

**A HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION
OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN AFRICA**

BRITAIN ACROSS THE SEAS

AFRICA

A
HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION
OF THE
BRITISH EMPIRE IN AFRICA

BY
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PREFACE

AND

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

IN view of the great developments of the British Empire in Africa since the commencement of the Twentieth Century, it was thought desirable by the National Society that a concise history of this racial enterprise should be published, which would not be too abstruse for young students (whose previous knowledge of Africa might be assumed to be elementary), nor yet too lacking in technical information to be of service to those who had left student-hood behind, but desired to learn rapidly 'how all these things came to pass' in this Continent of black, white, and yellow peoples. The book was to be written as far as possible without national or party bias.

How far I have accomplished these aims I must leave it to the fair-minded reader to decide. I have been left quite unfettered by the National Society, and the opinions herein expressed are my own, though I trust that they are coincident with the actual truth, so far as that truth can be realized whilst the nearer events of African history are not yet properly focussed by time.

It has seemed to me in my own revision of the

proofs, that here and there I may have given the impression that I reprobated the imperial enterprise of other European Powers in Africa; that while approving of the attempts of the British to keep open for their future advancement the road from Cape Colony to the Zambezi, I thought it reprehensible on the part of the Dutch States of South Africa to attempt to baulk such a scheme or to contemplate an alliance with the German Empire; that I cordially approved of a British Nigeria or Sudan, but not of a French Empire in these regions. Such were not my intentions; but as this book is mainly intended for students, for the use of the young men and women who will assist in framing the policy of the British Empire when the present generation of workers and politicians has passed into inactivity, I should like to make it quite clear that I have followed Thomas Carlyle's advice to 'clear myself of cant.' (But he and Huxley and Charles Kingsley so purged their minds of the national tendency to be hypocritical that they approved of, or did not condemn, the atrocities committed in Jamaica during the early 'sixties.) It is my personal opinion that on the whole the British have been more righteous in their dealings with the native races of Africa than have some other of their European rivals; but they do not hold the monopoly of virtue and disinterestedness. Who that has studied at first hand the present condition of Algeria, Tunis, French Guinea, Ivory Coast, Dahome, French Nigeria, and Sudan, can refuse a meed of praise—of the heartiest—to the results of France's sacrifices and achievements in the cause of true civilization? Who, on the other hand, could fail to condemn the French

treatment of Western Congoland, based on the Leopoldian régime in the defunct Congo Independent State? And in this last, though the diatribes and criticisms of Mr. E. D. Morel are confirmed and justified by what has taken place, can any fair-minded witness deny that the Belgians have wrought much good elsewhere in the Congo basin, outside the area affected by the direct management of King Leopold II, or of several of his concessionnaire companies? The British record in Uganda in the early days, or in Zanzibar for a brief period, or in the far-back formation of the West African Colonies was not devoid of blame. Chicanery, combined with pitiful indecision, marred our South African Policy at intervals between 1806 and 1900, but these faults were accompanied by the noblest achievements in true Christianity, Science, Valour in warfare with men and beasts and with the Devil of unregenerate nature, and victories over these enemies which must make us proud of our national records. An impartial outsider cannot always defend the details or the whole of the 'native' policy of the Natal government, but is bound to bear in mind the main fact that the negro population of Natal and Zululand in 1843 was only about 220,000, and has since risen to not far short of 1,000,000; also to give the comparative handful of whites in that garden colony full credit for their amazing success in the development of their country's inherent resources, to the great profit and welfare of blacks, as well as yellows and whites.

Nor can one fail to agree that the Germans deserve well of the world's opinion for the way in which they have conducted scientific research, have maintained free trade, and have (ultimately) benefited the indigenous peoples of

Togoland, Cameroons, East Africa, and South-West Africa. Both in making and in writing history it is my humble opinion that we gain rather than lose by attempting to be just, and that whilst the parable of the Ten Talents is always to be borne in mind, we should equally take to heart the metaphor which bids us have scrupulous care for the flawless condition of our own vision before we concern ourselves too closely with our neighbour's eyesight.

The Society which publishes this book desired that it might be illustrated copiously by photographs of the scenes, the peoples and personalities referred to. I have been able to supply some of these illustrations from my own drawings and photographs, but for the remainder (as well as for verbal information) I am very much indebted to a number of friends and fellow-travellers in Africa, as well as to institutions like the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Anthropological Institute. Among those to whom my thanks are specially due are the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, Capt. T. C. Hincks (Royal Berkshire Regiment), Mr. Leo Weinthal, F.R.G.S. (Editor of the *African World*), Capt. C. H. Foulkes, R.E., Mr. J. F. Cunningham (Secretary to the Uganda Administration), Col. H. G. C. Swayne, R.E. (formerly of Somaliland), the Rev. J. T. F. Halligey, F.R.G.S., Mr. Francis Harrison, F.R.G.S. (of the Natal Government Agency-General in London), Mr. C. L. Temple of the North Nigerian Administration, Capt. W. Stanley, a travelling commissioner in the Gambia Protectorate, the proprietors of *South Africa*, Major J. J. Lang, C.M.G., R.E., and Mrs. Arthur Foulkes (whose late husband was an official of the Gold Coast Colony).

H. H. JOHNSTON.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	I
NOTES—(A) THE CLASSIFICATION OF MANKIND	38
(B) THE DIVISIONS OF THE NEGRO RACE	38
(C) THE BUSHMEN AND HOTTENTOTS	40
(D) THE BANTU	42
II. PEPPER, SLAVES, AND GOLD.	45
NOTE—THE PEPPER TRADE	59
III. CAPE COLONY	61
NOTE—THE TSE-TSE FLY AND PARASITIC DISEASES	93
IV. ZULU-KAFIR MOVEMENTS IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY	95
V. THE FOUNDING OF NATAL	110
VI. THE CREATION OF THE ORANGE RIVER SOVEREIGNTY AND THE TRANSVAAL	120
VII. THE HISTORY OF THE TRANSVAAL	144
VIII. CAPE COLONY FROM 1835 TO 1885	166
IX. RHODES AND RHODESIA: 'BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA'	178
X. NATAL: AND THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA	213
NOTE—THE AREA AND PRODUCTS OF BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA	236
XI. THE NATIVES OF BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA	239
XII. THE MASCARENE ARCHIPELAGOES	259
XIII. THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA	265

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
XIV. NIGERIA	304
NOTES—(A) THE PRINCIPAL TRIBES AND PEOPLES OF BRITISH NIGERIA	330
(B) THE HAUSA PEOPLE	334
(C) OTHER TRIBES OF BRITISH NIGERIA	334
XV. EGYPT AND THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN	338
NOTE—THE NATIVES OF THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN	369
XVI. EAST AFRICA	372
NOTE—THE NATIVE TRIBES OF THE BRITISH EAST AFRICAN DOMINION	403
INDEX	411

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
THE GREAT LIBYAN DESERT ON THE WESTERN FRONTIERS OF EGYPT	2
A TYPICAL SCENE IN ARID SOUTH AFRICA, NEAR THE ORANGE RIVER: THE DRY BED OF A ONCE POWERFUL RIVER IN NAMAKWALAND	3
THE ' THORN ' COUNTRY	4
THE PARKLANDS OF AFRICA	5
CENTRAL AFRICAN SCENERY: A MOUNTAIN STREAM	7
THE FOREST OF EQUATORIAL AFRICA	9
MOUNTAIN SCENERY IN SOUTH-CENTRAL AFRICA	11
THE HIGHEST PEAKS OF RUWENZORI RANGE	13
THE OKAPI (OKAPIA JOHNSTONI)	15
A BERG-DAMARA, OR HAUKWAIN WOMAN	16
A BUSHMAN OF CAPE COLONY	17
A MUHIMA OF THE UGANDA PROTECTORATE	19
A HOTTENTOT MAN	20
THE FULA TYPE	21
AN ARAB SHEIKH	23
THE ANCIENT RUINS OF RHODESIA	25
EGYPTIAN FELLAHIN	27
HAMITES	29
A LIBYAN TYPE	31
THE CAPE ORYX OR GEMSBOK	35
THE KAVIRONDO OF EASTERN EQUATORIAL AFRICA: A COMELY TYPE OF ' BANTU ' NEGRO	39
BUSHMAN PAINTINGS ON THE ROCK SURFACES OF A CAVERN IN THE DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAINS, NATAL	41
A STREAM IN THE DENSE FOREST OF WEST AFRICA	43
VASCO DA GAMA	46
A ' CARAVEL ' OF THE GENOESE STYLE	47
CAPE COAST CASTLE: GOLD COAST COLONY	49

	PAGE
ELMINA CASTLE : GOLD COAST COLONY	50
ELMINA CASTLE : LOOKING TOWARDS ST. JAGO	51
A FULA : GAMBIA HINTERLAND	53
CHRISTIANSBORG CASTLE, NEAR ACCRA	54
CHILDREN BATHING IN THE SURF : GOLD COAST COLONY	55
IN TANGIER, MOROCCO	57
TANGIER FROM THE HARBOUR	58
JAMESTOWN : ST. HELENA	63
THE LIGHTHOUSE ON THE EXTREMITY OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE	65
THE SPRINGBOK (A GENUS OF GAZELLES)	67
THE GRACEFUL STANLEY CRANE (TETRAPTERYX PARADISEA)	69
A TYPICAL BOER FARMER IN SOUTH AFRICA : OVER SIX FEET TALL	70
A PORTION OF CAPE TOWN	71
A KAFIR CHIEFTAIN	73
IN THE HEX MOUNTAINS, WESTERN CAPE COLONY	76
SIR BENJAMIN D'URBAN	79
THE OLD METHOD OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRAVEL AND EXPLORA- TION—WAGGONS AND TEAMS OF OXEN	84
THE BOER COSTUME OF THE 'FORTIES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (AS WORN BY THE FRENCH EXPLORER, M. DELEGORGUE)	85
A GREAT ZULU WAR DANCE : ZULULAND	88
THE KUDU PASS IN THE DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAINS, ON THE BORDERS OF BASUTOLAND	90
VASCO DA GAMA'S MONUMENT, DURBAN, NATAL	91
THE TOWN AND HARBOUR OF DURBAN, NATAL	92
A BAVENDA VILLAGE IN THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL	96
A TYPICAL ZULU CHIEF	99
SNOW IN SOUTH AFRICA : THE VICINITY OF GIANT'S CASTLE IN THE DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAINS	102
IN BECHUANALAND	103
A 'KRAAL' OR VILLAGE IN BASUTOLAND	107
A ZULA WARRIOR	112
A ZULU PRINCE (DEBUKA) ; SON OF PANDA	115
THE TEMPORARY BRITISH CAMP AT CONGELLA, NEAR THE SITE OF DURBAN, 1842	116
'DICK' KING, THE HERO OF THE 600 MILE RIDE IN TEN DAYS FROM DURBAN TO GRAHAMSTOWN IN 1843	117
PIETER-MARITZBURG IN 1853	118

