

of British solidity and perseverance is found in the matchless energy and restless sharpness of the Yankee.

To cut here on this big tree the name of Rufus B. Crooks, in marble, is but the highest development of that cockney instinct which induces John Jones to carve his name on a bench in Richmond Park. If English travellers in America would but realise the great fact that America is only a semi-tropic England, minus the Norman Conquest, the germs of many curious expressions and apparently singular customs might be looked for nearer home.

Back to the comfortable wooden hotel for food and rest, and away again on pony-back early next morning for the Yosemite Valley. Three hours' easy riding carries us to another wooden shanty, where food awaits man and beast. All around is pine forest, but no dense, gloomy labyrinthine wood. Forest of stately trees growing at intervals, forest of brooks and streams, where water fills deep pools amid rocks and flashes over grey boulders of granite, and catches sunbeams that come slanting amid pine-tops; forest of spicy odours, of sweet scent, of the freshness of Summer Sierra, eight thousand feet above the sea-level.

But, as we ride along in the early summer afternoon through this undulating forest, there suddenly bursts upon us a sight unlike anything we have ever seen, unlike anything we are ever likely to see again until fate turns our steps towards the Valley of the Yosemite.

If the ground had opened suddenly before our ponies' heads the change could not have been more abrupt. All at once the trees in front vanish, the earth dips down into an abyss, and we find ourselves in a blaze of noonday light, grouped upon a bare rock, which, projecting out into space, has beneath it at one sweep of the eye the whole Yosemite. The Americans have named the rock Inspiration Point. It is an unfortunate title; the Rock of Silence would be a fitter name for it. The inspiration that prompts the reiterated utterance of "Oh, how beautiful!" "Oh, ain't it elegant!" "Did you ever?" "Ain't it romantic, now?" is not exactly the form of inspiration here needed; but it is, nevertheless, the one the wanderer will most likely discover among his inspired fellow-travellers, if he ventures to enter this valley in the company of his fellow-beings.

It is not easy to get nowadays to any of the beautiful spots of the civilised earth alone. In America, wherever the steamboat plies on the river, or the deep whistle of the iron-horse is heard, there the traveller has to take his scenery as he does his dinner—in company. Fortunately, once inside the magic circle of the rock wall of the Yosemite, one is free to wander alone through its countless aisles. This vast cathedral has, in fact, innumerable side chapels and cloisters, through which one can escape from the particular group or body of tourists to which a cruel fate, in the shape of a hotel captain or director of tourists, has consigned him.

But to return to Inspiration Point. Standing on the rock, and looking towards the north-east, the traveller, ordinary or inspired, sees as follows: A deep chasm or rent-like hollow, running about eleven miles amid nearly perpendicular mountains. Right in front, looking across this chasm, there stands a mighty rock, a single front of solid granite, smooth almost to polish. The top of this rock lies nearly level with the top of the rock on which he stands, the base rests amid green grass and dark pines far away below; from base to summit is three thousand one hundred feet. This is the "Tutuckanuba," or "Chief of the Valley" of the Indians, the "Capitan" of the white man. But measurements and names are useless to convey to the mind any fixed conception of this scene. The countless rocks that rise around the green cool-looking vale beneath have about them a strange aspect of solidity which no other mountains that we know of possess; they are rentless, jointless, unsplintered. Wherever ruin has come to them it has been in earthquake shape, cleaving at one single stroke some mighty cliff asunder, as a knife might sever an apple in twain, but leaving the sundered portions intact and unbroken. Looking up along the line of the southern rim, the great Half Dome is seen. Six thousand feet he towers above the valley, ten thousand above the sea. Its bald crown is as smooth as a skull, save for one solitary oak-tree, which has never yet been reached by man: but some vast shock has cut down the frontlet sheer into the valley, and,

steepest among all the steep sides of the Yosemite is the smooth face of this seamless rock. The effect of this entirety of rock, this smooth-polished surface of mountain, is striking in the extreme. It gives to these precipices a sense of greatness beyond even their own vast proportions; they are not, in fact, mountains, they are single rocks. El Capitan is but three thousand one hundred feet, but it is three thousand one hundred feet of solid single rock. The "Ma-tu" of the Indians, "Cap of Liberty" of the Americans, is another of these wonderful rocks; four thousand six hundred feet he rises sheer from the Nevada Fall, smooth, seamless, and glistening.

But it is time to begin our descent into the valley. It is a continuous zigzag. The ponies know it well; it looks nasty in scores of places, but the sure-footed beasts go steadily down. The descent is so steep that it takes less time to accomplish it than we could have supposed when looking at the valley from above.

We are on the level ground again, and push out from the base of the cliff into the more open meadow-land.

The evening is coming on. We hurry along a level, sandy track; around us are pine-trees, flowers, and ever-recurring vistas of water, clear, green, sparkling; a noise of falling water fills the air; the sunlight is streaming across the valley high above our head. We are in the shadow as we ride; but it is not sun or shadow, stream or waterfall, pine-tree or azalea-

blossom that we care to look at: it is the rocks. They rapt our gaze when we saw them from above, They do so ten times more strongly now—Cathedral, Sentinel, Three Brothers, El Capitan, Domes, Ramparts, call them what you will, they rise around us clear cut against the blue Californian sky, filling with the mystery of their grandeur the earth and heaven.

But it is not to its rocks that the Yosemite owes its greatest beauty. When that first party of exploration returned to tell the settlers in Mariposa of the wonderful valley which they had discovered, they spoke of a waterfall having a height of one thousand feet. It had in reality a height of two thousand six hundred and thirty-four feet, and yet that fall was only one among many. There are but few spots in the entire valley from which the eye cannot discern the sheen of water falling perpendicularly great distances, none in which the ear does not catch the roar or the murmur of cataract or rill. Go and look at the Bridal Veil (Pohono of the Indians): nine hundred and forty feet it casts its waters from a smooth ledge into a bouquet of pine-tops. "Spirit of the Evil Wind" the red men called it; for when its roar filled the lower valley the hot wind of the plains was blowing into the valley.

Go again to the Vernal, the Piwyack, or Wild Water of the Indians: you forget the Pohono in the newer loveliness of this broad sheet of snow, which in most exquisite curve drops three hundred and fifty feet. Then ride on higher up again: all at once you

are face to face with the Nevada Fall. It is seven hundred feet. Close beside it, steep as the face of a wall, there rises up a single solid rock which is three thousand eight hundred feet above the edge of the fall; the Cap of Liberty it is called. Can we put before the reader even a faint idea of this scene? From a sheer, clean, seamless rock, seven hundred feet above the spectator's head, a great body of water leaps out into space. Instantly it has taken the spring, innumerable bouquets of white lilies, jets of snowlike water, cast themselves forward from the mass, lengthening out into rockets of snow as they quicken their descent. At the left edge of the fall the rock is continued on more than three thousand feet into the sky. Bear in mind that this rock is not a mountain receding at even a steep angle from its base. It looks as directly over the foot of the fall as the cross of St. Paul's is over the pavement of the churchyard.

If the spectator feels inclined to doubt the narrowness of the base upon which this enormous rock stands, he has only to look around him to see a tangible proof of its closeness to him. There is a wooden shanty or rest-house standing not far from the foot of the fall. Some few years since a slight tremor shook the towering rock, and massive splinters fell crashing among the pine-tops. One went like a thunderbolt clean through the wooden house: the others are to be seen lying thickly about.

