

The Gentleman DIGGER

A
Study of
JOHANNESBURG
Life

By ANNA
Comtesse
de Brémont



**THE
GENTLEMAN
DIGGER**

A FEW PRESS OPINIONS
OF THE FIRST EDITION OF
THE GENTLEMAN DIGGER.

MORNING POST—"A graphic, cleverly written story of South African life."

GLASGOW HERALD—"Decidedly smart, the production of a clever writer."

VANITY FAIR—"An interesting portrayal of life at the Cape."

FINANCIAL NEWS—"It is very fine and thrilling and impressive."

ACADEMY—"The Comtesse de Brémont presents us with a terribly realistic picture of life in Johannesburg during the raging of the gold fever."

REVIEW OF REVIEWS—"Considered apart from its merits as a story, which are by no means inconsiderable, this work possesses special value as being a vivid and accurate picture of life in the South African gold-fields in Johannesburg."

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DAILY TELEGRAPH—"Those who like a good story, pleasantly told, should read *The Gentleman Digger*. . . . Readers who turn their attention to this volume will, apart from the interesting plot, gain much insight into the manners and customs of a land which is only just breaking into civilization as we understand it."

CITY PRESS (London)—"Such a story cannot but serve to greatly strengthen the hands of those who, in Parliament and elsewhere, are seeking by every means in their power to remove a stain that at the present moment mars the fair fame of Great Britain."

SPECTATOR (London)—"The characters are true to life, and the narration is continuous and spirited. The Comtesse de Brémont knows how to describe people and places, and there is local colouring."

ARGUS (Cape Town)—"Positively startling in the freedom with which the authoress has allowed herself to deal with well-known characters at the Rand. The portraits are sketched with so little disguise that we tremble to think how Johannesburgers will look into each other's eyes, and ask, 'Is it I?' . . . The Comtesse de Brémont has a sprightly style, and the sketches in its pages are wonderfully vivid, and give a picture of life at the Rand which no sober narrative could convey."

JOHANNESBURG STANDARD—"The book will be seized on with avidity, doubtless for the reasons above stated, and because Croesus—a well-known millionaire—journalists, brokers, the *jeunesse dorée*, and other individuals are offensively portrayed, not only with such impertinent detail as to make them easily recognisable, but with such spices of scandal and gossip that one-half of the world, which delights in reading anything that is 'down on' the other half, will purchase the book and read it with voracity. . . . It is served up warm—very!"

COURT JOURNAL—"Smart and realistic to a degree, which induces us to advise the author to ride the Pegasus with a bearing-rein for the future, there can be no doubt as to the readability of *The Gentleman Digger*, by Anna, Comtesse de Brémont, in which are painted in vivid colours the wild life of Johannesburg and the African gold-fields at the time of the 'boom' in Rand mines. The book is virtually a graphic description of a sort of Bohemianism run wild, and both characters and incidents are often so strongly drawn as to be calculated to give the more sensitive class of readers something of a shock. 'Which his language is free' might be applied to many of the characters in this curious story, interesting in its way as a study of men and manners—or want of them."

THE
GENTLEMAN
DIGGER

BEING STUDIES
AND PICTURES OF
LIFE IN JOHANNESBURG

BY

ANNA, COMTESSE DE BRÉMONT

AUTHOR OF "SOUTH AFRICAN STORIES"
"A SON OF AFRICA"
"THE RAGGED EDGE"
"SONNETS AND LOVE FORMS"
"THE WORLD OF MUSIC, ETC."

A NEW AND REVISED EDITION

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BY
ANNA, COMTESSE DE BRÉMONT,
***née* DUNFHE**

August 1899

LE COMTE EMILE LEON DE BRÉMONT

A HERO OF THE CRIMEA

A FRIEND OF SUFFERING HUMANITY

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS LOVINGLY AND REVERENTLY

Dedicated

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FOURTH IMPRESSION

WITH A NEW PREFACE

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH says: "A book by an anonymous author always arouses a certain inquiry, and when the book is clever and original the interest becomes keen, and conjecture is rife, endowing the most unlikely people with authorship. . . . It is very brilliant, very forcible, very sad. . . . It is perfect in its way; in style clear, sharp, and forcible; the dialogue epigrammatic and sparkling. . . . Enough has been said to show that *The Hypocrite* is a striking and powerful piece of work, and that its author has established his claim to be considered a writer of originality and brilliance."



JOHANNESBURG IN 1899. COMMISSIONER STREET.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

TEN years have elapsed since I wrote these studies of Johannesburg in the Transvaal.

The book has lived to reappear in this New Edition.

Why?

Because the book has grown in interest with its subject.

After ten years Ariadne's prayer has been answered.

England has awakened to the realisation of her duty towards Englishmen in the Transvaal.

Ten years have accomplished the fulfilment of Ariadne's prophecy of the future of Cecil Rhodes.

Ten years have beheld the storming by Cræsus of social and financial London—and witnessed the tragic end of his greatness.

Peace be to his ashes!

In ten years Johannesburg has emerged from the chrysalis of Darkness, Drought, Shantytown, Fever, and Mud.

To-day! Johannesburg is the Queen City of the Veld.

Palaces of marble, brick, and stone adorn her streets.

Electricity illumines her nights. Its splendour radiates from Mine to Mine along the great Reefs.