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xiii

	PAGE
LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR GEORGE WAKELYN HARRY SMITH, K.C.B.	121
HARRISMITH, A TOWN IN THE EASTERN ORANGE FREE STATE, NAMED AFTER SIR HARRY SMITH	124
THE ORANGE RIVER : NAMAKWALAND	125
THE MAJESTY OF SOUTH AFRICA	129
SIR GEORGE GREY, GOVERNOR OF CAPE COLONY, AND HIGH COMMISSIONER OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1854-60	131
A STREET IN HARRISMITH, AN IMPORTANT TOWN IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE	133
ADAM KOK	134
THE ' CULLINAN ' DIAMOND, CUT INTO TWO HALVES	137
THE HON. SIR JOHN BRAND, PRESIDENT OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE	141
AN INCIDENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR	142
IN THE TRANSVAAL	145
THE DUTCH (REFORMED) CHURCH AND THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE : PRETORIA	146
A BOER FARMER OF THE TRANSVAAL AND HIS TEN SONS READY FOR WAR	149
A LOCUST SWARM IN SOUTH AFRICA	152
SIR THEOPHILUS SHEPSTONE, WHO ANNEXED THE TRANSVAAL IN 1877	153
A GROUP WITH SIR THEOPHILUS SHEPSTONE AT THE ANNEXATION OF THE TRANSVAAL IN 1877	155
STEPHANUS JOHANNES PAULUS KRUGER : PRESIDENT OF THE TRANSVAAL (SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC) FROM 1881 TO 1900	158
SIR HENRY BARTLE EDWARD FRERE	159
MAJUBA HILL IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY	161
AN ALLUVIAL GOLD NUGGET OF 30 OZ. FROM LYDENBURG, EASTERN TRANSVAAL	165
AN AVENUE OF PINES NEAR CAPETOWN	167
ADDERLEY STREET, CAPETOWN	169
ANGORA GOATS OF CAPE COLONY	171
THE LATE JAN HENDRIK HOFMEYR	173
CHIEF SANDILE OF THE GAIKA KAFIRS	174
KRELI, CHIEF OF THE GALEKA KAFIRS	175
THE LATE RIGHT HON. CECIL JOHN RHODES, FORMERLY PRIME MINISTER OF CAPE COLONY	179
THOMAS BAINES	180

	PAGE
A BAOBAB TREE IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA	183
CECIL RHODES' HOME AT GROOTSCHUUR, RONDEBOSCH, NEAR CAPETOWN	185
IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA	187
RIGHT HON. DR. LEANDER STARR JAMESON, PRIME MINISTER OF CAPE COLONY, 1904-7	188
POST OFFICE : JOHANNESBURG	189
JOHANNESBURG TO-DAY	190
A HOUSE IN MODERN BULAWAYO	192
THE GRIM REALITIES OF WAR : THE BRITISH DEAD IN THE TRENCHES OF SPION KOP	194
A HOUSE IN PRETORIA, THE CAPITAL OF THE TRANSVAAL	195
THE REALITIES OF WAR : A BURNT HOUSE AND DESTROYED HOMESTEAD IN THE TRANSVAAL	196
THE TUGELA RIVER AT COLENZO, SHOWING THE NATAL GOVERNMENT RAILWAY BRIDGE DESTROYED IN 1899 AT COMMENCEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN WAR	197
LADYSMITH	198
RHODES' GRAVE IN THE MATOPPO HILLS	199
DR. DAVID LIVINGSTONE	200
ARAB AND YAO SLAVE TRADERS OF NYASALAND	202
MASEA AND MWITU, THE LAST TWO SURVIVORS OF LIVINGSTONE'S MAKOLOLO ON THE RIVER SHIRE, 1893	204
THE SOUTH END OF LAKE TANGANYIKA AND THE LITTLE STEAMER 'GOOD NEWS,' PUT ON THE LAKE IN 1886	205
MLOZI, THE ARAB CHIEF OF NORTH NYASA	206
TAWAKALI SUDI : JUMBE OF KOTA-KOTA	207
A CORNER OF MLOZI'S GREAT STOCKADE ON THE RUKURU RIVER, NORTH NYASALAND : TAKEN BY THE BRITISH FORCES, DEC. 5, 1895	208
THE HOISTING OF THE BRITISH FLAG AT MAKANJIRA'S, SOUTH EAST NYASA, 1893, AT THE PLACE WHERE CAPTAIN MAGUIRE WAS KILLED, AND DR. BOYCE AND MR. McEWAN WERE MURDERED	209
SIR HARRY JOHNSTON IN A CAMP ON THE UPPER SHIRE, WHICH WAS BESIEGED AT THE TIME (1893) BY ARAB AND YAO SLAVE TRADERS	210
RIVER SCENERY IN NORTHERN RHODESIA	211
KING ČECHWAYO IN 1875	214
ISANDHLWANA : OR THE HILL OF THE LITTLE HAND	215

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xv

	PAGE
CHIEF JOHN DUNN OF ZULULAND	216
AN EARLY PHOTOGRAPH OF DINIZULU, THE SON OF ČECHWAYO	217
IN LOVELY NATAL	218
A NATAL TEA GARDEN WORKED BY INDIAN KULIS	219
THE ENTRANCE TO DURBAN HARBOUR	220
HAY MAKING IN NATAL	221
THE TOWN HALL, DURBAN, NATAL	222
NATAL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND POLICE	223
ZULU WOMEN DOING EACH OTHER'S HAIR	224
H.M.S. 'GOOD HOPE' ENTERING DURBAN HARBOUR	225
THE PRINCIPALS WHO NEGOTIATED THE ARMISTICE AND PEACE OF VEREENIGING	226
NEGRO MINERS IN THE TRANSVAAL	227
A CHINAMAN ON THE RAND AND HIS TWO CHILDREN	228
MINERS, WHITE AND BLACK; 1000 FEET UNDERGROUND IN THE TRANSVAAL GOLD MINES	229
A CHINESE MINER, TRANSVAAL, 1905	230
THE RIGHT HON. LOUIS BOTHA, PRIME MINISTER OF THE TRANSVAAL	231
CAPETOWN WITH THE 'TABLE CLOTH' ON TABLE MOUNTAIN	232
A TOBACCO PLANTATION IN NATAL	233
COTTON PLANTING IN NATAL	234
'BRAYING' A SKIN TO MAKE A KAROSS	235
CATCHING A COCK OSTRICH FOR PLUCKING, CAPE COLONY	236
RT. HON. JOHN XAVIER MERRIMAN, PRIME MINISTER, CAPE COLONY	237
A MAÑANJA OF THE SHIRE HIGHLANDS	240
A NATIVE OF THE CENTRAL ZAMBEZI WITH FRONT TEETH REMOVED	242
CHIEF ADABUKA OF ZULULAND	246
A NATIVE KRAAL IN ZULULAND	247
FINGO KAFIRS	252
CLERGYMEN OF THE NATIVE ETHIOPIAN CHURCH, NOW AFFILI- ATED TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND	254
A NATAL POLICEMAN	256
ZANZIBARI ARABS, LAKE NYASA	257
THE SURRENDER OF THE ISLAND OF MAURITIUS TO THE BRITISH, AT PORT LOUIS, 1810	261
THE SEYCHELLES FROM THE SEA	262
VIEW IN THE SEYCHELLES	263

	PAGE
IN A PANDANUS SWAMP: WEST AFRICA	266
A MARKET-PLACE AT BATHURST, RIVER GAMBIA	267
MID-DAY IN A MUHAMMADAN TOWN, RIVER GAMBIA	268
A LANDSCAPE IN THE GAMBIA COLONY	269
A MANDINGO	271
THE RINGLET-HAIRED FULA	272
THE FORMER ALAKE OF ABEOKUTA: A GREAT CHIEF OF THE EGBA PEOPLE (LAGOS HINTERLAND)	273
IN FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE	275
A TYPICAL KRUBOY SEAMAN, SIERRA LEONE	277
CAPE COAST CASTLE, GOLD COAST	280
IN THE NATIVE TOWN, ACCRA	281
ON THE RIVER ANKOBRA, GOLD COAST HINTERLAND	282
IN THE FOREST OF THE GOLD COAST HINTERLAND	283
ON THE VOLTA RIVER NEAR ITS MOUTH	284
SURF-BOATS LEAVING THE SHORE, ACCRA	285
SURF-BOATS COMING OFF FROM CAPE COAST CASTLE (GOLD COAST)	288
TALL FOREST IN ASHANTI	289
CUSTOMS STATION AT CHÉASE, ON THE RIVER VOLTA, OPPOSITE GERMAN TOGOLAND	290
ACCRA BOATMEN OF THE G ^A TRIBE: GOLD COAST	291
ASHANTI PEOPLE	292
FANTI ARTISANS: GOLD COAST	293
A FANTI WOMAN: GOLD COAST	294
GROUP OF CHIEFS AND PEOPLE, NKORANZA, BEYOND ASHANTI, GOLD COAST HINTERLAND	295
GROUP OF PRINCIPAL CHIEFS: NAVORO: NORTHERN TERRI- TORIES: GOLD COAST	296
THE OMANHIN OF INSUAIN, A CHIEF FROM THE EASTERN HINTERLAND OF THE GOLD COAST COLONY	297
BUILDING THE RAILWAY FROM SEKONDI TO THE GOLD MINING REGION OF THE WESTERN GOLD COAST	298
THE RAILWAY TO THE GOLD FIELDS: GOLD COAST	299
A GOLD MINING SETTLEMENT: WESTERN GOLD COAST	300
A STEAM DREDGER AT WORK IN A GOLD COAST RIVER, EXTRACTING THE GOLD FROM THE SAND AND MUD OF THE STREAM	301
A GOLD COAST STOOL CARVED IN THE FORM OF AN ELEPHANT	302

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xvii

	PAGE
IN THE NEGRO QUARTER OF THE TOWN OF LAGOS	305
NATIVE IDOLS OF THE NIMBI OR 'BRASS' RIVER PEOPLE: NIGER	
DELTA	306
A VILLAGE IN THE LAGOS HINTERLAND	307
THE BUSA RAPIDS, LOWER NIGER	308
ON THE SHORES OF LAKE CHAD	309
COMMANDER HUGH CLAPPERTON, R.N., THE FIRST BRITISH	
EXPLORER TO REACH SOKOTO AND NUPE	310
IN BORNU (NORTHERN NIGERIA)	311
ON THE LOWER NIGER, IN THE DELTA	313
RIGHT HON. SIR GEORGE TAUBMAN GOLDIE, THE FOUNDER OF	
NORTHERN NIGERIA	315
A CHIEF IN HIS STATE CANOE, BONNY RIVER, NIGER DELTA	316
A CHIEF OF THE LAGOS HINTERLAND	321
SIR FREDERICK DEALTRY LUGARD	325
A FULA WARRIOR: NORTHERN NIGERIA	326
IN SOKOTO	328
THE RAILWAY FROM LAGOS TO THE NIGER	329
A FULA HERDSMAN AND HIS CATTLE: NORTHERN NIGERIA .	331
A FULA WOMAN	332
HAUSA PEOPLE BATHING IN THE NIGER AT LOKOJA	333
A KANURI HORSEMAN: BORNU, NORTHERN NIGERIA	335
THE PEOPLE OF LAGOS	336
THE SPHINX AND THE PYRAMIDS	339
A CIRCASSIAN OFFICER OF THE OLD STYLE IN THE EGYPTIAN	
SERVICE	341
AHMAD ARABI PASHA	343
ALEXANDRIA: PLACE DES CONSULS	344
THE CITY OF CAIRO SEEN FROM AL AZHAR UNIVERSITY	345
SIR SAMUEL BAKER, DISCOVERER OF LAKE ALBERT NYANZA,	
AND AT ONE TIME THE GOVERNOR OF THE EQUATORIAL	
PROVINCE OF THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN	346
GENERAL GORDON	347
DR. EMIN PASHA (EDUARD SCHNITZER), GOVERNOR OF	
EQUATORIA	349
GENERAL CHARLES EDWARD GORDON, R.E., GOVERNOR-GENERAL	
OF THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN	350
GENERAL VISCOUNT WOLSELEY	351
A VILLAGE IN UPPER EGYPT, NEAR MEMPHIS	353