Bend back your head to the full limits of the neck and look up at the Cap. It is very far above; a

cloud sails down from the blue sky, touches it, clings a moment to it, and then trails away into space ; there is not a trace of mist to hide one particle of the rock, the sunlight falls full upon it, and you mark many whitish specks far away near the summit. What are they ? They are the spots from whence the earthquake cast its bolts. Thousands of tons of rock have come down from these white specks. The Rock Cap of Liberty has shown the earthquake lurking beneath it, and the tourist of the time has been almost as astonished as some idlers of the earth when, from beneath the Phrygian cap, the human earthquake called Revolution has thundered amid their ranks.

One item regarding the Nevada Fall deserves to be recorded. Some years back there stood on the very lip of the fall a single rock, which divided the water as it rolled over the edge into two portions ; one contained by far the greater volume of water, the other was but a tiny stream which joined the main fall ere half the long descent was done. The single dark rock thus hanging, as it were, on the edge of the abyss, added not a little to the great beauty of the scene. But such was not the opinion of the State Commissioners who preside over the destinies of this valley, so long watched over by the eagles and by the sun. To these worthy men this single rock offered a chance not to be neglected of improving nature. Will it be credited that masons were engaged, a scaffolding was stretched over the smaller channel to the rock, a shaft was bored in it, dynamite did the rest ; and in the

special accounts of the State of California there appeared in the charges for maintaining the Yosemite the following item, "To repairing the Nevada Fall."

Thinking of all these things, as here we stand at the foot of the "repaired" fall; looking at the repairer in the full tide of his holiday offensiveness, and then glancing aloft at the grim giant Cap, set high above our world, one feels inclined to say, "Some day thy thunderbolts will avenge the outrage."

## AFGHANISTAN AND THE AFGHANS.

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WEST of the quivering plains of the middle Indus, where the five rivers of the Punjab meet in one common channel, there is seen a great mountain range, whose peaks prolong a broken outline along the horizon far into the north and into the south. When the sun sinks behind this mountain, in the days preceding the beginning of the cool season, masses of fantastic-shaped clouds are frequently seen piled above and beyond the loftiest peaks of the range, as though they reflected in the heavens a sea of billowy mountain set beneath them upon the earth. Yet the most fantastic images built by the evening vapours in the high atmosphere beyond the Sulimani range are not more rugged in outline, or more singularly interwoven in mass and form, than are the stern features of the land that lies beneath them. In fact, this range of the Sulimani marks one of the most abrupt transitions from level plain to rugged mountain that the surface of the globe presents to us—India, the land of plains, upon one side ; Afghanistan, the realm of mountains, on the other.

Amid the confused mass of mountains extending from the edge of the Indus valley to the deserts of Khorassan and the valley of Oxus, it is no easy task to follow out even the simple physical law which makes the snow-fed rivulet seek the ocean. With the exception of the small stream of the Kurum, the great range of the Sulimani sends forth no river, large or small, to find the ocean. Roughly speaking, what Switzerland is to Europe, Afghanistan is to Asia; with this difference, however, that more than half the valleys of the latter country are of the same altitude as the Engadine, that lakes are almost unknown, and that the snow-fall is lighter. Time has wrought but little change in the lines of communication through this mass of mountains. As they existed in the days of Alexander the Great, and Mahomed of Ghizni, so are they to-day—rough, stony tracks, frequently following the beds of torrents, crossing mountain passes at high altitudes, passing beneath the shadows of stupendous precipices, or piercing desert wastes girt round with gloomy hills. Yet the broad features of their course and distance are easy to comprehend. If we imagine a huge capital letter H, we shall have a fair idea of the general plan of the two great high-roads and the connecting cross-road that have existed in Afghanistan since the earliest time. Place at the top of the left-hand line of the letter the city of Herat, at the base of the same line the city of Shikapor; at the top of the right line the city of Balkh, at the base the city of Peshawar; put Kandahar, at

the point where the central connecting line intersects the left arm; place the fortress of Ghizni in the centre of this connecting line, and let Cabul mark its point of intersection with the right-hand line of the letter, and a rough idea of the main roads of Afghanistan, and of the position of the chief towns on the frontier and within the country, will be formed. The distances, however, between these points are great; the left-hand line is seven hundred miles, the right hand five hundred and sixty, the centre three hundred and twenty. Between these long lines all is mountain, savage solitude, gloomy valley, and rock-bound fastness. There are, it is true, other routes through the country besides those above mentioned, and there is a line by the valley of the Kurum, through the Sulimani range, but the practicability of all of these routes for the passage of troops has yet to be proved feasible.

Essentially a wild, stern land, a land filled with the shadows of dark mountains, echoing with the roar of tempest through impending passes; a land to which the changing seasons carry all the vast variety that lies between the snow-flake and the almond blossom; a land loved by its people through every vicissitude of its history, and clung to with a desperate tenacity which now dates back through one thousand years of recorded time. Of this people we shall say something.

For ages, stretching back into most remote traditions, a wild race has made its home in this lofty land. Greek conquest, Tartar horde, cloud of Khorassan

horsemen have swept by turns through those arid hills. All the wild spirits of two thousand years of Asiatic conquest have passed and repassed amid those stony glens and gloomy valleys, stamping each in turn upon the fierce Highland clans some quality of freedom, some faculty of fighting power. And ever as the tides of war and conquest ebbed and flowed around the lofty shores of those giant mountains, there was left, stranded in glen or fastness, some waif or stray of all that wild Toorkman torrent, which rolled its farthest limits to the walls of Vienna. Here, in these hills, Islam early built for itself one of its most redoubtable strongholds. About ninety years before William of Normandy invaded England, a renowned conqueror built himself a city and fortress upon a group of steep scarped rocks, set eight thousand feet above ocean-level. From here he spread his empire until it touched the Caspian upon one side and reached the Indian Ocean on the other. Amid the swift-recurring revolutions of Central Asia the wide dominion of Mahomed of Ghizni soon fell to pieces; Seljuk and Toorkman, Persian and Moghul swept by to transient empire and to final ruin; but, when the torrent had passed, these Afghan races—wild shepherds, hardy husbandmen, and reckless warriors—again sprang to independent life, and held their mountain homes on the old tenure of clanship: “content,” as their proverb runs, “with discord, war, and bloodshed, but never content with a master.” Fierce, fanatical, and revengeful, loving gold with

passionate rapacity, hospitable to strangers and to the poor, untamable to tyrants, the Afghans are to-day as they have been for a thousand years, stained by many crimes, but distinguished above all nations and peoples by a love of freedom and of country as fierce and lofty as the mountains that surround them. And thus through time Afghan history has ever been the same. Often overrun, but never conquered, the race which Mahomed of Ghizni led forth to conquest through the four great gateways of Afghanistan has retained through every varying phase of nine hundred years of strife the characteristics of its origin. Nay, farther off still, beyond every fragment of authentic history, hidden away in most remote antiquity, a glimpse comes to us of the strange nature of these mountaineers. It was among these savage solitudes that the Greeks placed the Titan whose indomitable will Jove himself could not subdue. Here on one of the icy crags of Bactria, Prometheus lay bound for ages, and still, where the great range of the Hindoo Koosh sinks down to meet the valley of the Oxus, a vast mountain cavern is called in Sanscrit lore the Cave of Prometheus.

