vaal, five—Good Friday, Easter Monday, Ascension Day, Whit Monday, and Christmas—are Church festival days, and are strictly observed by every Boer in the country.

The Dutch Reformed Church has been the state Church since 1835, when the Boers commenced emigrating from Cape Colony. The "trekkers" had no regularly ordained ministers, but depended upon the elders for their religious training, as well as for leadership in all temporal affairs. One of the first clergymen to preach to the Boers was an American, the Rev. Daniel Lindley, who was one of the earliest missionaries ever sent to South Africa. The state controls the Church, and, conversely, the Church controls the state, for it is necessary for a man to become a factor in religious affairs before he can become of any political importance. As a result of this custom, the politicians are necessarily the most active church members.

The Hervormde Dopper branch of the Dutch Reformed Church is the result of a disagreement in 1883 with the Gereformeerde branch over the singing of hymns during a

religious service. The Doppers, led by Paul Kruger, peaceably withdrew, and started a congregation of their own when the more progressive faction insisted on singing hymns, which the Doppers declared was extremely worldly.

Since then the two chief political parties are practically based on the differences in religion. The Progressive party is composed of those who sing hymns, and the members of the Conservative party are those who are more Calvinistic in their tendencies. As the Conservatives have been in power for the last decade, it follows that the majority of the Boers are opposed to the singing of hymns in church. The greatest festival in the Boer calendar is that of Nachtmaal, or Communion, which is generally held in Pretoria the latter part of the year.

The majority of the Boers living in remote parts of the country, where established congregations or churches are an impossibility, it behooves every Boer to journey to the capital once a year to partake of communion. Pretoria then becomes the Mecca of all Boers, and

the pretty little town is filled to overflowing with pilgrims and their "trekking" wagons and cattle. Those who live in remote parts of the country are obliged to start several weeks before the Nachtmaal in order to be there at the appointed time, and the whole journey to and fro in many instances requires six weeks' time. When they reach Pretoria they bivouac in the open square surrounding the old brick church in the centre of the town, and spend almost all their time in the church. It is one of the grandest scenes in South Africa to observe the pilgrims camping in the open square under the shade of the patriarchal church, which to them is the most sacred edifice in the world.

The home life of the Boers is as distinctive a feature of these rough, simple peoples as is their deep religious enthusiasm. If there is anything that his falsifiers have attacked, it is the Boer's home life, and those who have had the opportunity to study it will vouch that none more admirable exists anywhere. The Boer heart is filled with an intense feeling of family affection. He loves his wife and chil-

dren above all things, and he is never too busy to eulogize them. He will allow his flocks to wander a mile away while he relates a trifling incident of family life, and he would rather miss an hour's sleep than not take advantage of an opportunity to talk on domestic topics.

He does not gossip, because he sees his neighbours too rarely for that, but he will lay before you the detailed history and distinctive features of every one of his ancestors, relations, and descendants. He is hospitable to a degree that is astonishing, and he will give to a stranger the best room in the house, the use of his best horse, and his finest food. Naturally he will not give an effusive welcome to an Englishman, because he is the natural enemy of the Boer, but to strangers of other nationalities he opens his heart and house.

The programme of the Boer's day is hardly ever marred by any changes. He rises with the sun, and works among the sheep and cattle until breakfast. There at the table he meets his family and conducts the family worship. If the parents of the married couple are pres-

ent, they receive the best seats at the table, and are treated with great reverence.

After breakfast he makes his plans for the day's work, which may consist of a forward "trek" or a hunting trip. He attends to the little plot of cultivated ground, which provides all the vegetables and grain for the table, and spends the remainder of the day in attending to the cattle and sheep. Toward night he gathers his family around him, and reads to them selected chapters from the Bible. From the same book he teaches his children to read until twilight is ended, whereupon the Boer's day is ended, and he seeks his bed.

During the dry season the programme varies only as far as his place of abode is concerned. With the arrival of that season the Boer closes his house and becomes a wanderer in pursuit of water. The sheep and cattle are driven to the rivers, and the family follows in big transport wagons, not unlike the American prairie-schooner, propelled by eight spans of oxen. The family moves from place to place as the necessity for new pasturage arises. With the approach of the wet season the nomads

prepare for the return to the deserted homestead, and, as soon as the first rain has fallen and the grass has changed the colour of the landscape, the Boer and his vast herds are homeward bound.

The Boer homestead is as unpretentious as its owner. Generally it is a low, one-story stone structure, with a steep tile roof and a small annex in the rear, which is used as a kitchen. The door is on a level with the ground, and four windows afford all the light that is required in the four square rooms in the interior. A dining room and three bedrooms suffice for a family, however large. The floors are of hardened clay, liberally coated with manure, which is designed to ward off the pestiferous insects that swarm over the plains.

The house is usually situated in a valley and close to a stream, and, in rare instances, is sheltered by a few trees that have been brought from the coast country. Native trees are such a rarity that the traveller may go five hundred miles without seeing a single specimen. The Boer vrouw feels no need of firewood, however, for her ancestors taught her to cook her

meals over a fire of the dry product of the cattle-decked plains.