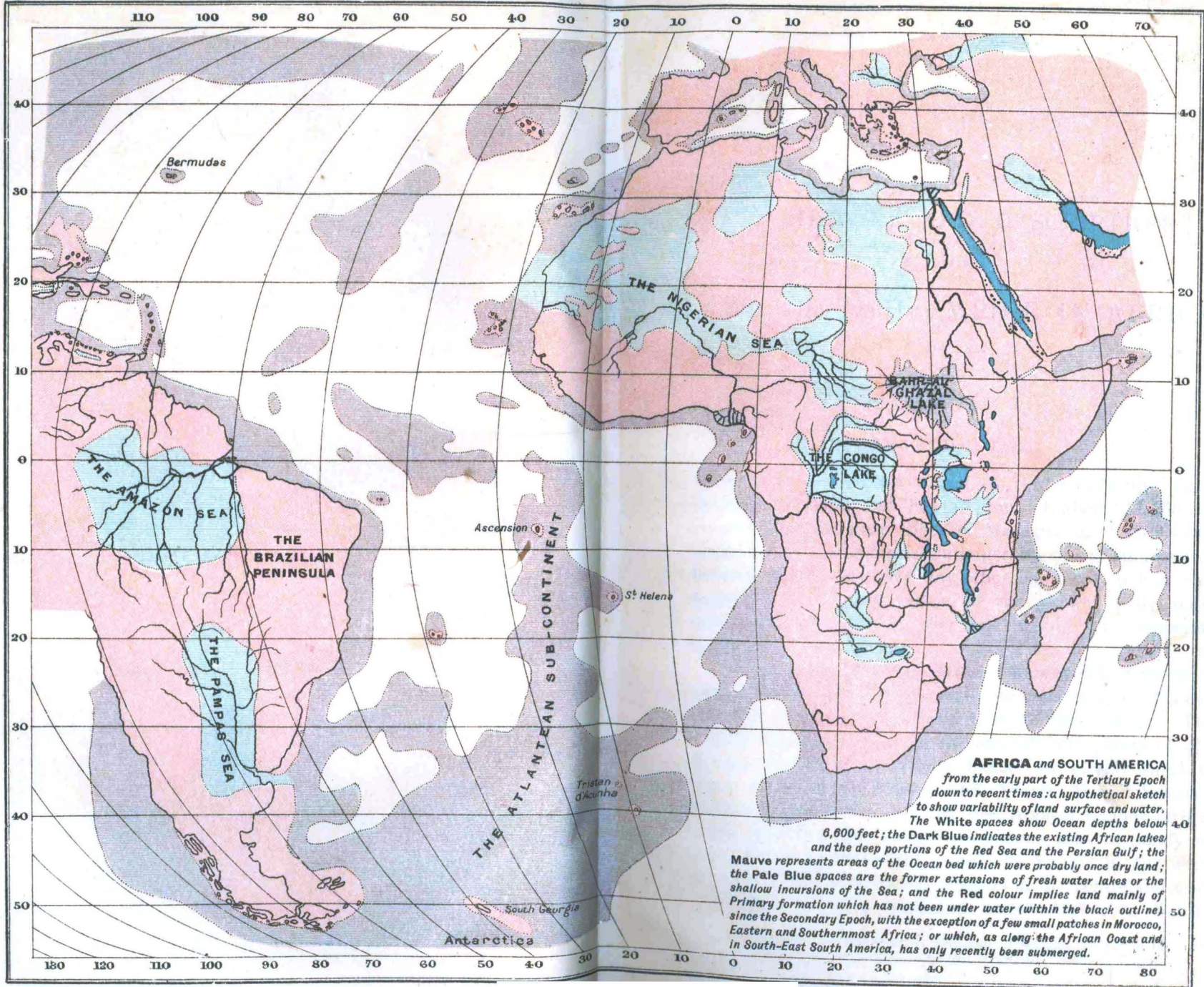
	PAGE
THE EARL OF CROMER, G.C.B., BRITISH AGENT AND CONSUL- GENERAL IN EGYPT FROM 1883 TO 1906	354
' PHARAOH'S BED ' : THE HALF-SUBMERGED TEMPLES IN THE DAMMED-UP NILE WATERS	355
THE NILE AT LUXOR	356
THE ' FUZZIE WUZZIES ' : HAMITE TRIBES OF EASTERN EGYPT, HADENDOWAS, BISHARIS, ETC.	357
SIR FRANCIS REGINALD WINGATE	359
THE SITE OF OMDURMAN	360
THE MAHDI'S TOMB : OMDURMAN	361
THE GORDON STATUE : KHARTUM	362
THE WHITE NILE : NEAR KHARTUM	363
THE TRAIN CROSSING THE DESERT FROM PORT SUDAN (RED SEA) TO KHARTUM	364
THE TRAIN AT KHARTUM STATION	365
A LIBYAN VILLAGE ON THE CONFINES OF EGYPT (OASIS OF SIWAH) IN THE NUBIAN DESERT	367
THE SEA FRONT AND CLOCK TOWER AT ZANZIBAR	373
KILIMANJARO, THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN AFRICA : 19,720 FEET	375
SIR JOHN KIRK, G.C.M.G.	377
SIR HENRY MORTON STANLEY, G.C.B.	380
A STREET IN MOMBASA	382
A NEGRO PORTER OF EAST AFRICA : MNYAMWEZI	385
THE MASAI OF EAST AFRICA	388
THE RIPON FALLS AND THE BIRTH OF THE VICTORIA NILE	389
THE VICTORIA NYANZA	391
IN THE BANANA GROVES OF BUGANDA	393
THE UGANDA RAILWAY DESCENDING INTO THE RIFT VALLEY, BRITISH EAST AFRICA	394
SLEEPING-SICKNESS PATIENTS, ENTEBBE, UGANDA, 1903	396
ADEN	397
TYPICAL SOMALILAND LANDSCAPE : STONES, RUBBLE AND THORNS	398
A SOMALI HUT	400
IN SOMALILAND	402
A CHRISTIAN NATIVE OF BUGANDA	405
TYPES OF BRITISH MEN WHO HAVE OPENED UP AFRICA : THE MISSIONARY SCHOLAR	406
TYPES OF BRITISH MEN WHO HAVE OPENED UP AFRICA : THE MILITARY OFFICER	407

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xix

LIST OF MAPS

	PAGE
AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA FROM THE EARLY PART OF THE TERTIARY EPOCH	<i>Facing page</i> I
SKETCH MAP OF KAFFRARIA	" " 80
BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA	" " 258
BRITISH WEST AFRICA	" " 318
EGYPT AND THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN	" " 342
BRITISH EAST AFRICA	" " 378
POLITICAL MAP OF AFRICA	" " 410



AFRICA and SOUTH AMERICA
from the early part of the Tertiary Epoch down to recent times : a hypothetical sketch to show variability of land surface and water.
 The White spaces show Ocean depths below 6,600 feet; the Dark Blue indicates the existing African lakes and the deep portions of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf; the Mauve represents areas of the Ocean bed which were probably once dry land; the Pale Blue spaces are the former extensions of fresh water lakes or the shallow incursions of the Sea; and the Red colour implies land mainly of Primary formation which has not been under water (within the black outline) since the Secondary Epoch, with the exception of a few small patches in Morocco, Eastern and Southernmost Africa; or which, as along the African Coast and, in South-East South America, has only recently been submerged.

INDEX

- ABABDEH** tribe, 370
 Abatétwa Zulus, 100
 Abdallah et Taaishi, Khalifa, 358 *n*,
 366
 Abeokuta, 304, 305
 Aberdare plateau, 8
 Abukir Bay, battle of, 338
 Abyssinia, mountains of, 8; Semites
 in, 23; Hamitic tribes colonize,
 28; Italians defeated in, 360;
 co-operation in subjugation of
 Somalis, 402
 Accra, settlement at, 54, 282;
 Capital of Gold Coast, 299, 301
 Adabuka, Zulu chief, 246
 Adamawa, mountains of, 8
 Adderley, Charles (Lord Norton),
 opposes convict settlement in
 Cape Colony, 168
 Aden, Semite trading-centre, 23;
 seizure by British Government,
 342
 Adventurers of London Trading
 to Africa, Company of, 53, 54
 Afafit, battle of, 357
Aframomum plant, 48, 60
 Africa, area of, 1; deserts, 1, 3-6;
 flora, 2-6; climate, 6-8; moun-
 tains, 8-9; lakes, 9-10; fauna,
 10-12; inhabitants, 13-22; Arab
 traders penetrate, 22-26; Jewish
 trade with, 24; ancient Egyp-
 tians in, 26-30; Libyan immi-
 gration, 30; Phœnician colonists,
 30-33, 398; Roman invasion, 33;
 French and Italian exploration,
 34; Portuguese discoveries and
 influence, 35-37, 46, 372; sources
 of food supplies, 37; English
 and Portuguese on west coast,
 46-60, 259-329; European dis-
 coveries and settlements in Cape
 Colony, 61-93
 African Association, the, 268, 306
 'African Company of Merchants'
 dissolved, 280
 African Lakes Company, 182,
 205
 African Steamship Company, 314
 'Afrikander,' the term, 71 *n*
 Afrikander Bond, establishment of,
 172
Agapanthus lily, 66
 A-giriama tribe, 408
 Akamba tribe, 408
 Akassa, 317 *n*
 Akitoge, made king of Lagos, 304
 Albany settlements instituted, 75
 Albert, Lake, 4, 8
 Albert-Edward, Lake, 9, 10
 Albert Nyanza, 9, 10
 Aldabra, discovery of, 259
 Alexander, Sir James, 156
 Alexandria, bombardment of, 344,
 345
 Alfred, county of, 125 *n*
 Algoa Bay, 80
 Almirante, discovery of, 259
 A-lungu tribe, 240
 Amabaca clan, 248
 Amahlubi, subjugation of, 213
 A-mambwe tribe, 240
 Amamfengu tribe, 105, 247
 Amandlambe clan, 248
 Amangwane Zulus, movements of,
 102-4
 Amapondo Kafirs, native State of,
 121
 Amaswazi tribe, 245
 Amatembu Kafirs, 246
 Amatongaland, German flag raised
 in, 177; annexation by Great
 Britain, 217
 Amaxesibe tribe, 247
 Amazulu, the, 98-101. *See* ZULU
 Ambas Bay settlement, 318, 319
 Amoaful, 288
 Anamabu, settlement at, 54, 282
 Anglo-Congolese treaty, 381
 Anglo-German Convention of 1890,
 186
 Angola coast; 4; mountains of, 8

- Angoni-Zulu tribe, movements of, 101-2; raids by, 209, 212
 Angoshe, Arab traders in, 26
 Angra Pequena Bay, 176
 Anuak Negroes, 371
 A-nyika tribe, 408
 Arabi Pasha, Ahmad, insurrection of, 344, 345 *n*
 Arabs, early trading in Africa, 22-26; revolt against Christianity, 33; conquest of Africa, 34; on West Coast, 56; of Egyptian Sudan, 369; of Mombasa, 373
 Archdall, Rev. Mr., assists Boers, 69
 Arnold, Colonel, 327
 Arnold, Sir Edwin, 182 *n*
 Arnot, David, British advocate, 138
 Arrhenius (Swedish traveller), 265 *n*
 Ascension, island of, 62 *n*
 Ashanti war, the first, 281; the second, 287-89; later rebellion, 290 *n*
 'Asiento,' the, 267
 Assini, 286
 Atbara, battle of, 363 *n*
 Atlas Mountains, flora, 6; altitude, 8
 Atonga tribe, 241
 Aures Mountains, flora, 6; altitude, 8