So much for the past; let us now look upon the later and present aspect of this eyrie and its eagles. About the year 1824, a young Afghan chief, named Dost Mahomed Khan, held possession of Ghizni and its surrounding fastness. The Dooranee kingdom was a prey to civil strife; the chiefs of Cabul were in open revolt against Ullah Khan; a dozen

different leaders strove for pre-eminence in Kandahar, Herat, and Cabul, and each, gathering around him some portion of the roving spirits of the land, carried devastating war from Herat to Jellalabad. One day a caravan passing from Bokhara to India encamped beneath the walls of Ghizni. The caravan was reported to be rich in gold. That metal was scarce in the coffers of Dost Mahomed, in the rock fortress above. Why not replenish the exhausted treasury from the treasure-bags of the passing merchants? The question was eagerly asked in the citadel from whose battlements the fighting followers of the young chief looked down upon the travellers' camp. It was not proposed to take the money by force of arms; *to borrow* was the expression used on the occasion. So the word "to horse" was given, and the Dost and his armed train sallied out from the citadel to draw a bill at sight upon the travellers beneath. Suddenly, as the armed band rode down the rocky way, the leader reined in his charger, and turning to his followers he said, "Brothers, what are we going to do? God knows whether these poor merchants will ever receive payment of the gold we are about to take from them as a loan. But what are we to do with the money when we get it? Shall we buy dominion with the plunder of the unfortunate? God forbid! Victory is of God, and He conferreth glory and power upon those whom He will cherish. If so, it is better that we pass by this temptation of the devil, and wait for what heaven has to send us. Patience, though a

bitter plant, produces sweet fruit." Having spoken, he turned his horse's head and passed back towards the citadel. It was the afternoon hour of quiet. On an eminence by the roadside he alighted. Beneath for many a mile stretched a long valley, and at times the eye could catch the dry sand windings of the track to Cabul. As the Dost and his people looked over the scene, they marked the figure of a solitary horseman approaching Ghizni. He proved to be the bearer of strange tidings. There had been a revolution at the capital, and this solitary messenger carried an offer to Dost Mahomed of the sovereignty of Cabul. Dost Mahomed Khan bent his head in prayer. "God is great," he cried. "Behold how dominion is His gift. Blessed be the light of His name! Mount and away to Cabul!"

Ten years passed away. They were years of peace and quietude in Afghanistan such as the land had long been a stranger to. The wild roving chieftain developed traits of character little dreamt of by the turbulent factions whose voices had given him power. This mountain land, which for thirty years had known but little of the restraints of law, became the only state in Central Asia where the strong arm of authority kept free the roads, sheltered the traveller, and protected the weak. So marked was the contrast between Afghanistan and the neighbouring States that, according to Captain Burnes, the reputation of Dost Mahomed was made known to a traveller long before he entered the country, and he adds, "No one better

merits the high character he has attained." "The justice of this chief," he writes again, "affords a constant theme of praise to all classes. The peasant rejoices in the absence of tyranny, the citizen in the safety of his home and the strict municipal regulations regarding weights and measures, the merchant at the equity of his decisions and the protection of his property, and the soldiers at the regular manner in which their debts are discharged. A man in power can have no higher praise." But an evil time was drawing nigh. In 1834, while Dost Mahomed was engaged at Kandahar in opposing Shah Shujah, who had invaded Afghanistan by the Bolan Pass, a crafty old tiger misnamed Rungeet, or the Lion, Prince of the Punjaub, crossed the Indus and seized upon the Afghan city of Peshawar. It was the old story of Harold attacked by Tostig in the north, and William of Normandy in the south. The Dost having crushed one enemy at Kandahar, swept back to rescue Peshawar from the other. Issuing from the Khyber Pass he appeared before Peshawar with fifty thousand wild and fanatical followers; but the old ruler of Lahore knew too well the power of gold among the chiefs whose undisciplined warriors formed the army of Dost Mahomed. An envoy was sent to the Afghan camp, and so well was the work of bribery and intrigue carried on that, ere the day of his arrival had closed in night, ten thousand of the invading troops had deserted, and when morning dawned the entire army of horse and foot was in full retreat into the mountain fastness.

Peshawar remained to Rungeet, but its loss rankled deeply in the mind of the Afghan ruler, and he eagerly looked forward to its restoration. Here in this retention of Peshawar by the Sikh chief lies the key-note of the Afghan question of forty years ago. It will be necessary to bear it in mind in order to justly estimate the quarrel so soon to break out. Two years after this date, in 1836, an English traveller appeared at Cabul upon an ostensible mission of commerce and amity. Beneath the guise of commerce there lurked conquest, beneath the friendship annexation. It is impossible to read the history of this mission of Captain Burnes, and of the events preceding the outbreak of hostility between England and Afghanistan, without seeing in them a flagrant disregard of justice, of good faith, and of honour. That Dost Mahomed was a ruler with whom it was safe to conclude a treaty of friendship, and that his views were favourably disposed towards alliance with us, there cannot be the shadow of doubt. The published dispatches of Captain Burnes clearly prove it. Nevertheless, in the face of many written statements of his envoy, Lord Auckland states, in his celebrated Simla manifesto, in 1838, "that the Barukzye chiefs, from their disunion and unpopularity, were ill-fitted under any circumstances to be useful allies to the British Government, and to aid us in our just and necessary measures of defence." On only one point in these negotiations was the Ameer inflexible. It was Peshawar. Practically we might

do what we liked with him if we would only make Rungeet Singh surrender the city which four years before he had reft from Afghanistan in the hour of her trouble. This demand for the restitution of stolen property Lord Auckland terms "an unreasonable pretension, and one inconsistent with justice." In another portion of this forgotten but once famous document, the attempt of the Ameer to recover in 1834 his lost possession is called "an unprovoked attack on the territory of our ancient ally, the Maharajah Rungeet Singh." But enough of this wretched double-dealing; let us pass on to the active operations that followed.

Of the two great roads leading from India into Afghanistan only one lay open to us in 1838, when the army of the Indus was set in motion for the conquest of the kingdom of Cabul. Through the Bolan Pass enormous columns of combatants and non-combatants poured on towards Kandahar. Endless trains of camels toiled along the rocky tracks. There was no opposition—nothing to dispute the passage save the arid nature of the soil. Nearly forty thousand camels perished on this dreary road. Kandahar opened its gates in April, 1839, and Shah Shujah took up his quarters in the old palace of the Dooranee kings. The whole of Western Afghanistan had accepted the new order of things with scarcely a semblance of opposition. Never had presages of disaster been more utterly falsified. Never had prophecies of success been more thoroughly fulfilled. 'Two months' delay,