Personal uncleanliness is one of the great failings that has been attributed to the Boer, but when it is taken into consideration that water is a priceless possession on the plains of South Africa, no further explanation is needed. The canard that the Boers go to bed without undressing is as absurd as the one of like origin that an entire family sleeps in one bed. Yet these fictions constantly appear, and frequently over the names of persons who have penetrated into South Africa no farther than Cape Town.

The Boer here depicted is the representative Boer—the one who shoulders his rifle and fights for his country; the one who watches his cattle on the plains and pays his taxes; the one who tries to improve his condition, and takes advantage of every opportunity for advancement that is offered. There is a worthless Boer, as there is a worthless Englishman, a worthless German, and a worthless American, but he is so far in the minority that he need not be analyzed.

There is, however, a Boer who lives in the towns and cities, and he compares favourably with other men of South African birth. He has had the advantage of better schools, and can speak one or more languages besides his own. He is not so nomadic in his tendencies as his rural countryman, and he has absorbed more of the modernisms. He can conduct a philosophic argument, and his wife and daughters can play the piano. If he is wealthy, his son is a student at a European university and his daughter flirting on the beach at Durban or attending a ladies' seminary at Bloemfontein or Grahamstown.

He is as progressive as any white man cares to be under that generous South African sun, and when it comes to driving a bargain he is a match for any of the money sharks of Johannesburg. For the youthful Boer who reaches the city directly from the country, without any trade or profession, the prospects are gloomy. He is at a great disadvantage when put into competition with almost any class of residents. The occupations to which he can turn are few, and these have been still further restricted in

late years by the destruction of cattle by the rinderpest and the substitution of railways for road transport. His lack of education unfits him for most of the openings provided in such a city as Johannesburg, even when business is at its highest tide, and a small increase in the tension of business brings him to absolute want.

The Boer of to-day is a creature of circumstance. He is outstripped because he has had no opportunities for development. Driven from Cape Colony, where he was rapidly developing a national character, he was compelled to wander into lands that offered no opportunities of any description. He has been cut off for almost a hundred years from an older and more energetic civilization, and even from his neighbours; it is no wonder that he is a century behind the van. No other civilized race on earth has been handicapped in such a manner, and if there had been one it is a matter for conjecture whether it would have held its own, as the Boer has done, or whether it would have fallen to the level of the savage.

Had the Boer Voortrekkers been fortunate

enough to settle in a fertile country bordering on the sea, where they might have had communication with the outer world, their descendants would undoubtedly to-day be growing cane and wheat instead of herding cattle and driving transport wagons. Their love of freedom could not have been greater under those circumstances, but they might have averted the conditions which now threaten to erase their nation from the face of the earth.

CHAPTER V

PRESIDENT KRUGER

STEPHANUS JOHANNES PAULUS KRUGER, or Uncle Paul, the Lion of Rustenberg, is a man of most remarkable characteristics. A man of absolutely no education, as we understand the word, he has, during the long years of a notable career, so applied his inherent abilities, his natural astuteness, the cunning acquired by constant battling with the wiles of native enemies, as to be able to acquit himself of his high office in a manner to be envied by many who have enjoyed a hundred times as many advantages. Although he is almost seventy-five years old, the President's mind has not become dimmed, but, if anything, has grown keener of perception and wider in its scope during the last ten years.

Since his youth Mr. Kruger has been a leader among his countrymen. When a boy he had

pronounced ability as a deer-stalker, and it is related of him that before he had reached manhood he had killed more lions than any other man in the colony. He was absolutely fearless, and could endure any amount of bodily pain and discomfort. As an example of this, I repeat his explanation of the accident that caused him to lose his left thumb:

"We were shooting rhinoceros one day," said he, "when an old gun exploded in my hands. It cut my thumb so badly that I saw it could not be saved. I borrowed a dull knife and cut the thumb off, because it prevented me from holding the gun properly."

President Kruger's personality is most unique. He impresses one as being a king in the garb of a farmer, a genius in a dunce's cap. At first sight he would be mistaken for an awkward countryman, with "store clothes" and a silk hat intended for some one else. His frock coat is far too small to reach around his corpulent body, and his trousers seem to have a natural antipathy for his shoes.

He wears no cuffs, and the presence of a collar and tie may be determined only by

drawing aside the natural curtain formed by his whiskers. He is uncouth in his manner, but he has great natural attractiveness gained by a long life among hunters in the wilds. He is suspicious of everything and every one, but that quality is easily accounted for by his early dealings with negro chiefs, whose treacherous habits caused him to become wary in all his transactions with them. In later days this has stood him in good stead. He is slow to make friends, but once he trusts a person voluminous proof is necessary before he alters his opinion of the man. He never forgets a good deed, and never pardons the man who does a bad one.

President Kruger is short in stature, measuring less than five feet seven inches. His head and body are large and fat, but his legs are thin and short. His head is just a trifle longer than broad, and almost fits the English definition of "square head." The small eyes are surmounted by bushy, white eyebrows, which extend half an inch beyond his forehead.

