

# TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

## LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE

COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO ENQUIRE AND REPORT  
UPON CERTAIN MATTERS CONNECTED WITH THE  
FUTURE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE TRANSVAAL  
AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

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Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.  
March, 1906.



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SIR,

Downing Street, March 21, 1906.

As you are aware, His Majesty's Government have advised the King that as, in their opinion, full self-government should be conferred on the Transvaal at the earliest possible date, the Letters Patent of the 31st March, 1905, which were intended to provide a representative form of Constitution intermediate between that now existing and Responsible Government, as understood in the great self-governing Colonies, should not be brought into effect, and that fresh Letters Patent should be issued establishing full Responsible Government as soon as practicable.

Before, however, considering the terms of the proposed Letters Patent in detail, His Majesty's Government desire certain information, which they believe can best be obtained on the spot by a specially appointed Committee, and they are glad to be able to avail themselves of your services as Chairman of this Committee. The Committee will consist, besides yourself, of three other members, Lord Sandhurst, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Sir F. Hopwood, K.C.B., and Colonel Johnston.

The general object of the inquiry is to inform His Majesty's Government as to the effect of the application of different principles to the actual conditions of the Transvaal, as affected by the numbers, distribution, and social condition of the population.

It will be the duty of the Committee :—

1. To inquire and report into the effect upon the representation of—

- (a) The Witwatersrand District;
- (b) Towns outside that district;
- (c) Purely rural Districts;

of the division of the Transvaal into sixty single-membered constituencies, according to different bases of representation.

2. To inquire and report into the effect of substituting a system of manhood suffrage for the qualification prescribed for voters in Clause III of the Letters Patent of 1905, the probable number of voters which would thus be added to the roll, and the comparative results in urban and rural districts.

3. To consider and report on any proposals for the representation of urban or rural interests respectively, other than the division into single-membered electoral divisions, and specially the effect upon such division of a marginal discretion larger than has hitherto been proposed in their delimitation to meet

special circumstances, such as respect for existing boundaries of districts already recognized for local government purposes, community or diversity of interests, means of communication, or physical features.

4. To consider and report, from such sources as may be available, how far the census of 1904 is in regard to some localities no longer to be relied upon, and also how far an estimate, which would be sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes, could be procured from information in the possession of the Government or otherwise.

5. To make some estimate of the results of applying analogous processes to the circumstances of the Orange River Colony.

I am to draw your special attention to the proposals which it is understood were discussed at a recent conference of the leaders of the various parties. The introduction of manhood suffrage, taken in conjunction with the larger marginal discretion already referred to in the delimitation of electoral divisions might materially modify the situation and tend to make the Constitution generally more acceptable.

Having regard to the cost of living in the Transvaal, the adoption of manhood suffrage in place of a £10 franchise cannot involve any serious increase in the electorate, but on the other hand it will admit to the privileges of citizenship certain classes to whose exclusion objection has always been taken, and whose admission to the voters' roll, especially in the case of the younger farmers, would be desirable.

It is unnecessary to lay stress upon the importance of your Report being submitted at the earliest moment which is consistent with the due completion of your inquiry.

His Majesty's Government have not found it possible to determine the form of the Constitution under which Responsible Government is to be introduced into the Colonies without the information which they thus hope to obtain; but they recognize that from every point of view it is essential to use every means in their power to shorten this interval before the new Constitution is determined and the new Government is installed.

I am, &c.,  
FRED. GRAHAM.

The Right Honourable  
Sir J. West Ridgeway,  
G.C.M.G., K.C.B., &c.