and the army moved out of Kandahar for a final advance upon Ghizni and Cabul. It was now mid-summer, but the mornings were deliciously cool, for the long winding columns had climbed six thousand feet above the sea-level, and the road was still ascending as it led on to Ghizni. Within the old rock fortress some two or three thousand Afghans still clung to the crumbling fortunes of Dost Mahomed, but even in this small garrison desertion was numerous; and when the army drew up before the citadel on the 22nd of July, every detail of the defence was known to the British general. A single gateway, that leading to Cabul, had been left unblocked by masonry. Under cover of darkness the army moved round the fortress and took up a position on the west or Cabul side. An hour before daybreak on the 23rd of July, a small party of sappers crept forward to the gate and laid bags of powder beneath the archway. The train was soon fired, the massive gate disappeared, the walls crashed inwards, and amid smoke and flame the stormers rushed into the fortress. Half an hour's fighting decided the fate of Ghizni. There is a story still told among the men of the 13th Regiment which deserves record. Amid the confusion following the explosion of the gunpowder, one of the engineers, passing back by the spot where the assaulting columns stood awaiting the word to advance, was accosted by the officer commanding as to the result of the explosion. "The passage was choked with fallen masonry; the forlorn hope could not force it." Turning to the

bugler at his elbow the leader ordered the "retire" to be sounded. The bugler, Luke White, was one of those stray peasant waifs which destiny flings to nations as though to point a satire upon their theories of high-bred heroism. "The 13th," answered the boy, "don't know the 'retire.'" He sounded the "advance," and the regiment moved on to the attack. With the capture of Ghizni the campaign, so far as fighting was concerned, began and ended.

The Ameer, indeed, advanced from Cabul to meet the invaders of his kingdom as they pressed on towards his capital, but his troops fell from him like leaves from a dying tree. In the valley of Muedan he resolved to make a last stand against his enemies. With the Koran raised in his hand, he rode among his faithless followers, calling upon them to make one final effort against the invader and the infidel. "You have eaten my salt," he said, "for thirteen years. Since it is plain that you are resolved to seek a new master, grant me but one favour in return for that long period of kindness. Enable me to die with honour. Stand by the brother of Futteh Khan while he executes one charge against the cavalry of those Feringee dogs. In that outset he will fall; then go and make your terms with the new chief." Strange are the ways of destiny. Had his dastard followers but risen to the enthusiasm of their leader's words, his fate was for ever sealed—the cause of Dost Mahomed would have perished at Muedan, but in the great book it was ruled that this

dark day of defeat and desertion should be the midnight of his disaster. Henceforth there would be many hours of darkness, but they would all be shortening towards the dawn.

Over the wild pass of Bamian, Dost Mahomed passed, a fugitive, to the Uzbegs of Kunduz. A couple of thousand devoted adherents still clung to his ruined fortunes. To add to his overwhelming misfortunes, a favourite son was borne along with difficulty in the rapid flight, fainting with fever. The deserters to the British camp had carried these particulars of the last scenes of the Ameer's reign, and they found ready comment in the diaries of the day. The boldest and most turbulent of the Ameer's sons was sinking from disease. Akbar Khan would never again trouble the British cause in Afghanistan. So ran the prophecies. Just two years later the name of Akbar Khan had become a terror throughout the land, and all that remained of British power in Cabul lay at the mercy of this dying chief. Shah Shujah entered Cabul in triumph. He wore on his garments and sword-girdle many of the precious gems which his ancestor Ahmed Shah carried away from the camp of Nadir Shah after the murder of the Persian conqueror at Meshed. But one great gem was conspicuous by its absence—the famous "Mountain of Light," the Kohinoor, was not there. The legacy of sorrow which it had carried to its owners through three hundred years clung now in this hour of apparent triumph to the old Shah Shujah, but the stone itself had been lately surrendered by him

to Rungeet Singh, the Sikh ruler of Lahore. And now the work was over. The curtain had fallen upon the last act, the lights were being turned off, and the crowd pressed out in all haste to get away. If it had been so easy to conquer Afghanistan, the retention of the country must be a matter of still greater facility; so, at least, said the men who spoke with the seriousness of responsibility, and it must be allowed they were as good in deed as in opinion. Ere winter had come only two regiments of European infantry remained in Afghanistan. Two years passed away. Low ominous growls of rebellious thunder sounded at times amid the stern hills. Now it was the Ghilzies around Ghizni; now the Khyberees between Jellalabad and Peshawar; anon the Uzbegs threatened the passes of the Hindoo Koosh. Soon deeds of sudden assassination startled the cantonments of Cabul or Kandahar. But though every month revealed some new instance of that old Afghan nature whose untamableness had been a proverb over Asia for six centuries, no warning could be seen by the doomed men who in the daily routine of cantonment life pursued the easy round of Indian military existence. English ladies made their homes in Cabul, the band played, the evening ride was taken without the city-walls, the life of mess and parade went on as though the Union Jack had waved above the Bala Hissa for half a century.

All at once the storm broke. The envoy, the political agent, the general commanding the troops,

and many other heads of departments awoke one morning to find Cabul in revolt. To extreme confidence succeeded complete paralysis. From Bamian to Jellalabad, from Ghizni to Herat, the tribes had risen, content to let their mutual animosities rest awhile in the unwonted sensation of unity against the common enemy. Then began one of the most miserable chapters of British history. The winter had already placed his foot upon the hilltops, and was daily drawing nearer to the doomed garrison of Cabul. From glen and valley, in numbers that hourly became stronger, bands of fierce men poured forth to the holy war. There were men of gigantic form, and savage, though majestic mien—men who carried the sword and shield of the days of Timour, and others who bore the matchlock and rifle of more modern war; and to give point and direction to all this mass of ferocity there appeared on the scene that same son of Dost Mahomed, Akbar Khan, whose crippled state two years before had been a calculated factor among the chances of his father's capture.

But more fatal than hostile foeman or rigour of winter in this alpine land was the indecision of character and faltering purpose of the British leaders. It is needless to dwell upon the miserable scenes that marked the closing weeks of the year 1841—the capture of the commissariat stores, the assassination of the envoy, MacNaughten, the final treaty of evacuation. On one point, however, the assassination of the envoy, we may say, that although it is clear that the

deed was committed by Akbar Khan, it is also evident that it was not premeditated. To obtain possession of the envoy, and to use that possession as a hostage for the fulfilment of certain conditions, was the real object aimed at by the Afghan leaders. Had murder been meant it is evident that no attempt at capture was necessary; but the unfortunate envoy strenuously resisted, and in the struggle that ensued between him and Akbar Khan, met his death.

On the morning of the 6th of January the retreat from Cabul began. Four thousand five hundred fighting men and three times that number of followers turned their faces towards India, beginning the most disastrous movement recorded in English history. This retreat lasted seven days, and measured in distance about fifty-five miles. In those seven days every horror that human misery counts in its catalogue was enacted. The enemy and the elements were alike pitiless. Through driving snow and bitter blast the long column wound its way between stupendous cliffs, from any vantage point of which the *juzails* of the Afghans poured destruction. The night closed over the fearful scene, but the dark hours did their work more silently, though not less surely, than the daylight. Seven mornings dawned upon masses of men frozen as they lay—grim bivouacs of death. At length there were no more to die. Of all these thousands one solitary man passed out from the terrible defile of Jugdullock—he was all that remained of the army of Cabul.

The spring of the following year saw two armies again marching into Afghanistan, along the two great highways. Their work was to relieve beleaguered garrisons in Kandahar and Cabul, to avenge and to retire. The garrisons were relieved. For nine hundred years Mahomed of Ghizni had lain at rest in the mausoleum at Rioza. His tomb was rifled of its gates—in what manner this act of vandalism revenged the disasters of the Khurd Cabul is not apparent—and then the armies marched away, leaving Afghanistan to the Afghans. Twenty millions of money! twenty thousand human lives! three times that number of camels and horses lost! a name hated throughout the length and breadth of the mountain land—such were the results accruing to us from three years' wandering in search of a scientific frontier.