 BA-AMBA tribe, 403
 Bab-al-Mandeb, 27
 Baca Kafirs, 228
 Ba-chagwe tribe, 403
 'Ba-fransa' missionaries, 383
 Ba-ganda tribe, 404. *See* GANDA
 Baggara Arabs, 370
 Bahr-al-ghazal region, 10 and *n*, 349, 350, 364, 365, 381
 Ba-hurutse people, 244. *See* BAROTSE
 Baikie, Dr., explorer, 313
 Ba-ila tribe, 243. *See* ILA
 Bain, Professor, 181 *n*
 Baines, Thomas, explorer, 181 *n*, 201
 'Ba-ingrezi' missionaries, 383
 Ba-iru tribe, 404. *See* IRU
 'Ba-islamu' party, 383
 Ba-kalahari people, 244
 Ba-kalaña tribe, 97 and *n*
 Ba-karaña tribe, 241
 Bakaranga tribe, 18, 22
 Baker, Sir Samuel, 341, 347, 348, 363
 Ba-konjo tribe, 404
 Ba-kwena people, 244
 Balala people, 240
 Balenje people, 240
 Baluchi, in Nyasaland, 205
 Ba-lui country, native conquest of, 104; people, 243
 Ba-mangwato people, 244. *See* BECHUANA
 Bambute tribe, 403
 Ba-nanswa tribe, 241. *See* NANSWA
 Bangweulu, Lake, 10, 203, 376
 Bantu, tribe, 18-22, 25; language, 42-44; divisions of, 74; habitat, 97; in Tansvaal, 148
 Ba-!waketsi country, 104
 Ba-nyai tribe, 97, 241
 Banyoro, conquest of the, 387
 Baobab tree, 183
 Ba-pedi people, 148, 151, 244
 Barakonda, fall of, 269
 Barberton, founding of, 164
 Barghash bin Said, Sayyid, 374, 395
 Bari people, 406
 Baring, Sir Evelyn, *see* Cromer, Lord
 Barkly, Sir Henry, action regarding diamond-fields, 136-39; annexation investigations, 174
 Barn, Sir George, expedition to W Africa, 50
 Ba-roloñ people, 244
 Barolong (Bechuana), 88, 89
 Baronga tribe, 18
 Barotse tribe, 104
 Barotse-land, 207
 Barth, Heinrich, explorer, 311, 312
 Ba-rue tribe, 98
 Basel Mission, 284
 Ba-sese tribe, 404
 Ba-shangane tribe, 97. *See* SHANGANE
 Bashi River, 172
 Ba-soga tribe, 404
 Ba-subia tribe, 242. *See* SUBIA
 Basuto nation, 18, 244; raids and ravages of, 103-6; massacre of at Weenen, 111
 Basutoland, beauties of, 106; native tribes in, 120; area, 236; exports, 238
 Ba-swina tribe, 97. *See* MASHONA
 Bataung tribe, 87
 Batavian Republic, Cape Colony a part of, 70
 Bathurst, 267
 Ba-tlapiñ people, 244
 Batlaping, 130
 Ba-toana people, 244
 Ba-tonga tribe, 97, 243
 Battalim Arabs, 370
 Battenberg, Prince Henry of, 290 *n*
 Battle of the Pyramids, 338
 Bauchi pagans, 337
 Bausi people, 240

- Bavenda, 97, 148, 244
 Bavenda, murder Dutch, 148 *n*
 Ba-waŋketsi people, 244
 Beaconsfield, Lord, buys Suez Canal shares, 343
 Bechuana tribe, 18, 22, 88, 89, 91, 243; habitat, 97; recovery of as a race, 120; in Transvaal, 148; origin of name, 244
 Bechuanaland, annexation of, 164, 180, 184; area, 236; products, 238
 Beecroft, Consul, exploration of Niger by, 310
 Beersheba, conference at, 130
 Belgium, interest in East Africa, 378, 381
 Bell, king of Duala tribe, 318
 Bello, Fula sultan, 309
 Bema tribe, 212, 240
 Benguela, mountains of, 8
 Beni-Amer tribe, 370
 Benin, city of, capture of, 323; king of, 49, 305; kingdom of, 305
 Benin River, 48
 Benyovski, Polish adventurer, 68
 Benue River, 4, 8; discovery of Upper, 311
 Berbera, 400
 'Berea, Battle of,' 127
 Berg-Damara tribe, 175
 Berkeley, Ernest, Commissioner of Uganda, 386
 Berkeley, Fort, 388
 Berlin, Congress of, 317
 Bezuidenhout, Frederik and Jan, deaths of, 77, 78
 Biggar, Alexander, 114
 Biggarsberg, 114 *n*
 Binger, Captain L., discovers the Volta, 291
Birkenhead, wreck of, 123
 Bisa people, 240
 Bisharin tribe, 370
 Blake, Admiral, in Straits of Gibraltar, 57
 Blantyre, founding of, 204
 Blauwberg, battle of, 72
 Bloem, German freebooter, 121 *n*
 Bloemfontein, site of, 121; Boers march on, 122; capture of by British, 195
 Blood River, battle of, 114, 160
 Blunt, Lady Anne, 344 *n*
 Blunt, Wilfrid, 344 *n*
 Boer war of 1899, 194-96
 'Boer,' derivation, 71 *n*
 Boers' treatment of Hottentots, 73; insurgents hanged, 78; migration from Cape Colony, 83-87; in Natal, 88, 110-19; found Orange Free State, 87, 89; defeat Matebele, 88-91; and the Basuto tribes, 120, 121
 Boisragon, Captain, escape from Benin, 322
 Bolts, English adventurer, 68
 Bonaparte, Napoleon, and Central Sudan, 308 *n*; descent on Egypt, 338; scheme conceived by, 340
 Bonny, 320 and *n*
 Boomplats, battle of, 122
 Borckenhagen, Mr., establishes Afrikander bond, 172
 Borgu, 336
 Boshof, Jacobus, President of Orange Free State, 128, 130, 132, 145
 Botha, General Louis, Prime Minister of Transvaal, 230
 Boyce, Dr. Sorabji, murder of, 255
 Braganza, Catherine of, and Charles II, 58
 Brand, President, claims diamond-fields, 136; accepts indemnity, 140; acts as mediator in Boer war, 162
 Brava, 400
 'British Central Africa,' conception of by Rhodes, 183
 British East Africa, protectorate of: administration by British East Africa Company, 391; taken over by British Government, 392; extension of boundaries, 392; population, 394; area, 395; native tribes of, 403-8
 British East Africa Company, 381, 383, 384, 391, 392
 British Kafraria, 168, 172
 British South Africa Company, *see* Chartered Company
 Broadley, Mr. A. M., 344 *n*
 Bromhead, Lieut., 214
 Bronkhorst's Spruit, battle of, 161
 Brownlee, Mr. Charles, made head of Xosa Kafirs, 122
 Buchanan, Consul, 255
 Buchanan, John, pioneer coffee-planter, 207
 Buduma negroes, 335
 Buffalo River, 102
 Buganda, flora and kingdom, 4, 384, 386
 Bukonjo-Burega-Burundi plateau, 8
 Bulawayo, occupation of, 187
 Bulom tribe, 276

- Bunseu, Mr., and African exploration, 311
- Bunu, chief of Swaziland, 251
- Burgers, Thomas François, President of Transvaal, 150; mission to Europe, 151; does not oppose annexation of Transvaal, 156
- 'Burgher,' meaning, 71 *n*
- Burton, Sir R. F., 203, 375, 401
- Busa Rapids, 268, 308
- Bushmen, origin, 15, 18; description and history, 40-42, 248, 249
- Busoga, 384, 387
- Buxton, Sir Thomas Fowell, and slave trade, 274 *n*
- Byzantine influence on Africa, 33, 37
- CABLE Companies, monopoly of telegraphs, 191
- Cairo, British occupation of, 345
- 'Calabar Coast,' 48 *n*
- Calabar River, 48 *n*
- Caledon River, 104
- Cameron, Commander V. L., crosses Africa on foot, 378
- Cameroons, volcanoes of, 8
- Campbell, John, British arbitrator, 138
- Canary Islands, mountains of, 9
- Cape toys, 249
- Cape Coast Castle, 49, 279
- Cape Colony, flora, 6, 66; mountains, 9; fauna, 12; Negro inhabitants in, 22; annexation of Table Mountain and Table Bay, 61; Dutch occupation of, 61; French designs on, 64; British naval expedition to Capetown, 65; Huguenot refugees in, 66; discovery of Orange River, 67; British capture of Capetown, 68; European population, 69, 70; withdrawal of British, 70; re-occupation by British, 71, 72; the 'Native' question, 72; military operations against Kafirs, 74-75, 168, 172; the Albany settlements, 75-77; alienation of Dutch from British rule, 77, 78; slave population and emancipation, 79, 166; Boer grievances and migration, 80-88; Kaffir rising of 1834, 80; land question, 81; reactionary policy of Colonial Secretary, 82; warfare between Matebele and Boers, 88-91; Boer designs on Natal, 92; annexation of Natal by two Englishmen, 93; tse-tse fly and parasitic diseases, 93, 94; boundaries of in 1852, 125; establishment of municipal government, 166; Road Boards, 166; educational system, 167; increase in population, 168; attempts to found penal settlements, 168; a Constitution granted, 170; introduction of Merino sheep and Angora goats, 170; the Franchise Act, 170 *n*; destruction of cattle by Kafirs and its result, 170; Negroes replaced by white settlers, 171; railways and telegraphs instituted, 171; Prince Alfred's visit, 171; accretions of territory, 172; present system of government introduced, 172; equal language rights granted, 172; dismissal of Sir John Molteno, 173; Mr. Palgrave's mission and its outcome, 174-76; German aspirations, 176, 177; area of the Colony, 237
- Cape Mounted Police, 135 *n*
- Cape Mounted Rifles, 168
- Cape of Good Hope, lighthouse, 65
- 'Cape to Cairo,' 182 *n*
- Cape to Cairo Railway, 191, 211
- Cape Verde Islands, mountains of, 8
- Capetown, founding of, 61; British expedition to, 65; English take possession of, 68; 'tablecloth' on Table Mountain, 232
- Carnarvon, Earl of, proposes confederation of whites, 151-53; annexation of Transvaal, 154-56
- Carthage, founding of, 32
- Casati, Signor, 341
- Cathcart, Sir George, attempt to subjugate Basuto, 127; forms Cape Mounted Police, 135 *n*
- Catherine*, the, 53
- Caucasian invasion, 18, 28
- Cavendish, Captain, rediscovers St. Helena, 62
- Čechwayo threatens Transvaal, 156; war of, against British, 213, 214; capture of, 215; death, 251
- Cestos River, 48
- Chad, Lake, discovery of, 308
- Chailé-Long, Col. C., 341
- Chaka, 92, 93; raids and ravages of, 100-6; death, 108; sketch of, 251