When he is not sitting for a photograph his hair is not so neatly arranged as it appears

in the well-known pictures, but hangs loosely down over his wide forehead, except when, with a hasty swish of the hand, he brushes it aside. The hair is nearly white, and hangs over the sides of his head in long tresses, which cover both his ears.

When he smiles the big fat circles above his cheeks are pushed upward, and shut his small gray eyes from view. But when pleased the President generally laughs hilariously, and then his eyes remain closed for the greater part of a minute. Mr. Kruger's nose and mouth are the chief features of his face. Both are more extensive than his large face demands, but they are such marvels in their own peculiar way as to be distinguishing marks. The bridge of the nose grows wide as it goes outward from the point between the eyes, and before it reaches the tip it has a gentle upheaval. Then it spreads out on either side, and covers fully two inches of area above his upper lip. It is not attractive, but in that it follows the general condition of his facial landscape.

The mouth is wide and ungainly. The constant use of a heavy pipe has caused a deep de-

pression on the left side of his lower lip, and this gives the whole mouth the appearance of being unbalanced. His chin is large and prominent, and his ears correspond relatively in size and symmetry with his face. When in repose his features are not pleasant to look upon, but when lighted up by a smile they become rather attractive, and generally cause his laughter to become contagious among his hearers.

The thin line of beard which runs from ear to ear combines with the hair on his head in forming what is not unlike a white halo around the President's face. The lines in the man's face are deep, irregular, and very numerous. They indicate more than anything the ceaseless worry and troubles to which the President has been subjected while directing the affairs of his countrymen of the Transvaal.

The physical description of the Kruger of to-day is one that suggests sluggishness and idleness rather than alertness and ceaseless activity. The appearance of the man certainly does not conform with his record of marvellous performances, unflagging endeavour, and superior mental attainments. The well-pre-

served Kruger at seventy-five years bears no deep marks of the busy and eventful life he has led, nor are there any visible indications that the end of his usefulness to his people is close at hand.

The fragmentary history of Mr. Kruger's life, as related by himself, gives an insight into his remarkably varied experiences. He modestly refrains from allowing any one, even those who know him best, to obtain from him enough of his own history to incorporate in a biography, and it is likely, unless in his later years he changes his mind, that no detailed narrative can ever be written.

Although the majority of his countrymen are of Dutch or Huguenot ancestry, Mr. Kruger is of German descent. Jacob Kruger, his paternal ancestor, emigrated to South Africa, in 1713, from the Potsdam district of Germany, and married a young woman who was born in Cape Colony. He was born October 10, 1825, in Colesburg, Cape Colony, whither his parents had "trekked" from Cape Town a quarter of a century before. The first Krugers whose names appear in the Dutch East India Com-

pany's records arrived in the settlement at the Cape in 1712, and thereafter became leaders in enterprise among the settlers. While Mr. Kruger was yet in his infancy the Boers' troubles with the Colonial Government began, and when he was ten years old he migrated with the "Voortrekkers" to the unknown regions in the interior.

The life in the open and the tropical temperature served to develop him early, and at the age of fifteen we find him shooting his first lion, as well as serving in the capacity of "field cornet," a minor official position. As such he took part in the wars with the Zulu Dingaan and the Matabele Moselekatse, and served with distinction. In 1842 he was confirmed by the Rev. Daniel Lindley, the American missionary, and had implanted more firmly in his heart the religious feeling which in later years has proved to be his greatest solace in his troubles.

Next we hear of him standing by the side of his father while he fires the first shot at the English soldiers in the battle of Boomplaats, in 1848. After doing valiant service in that battle, he became one of the leaders of the

"trekkers" who settled in the Transvaal country.

In 1856 young Kruger, then barely thirty-one years old, is elected sub-commandant of the Transvaal army, a most responsible position in a country where natives are as treacherous as they are innumerable. Five years later he becomes commandant of the army, and leads a force of one hundred and fifty men against Chief Sechele. He retains that office until 1877, when England annexes the country to her domain. During the war for independence which then ensues, Mr. Kruger is Vice-President of the Triumvirate, which executes the government of the country, and after peace is declared in 1883 he is elected to the presidency. He is thrice re-elected, and is now serving his fourth term as head of the South African Republic.

Into this skeleton of his life's story might be fitted innumerable incidents and anecdotes that are related by his countrymen, who treasure them greatly and repeat them at every opportunity. Many of these are probably imaginary, while others have undoubtedly been retold

so frequently that they have lost all resemblance of the original form. The majority of the stories refer to Mr. Kruger's prowess in dealing with lions, tigers, and elephants, and many of these are probably true. Several of those that he himself verifies are given merely to illustrate the experiences that the Boers encountered in the early days of the "trekkers."

When fifteen years old Kruger and one of his sisters, being left alone on the veldt by their parents, were approached by a South African panther, small but of ample enough proportions to frighten the two children. Kruger, with only a knife for a weapon, boldly attacked the panther, and after a severe struggle, during which he was sorely injured, slew the beast. Another story, illustrative of his physical strength, is that he contested with a native in a foot-race of twelve hours' duration, and won by such a large margin that he was enabled to stalk a buck on the veldt and carry it to his father's house before his competitor reached the goal.