## THE ZULUS.

THE vast disjointed dominion which upon the maps of the world bears the colour and the cognomen of British colonial territory has ever had strange methods of making its existence known to the mother country. For many successive years various portions of it will lie in a kind of moral and political torpor, giving forth to the far-away home land only the feeblest evidences of existence. Life, indeed, will at such times be very far from being extinct in these quiet dependencies. Ships will sail to and fro between the great maritime centres of commerce and distant ports in the southern hemisphere, all the work of life—the buying and selling, the birthing and the burying—will be carried on there; but beyond some chance allusion in the column of a newspaper to a change of ministry, to the appointment of a new governor, or to the state of trade, that world, which calls itself “the world,” passes along its road utterly ignoring the existence of entire colonies, and serenely unconscious of political or territorial divisions whose superficial area would measure ten times that of Great Britain.

All at once, however, "the world" rouses up to a wonderful greed for knowledge upon some particular spot which has been British territory for half a century, but which Britons have never bothered their heads about. Some colony has suddenly spoken. A black king, whose name nobody ever heard of, has suddenly crossed a river, whose name nobody could ever remember, at the head of thirty thousand of his soldiers, whom nobody knew anything about. The excitement instantly becomes intense. Everybody has something to say about this black king, his thirty thousand soldiers, and the river which he has crossed. The illustrated papers immediately produce the very blackest pictures of this black king, the magazines have articles minutely describing the interior economy of his household, the number of his wives, and the habits and customs of his court. His fathers and his grandfathers, personages whom he himself may be said to possess indefinite ideas about, are reproduced in colours of lasting enmity to mankind in general and to Britons in particular. What is called "the popular mind" of the nation is educated into such a becoming frenzy of hostility against black kings as a principle, that the holders of spades and clubs at the evening rubber are half inclined to forget to call honours ere the trump has been turned. It does not matter much whether the black king has crossed the river into our territory in attempted rectification of some wrong which he has suffered at our hands, or whether we have crossed the river into his territory

upon the clearest and most conclusive testimony that his property and that of his subjects would be vastly benefited by being transferred to our hands.

If any person should attempt to enter into the justice of the cause of quarrel before this "devout consummation" had been arrived at, cries of unpatriotic conduct are quickly raised. "Shoot first and try afterwards" becomes the rule. While the black king's dealings towards us are weighed and measured by the strictest code of civilised law and usage existing between modern states, our relations towards him are exempted from similar test rules, and the answer is ever ready for those who would preach the doctrine of a universal justice between man and man, of the impossibility of applying to savage communities the rules and maxims of ordinary life.

Thus to-day in South Africa the stream of our empire rolls on by the same methods and the same laws that propelled it two centuries ago in North America, with this difference however: First, that in South Africa we are working up into a vast continent peopled by tens of millions of negroes, while our progress in North America was across a sparsely peopled land. Second, that while in America what we call the keynote of settlement, *i.e.*, the land grant to a settler, was struck at the modest figure of two hundred acres, in South Africa it has been fixed at twenty times that figure, and four thousand acres made the minimum amount of land upon which the pioneer of civilisation will begin his work. In these two differences lie most

of the difficulties that beset our work in South Africa. While on the one hand our settlers spread themselves farther and farther out in defenceless isolation from each other, peopling a territory as large as France with a population of a tenth-rate English town, the natives driven back into more compact masses outside our frontiers, or rapidly increasing in their locations within our own limits, are always disposed to try, after certain lapses of time, the chances of war against us. Nothing is more natural than that they should do so. Whatever may be the abstract justice of our laws, and the blessings of peace and security resulting from their application, it is impossible to prevent the intercourse between the white settlers and the aboriginal native from being one which is subject to frequent instances of manifest injustice. The brutal but heedless blow struck by the driver of a post-cart at some wayside wondering black man; the license of some diamond digger who, frequently a runaway from the restraints of law in his own home, would deny to the black man every vestige of human right; the inevitable greed for the possession of huge areas of land existing in the minds of all South Africans, and the consequent temptations to indulge in annexation—all these produce in the native mind a deep and widespread feeling of antagonism and resentment which every now and again finds expression in open conflict.

It will occur to many readers to ask how it was that the vast force which they have lately read of as obey-

ing the orders of the Zulu king could have been able to maintain themselves, in a land divided from our territory by the breadth of a river fordable in hundreds of places, without making their presence such a menace to our farmers as must, years ago, have caused conflict between them and us? Men may fairly ask how came it that this army of disciplined savages should have remained all this time at perfect peace with us, yet that the moment we declare war against them they show themselves strong enough to inflict upon our troops the greatest reverse sustained by us during the present generation? Let us see if we can reply to that question.

Fifty years from the present time Chaka, the first great king of the Zulus, died at the hands of his subjects near the banks of the Lower Tugela river, in the present colony of Natal. As he fell covered with spears he uttered words which still live in the memory of the Zulu nation: "You think you will rule this land when I am gone; but behind you I see the white man coming, and he will be the king." Six years after these words were spoken the white man came. He came trooping in long lines of lumbering waggons down the steep sides of the Drakensberg Hills, and, making his laagers along the broad valley of the Upper Tugela, he called Natal his home. These men were Dutchmen from the Cape Colony who, dissatisfied with English law, had wandered forth to seek their fortunes in the wilderness. Before a year had passed they were at war with the Zulus. For years, with

varying fortune, this war went on—now it was the Zulus who carried death and destruction among the laagers, anon it was the Dutchman who fought his way into the Zulu kraals, and laid in ashes the chief stronghold of the Zulu power. While all this went on another band of white men had established themselves on the coast of Natal, close by the Zulu kingdom. These people had come as friends of the Zulus, and not the least important link in the chain of friendship that bound together the successor of Chaka and the sea-coast colony was the knowledge that the white men who had crossed the Drakensberg and those who had pitched their tents by the surf-beaten shore were at enmity with each other. It would take long to tell the varying phases of that enmity between Englishman and Dutchman which made the early history of Natal one of conflict between these rival races. Enough for us to show that to the Zulu mind there was ever apparent but one real enemy—the Dutch Boer. It was against this foe that for thirty years the military instinct which Chaka had first fostered was sustained by Panda and by Cetewayo. In a form, that grew as it was fed, the earth-hunger of the Dutch settlers had gone on from year to year with more insatiable desire. Boer dominion had spread itself out farther into the northern wilderness, lapping round the Zulu kingdom on the west, and threatening its existence on the north towards Delagoa Bay. This republic, which numbered eight thousand families, and possessed a territory larger than France, was,

year by year, annexing, seizing, and confiscating some new slice of territory, driving back into remoter wilds Basuto or Batlapin, and pushing its frontier nearer to the tropic line. There had been encroachments made, too, on the side of Zululand; but these had never been enforced by arms. The beacon line, which the Transvaal Dutch claimed as their boundary on the Zulu frontier, remained a disputed territory, because both Zulu and Boer understood that England would not tolerate hostilities on her Natal frontiers. England was, in fact, to the Zulu his great hope against Dutch aggression. When the regiments mustered around the king's kraal for the annual training, the imaginary enemy against whom their evolutions were directed was on the western and not upon the southern frontier. If any rumour of Boer incursion reached the king's kraal at Udine, messengers were dispatched forthwith to acquaint "Somseu" (the Secretary of Native Affairs in Natal), and to ask advice and assistance from the English. The boundary line of the Tugela was, as we have said, only a narrow river, easily forded in the dry season in a hundred different places; yet for twenty years the sheep and cattle of the Natal farmers were as safe from Zulu raid or theft as though the farms had lain along the valley of the Thames. Six years have not yet passed since an English governor of Natal camped night after night for twenty days in succession along the Buffalo and Tugela boundaries of Zululand without a single armed man as escort, and with most of the

work of camp and transport carried on by Zulu hands.