- Chali, native chief, 249
 Chard, Lieutenant, 214
 Charles II, betrothal negotiations, 58
 Chartered Company of South Africa, 180, 182, 184, 186, 189-92, 207, 208, 211, 212
 Chamberlain, Right Honble. Joseph, opposition to Rhodes' scheme, 184, 189
 Chambezi River, 203
 Chéase, Customs Station at, 290
 Chelmsford, Lord, campaign against Zulus, 214-15
 Chermiside, Sir H., defeats Dervishes, 356
 Chikwisi, defeat of, 258
 Chinese labour in British South Africa, 228, 229
 Chipatula, native chief, 254
 Chitambo, 203, 211
 Chi-venda language, 244
 Christian VII of Denmark forbids slave trade, 273
 Christiansborg, 54, 284, 301
 Church Missionary Society, 313, 375, 378, 383
 Church of Scotland Mission, 203
 Cilliers, Carel, 114
 Clapperton, Captain Hugh, explorer, 308, 309
 Clarkson, Thomas, writes against slave trade, 274 *n*
 Clerk, Sir George Russell, and abandonment of Orange River Sovereignty, 128
 Cloete, Henry, British Commissioner in Natal, 118, 119
Cola acuminata, 303 *n*
 Colenso, Bishop, 217 *n*
 Colenso, Miss Frances, champions Dinizulu's cause, 216
 Colenso, Tugela River at, 197
 Colley, Sir George, victories of Boers against, 161, 162; death of, 162
 Colquhoun, A. R., control of concessions in Matebeleland, 186
 Colville, Sir Henry, Commissioner of Uganda, 384-86
 'Commando,' derivation, 130 *n*
 Comoro Islands, flora, 6; Negro colonists, 14; Arabs in, 34
 Congella, British camp at, 116
 Congo River, 10
 Congo Free State, 379, 381
 Congo pygmies, 13, 16, 34, 38, 371, 403
 Congoland, Western, flora, 4
 Convicts, attempts to send to Cape Colony, 168
 Corso, Cape, settlement at, 54
 Cosmoledo, discovery of, 259
 Crawshay, Captain Richard, 205, 206
 Cromer, Lord, 352 *n*, 355, 358
 Cronje, Commandant, captures Potchefstroom, 160, 161
 Crystal Mountains, 10
 'Cullinan' diamond, 137
 Cunningham, Mr. J. F., *preface*, 389
 Cyrene (or Barka), 1
 Cyrenaica, 27
 DAGARI Negroes, 293
 Dagboma Negroes, 293
 Dahome, France declares protectorate over, 292
 d'Albuquerque, Alfonso, 372
 d'Almeida, Francisco, 372
 Damaraland, 8, 165
 d'Anaya, Pedro, 372
 Danó, 285
 Darfur Mountains, 8
 Daudi Chua, king of Buganda, 388
 De Beers Diamond Company, 178, 180
 Delagoa Bay, Austrian designs on, 68; Boer party reaches, 86; Portuguese settlement at, 116; dispute over, 154
 Delegorgue, M., Boer costume of, 85
 De Lesseps cuts Suez Canal, 342
 Delmé-Radcliffe, Colonel Charles, in Uganda, 389
 De Mist, Dutch Commissioner, 70
 Denham, Major Dixon, explorer, 308, 309
 Denmark sells Gold Coast possessions to Britain, 284
 Derby, Earl of, deputation of Boers to, 163
 Dervishes, 356
 Diego Garcia, discovery of, 259
 Dieppois discoveries, 35
 Dilolo, Lake, 201
 Dingane, assassinates Chaka, 108; deceives and massacres Boers in Natal, 110-12, 251; defeated by Boers, 114, 115; assassination of, 115, 251
 Dingiswayo, chief of Abatetwa, 100 and *n*, 251
 Dinizulu, troubles with, 216-17, 224, 251
 Dinka negroes, 366, 371
 Dixcove, 282
 Docomo, king of Lagos, 304
 Dodowa, battle of, 281
 Dongola province, conquest of, 360

- Dopper Church, warfare over, 147
 Dorobo nomads, 404
 Drakensberg Mountains, Bushman paintings in, 41; Giant's Castle, 102
 Drifts, closing of, 186
 Dualla, Somali follower of Stanley, 403
 Dunn, John, chief in Zululand, 215
 Durban, derivation of name, 82; English at, 110, 115, 117; harbour, 220; town hall, 223
 d'Urban, Sir Benjamin, administration and policy in Cape Colony, 80-82, 93; policy of, carried out, 122
 Dutch East India Company, 68, 69
 Dutch Reformed Church, 79, 146
- EBONY** tree, destruction of, in St. Helena, 64 and *n*
 Edinburgh, Duke of, visits Cape Colony, 171
 Edward IV, embassy from Portugal to, 47
 Edward VII, King, at opening of Suez Canal, 342
 Edwards, Major C. A., campaign in Nyasaland, 209; Edwards, Lieut.-Colonel Charles, 258
 Efik race, 337
 Egerton, General Sir C. C., in Somaliland, 402
 Egypt: Lower, 1; life and customs of, 13; ancient fauna, 14; Semitic influence in, 23; ancient Egyptians settle in Nile valley, 26. *See also* Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan
 Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan: French occupation of Egypt, 338-40; Turkish control, 340-44; making of the Suez Canal, 342; occupation by British Government, 345; collapse of the Egyptian Sudan, 347; defeat of Hicks Pasha at Kashgil, 349; evacuation by British, 349, 350; General Gordon's scheme, 351; fall of Khartum, 352; movements of army under Lord Wolseley, 352, 353; an onerous problem, 353; Lord Cromer's administrative ability, 355, 358; revolt of Osman Digna, 356, 357; British advance on Sudan, 358-61; the Fashoda incident, 361-63; trouble with Belgium, 364, 365; Sudan again under British rule, 365; present prosperity, 366; natives of the Egyptian Sudan, 369-71; area, 371. *See also* EGYPT, LOWER
Elais guineensis, 302 *n*
 Elgon plateau, 8
 Elgon, volcano of, discovery of, 379
 Elizabeth, Queen, grants African trading charter, 53, 56; commercial intercourse with Morocco, 57; liking for pepper, 60
 Elmina, slave mart, 52; Ashanti attack on, 287, 299
 Elton, Consul Frederick, 178*m*
 Emin Bey, Dr., administrator of Equatorial province, 350; relief of, 381; ingratitude towards Stanley, 382
 Entebbe, 390
 Eocene period in Africa, 12
 Ethiopian Church, 254
 Ethiopian tribes, 370
Euphorbia, 103
 European influence on Africa, 37
 Ewatt, Colonel John, in Uganda, 388, 389
- FANTI** people, 293
 Farewell, Lieutenant, in Natal, 92, 93
 Fashoda incident, 362, 363
 Felup Negroes, 270
 Fernando Po, 8, 275, 318, 319
 Festing, Sir Francis, defeats Ashantis, 287
 'Fingo' tribe, 81, 105, 123, 247, 252
 Fitzherbert, Captain, in Cape Colony, 61
 Fodi Kaba, murders British officials, 270
 Fomanah, peace signed at, 288
 Forest Negroes, 38, 371, 403
 Fotheringham, Monteith, 205
 Foulkes, Capt. C. H., *preface*
 Ffoulkes, Wm. A., *preface*
 France declares protectorate over Dahome, 292; occupation and loss of Egypt, 338, 340, 343, 345; surveys and explores east coast of Africa, 374; agreement entered into with Britain, 379; interest in Uganda, 382; protectorate in Somaliland, 401
 Franchise Act, in Cape Colony, passed, 170 *n*
 Freetown, landing-place for freed slaves, 276

- Fremantle, Admiral Sir E., capture of Vitu by, 392
 French Guinea, mountains of, 8
 Frere, Sir Bartle, Boers present petition to, 157; dismisses Sir John Molteno, 173; cause of, 174; Zulu policy of, 213
 Froude, James Anthony, discusses confederation of whites, 152, 153
 Fula, race and language, 21, 30, 40, 53, 293, 330-33; campaign against, 324, 327
 'Fuzzie-wuzzies,' 357, 370
- Ġã peðple, 293
 Ġaika, Kafir chief, 80, 249
 Ġaika clan, 248
 Ġala people, 408
 Ġaland, Hamitic tribes colonize, 28
 Ġaleka clan, 248
 Gambetta, Leon, designs on Niger territory, 314
 Gambia, administration of, 268, 269; prosperity, 270
 Gambia River, 4, 52, 53, 267
 Ganda, *see* BUGANDA, BAGANDA, UGANDA
 Gardiner, Captain Allen, founder of Durban, 92 *n*
 Gardiner, Captain Allen, missionary in Natal, 110
 Gbari, 336
 Gbomyan Negroes, 293
 Germany, actions of in South Africa, 177; annexes Togoland, 292; interest in East Africa, 378, 379, 381, 382; subjects of, massacred in Vitu, 392; annexes Zanzibar, continental dominions, 395
 Gessi Pasha, 341
 Giants' Castle, 102
 Ginginhlovu, massacre at, 111; Zulu ambushade at, 113; Boers destroy, 114
 Ginginhlovu, battle of, 215
 Gladstone, William Ewart, opinion of affairs in South Africa, 160; and the occupation of Egypt, 345, 346, 349, 352 *n*
 Glasgow, Bishop of, *preface*
 Glenelg, Lord, reactionary policy in Cape Colony, 81-83, 93; policy reversed, 122
Glossina, 93, 94
 Glover, Sir John, movements against Ashantis, 287, 288
 Gold Coast, derivation of name, 48 *n*; trading settlements on, 267, 280; early government of 280; transferred by Great Britain to committee of merchants, 282; Colonial Office resumes control, 283; made a self-contained colony, 284; climate troubles, 285; Dutch possessions on, 286; temperature, 286 *n*; Great Britain obtains entire control, 287; the Ashanti war, 287-89; boundaries fixed, 292; native people, 293-96; gold exports, 297-99; other commercial resources, 302
 Goldie, Sir George Taubman, commercial development of Nigeria by, 314-24, 327
 Gonakwa, people, 248
 Goosen, land of (Goshen), 163
 Gordon, Captain Robert, discovers Orange River, 67
 Gordon, General Charles, made Governor-General of Egyptian Sudan, 348; sent to Khartum, 349; nominated Governor of Congo Free State, 350; death of, 352; memorial to at Khartum, 366
 'Gordonia' district, annexation of, 176
 Goschen, Lord, averse to expenditure on African colonizing, 182, 184 *n*
 Graaf-Reinet, Republic of, 70
 Graham, Sir Gerald, 352 *n*
 Grahamstown, founding of, 75
 'Grain Coast,' 48 *n*
 Grant, Col. J. A., 347, 363, 376
 Grant, Sir Charles, *see* LORD GLENELG
 Great Fish River, 75
 Great Kei River, 80
 Great Trek, the, 83
 Greek influence on Africa, 33, 37
 Gregory, Professor J. W., cited, 373 *n*, 376 *n*
 Grenfell, Lord, defeats Dervishes, 356
 Grey, Sir George, arbitrates between Boers and Basuto, 128-33
 Grey, Earl, attempts to institute penal settlement in Cape Colony, 168; and slave trade, 274 *n*
 Grikwa tribe, 42
 Grikwaland East, native reserve, 132
 Grikwaland West, native tribes in, 120; annexation of, 138-40