During the "trekking" trip from Cape Colony to the final settlement in the Transvaal the

Boer settlers shot no less than six thousand lions, and of that number Kruger is credited with shooting more than two hundred and fifty.

His personal bravery was never shown to better advantage than in 1857, when he was sub-commandant of the Transvaal army. He had ordered several of his burghers to go into the Orange Free State, with which country there was a serious misunderstanding, and there they were arrested. As soon as Mr. Kruger heard of the men's arrest he hastened into the camp of the Free State forces and asked for the release of the prisoners on the ground that they were innocent, and that if any one were guilty he was that man, because he had ordered them to enter the country. The commandant of the Free State forces was so greatly amazed by Mr. Kruger's bravery that he allowed all the Boers to return to their own camp.

Mr. Kruger's remarkable vitality and capacity for hard mental labour are the results of the great care which he bestows upon himself and the regular habits which he has followed for almost twenty years. He rises at

half past five o'clock every morning, and follows a daily programme, from which he never deviates unless he is absent from home. After he leaves his bedroom he proceeds to his library and drinks several cups of intensely black coffee, and smokes several pipefuls of strong Boer tobacco. Then he spends the greater part of an hour in family devotions and the perusal of the Bible. After breakfast, at half past seven o'clock, he receives the members of the Volksraad, and then transacts the heaviest business of the day. After all the Volksraad members have departed, he steps out on the piazza of his little whitewashed cottage and joins the burghers, or citizens, who every morning congregate there and discuss state affairs while they sip the coffee and smoke the tobacco which the President furnishes to all visitors.

At ten o'clock the state carriage and its escort of eight gaudily apparelled troopers await him at the gate, and he is conveyed to the Government House, several blocks distant. As soon as he arrives there he is to be found either in one legislative chamber or the other, directing the affairs of the two bodies, making ad-

dresses or quietly watching the progress of legislative matters. At noon he returns to his home for luncheon, but is back at his duties in the Government House at two o'clock, and remains there three hours in the afternoon. Thereafter he receives burghers at his home until seven o'clock, and retires every evening at precisely eight o'clock.

The power which Mr. Kruger has over the majority of his countrymen is due in no small measure to his fondness for conversing with them and his treatment of them when they visit his cottage. As soon as the sun has risen, a small stream of Boers wends its way toward the President's cottage and awaits his appearance on the piazza. When Mr. Kruger comes among them he loses his identity as President, and merges his personality into that of an ordinary burgher. This custom has endeared him in the affections of his people, and, as a result, whenever he makes a stand on any question it may be taken for granted that he has thoroughly discussed the subject beforehand with his burghers, and that he can depend upon the majority of them for their support.

Mr. Kruger is a speech-maker of no mean ability. His addresses in the Volksraad are filled with good reasoning, homely similes, biblical quotations, and convincing argument. He speaks without preparation, indulges in no flights of oratory, but uses the simple, plain language that is easily understood by the burgher as well as the statesman. All his speeches are delivered in the Boer "taal," a dialect which bears the same relation to the Dutch language as "low" German does to "high" German. Generally the dialect is used by the Boers in speaking only, the pure Dutch being used in correspondence and official state papers.

The President may be able to speak the English language, but if such is the case he succeeds admirably in allowing no one except his most trusted friends to hear him. Much investigation has failed to reveal any one in Pretoria who has ever heard him speak the English language, although reports have it that he speaks it fluently. He understands the language well, and any one who has ever held a conversation with him through an interpreter

will recall that he occasionally forgets his assumed inability to understand English, and replies to a question before the interpreter has commenced to translate it.

Mr. Kruger has been twice married. His first wife, a Miss Du Plessis, was the daughter of one of the early voortrekkers, and with the other women took part in many of the Boer wars against the natives. She died shortly after the founding of the republic, and left one son, who lived only a short time. Mr. Kruger several years afterward married his first wife's niece, who is now the first lady of the land. Like almost all Boer women, she has a retiring disposition, and very rarely appears in public except at religious gatherings. The President rarely introduces her to his visitors, probably in obedience to her own desires, but she constantly entertains the wives and daughters of burghers who call on her husband.

President and Madame Kruger have had sixteen children, seven of whom still live. One of his sons is the President's private secretary, and a youth of decidedly modern ideas and tendencies. Another son is a private in the

Pretoria police, a state military organization in which he takes great pride. A third occupies his father's farm near Rustenberg. The other children are daughters, who are married to Boer farmers and business men. One of Kruger's sons-in-law is Captain F. C. Eloff, who was taken prisoner by the Uitlanders during the raid, and who has since aroused the enmity of the English residents by freely expressing his opinion of them in public speeches. Captain Eloff is several times a millionaire, and lives in a two-hundred-and-fifty-thousand-dollar mansion.