Whence, then, came the change that has succeeded in transforming this state of friendly feeling into one of dire hostility and war? The answer is not far to seek. For thirty years the emigrating Dutch had acted as a buffer between us and the native races. By the annexation of the Transvaal Republic we removed that buffer, and placed ourselves face to face with the black man along seven hundred miles of frontier. Nay, we did more than that. We stepped at once into the possession of a legacy of contention, aggression, and injustice, from which it was almost impossible to escape, save by the exercise of a calm control, a clear and impartial judgment, and the employment of just and able instruments in our dealings with the frontier races. Not only did our annexation of the Transvaal expose us to a vast variety of difficulties with natives which heretofore we had been secure from, but it placed us in that position of difficulty at a moment when circumstances outside our control had carried the whole question of the relationship between black and white to a state of tension filled with the gravest outlooks.

Twelve years ago the discovery of precious stones and minerals in large quantities in the upper plateau of South Africa brought to the colonies of Natal and the Cape a new race of adventurers. The miner, the digger, the prospector—all those wild waifs and strays that the great game of gold brings together, flocked

into this upland country, and began to work beneath a sun, and under conditions of life, more than ever prone to set alight the ever easily fanned flame of passion and avarice. To the great pit where lay the rich shining stones flocked also many thousands of black men. From far-away tropic regions beyond the Limpopo, from nearer Basuto mountains, from Zululand and Kaffirland, came bands of twenty tribes, whose common brotherhood had been lost ages ago, amid wars and wanderings of times before the white man came. As, month by month, the great pit grew deeper at the delving of these countless negroes, deeper, too, grew the hostile feelings of the rival races—black and white. The great war of capital against labour had here added to it the older strife of colour against colour. In this vast school-room at Kimberley the prizes given were rifles and ammunition; the lesson taught was identity of interest against a common foe. Here, first of all, the black man learned that all white men were one against him, and that he, through his many subdivisions, was one against the white man. And he learned this lesson, too, at the hands of men, many of whom were turbulent and desperate, and some of whom he saw in armed hostility to English law and in open defiance of English government.

This view is not new to us. Six years ago, after visiting the diamond-pit at Kimberley, we recorded the opinion that the result of the coming together of the black races at the diamond-fields, and of the

distribution of arms and ammunition amongst them as wages for work, must produce war between the white and black races. It has been computed that more than four hundred thousand stand of arms, principally rifles, with ammunition, passed into possession of black men at the diamond fields. But more dangerous even than these arms and munitions of war has been the knowledge of which we have spoken, and the lessons of lawless opinion and defiance of authority imbibed at the same time.

Thus it will easily be understood how, at the moment of our annexation of the Transvaal, we were brought face to face with the culminated results of many circumstances, all of which tended to a war of races. But the question may be asked, with regard to the particular war in which we were lately engaged, "How came it that the annexation of the Transvaal caused a radical change in our policy towards the Zulus, seeing that before that annexation our frontiers were conterminous with those of the Zulus along one hundred and fifty miles of territory?" To this it may be answered that the annexation not only doubled our frontier adjoining Zululand, but it put us in all the inimical positions previously held by the Dutch, and made an escape from the vicious policy of our predecessors a matter requiring the utmost tact and caution.

. We will not here enter into the question whether either of these attributes has been observable in the conduct of our dealings with the native races, or

whether the annexation of the Dutch republic was not a necessary consequence of the error which, in 1854, permitted the formation of foreign states beyond our frontiers. While holding for ourselves that the annexation was premature, and was entered upon in opposition to the opinions of the majority of the respectable inhabitants of the State, we nevertheless are of opinion that, notwithstanding that annexation, hostilities could have been avoided both in the Transvaal and in Zululand, and that it was possible to have inaugurated a line of policy towards the Zulus and other tribes which would have fostered the gradual disintegration of the dangerous elements of that power, and produced the final disappearance of tribal influence from the natives of South Africa.

Although the discipline and strength of the Zulu army has lately been made terribly apparent to Englishmen, its power is nothing new to the colonists of Natal. No one that has ever seen a Zulu regiment march, or heard the deep, terrible note of the Zulu war-step, could fail to realise the fact that the power which comes from numbers moving with one will and from one impulse was here existing to an extent but rarely seen even among civilised races. It has been usual for modern writers to trace the history of organisation among the Zulus to the time of Chaka; but there are strong reasons for believing that the institutions of Chaka were but the revivals of far earlier customs, and that we have to seek in the first records of African discovery south of the equator for the origin

of the warlike habits of the people whom to-day we call Zulus.

Four hundred years from the present time a great wave of black men swept southward towards the Cape of Good Hope from the vast interior highlands of equatorial Africa. At times the waves surged east till they touched the early Portuguese kingdom of Quillimane on the one hand, and west until they reached that of Angola and Congo upon the other. At each side the story was the same. The Gaigas, as this torrent was called, carried death and destruction wherever they went. They moved under rigid rules of martial law, their captains and common soldiers were trained under a terrible discipline, their bravery was undoubted, their ferocity struck terror even into the other cruel races with whom they came in contact.

The narratives of the Portuguese missionaries of the fifteenth century are filled with their ravages and conquests. A countryman of ours, by name Battel, a sailor, joined this conquering people, fought under their king, and became a leader among them. From his narrative most of our knowledge of them is derived. We know that, after ravaging during many years the frontiers of Angola and Benguela, they passed south towards the Cape of Good Hope, and then for nearly two hundred years they are lost sight of. In the vast wildernesses of the Orange River, in the glens and fastnesses of the Amatola, Maluti, and Drakensberg Mountains, the human wave that had begun its course where the green Soudan merged into

the grey Sahara, sunk at last to comparative quiet, and settled down to pastoral life over all that great wilderness of beauty which is to-day South Africa. That this human wave, which probably was first set in motion by the Arab conquests in North Africa during the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, drove out the aboriginal races of Southern Africa—the Bushman and the Hottentots—there cannot be a doubt; and there is every reason to suppose that the wide human family known to us to-day under the appellation Kaffir—a name given by the Arab traders, and adopted from them by the Portuguese settlers at the Mozambique—that family, broken into its many subdivisions of Gaika, Galega, Khosa, Zulu, &c., dates its descent and inherits its characteristics of courage from the torrent which so long rolled its troubled course along the great central highland of the continent. The military organisation and the iron discipline introduced by Chaka into the Zulu nation were but revivals of the laws and institutions of which Battel tells us.

