeni's own brother, got possession (of course without any resistance) of an exposed store on their side of the river, belonging to a gentleman named Ryan. When they called a parley with Mr Eckersley, the native commissioner, whom they wanted to surrender the fort, Ryan was with the other white men. The chief therefore knew him to be his enemy; still, desirous to detach him from Eckersley's small force, he told him to cross the river and go to his store—that no harm would come to him. As, however, Mr Ryan would not desert his friends, the wily Kafir tried another plan. He taunted Ryan, saying, "You are afraid to go over there among my warriors; you don't like to die,—that is why you won't go back to your house to watch that my people pay for the blankets they are taking." Mr Ryan very resolutely told him that he was not frightened to go anywhere under the protection of a chief's word; and accordingly he accepted the invitation, and went with every outward sign of confidence amongst them. Notwithstanding their rage, which was great at being checked by the small force opposed to them, they did not harm their visitor, who left them and accompanied Eckersley on a retreat made that night under circumstances of unusual danger.

Of course, amongst the Bapedi there are also very ignorant men, to whom our arms and habits were quite strange. I remember one of these calling out to Captain Reidel from the rocks at the close of a fight in which he had been throwing shell,—"You witch! you witch! you are a great doctor. I would like to be near you to learn what spell you use to make your guns shoot twice." He referred, of course, to the explosion of the gun, and the bursting of the shell.

Kafir simplicity goes hand in hand often even with considerable knowledge. A chief who can read and write, and is otherwise pretty well educated, was visited not long ago by a friend of mine, a trader, who had a very indifferent lot of goods to sell. It was near the end of the dry season, and my friend found that there had arrived at the station two days before him another trader, who had ridden up in his travelling-waggon, so as to be a good deal in advance of his wares. Trader No. 1 described the stuff that was coming on in such eloquent terms that the chief would not even look at No. 2's stock; and until trade was permitted, of course the tribe could not buy. For four or five days No. 2 cast about vainly in his head for some plan by which to make a market, as he knew thoroughly well that if the other fellow's waggons came in, the place would be overstocked, and he would not sell £10 worth. One day when the waggons were within a few hours of arriving, he noticed his rival looking into a tree. On joining him he found that he was examining the skin of a large iguana (river-lizard), which he had killed shortly after his arrival at the village. Off went my friend to the chief, whom he saluted politely—then, as is customary, sitting down for a time without speaking a word. On being at length asked what he wanted, he said, "When had you rain last? The grass is burned up; why do not your rain-makers go to work?" The chief immediately informed him that the rain-makers were busy and would make rain soon. "No," said the innocent white man; "not so long as that man with the three waggons coming wants to cross the river without wetting his feet. He is a great doctor, and has hung a lizard's skin in a tree, with the tail to the sky, so that it cannot rain while he is here." Indunas (headmen) were instantly despatched to search for the magic skin. It was found as described. The king, indignant with the astonished trader, whom he would not permit to open his mouth, and who therefore was utterly unable to guess what charges were made against him, hurried the man at once out of his country, and turned back his waggons, already within three hours' journey of the place. The unfortunate reputed witch was bundled on from kraal to kraal, and finally returned to civilisation, his trad-

ing prospects entirely spoiled, and having lost a season without knowing why or wherefore. His only rival being thus got rid of, my inventive and mendacious acquaintance sold his goods at a splendid profit, and returned to his home rejoicing. The hero of the tale is now alive and doing well in Lydenberg.

I have stated that even Secocoeni's Kafirs have a principle of honour, as illustrated by their conduct to Ryan. They have also a certain spirit of fair-play, which enables them very often to judge rightly of acts which, with enemies of less fair and impartial character, would certainly meet with misconstruction. On the 30th of January 1877, for sufficiently good reasons, I deemed it necessary to send a few men as a stealth-patrol a long way down towards Secocoeni's. These I put in charge of Mr Bayley, with whom went Mr Eckersley as interpreter, with private instructions to capture some of the headmen—if possible alive—but not, under any circumstances, to kill any one unless in case of necessity. This party started before daylight, and succeeded in fixing themselves unobserved on a path that led from one of the king's principal kraals to others—kraals, path, hiding-place and all being in a valley, the hills around which were thickly planted with Kafirs. During the morning many people came and went along the path, but they were women and children—people of no account. At length a warrior was seen, attended by a few others,—all highly decorated in full war-costume of tails and feathers. From what I have since learned, I believe the fellow was the king's adjutant-general on a tour of inspection. With his followers he was walking nicely into the little trap, when a horse unfortunately broke out of the bush, showing at once that Europeans were in the valley. Some of the Kafirs immediately turned for safety towards the side from whence they had come; whilst others, believing they were as yet unseen, simply vanished—sinking down where they stood amongst the rocks and bushes. Eckersley, however, could not lose his prize so easily. He galloped after the fugitives, telling them to halt, and promising that he would spare their lives. He spoke good Kafir, and they understood him well; but instead of surrendering, as his horse gained on

them—just as they reached the edge of the bush for which they were making, they turned and fired at their pursuer. A second time he asked the principal fugitive to submit. His reply was another shot that nearly spoiled George's curls, who of course then put a bullet through the Kafir, rode back to his ambush, picked up his party, and got away home out of the valley, which by this time was alive with drum-beating, horn-blowing, and other sounds of alarm. In thus returning to his party, he passed through one of those groups of the enemy that I have mentioned as not having fled, but that had merely sunk to cover on the ground where they stood. Any of these could easily have shot him down; but they afterwards explained to us at the fort that they would not do so, because they knew "Umbabala" (Mr Eckersley, the "Bush-buck") had offered life to their chief, and did not kill him until he was forced by the old fool's firing twice. Of course all these Kafir sayings must be taken with a grain of salt; but still I have no doubt that they appreciated Eckersley's motives on this occasion, and well understood that he had no desire to shed blood uselessly.