Villas and Gardens, Parks and Pleasure-grounds, revel in the beauty of perpetual light.

Roads of asphalt and stone welcome the tread of many feet.

The Railway, the Tram, the Motor-car have vanquished the Coach, the Bullock-waggon, and Cape-cart.

The reign of the Cycle brings the pleasures of travel to poor as well as rich.

The best of the Fourth Estate has been brought to bear on the enlightenment of the multitude.

The Wild Cat Promoter has vanished to the limbo of Justice.

The Gold output has leapt from ten-thousand to half-a-million ounces a month.

Last year's (1898) value was £16,240,630.

The present output amounts to nearly half-a-million ounces per month.

Ten years ago the value of output was £1,490,568; this year it exceeds £20,000,000 sterling.

The total value of the output of gold from the Transvaal up to the end of last year was £70,228,603.

All this Progress in one decade of the nineteenth Century!

Yet, Behold!

Johannesburg, the most amazing Miracle of Progress the world has ever seen.

Behold her! Boer-ridden! With the heaviest taxation in the world. A prey to the evils of Illicit Liquor traffic.

Behold! the men who have worked this miracle of progress.

Behold them: gagged with the muzzle of Uitlander.

Behold them: without Liberty of Franchise, without Liberty of Speech, without Liberty of Home, and without Liberty of Religion.

Johannesburg! Beautiful without: rotten within.

Shall Britain wait another decade to work out thy redemption?

*ANNA DE BRÉMONT,
Née DUNPHIE.*

LONDON, August 1899.

ORIGINAL PREFACE



IN the process of civilisation there are many evils, some of which are necessary—others totally unnecessary. The greatest of these is the introduction of intoxicants among the savage nations whom the white man has conquered in his march of progress. It is an awful crime practised without compunction against the black humanity of Africa.

A crime crying out daily and hourly, in the wilderness and in the town, in the night and in the blessed sunshine, for vengeance on the unscrupulous men who, through the lust for gain, degrade and ruin the helpless native by the indiscriminate sale of alcoholic drink.

The incident, portrayed in this brief study, of the cruel murder of an Englishman by five drunken natives, and the details of the trial, are facts that can be verified by the principal Johannesburg evening paper.

ANNA DE BRÉMONT,
Née DUNPHIE.

JOHANNESBURG, 1890.

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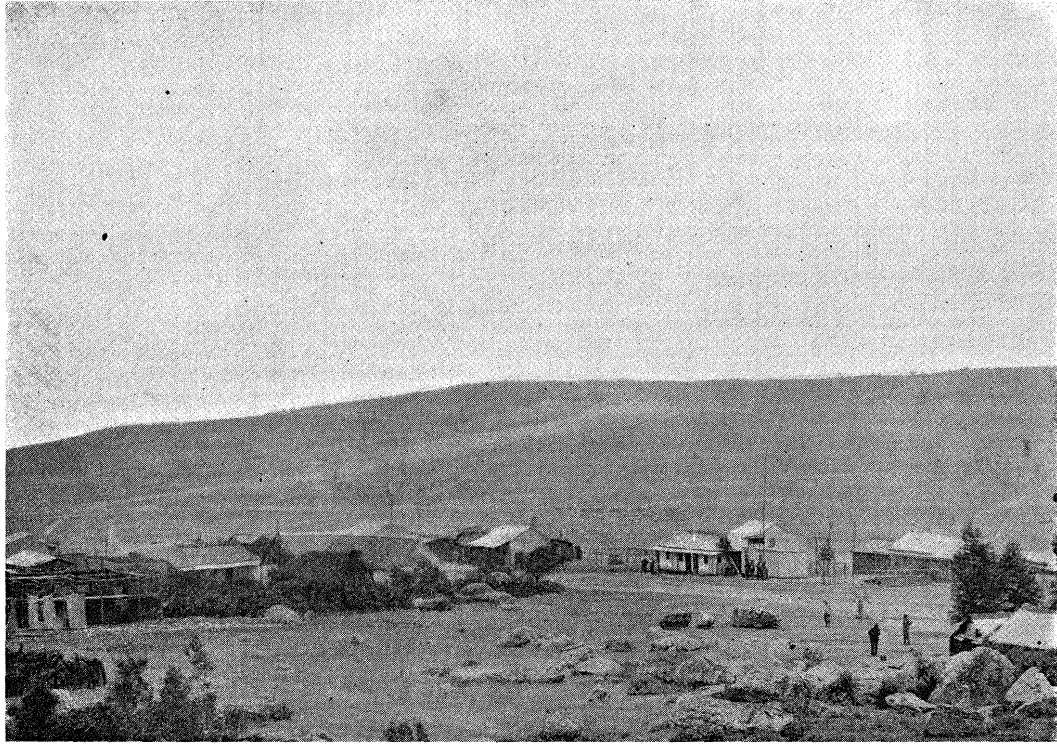
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SCENARIO

THE action covers six months passed in Johannesburg during the famine, crisis, and collapse of the share-market.

Only incidents peculiar to the life in the Rand have been described, through which is woven a love interest, the two actors being from their respective callings intimately connected with the life studies herein depicted.

LONDON, 1899.



THE BEGINNING OF JOHANNESBURG.