Of this military organisation it has been fairly said that it was impossible it could have gone on in close proximity to our Natal frontier without producing, sooner or later, an inevitable conflict with us. This view would be undoubtedly correct if the organisation of the nation into regiments had been founded upon any principle more lasting than the king's will; but the despotism of the Zulu monarch was of all despotisms the most exposed to the danger of over-

throw from revolt within itself. Chaka, and his successor, Dingaan, were both assassinated by their rebellious subjects. Cetewayo and his brother Umlulazi long waged deadly war upon each other; and only a few years from the present time the waters of the Lower Tugela were black with thousands of Zulus killed in a bloody battle between the two great sections of the army.

The elements of the destruction of Zulu power lay in Zululand itself, and another policy might long since have freed the people from the tyranny of the military system and broken the power of the chiefs from the Pongola to the Kei. It was not followed. Steadily through past years we have continued to uphold the principle of chieftainship. How much wiser would it have been had we adopted the communal system of the village, dividing the land in our native locations by villages or kraals, instead of by tribes! From this the transition to individual proprietorship of land would have been an easy one, the introduction of civilised habits, to say nothing of religion and morality, would have been possible, and the chance might still have been open to us of solving that inscrutable problem—the raising of this vast, fallen African race to light and hope.

And now let us look back at a page of well-nigh forgotten history. At the door of England lies the memory of a great sin. Three hundred years from the present time an English ship bore to the continent of America from that of Africa the first cargo of

slaves ever taken from that dismal shore. During two entire centuries that terrible trade was prosecuted by English capital and English enterprise to a far greater degree than by the efforts of any other nation.\* Could the long catalogue of horrors that filled the continent of Africa with blood, and strewed the tropic ocean with corpses, be unfolded to-day, the nation might well stand aghast at the awful spectacle of human misery wrought by the "enterprise" of bygone Bristol and the "energy" of early Liverpool. Over the dreary surf-beaten shore, between the feverish forest and the yellow sand, there rise to-day along the pestilential West Coast of Africa huge bastioned castles, lonely and untenanted. Their work has long since vanished; their guns lie overturned, the gates are rusty, their vast vaults are empty; but still they stand the white monuments of a mighty crime, bearing testimony to the sea and to the land of a gigantic injustice. In these vast tombs the living dead were buried until the slave-ship was ready in the offing. There was the land-gate and the sea-gate. As the rusty land-gate swung in upon its hinges, home, kith, and kin closed with it; as the sea-gate opened towards the ship, toil, the lash, and death coiled closer around the negro's heart.

All these long centuries of crime are still unpaid for. The slaves set free by us fifty years ago were not a thousandth part of those we had enslaved. Yet the account is still open, and the wrong done by

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\* In the year 1788, 120,000 Africans were taken from the coast as slaves by Europeans; of which half were in British ships.

us during all these years in West Africa can yet be righted in the future of the southern continent. This, then, is the question which Englishmen have a right to ask: "What have you done with this people? Have you taught them nothing better through all these years than to exchange their assegais for rifles? Do you dare to tell us that in this land, which is larger than France, Spain, and Germany put together, there is not room for three hundred thousand white men and a million and a half of blacks? and can all your teaching, preaching, and civilisation evolve nothing better for this African than a target for your bullets?"

Notwithstanding the wide gulf which we fancy lies between us and this black man, he is singularly like us. He will cry if you stick a pin into him, he will be thankful for a gift, he will resent an injury, he will weep for the loss of a wife or child, he will fight for his homeland—he can even die for what he believes to be the right. And mark you this vast difference between him and the other aboriginal races with whom your spirit of colonisation has brought you into contact: he does not die out before us. He asserts the fact of his existence amid our civilisation. He increases upon every side. While the work of colonisation has been going on for more than two centuries, the black race to the white is still as six to one. Here, in South Africa, lies our chance of undoing the wrong done by Europe to the Libyan race in the past; here lies our sole hope of ever

shedding into this vast, dark continent the lights of faith and justice. Let us not imagine that by trade these precious gifts can be carried into the dim interior. The first principle of trade with the savage, whether it be trade in human heads or cocoa-nuts, is to outwit him. During four hundred years we have traded with the Gold Coast and with the Gambia, yet within a rifle-shot of the shore the fetish is rampant, the savage instinct is untamed. In South Africa the European constitution flourishes beside the negro. There it is possible to teach without death closing the schoolmaster's book ere the lesson has been learnt; there precept and example can go hand in hand together; there the limit is large enough for ten millions instead of two millions; there the capabilities of future extension are vast as the continent itself.

Ages ago, along the lofty plateau of the central continent, the hordes of savages pressed southward from the equator, darkening and devastating as they went. That same road now lies open for the reflex flood of light and truth. How is that tide to be set in motion? Not by wide-sweeping annexation, by trade in rum and rifles, by "commando" warfare, not even by zealous though missionary enterprise alone. But it may be done by other and gentler means. It may be done by lighting, even within sight of Cape Town, or of Port Elizabeth, or of Durban, a ray that has never yet been lighted in the black man's mind—the idea that he may be made an independent unit in a civilised community; the idea

that he will be protected against all injustice, whether from black man or from white; the idea that liberty does not mean idleness, and that the schoolmaster has a claim upon his little ones that cannot be overlooked; the idea that his toil, given for many centuries to the world at large, must now at last be given to himself; the idea that service of arm to his chief, or of muscle to his master, must be changed to service of mind and body for his one wife and for his children.

These rays, once lighted, can never be put out. Northward, year by year, they will travel into regions where never yet the white man's foot has rested. "Good Hope"—thus they named this lofty sea-girt promontory far down in the Southern Ocean. It rests with England in the future to fulfil the aspiration of those brave Portuguese sailors whose eyes first looked upon that rugged frontlet. Surely it is a brave and noble toil, and well worthy of our nation's manhood.

If from the wretched scenes lately enacted, and from the selfishness and strife which culminated in this most deplorable of our Kaffir wars, there arises in the minds of Englishmen a fervent resolve to attempt a new beginning, then may even our past

Sin itself be found

A cloudy porch that opens on the sun.

NOTE.—The writer of these pages is fully aware that the idea of breaking the tribal system, and establishing individual ownership in property, has been frequently advocated in the past, particularly by Sir George Grey, but its adoption has never been even attempted. The outlay necessary to start the machinery which might effect the change has always been refused, and while thousands have been deemed too great an expenditure in the cause of humanity and progress, millions have been freely lavished on the old, hopeless lines of punishment and repression.

## SOUTH AFRICA.

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### I.

**F**AR up in the mountains of South Africa, where the peaks of the Drakensberg and the ridges of the Malutis attain their loftiest level, there lies a region but little known even to the people who dwell in its vicinity.

It is a land of jagged peaks and scarped precipices, of torrents and rocks, of secluded valleys, and great wind-swept hills. Snow rests for many months in the year upon its rugged hilltops; grass grows rank and green in its many valleys. A thousand crystal streams flash over rocky ledge, and ripple through pebble-paved channels, and, all the year round there is a sense of freshness in the air, for the breeze that sweeps the land blows over peaks set ten thousand feet above the sea-line.

This in Africa—that land of heat and sun, of swamp and forest? Yes, even in Africa lies the region just pictured; this Switzerland of South Africa, mountain Basutoland.