- Grootschuur, Rondebosch, 185
 'Guinea Coast,' 48 n
 Guinea, forest land of, 4; Portuguese in, 47
 Guinea, Gulf of, 300
 Guineas, minting of the first, 55
 Gungunyana, native chief, 250
 Guresi-Teme Negroes, 291, 293
 Gurunsi Negroes, 293
- HADAREF** tribe, 370
 Hadendowa tribe, 370
 Hadhramaut, Semite trading-centre, 23
Hãmamaba, 94
 Haggard, Rider, cited, 155, 178 n
 Halawin Arabs, 370
 Hall, Mr. R., 25
 Halligay, Rev. J., *preface*
 Hamak tribe, 370
 Hamitic people, 356
 Hannington, Bishop, 389
 Hanno, cited, 32
 Hardinge, Sir Arthur, 392
 Harris Smith, 133
 Harrison, Mr. F., *preface*
 Hartley, David, and slave trade, 274 n
 Hausa Negro, 40, 56, 334
 Hawawir Arabs, 370
 Hawkins, Captain John, in slave trade, 52
 Heidelberg, Boer flag hoisted at, 160
Helichrysum, 66
 Henga natives, 205
 Henga-Tumbuka group of natives, 241
 Henry IV, Moorish embassy to, 57
 Henry the Navigator, 35
 Herero invasion, 175
 Herero tribes, 95
 Hewett, Mr. Edward Hyde, 292; annexes Cameroons, 318
 Hex Mountains, 77
 Hicks Beach, Sir Michael, *see* St. ALDWYN, LORD
 Hicks Pasha, expedition against Mahdi, 348, 349, 366
 Hillman, William, explorer, 308, 309
 Hima Negroes, 21, 28, 250
 Hincks, Capt. T. C., *preface*
 Hinza, native chief, 250
 Hobart, Lord, and West Coast of Africa, 268
 Hofmeyr, J. H., establishes Afrikaner bond, 172
- Holland, surrenders Gold Coast possessions to Britain, 285
 Hornemann, Friedrich, explorer, 306
 Hottentots, 74-75, 79, 81, 89; habitat, 97; massacre of at Weenen, 111; join Kafir revolt, 123; warfare with Herero, 174-76; divisions of, 248; number of in British South Africa, 248
 Hottentot Regiment, 72, 77
 Huguenots, in South Africa, 66; treatment of Hottentots, 73
- IBERIAN** race, 14
 Ibo (E. Africa), early tradersⁿ, 26
 Ibo communities (Nigeria), 322, 323, 337
 Ibrahim, victorious general, 340
 Igara race, 337
 Ijo communities, 322, 323, 337
 Ilorin, 305
 Imperial, the Prince, death of, 214
 Imperial German East Africa Company, 68
 Isandhlwana, capture of, 214
 Islam, crash of, 33
 Ismail, Khedive, 344, 348, 355
 Ismail Pasha, 341
 Italy, occupies Masawa, 349, 358; defeats Dervishes, 358; reverse in Abyssinia, 360
 Italian discoveries, 35
 'Ivory Coast,' 48 n, 286
- JAALIN** Arabs, 361, 370
 Jackson, F. J., in Uganda, 387
 Jacobs' Farm, discovery of diamonds on, 135
 Jaja, chief of Opobo, 320, 322
 Jameson, Dr. Leander Starr, in Matebeleland, 101, 186-88; raid into Transvaal by, 188-91; sentenced to imprisonment, 191; Prime Minister, Cape Colony, 188
 Jameson Raid, 141, 142, 188-93
 Jamestown, St. Helena, 63
 Janssens, General, Dutch Commissioner, 70; battle with British, 71, 72
 Jekri race, 337
 Jenne, 268
 Jews, trading in Africa, 24
 Jibuti, 362
 Jobson, Captain Richard, ascends Gambia, 53
 Johannesburg, and Jameson Raid, 189-91

- Johnston, Sir Harry, 182 *n*;
action against Jaja, 320; in
Nyasaland, 207, 210, 319; enlarge-
ment of Uganda protectorate
under, 390
- Johnstone, Commodore, 65
- Jorissen, Dr., mission to England,
156 *n*
- Joubert, Pieter, leader of Boer
insurrection, 160; defeats British,
161; signs Convention, 162
- Juba River, 378 *n*
- KABABISH** Arabs, 370
- Kabatega, king of Unyoro, 384,
388
- Kagwa, Sir Apolo, 387
- Kalahari Bushmen, 249
- 'Kala-hari' Desert, 3; character-
istics of, 6 and *n*
- Kafir ancestor worship, 98
- Kafir, derivation of name, 245
- Kafir Military Police, revolt of,
123
- Kafir wars and invasions, 74-75, 80,
123, 255-58
- Kafir-Zulu population, 247
- Kamba tribe, 408
- Kambula, battle of, 215
- Kampala, 390
- Kamurasi, king of Unyoro, 384
- Kano, 327
- Kanuri people, 334
- Kanya, 104
- Karamojo tribe, 404
- Kareli, or Kreli, defeated and
imprisoned, 173; death, 250
- Kashgil, Hicks Pasha's defeat at,
349
- Kassala, capture of, 358
- Kau-kau Bushmen, 249
- Kauri shells, 304 *n*
- Kavirondo tribes, 404
- Keate, Mr. R. W., award *re*
diamond-fields arbitration, 138,
150
- Keiskamma River, 80
- Kenana Arabs, 370
- Kenya, Mount, discovery of, 5, 8,
375, 379
- Kerne, Phœnician emporium, 32
- Khama, chief of Bamangwato, 244,
253
- Khartum, fall of, 352
- Kikuyu Plateau, 8
- Kikuyu tribe, 407
- Kilimanjaro, Mount, discovery of,
375
- Kilwa, early traders in, 26; Persian
settlement at, 372
- Kimberley, Lord, unfounded
charges against Boers made by,
139; forbids land annexation,
176 *n*
- Kimberley, diamond fields of, 136-
40
- King, Lieut., in Natal, 92, 93
- King, Richard, remarkable riding
feat by, 118
- Kipini, 393 *n*
- Kirk, Sir John, accompanies Living-
stone, 201; discoveries in East
Africa, 376; virtual ruler of
Zanzibar, 377; scheme for British
protectorate in East Africa, 378,
379
- Kirke, Colonel, and 'Kirke's
Lambs,' 59
- Kishin, State of, 398
- Kisi tribe, 276
- Kismayu, 393 *n*
- Kitchener, Viscount, in Boer war,
143, 195; military operations in
Egypt, 358-61; at Fashoda, 362
- Κνηφοβα*, 66
- Koelle, Rev. Sigismund, 276
- Kofi, King, 288
- Kok, Adam, chief of Zulus, 120, 122,
134, 253
- Kokoso, king of Lagos, deposed,
304
- Kommenda, 282
- Komoe River, 291
- Konde, group of tribes, 240
- Korana Hottentots, 248
- Korana tribe, 42; punishment of,
130
- Kordofan, 348, 366
- Kormantine, settlement at, 54
- 'Kosi Bay,' 217, 218
- Krapf, Ludwig, missionary ex-
plorer, 375, 378, 379
- Kru races of West Africa, 52
- Kruger, President S. J. P., 114, 144,
147, 218; defeats natives, 130;
closing of Vaal River 'drifts'
by, 142, 186; cruelty to natives,
148 *n*; elected Vice-President,
150; protest against Act of
Annexation, 156 *n*, 157; leader
of Boer insurrection, 160; signs
Convention, 162; elected Presi-
dent, 163; heads deputation to
London, 163; attributes of,
193; downfall of, 197
- Kruger, Stephanus Johannes Paulus,
86

- Krugersdorp, 160
 Kudu Pass, 90
 Kumasi, fall of, 288
 Kunene River, 175, 176
 Kwathlamba-Drakensberg Moun-
 tains, 9
- LACERDA, Dr. José, 182 *n*, 199
 Lado, Belgian occupation of, 364,
 365
 Ladysmith, siege of, 195
 Lagden, Sir Godfrey, 253 *n*
 Lagos, inclusion in West African
 settlements, 275
 Lagos, annexation of, 304
 Laing, Major Alexander, explora-
 tion work of, 309, 310
 Laing's Nek, battle of, 161
 Laird, MacGregor, explorer, 310,
 313
 Lamu, Persian settlement at, 26,
 372
 Land question in Cape Colony, 81
 Lander, John, explorer, 310
 Lander, Richard, explorer, 306 *n*,
 309, 310
 'Landins,' the, 101
 Lang, Major J. J., *preface*
 Langalibalele, Kafir chief, 213, 252
 Lango tribe, 404, 406
 Lanyon, Sir Owen, administration
 of Transvaal by, 156
 Lavigerie, Cardinal, founds mission
 in North Africa, 382
 Lendu tribes, 406
 'Leopard' societies, 276
 Leopold, Lake, 10
 Leopold II of Belgium and African
 exploration, *preface*, 378, 381;
 concession granted to, 381
 Lerothodi, Basuto chief, 253
 Letso, Basuto chief, 253
 Levaillant, French naturalist, 66
 Lewanika, king of Barotseland, 253
 Leyds, Dr., hatred of Great Britain,
 193
 Liberia, 8, 48
 Libya, ancient fauna, 14
 Libyan Desert, 1, 10; character-
 istics of, 6, 27, 28
 Libyan race, 14, 18
 Libyans, influence of on Negroes, 30
 Lichtenstein, H., naturalist, 244
 Limba tribe, 276
 Limpopo, early traders near, 24
 Limpopo valley, 84
 Lindley, Mr., American missionary,
 89
- Lion, the, 48
 Livingstone, Charles, 201
 Livingstone, David, cited, 81
 Livingstone, Dr., and the Maka-
 lolo, 104; dislike of Boers,
 147; explorations in Zambezia,
 198-203; death, 203
 Livingstonia Free Church Mission,
 203
 'Livingstone Search Expedition,'
 203
 Lixus, founding of, 32
 Lobengula, 181, 182, 186, 187, 250
 Lok, Mr. John, expedition to West
 Africa, 50
 Lokoja, founding of, 313
 London Missionary Society, 72, 79,
 81, 205
 Lotuka tribe, 404, 406
 Lourenço Marquez, Boers at, 86
 Lovedale Mission College, 80 *n*
 Lualaba River, 4, 203
 Luangwa River, 102, 201
 Luapula River, 4, 376
 Lüderitz, Ludwig, obtains con-
 cession for Angra Pequena Bay,
 176
 Lugard, Sir F., operations against
 Arab slave-dealers, 205, 206, 258
 Lugard, Sir F., governor of Nigeria,
 326-28
 Lugard, conquest of Uganda by, 383
 Lumbwa tribe, 390, 406
 Lungu tribe, 240
 Lupton, Bey, 350, 381
 Lydenburg, republic of, 144-46
 Lyon, Captain George, explorer, 308
- Macarthy, Sir Charles, expedition
 against Ashanti, 281
 Macarthy's Island, 269
 Macaulay, Zachary, governor of
 the Sierra Leone Company, 274
 Maccabees, discovery of coins of, 24
 Macdonald, Sir Claude, commis-
 sioner of Niger Coast, 321, 322
 Macdonald, Sir J. S. L., survey of,
 387, 388
 McEwan, Mr., murder of, 255
 Macguire, Corporal, explorer, 312
 Mackenzie, Bishop, 201 *n*
 Mackenzie, Sir George, solves
 slavery difficulty, 392
 Mackenzie, Rev. John, 178
 Maclean, George, explorer of Gold
 Coast, 282, 283
 MacMahon, President, arbitrates in
 Delagoa Bay dispute, 154