Popular report in Pretoria has it that the President's wealth amounts to a million dollars, but his mode of living certainly does not betray it. His salary as President is thirty-five thousand dollars, in addition to which he is annually allowed fifteen hundred dollars for house-rent, or "huishuur." He has long since purchased the house in which he lives, but, as the allowance of fifteen hundred dollars is annually paid to him, the English residents aver that the amount is intended as a slight reimbursement to him for the money he spends for

the coffee and tobacco used by the burgher callers at his cottage. During the later years of his life Barney Barnato, the wizard of South African finance, supplied to the President all the tobacco he used, and consequently Mr. Kruger was able to save the Government tobacco allowance. Barnato also presented to Mr. Kruger two handsome marble statues of lions which now adorn the lawn of the presidential residence. A photograph which is greatly admired by the patriotic Boers represents Mr. Kruger appropriately resting his hand on the head of one of the recumbent lions in a manner which to them suggests the physical superiority of the Boers over the British.

Mr. Kruger has always been a man of deep and earnest religious convictions. In his youth he was taught the virtues of a Christian life, and it is not recorded that he ever did anything which was inconsistent with his training. An old Zulu headman who lives near the Vaal River, in the Orange Free State, relates that Mr. Kruger yoked him beside an ox in a transport wagon when the trekkers departed from Natal in the early '40s, and compelled him to

do the work of a beast; but he has no good reason for declaring that his bondsman was Mr. Kruger rather than any one of the other Boers in the party.

When Mr. Kruger was about thirty-five years old his religious enthusiasm led him into an experience which almost resulted in his death. He had met with some reverses, which caused him to doubt the genuineness of religious assistance. He endeavoured to find comfort and consolation in his Bible, but failed, and he became sorely troubled. One night, after bidding farewell to his wife, he disappeared into the wilderness of the Magalies Hills, a short distance west of Pretoria. After he had been absent from his home for several days, a number of men went to the hills to search for him, and found him on his knees engaged in singing and praying. He had been so many days without food and water that he was too weak to rise from the ground, and it was necessary for the men to carry him to his home. Since that experience he has believed himself to be a special instrument of a divine power, and by his deeds has given the impression that

he is a leader chosen to defend the liberties and homes of his people.

He never speaks of his experience in the hills, but those who have been his friends for many years say that it marked an epoch in his life. The Boers, who have none of the modern cynicism and scepticism, regard him as the wielder of divine power, while those who admire nothing which he is capable of doing scoff and jeer at him as a religious fanatic, and even call him a hypocrite. Any one who has observed Mr. Kruger in his daily habits, or has heard him in the pulpit of the church opposite the cottage where he lives, will bear witness to the intensity and earnestness of his genuine religious feeling. The lessons of life which he draws from his own personal experiences, and expounds to his congregation with no little degree of earnestness, are of such a character as to remove all doubts which the mind may have concerning his purity of purpose.

Mr. Kruger's style of writing is unique, but thoroughly characteristic of himself. The many references to the Deity, the oftentimes pomp-

ous style, the words which breathe of the intense interest in and loyalty to his countrymen, all combine to make his state communications and proclamations most interesting reading. The following proclamation, made to the citizens of Johannesburg several days after the Jameson raid, is typical:

"*To all the Residents of Johannesburg.*

"I, S. J. P. Kruger, State President of the South African Republic, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, by virtue of Article VI of the Minutes of the Council, dated January 10, 1896, do hereby make known to all the residents of Johannesburg and neighbourhood that I am inexpressibly thankful to God that the despicable and treacherous incursion into my country has been prevented, and the independence of the republic saved, through the courage and bravery of my burghers.

"The persons who have been guilty of this crime must naturally be punished according to law—that is to say, they must stand their trial before the high court and a jury—but there are thousands who have been misled and

deceived, and it has clearly appeared to me that even among the so-called leaders of the movement there are many who have been deceived.

"A small number of intriguers in and outside of the country ingeniously incited a number of the residents of Johannesburg and surroundings to struggle, under the guise of standing up for political rights, and day by day, as it were, urged them on; and when in their stupidity they thought that the moment had arrived, they (the intriguers) caused one Dr. Jameson to cross the boundary of the republic.

"Did they ever ask themselves to what they were exposing you?

"I shudder when I think what bloodshed could have resulted had a merciful Providence not saved you and my burghers.

"I will not refer to the financial damage.

"Now I approach you with full confidence. Work together with the Government of this republic, and strengthen their hands to make this country a land wherein people of all nationalities may reside in common brotherhood.

"For months and months I have planned what changes and reforms could have been

considered desirable in the Government and the state, but the loathsome agitation, especially of the press, has restrained me.

"The same men who have publicly come forward as leaders have demanded reforms from me, and in a tone and a manner which they would not have ventured to have done in their own country, owing to fear for the criminal law. For that cause it was made impossible for me and my burghers, the founders of this republic, to take their preposterous proposals in consideration.

"It is my intention to submit a draft law at the first ordinary session of the Raad, whereby a municipality, with a mayor at the head, would be granted to Johannesburg, to whom the control of the city will be intrusted. According to all constitutional principles, the Municipal Board will be elected by the people of the town.