The clouds which the Indian Ocean sends to South

Africa linger over this region of mountain peak, and shed their showers upon it through the months of summer; but in winter the skies are clear, the sun shines over the land, and the clouds which occasionally gather upon the peaks float away, leaving them clothed in dazzling snow, and seamed with ice-crueted cataracts.

Many rivers have their sources in this mountain region, and east, west, north, and south streams flow forth from it into a lower set land. Streams of small size and of large, streams which soon swell into mighty rivers, and become yellow and muddy as they roll towards far-separated oceans, forgetting the pure traditions of their birth among the snow-hills, in the turmoil of maturer life.

Looked at from its many sides, Basutoland presents always to the traveller a sight filled with a sense of freshness and of pleasure. From whatever point he regards it, he must ever look up to it; east or west, north or south, it first rises before him in the outline of a stupendous mountain, whose summits yield to the eye, long wearied of the leaden level of interminable plain, that cool draught which is fresh as water to a thirsty wanderer in a desert land.

But if from all sides it is grateful to the eye, from the east side it is something more; spread beneath it to the east lies a fair and fruitful land, a land whose highest level is fully four thousand feet lower down, and whose plains and hills lie outlaid at his feet, like a vast sea beneath a lofty shore.

This land of lower level is Natal; where Natal ends on the west, Basutoland begins on the east, and begins in a line so abrupt, so rugged, so scarped into precipice, and turret, and pinnacle, that it would seem as though nature had upraised a mighty wall of rock to mark for ever her line of separation between the mountain called Basutoland, and the meadow called Natal.

There are not many sights in South Africa which linger longer in the traveller's mind than that which can be seen almost every morning from the eastern ridge of Basutoland—the Drakensberg.

It is sunrise over Natal, up from the haze which hangs over the Indian sea—the haze which has turned to varying green, and gold, and crimson, as he drew nearer to the surface—comes the great blood-red sun, flashing on the rent pinnacles of the mountain wall while yet the region far below is wrapped in purple mist. No towns, no hamlets, no homesteads stud the vast plain beneath; but scores of rivers wind through great grass-covered valleys, and from their unseen beds, long rifts of snow-white vapour float upward towards the growing light, and wreath themselves along the feet of hills, and cling to kloof, and catch upon their upmost billows the light in which they are so soon to die. And as the light grows stronger, and the flying remnants of night, prisoned at the base of the great cliffs, are killed by the shafts which the day flings into “krance” and cavern, there lies spread before the eye a vast succes-

sion of hill and valley, table-topped mountain, gleaming river—all green with grass—dew-freshened, and silent. This is Natal.

Far away, beyond all, a vague blank upon the horizon, the unseen sea is felt by the sight, where, at the furthest verge of vision, the Indian Ocean sleeps in space.

But there is another sight which the traveller sees just before nightfall, when from the meadow of Natal he looks up to the lofty ridge of Basutoland. The day has done its work; the sun has gone down behind the great western barrier; turret, dome, and rent mountain pinnacle are clear cut in snow and purple against the green and saffron curtain of the sunset; the wall of rock is dark at its base, indistinct in its centre, sharp and lustrous along its serrated summit; the night gathers at its feet; the day lingers around its head; there is a shade of untold beauty in the sky, a green, such as one sometimes sees in *Sèvres*, and which I have never seen in sunset save in Natal. The night deepens, and the light dies but long after nightfall, that glorious light still lives in the western sky, and the unnumbered peaks, and jagged spires, and pinnacled turrets of the Drakensberg stand in lofty loneliness as though guarding the slow retreat of day into some far-off world.

This great range of the Drakensberg, called by the natives *Kathalama*, runs nearly north and south along the west frontier of Natal; but near the twenty-

ninth parallel of south latitude, its direction changes suddenly from north to west, and culminates in a vast mountain mass, known as the Mont aux Sources, from which many subsidiary ranges and innumerable streams descend into the surrounding countries. If one can imagine a large letter A laid with its apex to the north, the right-hand arm would form the Drakensberg, the apex flattened out would be the Mont aux Sources, and the left arm would be the Maluti range. Between the arms of the range are several minor ranges and clusters of mountain, a great sea of peaks; and from the Mont aux Sources, flowing from a labyrinth of cliff and cataract, springs the Orange River and its many tributaries.

Three other large rivers rise in this impenetrable fastness, the Wilge, or south fork of the Vaal, the Caledon, or north fork of the Orange, and the Tugela, the principal river of Natal. These many rivers flow from the Mont aux Sources, south, east, north, and west; the Orange, as we have said, springing from between the arms of the letter A, the Drakensberg and the Malutis; the Caledon having its source outside the Maluti range, and between it and the lower range of the Rhode Berg; the Wilge River rising on the north face of the Mont aux Sources, and flowing down into the Orange Free State to join the diamond-famous Vaal; and the Tugela, which, also waking from the same bed, leaps suddenly from its cradle on the summit of the Mont aux Sources down the perpendicular verge of the Drakensberg, as though, overjoyed to

turn its steps to the fair region of Natal, it cared little for the three thousand feet of ledge that lay beneath it and that green meadow land. All these rivers carry to the Atlantic or Indian seas the tribute which the mountain monarchs send to the ocean from which they once rose.

So far for the rivers and the mountains of the land. Now for the people who have made their dwellings in this lofty region.

Many years ago, when the present century was in its cradle, a young Zulu warrior came riding from the south along the base of the Drakensberg. He held a northern course. He was accompanied, or rather carried, by an animal never before seen in the land; at times he appeared to the astonished eyes of the beholders as a portion of this animal, at other times he was separated from it.

The young Zulu was a long-banished exile returning to his home on the Tugela from a far southern land; the strange animal he bestrode was a horse, the first of its kind ever seen in these great wastes of South Africa; but he brought with him from the white man's home other and far greater secrets than the strange animal that carried him—he brought the idea of unity where there had been disunion, of discipline and combination where all had been petty tribal war and internecine confusion, of the strength which lies in organised numbers against the weakness of the individual. He had seen the regular soldiers of the white man, had caught in a vague way the outline of

their organisation, and now, as he sought, after a lapse of years, his Umtetwa people, it was with the hope of moulding the scattered power of his tribe after the manner of the white soldiery in the infant colony to the south, and he succeeded.

His people received him as their chief, named him Dingiswayo, or "The Wanderer," and listened to his counsel and his plans.

Soon the youth of the Umtetwa were formed into bodies, fighting under distinct chiefs, and subject to the will of one man, Dingiswayo. This army of the Umtetwa was not a mere plaything in the hands of its chief, and ere a year had passed, the neighbouring tribes had felt the power of the new organisation; small tribes became incorporated with or subject to the Umtetwa, and many restless spirits among the young men of the country beyond the Tugela joined the army of Dingiswayo, to push their fortunes in the new field which he had opened to them.

Among the adventurous spirits thus drawn to the service of the Wanderer, there was one of no ordinary genius. Chaka, the son of Senzangakona, chief of a small tributary tribe called Zulus, entered as a common soldier into one of the regiments of Dingiswayo. His bravery soon pointed him out for leadership; he learnt the lesson of organisation and discipline even to greater effect than had his master; and when his time of chieftainship had come, a new power had dawned among the scattered tribes of South-Eastern Africa.