- Mad Mullah (Muhammad Abdallah), 401, 402, 403
- Madagascar, area, 1; flora, 6; fauna, 10-12; Negro colonists, 14; Arabs in, 34; French in, 64, 68; Austrian designs on, 68; French protectorate established, 262
- Maddox, Captain H., in Uganda, 388
- Madi Negroes, 406
- Madikane, Fingo chief, 251
- Mafeking, 189
- Magadosho, 372, 400
- Maguire, Captain, 255, 258
- Maguire, Rochfort, obtains gold-mining concession, 181
- Mahdi Muhammad Ahmad, 348
- Mahé, capture of by British, 260
- Maitland, Sir Peregrine, settlement of Basuto question by, 121
- Majorcan discoveries, 35
- Majuba, battle of, 161, 162
- Makana, religious mystic, 250
- Makanjira, Yao chief, 209, 255
- Makapan, cruelty and death of, 148 n
- Makaranga, 18, 22, 97, 186, 241
- Makololo tribe, 104
- Makololo, accompany Livingstone, 203, 204
- Makoma, native chief, 249
- Makwana, Boers purchase land from, 87
- Malindi, early traders in, 26, 373
- Mambwe natives, 205, 240
- Mampursi Negroes, 293
- Mañanja people, 202
- Mandingo tribes, 40, 53, 56, 269, 270, 276-78, 295
- Manikusa, Zulu leader, 250
- Mankind, classification of, 38
- Manning, Sir William, campaign in Nyasaland, 209; Manning, General Sir W. H., in Somaliland, 402
- Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice, dictum on slave trade, 274
- Ma-ntatisi, woman-chief, 103, 252; tribe of, 103
- Marchand, Major, retirement from Fashoda, 363
- Maritz, Gerrit, Boer leader, 117
- Masai Negro, 40, 379, 392, 406-7
- Masarwa Bushmen, 249
- Masawa, Italy occupies, 349, 358
- Mascarenhas, Pedro de, Portuguese navigator, 259 n
- Mascarene Archipelagoes, discovery of, 259; remarkable bird fauna, 259 n; British capture Mauritius and Bourbon, 260; restoration of Bourbon to France, 260; population of Mauritius, 262; area and population of the Seychelles, 264
- Mashangane tribe, 18, 241
- Mashona tribe, 97, 186, 241
- Maskat, 373, 374
- Maskati Arabs, drive Portuguese out East Africa, 373
- Mason-Bey, 341
- Masupha, Suto chief, 253
- Matebele, 87 and n, 89
- Matebele war, 192
- Matebeleland, mining in, 186
- Matiwane, native chief, 250
- Matoppo hills, Rhodes' grave in, 199
- Mauch, Karl, discovers gold in Tati River, 148, 181
- Mauretania, countries embraced in, 1 n; flora of mountains of, 6; fauna, 12; inhabitants, 14
- Mauritius, French occupation of, 68; discovery of, 259; capture by British, 260; population, 262
- Mazrui, dynasty of, 373 and n
- Merriman, John X., 174; Prime Minister, 237
- Mfumbiro, volcanoes of, 8
- Middle Ages, customs of, in Africa, 13
- Midgan tribe, 399
- Milner, Sir Alfred (afterwards Viscount), 191
- Milton, John, cited, 52 n
- Miocene period in Africa, 10-12
- Missionaries in Africa, 72, 78, 79, 81, 106, 110, 123, 147, 163, 176, 178, 273, 318, 319, 375, 378, 382, 383, 391
- Mlanje, Mount, peaks and cedars on, 11
- Mlauri, native chief, 254
- Mlozi, Arab sultan, 206, 209, 255
- Moçambique, early traders in, 23, 26
- Moir, Frederick, 205, 206
- Moir, John William, 205, 206
- Moirosi, Suto chief, 253
- Molitsane, Kafir chief, 124
- Molteno, Sir John, position as to confederation, 153; dismissal as Prime Minister, 173; cause of, 174
- Mombasa, early traders in, 26; Arabs capture, 373; British occupation of, 374; missionaries established in, 375

- Monomotapa, kingdom of, 26 and *n*
 Moravian missionaries, 72, 78;
 crusade against slavery, 273
 Morel, Mr. E. D., *preface*
 Morland, Colonel, 327, 328
 Morocco, life and customs of, 13;
 British designs in, 57-59
 Mosega, battle of, 89
 Moselekatse, warfare with, 87, 89,
 90, 91; his rise and fall, 105;
 death, 250
 Moshesh, inaugurates Negro con-
 federacy, 107, 108; Basutoland
 under, 120-24; harassing of
 Europeans by, 126, 128, 133;
 expeditions against, 127, 130,
 134; becomes British subject,
 135; death, 253
 Mpezeni, native chief, 209, 258
 Mponda, Yao chief, 254
 Mpondo Kafirs, 246
 Mubarak, Sidi, trouble with, 392
 Muhammad Abdallah, *see* MAD
 MULLAH
 Muhammad Ali, Pasha of Egypt,
 340, 341
 Muhammad Granye, 400
 Muhammad es-Senussi, teaching
 of, 327 *n*
 Munshi cannibals, 323, 337
 Munzinger, Bey, 341
 Murabitin people, 333
 Mutesa, king of Uganda, 383
 Mwanga, king of Uganda, 383,
 388
 Mweru, Lake, 4, 10, 203, 376
- NACHTIGAL, Dr., mission to Bornu,
 314
 Nakedness, 240, 408
 Naku, Pondo chief, 121
 Namakwaland, dry river-bed in,
 3; annexation of islets off coast
 of, 126
 Nama Hottentots, 248
 Nana, conflict with, 321-23
 Nandi plateau, 8
 Nandi regions, natives of, 390,
 406
 Napoleon, Emperor, on St. Helena,
 64
 Napoleon III and East Africa,
 374
 Natal, early inhabitants, 22; coins
 discovered, 24; Boers penetrate,
 110; massacre at Weenen, 111;
 Zulus capture and destroy Dur-
 ban, 113; defeat and death of
 Dingane, 114, 115; British re-
 occupy Port Durban, 115, 117;
 Pieter-Maritzburg founded, 117;
 English besieged in Durban by
 Boers, 118; termination of Boer
 republic, 118; delimitation of in
 1845, 119; boundaries of in
 1852, 125; military occupation
 of, by Boers, 195; Zulu cam-
 paigns, 213-15; native quarrels in
 Zululand, 216; annexation of
 territory up to Portuguese
 boundary, 217; addition of
 Transvaal districts, 218; area,
 218, 237; representative govern-
 ment granted, 218; railways,
 219; products, 220, 238; Indian
 immigration, 220; number of
 native population, *preface*, 221;
 franchise restriction, 221, 225;
 institution of the poll-tax, 222;
 insurrection of Kafirs, 223; objec-
 tion to importation of Asiatic
 labour, 228
 National African Company, *see*
 ROYAL NIGER COMPANY
 'Native' question, 72
 Natives of South Africa, number,
 239; enumeration of tribes,
 240-48; Hottentots and Bush-
 men, 248; list of native chiefs
 of Bantu peoples, 249-55; wars
 between natives and British,
 255-58. *See also* under TRIBAL
 NAMES
 Ndlambe, Kafir chief, 80, 250
 Neanderthaloid type of man, 14
 Negro labour-supply, 229 *n*
 Negro race, origin, 14; division
 into two groups, 15, 38-40;
 Congo pygmies, 16; early migra-
 tion, 17; intermarriage with
 Hamites, 28; primitive exist-
 ence, 36; in the Gambia colony,
 Nilotic Negroes, 370; Sudanian
 Negroes, 371; Forest Negroes,
 371. *See also* NATIVES OF SOUTH
 AFRICA
 Nelson, Lord, defeats French, 338
 Neolithic Age, remains of, in
 Africa, 13
 Newcastle, Duke of, Colonial Secre-
 tary, abandons Orange River
 Sovereignty, 127
 Ngami, Lake, 97
 Nicoll, John Lowe, 205
 'Nieuwe Republiek,' the, 216
 Niger delta, 317 and *n*
 Niger River, 4, 10

- Nigeria, annexation of Lagos, 304 ; area, 305, 309 ; exploring expeditions sent to, 306-13 ; trading operations in, 313 ; German designs in, 314, 318 ; French advances, 314 ; commercial war, 315 ; jurisdiction of Royal Niger Chartered Company, 317 ; commercial development difficulty, 319 ; placed under a Commissioner, 321 ; trouble with king of Benin, 322, 323 ; fighting with Munshi, 323 ; expedition against Fula, 324 ; charter of Royal Niger Company annulled, 324 ; direct British rule instituted, 325 ; present day condition, 328 ; principal tribes and peoples, 330-33 ; the Hausa people, 334 ; other tribes, 334
- Nile, Mountain, 388
- Nile, Valley of, 2
- Nile watershed, 4
- Nilotic Negroes, 13, 21, 38, 370, 404
- Nkonde natives, 205
- Nkoranza people, 295
- Nqwiliso, Kafir chief, 253
- Nubian Alps, 8
- Nubian Desert, 1 ; characteristics of, 6
- Nuer Negroes, 371
- Nupe people, 336
- Nyamnyam tribe, 366
- Nyangwe, 378
- Nyanja tribes, 105, 241
- Nyasa, Lake, flora, 5 ; mountains adjacent, 8 ; Zulus of, 102
- Nyasaland Protectorate : Zulus of, 102 ; British designs regarding, 183 ; Rhodes and, 183, 184 ; explorations of Dr. Livingstone, 199-203 ; missionary societies in, 203 ; founding of its capital, 204 ; trading company created, 205 ; war with slave traders, 205, 209 ; separation as a protectorate, 207 ; area, 208, 236 ; cotton-growing capabilities, 209, 211 ; coffee-growing, 210 ; tobacco cultivation, 211 ; prosperity under British rule, 212 ; products, 237
- OBOK, port of, 401
- Ogadein, Somali rebellions of, 393
- Oil Rivers Protectorate, 319, 320
- Okapi, the, 15
- Oldfield, Mr., explorer, 310
- Oman, Arabs of, 372, 373
- Omdubreikat, battle of, 366
- Omdurman, capture of, 361
- 'Ophir,' the land of, 24
- Orange Free State: inauguration of, 128 ; declares war against Basutos, 130, 133 ; enlargement of territory, 132 ; conference with Moshesh, 133 ; boundaries delimited by British, 135 ; dispute *re* diamond fields, 135-38 ; bitter dislike of England aroused, 139 ; indemnity paid by Great Britain, 140 ; the Jameson Raid, 142 ; annexation by Great Britain, 143 ; treaty with Pretorius, 145 ; asked to annex Transvaal, 150 ; volunteers flock to help Transvaalers, 162 ; assists in war with England, 194 ; annexation by Britain, 225
- Orange River, discovery of, 67
- Orange River Colony, 73 ; a Crown colony, 225 ; opposition to Asiatic labour, 228 ; self-government granted to, 230 ; area, 236 ; products, 238
- Orange River Sovereignty, creation of, 120-22 ; conference with Boers, 124 ; abandoned, 127-28
- O'Reilly, trader, 135
- O'Reilly, Anthony A., Transvaal arbitrator, 138
- Oryx or Gemsbok, 35
- Osman Digna, revolt of, 356, 357, 366
- Oswell, William Cotton, explorations in Zambezia, 200
- Othman dan Fodio, Fula leader, 333
- Oudney, Dr., explorer, 308
- Overweg, Dr., explorer, 311
- Owen, Captain, treaty with Zulus, 116, 154 ; survey expedition of, 374
- Owen, Major Roderick, 388
- Owen, Mr., with Boers in Natal, 110, 111
- Ozo River, 392
- PAARDEKRAAL, 160
- Palgrave, W. Coates, mission of investigation and its results, 174-76
- Panda, supports Boer settlers, 114 ; agreement with British, 119
- 'Paradise, grains of,' 48 and *n*, 60