"I earnestly request you, laying your hands on your hearts, to answer me this question: After what has happened, can and may I submit this to the representatives of the people? My reply is, I know there are thousands in

Johannesburg and the suburbs to whom I can intrust such elective powers. Inhabitants of Johannesburg, render it possible for the Government to go before the Volksraad with the motto, 'Forgotten and Forgiven.'"

Mr. Kruger's political platform is based on one of the paragraphs of a manifesto which he, as Vice-President of the Triumvirate, sent to Sir Owen Lanyon, the British Resident Commissioner, on Dingaan's Day, 1880, when the Boers were engaged in their second struggle for independence. The paragraph, which was apparently written by Mr. Kruger, reads:

"We declare before God, who knows the heart, and before the world: Any one speaking of us as rebels is a slanderer! The people of the South African Republic have never been subjects of Her Majesty, and never will be."

The President's hatred of the English was bred in the bone, and it will never be eradicated. To see his country free from every English tie is the aim of his existence, and every act of his political career has been born with that

thought. His own political aggrandizement has always been a secondary thought. He himself has declared that there is no one in the republic who is able or willing to complete the independence of the republic with such little friction as he, and that, such being the case, he would be a traitor to desert the cause in the hours of its gravest peril. He considers personal victories at the polls of his own country as mere stepping-stones toward that greater victory which he hopes to secure over the English colonial secretary, and the day that England renounces all claim to suzerainty over the Transvaal Mr. Kruger will consider his duty done, and will go into the retirement which his great work and the fulness of his years owe him.

For a man whose education has been of the scantiest, and whose people were practically unheard of until he brought them into prominence, Paul Kruger has received from foreign sources many remarkable tributes to the wisdom with which he has conducted the affairs of the country under circumstances of more than ordinary difficulty.

That which he received from Emperor William, of Germany, several days after the repulse of the Jameson raiders, was perhaps the finest tribute that Mr. Kruger has ever received, and one that created a greater sensation throughout the world than any peaceful message that ever passed between the heads of two governments. The cablegram, of which the text follows, is one of the most priceless treasures in Mr. Kruger's collection:

"*Received January 3d, 1896.*

"*From Wilhelm I. R., Berlin.*

"*To* PRESIDENT KRUGER, *Pretoria.*

"I tender you my sincere congratulations that, without appealing to the help of friendly powers, you and your people have been successful in opposing with your own forces the armed bands that have broken into your country to disturb the peace, in restoring order, and in maintaining the independence of your country against attacks from without.

"WILHELM I. R."

Prince Bismarck declared that Kruger was the greatest natural-born statesman of the time.

William E. Gladstone, who had many opportunities to gauge Kruger's skill in diplomacy, referred to him as the shrewdest politician on the continent of Africa, and not a mean competitor of those of Europe. Among the titles which have been bestowed upon him by European rulers are Knight of the First Class of the Red Eagle of Prussia, Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, Grand Knight of the Leopold Order of Belgium, Grand Knight of the Netherland Lion, and Grand Knight of the Portuguese Order of Distinguished Foreigners.

If a detailed history of Mr. Kruger's life could be obtained from his own lips, it would compare favourably with those of the notable characters of modern times. The victories he has gained in the field of diplomacy may not have affected as many people as those of Bismarck; the defeats administered in battle may not have been as crushing as those of Napoleon, but to his weakling country they were equally as decisive and valuable.

The great pyramid in the valley of the Nile is seen to best advantage as far away as Cairo. Observed close at hand, it serves only to dis-

turb the spectator's mind with an indefinable sense of vastness, crudity, and weight; from a distance the relative proportions of all things are clearly discerned. So it is with the career of Mr. Kruger. Historic perspective is necessary to determine the value of the man to the country. Fifty or a hundred years hence, when the Transvaal has safely emerged from its period of danger, there will be a true sense of proportion, so that his labours in behalf of his country may be judged aright.

At this time the critical faculty is lacking because his life work is not ended, and its entire success is not assured. He has earned for himself, however, the distinction of being the greatest diplomatist that South Africa has ever produced. Whether the fruits of his diplomacy will avail to keep his country intact is a question that will find its answer in the results of future years. He has succeeded in doing that which no man has ever done. As the head of the earth's weakest nation he has for more than a decade defied its strongest power to take his country from him. That should be sufficient honour for any man.

CHAPTER VI

INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT KRUGER

As is the rule with them everywhere, Englishmen in South Africa speak of Mr. Kruger with contempt and derision. Unprejudiced Americans and other foreigners in South Africa admire him for his patriotism, his courage in opposing the dictatorial policy of England's Colonial Office, and his efforts to establish a republic as nearly like that of the United States of America as possible. My desire to see Mr. Kruger was almost obliterated a week after my arrival in the country by the words of condemnation which were heaped upon him by Englishmen whenever his name was mentioned. In nearly every Englishman's mind the name of "Oom Paul" was a synonym for all that was corrupt and vile; few gave him a word of commendation.