Kafirs altogether are a queer lot, and circumstances apparently very insignificant often produce most disproportionate effects upon their minds. I remember on the Queen's birthday in Lydenberg, at the review and *feu-de-joie* firing in honour of her Most Gracious Majesty, two or three little incidents occurred, one of which showed the observant and peculiar character of the South African savage in a very strong light. The officers, after the work was done, had a sort of impromptu tiffin in the large marquee facing the parade-ground. Without any intention deliberately to offend, they yet managed to neglect the little courtesy of inviting the Dutch officials of the village, who were present, to join their company. It must be remembered that there were no other persons present as representatives of either the British Crown or the Dutch Republic but the officers of the 13th P. A. Light Infantry and the Dutch officials of Lydenberg district. The latter, with a proper respect for themselves and their offices, having received no special invitations to the *déjeûner* in her Majesty's honour, of course with-

drew to their homes. The result was, that the loyal toasts were not even proposed; the gulf between English and Dutch was still further widened; and a Kafir commander, who was present on a visit, came to me and said, "Have you seen that the Boers and the English will not eat together? They will soon fight." Now I do not believe that Captain Cox, then in command at the camp, meant any disrespect to the Boer officers and Dutch officials; in fact I know that he did not. He and his officers are most courteous and amiable gentlemen. They merely forgot that a Dutch Landdrost, who really ranks next to the Governor and Judge of the High Court, was a person in the public eye of much more importance than a potboy or a huckster's counterman.

The same Kafir was filled with delight at the new bayonet exercise, which he had heard of, but never before seen. He thought it was the grand war-dance of the red-coats, and went, eager for battle, to his great friend and confidant, Mr Stafford Parker, formerly "Lord of Misrule," at Klipdrift, and President of the Vaal River diggers, saying,—"Inkosi! what a beautiful war-dance the Queen's red soldiers have! Now Secocoeni must tremble. The English have taken their medicine and danced their dance; to-morrow they will be on the path to the mountain." The poor fellow judged of our practice by his own. Not only he, but many of the enemy were deceived into expecting an immediate attack. The soldiers, however, as might be expected, remained in their quarters; and after a couple of weeks British prestige was seriously injured by the report going through Kafirland that the soldiers had danced their war-dance, but dared not leave the village to march against the enemy, from whom they had to be protected by the Boers and the volunteers.

It is as well that the public should learn something as to the real state of the Bapedi in regard to education, religion, and morality. During my journeys through their country, I have found many who were well aware of the power, and had acquired some little of the learning, of Europeans; but I have never seen one who was the less a savage by reason of his education or his acquired habits. I agree most heartily with those who consider that a Kafir is capable of

adding the vices of white men to his own more primitive ones; but, as a rule, if he remains under, or goes back to, tribal influence, he retains none of our better teaching. In page 408 of the work I have so often referred to, published by the London Missionary Society, I find the following pregnant remark: "My observation goes to show that these wanderers (Kafirs), by their short residence with white people, have adopted the worst habits of the latter, while they are much more treacherous and unmanageable than the raw heathen. From these statements it will be evident that the mingling of the native tribes and foreigners is far from being an unmixed benefit." The evil "rather than the good qualities of the latter are propagated." In the same way, I have failed to find that improved methods of cultivation, the possession of ploughs and other agricultural implements, or even the acquisition of habits of luxury, leading them to increased intercourse and trade with the whites, have in any way tended to wean the Kafir, *while still under tribal influences*, from war and bloodshed. It will be found that the tribes who have availed themselves to the greatest extent of the advantages of civilisation offered to them in and about British Kaffraria, have been as prone to revolt as the most utter barbarians.

I have seen many very pretty and highly creditable bits of cultivation in Kafirland, especially in the beautiful valley of the Speckboom, where, after passing Johannes' stronghold, the river, amidst lovely scenery, flows through a rich and fertile valley to the plain. I have seen Kafirs who could talk English, and steal, drink, and lie, as well as if they had been born in Europe; but these same men in war time became utter savages, and even began to resume truthful and honest habits. That there are tame and civilised Kafirs I admit; but they belong to no Kafir nation, sit under no chief, and, as a rule, are to be found dwelling only amongst the Boers. With these people I deal more at length in another chapter.

CHAPTER X.

OUR TAME KAFIRS.

Value of language—Slaves or servants—A bond of gratitude—Teaching him manners—Mr Froude on serfdom.

I WILL now honestly confess that during my residence on the Diamond Fields I had been led to believe that some at least of the Boers were slave-owners; and when I went into the Transvaal Republic, and felicitated myself on the opportunities for doing good to captives and the oppressed that must be thrown in my way, to my astonishment I found that in the Transvaal, Mr Froude's assertion, "that the white people were much more in the position of slaves to the Kafirs than the blacks were to them," was literally and unreservedly true. I have never seen but one case of slavery during my whole residence in South Africa, and that one case was in British territory. It is quite true that natives could not become either voters or legislators in the Republic; but it is not so many years ago since the majority of the free and independent inhabitants of the British Isles were in a similar position in their own country, and under their own most liberal constitution. Under the Boers, and amongst their servants and black tenants, have I found the only real approach to conversion, if conversion means the changing of a life from bad to good, that can be seen in Africa.

At the very outset of my journey I was forced to notice a singular and interesting fact. In Natal, and amongst Englishmen, the European learns the language of the native, and is valued in proportion to his proficiency in it. At Welford's, Knox's, Walsh's, and nearly every other store I had