When I came into the pretty little town

of Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, where the President lives and where he mingles daily with the populace with as much freedom and informality as a country squire, there was a rapid transformation in my opinion of the man. The Boers worship their leader; to them he is a second George Washington, and even a few Englishmen there speak with admiration of him.

The day before my arrival in the town John McCann, of Johannesburg, who is a former New-Yorker and a friend of the President, informed Mr. Kruger of my intention to visit Pretoria. The President had refused interviews to three representatives of influential London newspapers who had been in the town three months waiting for the opportunity, but he expressed a desire to see an American.

"The Americans won't lie about me," he said to Mr. McCann. "I want America to learn our side of the story from me. They have had only the English point of view." I had scarcely reached my hotel when an emissary from the President called and made an appointment for me to meet him in the after-

noon. The emissary conducted me to the Government Building, where the Volksraad was in session, and it required only a short time for it to become known that a representative from the great sister republic across the Atlantic desired to learn the truth about the Boers.

I was overwhelmed with information. Cabinet members, Raad members, the Commissioner of War, the Postmaster General, the most honoured and influential men of the republic —men who had more than once risked their lives in fighting for their country's preservation—gathered around me and were so eager to have me tell America of the wrongs they had suffered at the hands of the British that the scene was highly pathetic.

One after another spoke of the severe trials through which their young republic had passed, the efforts that had been made to disrupt it, and the constant harassment to which they had been subjected by enemies working under the cloak of friendship. The majority spoke English, but such as knew only the Boer taal were given an opportunity by their

more fortunate friends to add to the testimony, and spoke through an interpreter. Such earnest, such honest conversation it had never been my lot to hear before. It was a memorable hour that I spent listening to the plaints of those plain, good-hearted Boers in the heart of South Africa. It was the voice of the downtrodden, the weak crying out against the strong.

When the hour of my appointment with the President arrived there was a unanimous desire among the Boers gathered around to accompany me. It was finally decided by them that six would be a sufficient number, and among those chosen were Postmaster-General Van Alpen, who was a representative at the Postal Congress in Washington several years ago; Commissioner of Mines P. Kroebler, Commissioner of War J. J. Smidt, Justice of the Peace Dillingham, and former Commandant-General Stephanne Schoeman.

When our party reached the little whitewashed cottage in which the President lives a score or more of tall and soil-stained farmers were standing in a circular group on the low

piazza. They were laughing hilariously at something that had been said by a shorter, fat man who was nearly hidden from view by the surrounding circle of patriarchs. A breach in the circle disclosed the President of the republic with his left arm on the shoulder of a long-whiskered Boer, and his right hand swinging lightly in the hand of another of his countrymen. It was democracy in its highest exemplification.

Catching a glimpse of us as we were entering on the lawn, the President hastily withdrew into the cottage. The Boers he deserted seated themselves on benches and chairs on the piazza, relighted their pipes, and puffed contentedly, without paying more attention to us than to nod to several of my companions as we passed them.

The front door of the cottage, or "White House," as they call it, was wide open. There was no flunkey in livery to take our cards, no white-aproned servant girls to tra-la-la our names. The executive mansion of the President was as free and open to visitors as the farmhouse of the humblest burgher of the re-

public. In their efforts to display their qualities of politeness my companions urged me into the President's private reception room, while they lingered for a short time at the threshold. The President rose from his chair in the opposite end, met me in the centre of the room, and had grasped my hand before my companions had an opportunity of going through the process of an introduction.

There was less formality and red tape in meeting "Oom Paul" than would be required to have a word with Queen Victoria's butcher or President McKinley's office-boy.

While Mr. Kruger's small fat hand was holding mine in its grasp and shaking it vehemently, he spoke something in Boer, to which I replied, "Heel goed, danke," meaning "Very well, I thank you." Some one had told me that he would first ask concerning my health, and also gave me the formula for an answer. The President laughed heartily at my reply, and made a remark in Boer "taal." The interpreter came up in the meantime and straightened out the tangle by telling me

that the President's first question had been "Have you any English blood in your veins?"

The President, still laughing at my reply, seated himself in a big armchair at the head of a table on which was a heavy pipe and a large tobacco box. He filled the pipe, lighted the tobacco, and blew great clouds of smoke toward the ceiling. My companions took turns in filling their pipes from the President's tobacco box, and in a few minutes the smoke was so dense as nearly to obscure my view of the persons in front of me.

The President crossed his short, thin legs and blew quick, spirited puffs of smoke while an interpreter translated to him my expression of the admiration which the American people had for him, and how well known the title "Oom Paul" was in America. This delighted the old man immeasurably. His big, fat body seemed to resolve itself into waves which started in his shoes and gradually worked upward until the fat rings under his eyes hid the little black orbits from view. Then he slapped his knees with his hands, opened his large mouth, and roared with laughter.

It was almost a minute before he regained his composure sufficiently to take another puff at the pipe which is his constant companion. During the old man's fit of laughter one of my companions nudged me and advised me: "Now ask him anything you wish. He is in better humour than I have ever seen him before." The President checked a second outburst of laughter rather suddenly and asked, "Are you a friend of Cecil Rhodes?" If there is any one whom "Oom Paul" detests it is the great colonizer. The President invariably asks this question of strangers, and if the answer is an affirmative one he refuses to continue the conversation.

Being assured that such was not the case, Mr. Kruger's mind appeared to be greatly relieved—as he is very suspicious of all strangers—and he asked another question which is indicative of the religious side of his nature: "To what Church do you belong?" A speaking acquaintanceship was claimed with the Dutch Reformed Church, of which the President is a most devout member, and this served

to dissipate all suspicions he might have had concerning me.

The interpreter was repeating a question to him when the President suddenly interrupted, as is frequently his custom during a conversation, and asked: "Do the American people know the history of our people? I will tell you truthfully and briefly. You have heard the English version always; now I will give you ours."

The President proceeded slowly and, between puffs at his great pipe, spoke determinedly: "When I was a child we were so maltreated by the English in Cape Colony that we could no longer bear the abuses to which we were subjected. In 1835 we migrated northward with our cattle and possessions and settled in Natal, just south of Zululand, where by unavoidable fighting we acquired territory from the Zulus. We had hardly settled that country and established ourselves and a local form of government when our old enemies followed, and by various high-handed methods made life so unendurable that we were again compelled to move our families and posses-

sions. This time we travelled five hundred miles inland over the trackless veldt and across the Vaal River, and after many hardships and trials settled in the Transvaal. The country was so poor, so uninviting, that the English colonists did not think it worth their while to settle in the land which we had chosen for our abiding-place.

"Our people increased in number, and, as the years passed, established a form of government such as yours in America. The British thought they were better able to govern us than we were ourselves, and once took our country from us. Their defeats at Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill taught them that we were fighters, and they gave us our independence and allowed us to live peaceably for a number of years. They did not think the country valuable enough to warrant the repetition of the fighting for it. When it became known all over the world twelve years ago that the most extensive gold fields on the globe had been discovered in our apparently worthless country, England became envious and laid plans to annex such a valuable prize. Thou-

sands of people were attracted hither by our wonderful gold mines at Johannesburg, and the English statesmen renewed their attacks on us. They made all sorts of pretexts to rob us of our country, and when they could not do it in a way that was honest and would be commended by other nations, they planned the Jameson raid, which was merely a bold attempt to steal our country."

At this point Kruger paused for a moment and then added, "You Americans know how well they succeeded." This sally amused him and my companions hugely, and they all joined in hearty laughter.

The President declared that England's attitude toward them had changed completely since the discovery of the gold fields. "Up to that time we had been living in harmony with every one. We always tried to be peaceable and to prevent strife between our neighbours, but we have been continually harassed since the natural wealth of our land has been uncovered."

Here he relighted his pipe, which had grown cold while he was detailing the history

of the Transvaal Boers, and then drew a parable, which is one of his distinguishing traits: "The gold fields may be compared to a pretty girl who is young and wealthy. You all admire her and want her to be yours, but when she rejects you your anger rises and you want to destroy her." By implication England is the rejected suitor, and the Transvaal the rich young girl.

Comparing the Boers' conduct in South Africa with that of the English, the President said: "Ever since we left Cape Colony in 1835 we have not taken any territory from the natives by conquest except that of one chief whose murderous maraudings compelled us to drive him away from his country. We bartered and bought every inch of land we now have. England has taken all the land she has in South Africa at the muzzles of repeating rifles and machine guns. That is the civilized method of extending the bounds of the empire they talk about so much."

The Englishmen's plaint is that the republic will tax them, but allow them no representation in the affairs of government. The

President explained his side in this manner: "Every man, be he Englishman, Chinaman, or Eskimo, can become a naturalized citizen of our country and have all the privileges of a burgher in nine years. If we should have a war, a foreigner can become a citizen in a minute if he will fight with our army. The difficulty with the Englishmen here is that they want to be burghers and at the same time retain their English citizenship.

"A man can not serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other, or hold to the one and despise the other. We have a law for bigamy in our country, and it is necessary to dispose of an old love before it is possible to marry a new."

"Oom Paul" is very bitter in his feeling against the English, whom he calls his natural enemies, but it is seldom that he says anything against them except in private to his most intimate friends. The present great distress in the Johannesburg gold fields is attributed by the English residents to the high protective duties imposed by the Government and the high freight charges for the transmission of ma-

chinery and coal. Mr. Kruger explained that those taxes were less than in the other colonies in the country.

"We are high protectionists because ours is a young country. These new mines have cost the Government great amounts of money, and it is necessary for us to raise as much as we expend. They want us to give them everything gratuitously, so that we may become bankrupt and they can take our country for the debt. If they don't like our laws, why don't they stay away?"

Nowhere in the world is the American Republic admired as much outside of its own territory as in South Africa. Both the Transvaal and the Orange Free State Constitutions are patterned after that of the United States, and there is a desire lurking in the breasts of thousands of South Africans to convert the whole of the country south of the Zambezi into one grand United States of South Africa.

Sir Alfred Milner, the Queen's Commissioner to South Africa, said to me several days before I saw Mr. Kruger that such a thing might come to pass within the next