- Park, Dr. Mungo, and Niger River, 268; explorations of, 306 *n*
- Parnell, Mr., and Cecil Rhodes, 181
- Patterson, Lieut. William, 68
- Peckhard, Dr., and slavery, 274 *n*
- Pemba, island of, 3, 5, 395
- Pepper trade, 48, 59, 60
- Persian colony in Africa, 28, 373
- Peters, Dr., remarkable journey by, 382
- Petherick, John, explorer, 347, 363
- Pharaoh Necho, 32
- 'Pharaoh's Bed,' 355
- Phillips, E. O., mission of to king of Benin, 322
- Philip, Rev. Dr., champions cause of Kafirs, 81, 82, 120
- Phœnicians, colonists in Africa, 30-33, 398
- Pieter-Maritzburg, founding of, 117
- Pinteado, Antonio Anes, leads English to Guinea, 47-50
- Pleistocene period in Africa, 12, 13
- Pliocene period in Africa, 12, 13
- Pondoland, 126, 246
- Pondomisi tribe, 247
- Portal, Sir Gerald, sent to Uganda, 384
- 'Porto Cale,' 45 *n*
- Portugal: derivation of name, 45; commercial treaties and political relations with England, 46; hostility to English in Africa, 47, 48, 52; England helps against Moors, 56; Moroccan possessions of, 58; ejected from Morocco, 59; and Delagoa Bay, 116, 154; objects to extension of Transvaal frontiers, 150
- Portuguese discoveries, 35; influence on Africa, 36, 37; in Nyasaland, 199, 201, 202; discover Mascarene archipelagoes, 259; on west coast of Africa, 266; lay foundations of Elmina, 287; cocoa plantations of, 303 *n*; settlements on east coast of Africa, 372, 373; in Somaliland, 399, 400
- Portuguese Guinea, 266
- Potgieter, Andries Hendrik, leads Boer trek, 86-92, 113
- Potgieter, Commandant, cruelty to natives, 148 *n*
- Potgieter, Hermanus, slaying of, 148 *n*
- Potchefstroom, founding of town, 113 and *n*; republic of, 144
- Pretoria, occupation of by British, 195
- Pretorius, Andries, attacks and defeats Dingane, 113-15
- Pretorius, Commandant, marches on Bloemfontein, 122; Boer independence obtained by, 124
- Pretorius, Marthinus Wessel, 113 *n*, 145; president of Orange Free State, 132; claims diamond fields, 136-38; resignation and re-election, 147; leader of Boer insurrection, 160; signs Convention, 162
- Prempe, taken prisoner, 289 *n*
- Primrose*, the, 48
- Principe, 303 *n*
- QUAKERS, *see* SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
- Queen Adelaide Province, declaration of, 80
- Quelimane, Arab traders in, 26
- Quelimane, railway to, 211
- RABAH, Sudanese adventurer, 326, 327
- Ra-makukane, native chief, 253
- Rankin, Daniel, discovers Chinde mouth of Zambezi, 201
- Ravasco, Ruy Lourenço, 372
- Rebmann, Johann, missionary explorer, 375, 378
- Reitz, Mr., 143; establishes Afrikaner bond, 172
- Rensburg, Jan van, expedition of, 83
- Resheida, Arabs, 370
- Retief, Pieter, first governor of Orange River State, 90, 92; penetrates into Natal, 110; murder of, 111
- Réunion, French in, 64, 68; discovery of, 259; capture by British, 260; restored to France and renamed, 260
- Rhodes, Cecil, early history, 178; pro-Boer policy and sympathies, 142, 178; dislike of Imperial Government, 179; conceives idea of a Chartered Company, 180; acquisition of mineral rights, 181; journeys to England to apply for charter, 183; compact with British Government, 183; becomes Premier of Cape Colony, 184; Matebeleland troubles, 186-88; made a P. C., 189; the

- Jameson Raid, 188-90; resigns premiership, 191; builds railways and institutes telegraphs, 191; helps to quell Matebele rebellion, 192; his responsibility for second Boer war, 193; witness in forgery case, 194; death, 194
- Rhodes, Colonel Frank, 178 *n*
- Rhodes, Herbert, 178 *n*
- Rhodesia, mountains of, 8; first application of name, 191; early explorations of by Portuguese, 199; Livingstone's travels and, 199-203; division into two provinces, 207; area, 208, 236; general prosperity, 208, 210-12; products, 238
- Rhodesia Railways, Limited, 191 *n*
- Richardia*, 66
- Richardson, James, explorer, 311
- Ripon Falls, 389
- Ritchie, Mr., explorer, 308
- Roberts, Earl, in Boer war, 143, 195
- Robinson, Sir Hercules (Lord Rosmead), 191
- Rodriguez, discovery of, 259
- Roman Empire, customs of, in Africa, 13
- Romans in Africa, 33, 37
- Ronga race, *see* THONGA
- Rorke's Drift, defence of, 214
- Rosebery, Lord, and Uganda, 384
- Royal African Company, 54, 55
- Royal Geographical Society, 203, 379
- Royal Niger Chartered Company, 317, 321, 324
- Rudd, C. D., obtains gold mining concession, 181
- Rudolf, Lake, 3, 403
- Rustenburg, 144
- Ruvuma River, 202
- Ruwenzori Mountains, flora, 4; altitude, 8; lakes contiguous, 10
- SAHARA Desert, 1, 3, 10; characteristics of, 6
- Said Pasha and Suez Canal, 342
- St. Aldwyn, Lord, answer to Boer Petition, 157
- St. Helena, acquisition by England, 62-64; native chiefs sent to, 215, 217
- St. Mary, fort on island of, 54, 269
- Salisbury, Lord, and South Central Africa, 182, 183
- Sand River Convention, 124, 126
- Sandile, chief of Xosa Kafirs, 122, 123; rebels against British, 168, 173; death of, 173, 249
- Sankandi, 270
- Santa Lucia Lake, 216
- Saõ Thomé, 8, 303 *n*
- Sawarab Arabs, 370
- Sayyid Ali, Sultan of Zanzibar, 395
- Schoeman, Stephanus, causes civil war, 146, 147
- Scott, Mr., death in Busoga, 387
- Scott, Sir Francis, action at Kumasi, 289 *n*
- Sebastian, King of Portugal, death, 58
- Sebhuza, chief of Swaziland, 252
- Sebituane, Zulu chief, 104, 105, 252, 254
- Se-chuana language, 244
- Sekelutu, son of Sebituane, 201, 254
- Sekondi, 282, 301
- Sekukuni, ravages Lydenburg district, 151; defeated and taken prisoner, 160, 253
- Semliki River, 4
- Senegambia, 56, 267
- Senga people, 241
- Senussi sect, 327
- Sese Islands, 384
- Sesheke, 200
- Se-suto language, 244
- Seychelles, flora, 6; acquired by Great Britain, 260; area and population, 264
- Sharifian dynasty in Morocco, 58, 59
- Sharp, Granville, slave abolitionist, 274 and *n*
- Sharpe, Sir Alfred, 205, 207
- Sheba, Queen of, 24
- Shepstone, Sir Theophilus, delegate from Natal, 153; proclaims annexation of Transvaal, 156; pledges of, 157
- Sherbro, island of, 276
- Shillinge, Captain, in Cape Colony, 61
- Shilluk Negroes, 371
- Shire, River, 178 *n*, 201
- Shukerich Arabs, 370
- Sierra Leone, fort built at, 54; chartered company acquires land near, 266; settlement as ex-slave colony, 274; area, 275; slave-trade courts established at, 275; indigenous natives, 276;

- 'Leopard' societies of, 278; climate, 278; native encroachments on, 279; internal government, 280; Gold Coast detached from, 284; retardation of development of, 299
- Sigcau, Kafir chief, 253
- Simen, Mount, 8
- Siwah, Oasis of, 367
- 'Slagters Nek,' 78
- 'Slave Coast,' 48 n
- Slave trade, 52, 53, 72, 268, 271-74, 276, 307, 372
- Slavery, in Cape Colony, 79; abolition of, 80, 186
- Slatin Bey, Rudolf, 350, 358
- Sleeping sickness, 383 n, 390
- Smeathmann, Dr., 265 n
- Smith, Captain, defeated by Boers, 118
- Smith, Colonel Sir Harry, repulsion of Kafir invasion by, 80; delimits Orange River Sovereignty, 122; defeats Boers, 122; operations against Xosa, 122, 123
- Smith, Colonel Holled, defeats Osman Digna, 357
- Sobo race, 337
- Sochangana, devastates Portuguese South East Africa, 101, 105; defeats Chaka's army, 108
- Society of Friends, oppose slavery, 271-73
- Sofala, early traders in, 23, 26, 372
- Sokoto, 327, 328
- Sokotra, early inhabitants, 398; annexation by Britain, 399
- Solomon, King, 24
- Somali race, 399, 408
- Somaliland, scrub-land of, 3; early traders in, 23, 26; Hamitic tribes colonize, 28
- Somaliland, inclusion in Egyptian dominions, 341; division of, 349; early history, 397, 398; fauna and native inhabitants, 399; Portuguese occupation of parts, 399, 400; area and population of British portion, 401; expeditions against the 'Mad Mullah,' 401-3
- Somerset East, 77
- Somerset, James, Negro slave, 274 n
- Somerset, General Lord Charles, Albany settlements and, 75-78; harshness to Boer insurgents, 78
- Songhai Negroes, 277, 335
- 'South Africa,' *preface*, 155
- South African Legislature, membership limitation, 234, 236
- South African Republic, founding of, 113, 120. *See also* TRANSVAAL
- Sparman, Swedish botanist, 66, 265 n
- Speke, Capt. J. H., 203, 347, 363, 376, 401
- Spion Kop, 194
- Sprigg, Sir Gordon, becomes Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 173
- Stanley, Sir H. M., surveys Lake Tanganyika, 203; on the Congo, 378; journey to relieve Emin Pasha, 380; results of his journey, 381; invites missionaries to Uganda, 383
- Stanley, Capt. W., *preface*
- Star of South Africa, the, 136
- Stephanie, Lake, 403
- Stephen, James, and slave trade, 274 n
- Stewart, Lieut.-Colonel, J. D., murder of, 352
- Stilleland, republic of, 163, 164
- Stockenstrom, Andries, appointed Governor of Adelaide, 82
- Stuhlmann, Dr., explorer, 382
- Suakin, 349, 352 n, 353
- Sudan, life and customs of, 13
- Sudanian Negroes, 371
- Suffren, Admiral, defeats British, 65
- Suk tribe, 404
- Suez, Isthmus of, 27
- Suez Canal, opening of, 342; England purchases shares in, 343; neutralization of, 353
- Swahili people and language, 409
- Swann, Alfred J., 207
- Swaziland, area, 236
- Swazi Zulus, 148, 245
- Swayne, Colonel E. J., defeats Mad Mullah, 402.
- Swayne, H. G. C., *preface*
- Swellendam, Republic of, 70
- TABLE Bay, 61, 65, 71
- Table Mountain, 61
- Tafilat, Oasis of, 58
- Tajurra, 400
- Tajurra Bay, 401
- Takana tribe, 404
- Tanganyika, 4, 8, 9, 102
- Tangier, British and, 57-59
- Tantum-Kweri, 282
- Tati district, gold mining in, 149, 181
- Taufik, Khedive, 344

- Tavista, 408
 Tawakali Sudi, 206, 255
 Taylor, Captain John, 274 *n*
 Teleki, Count, 403
 Tembu, Kafirs, 246
 Tel-el-Kebir, 344, 348
 Teleki, Count, 403
 Temne tribe, 276
 Temple, Mr. C. L., *preface*
 Tenda, 53
 Tenerife, Mount, 9
 Tertiary epoch in Africa, 10
 Tetwa Zulus, 100
 Thaba Bosigo, 107, 127, 130, 134
 Thaba Nchu, 86, 89
 'The Golden Trade,' 53
 Theal, McCall, quoted, 82, 156;
 cited, 108, 139
Theobroma, 303 *n*
 Thompson, F. R., obtains gold
 mining concession, 181
 Thompson, George, expedition to
 Gambia, 53
 Thomson, Joseph, forestalls German
 designs on Nigeria, 316; East
 African explorer, 379
 Thonga race, 74, 95, 98, 245
 'Thorn' country, the, 4
 Thurston, Major A. B., in Uganda,
 383 *n*, 387
 Thunberg, Swedish botanist, 66
 Tibesti Mountains, 8
 Timbuktu, 59, 268
 Togoland, Germany annexes, 292
 Tomal tribe, 399
 Tonga group of natives, 242
 Toole, Mr., explorer, 308
 Toski, battle of, 356
 'Touaregs' of the Sahara, 30, 336
 Towerson, Master William, ex-
 peditions to West Africa, 50-51
 Transvaal: mountains of, 9; early
 race in, 22; Boers penetrate,
 121; force from defeated at
 Boomplats, 122; independence
 acknowledged by British, 124,
 144; assists Orange Free State
 against natives, 130; dispute *re*
 diamond fields, 135-38, 150;
 Jameson raid, 142; founding of
 Volksraad, 144; an independent
 republic formed by recalcitrants,
 144-46; civil war in the State,
 146-47; antagonism of mission-
 aries towards Boers, 147; dis-
 covery of gold, 148, 164; exten-
 sion of borders, 150; treaty
 with Portugal, 150; reorganiza-
 tion by President Burgers, 151;
 trouble with Basuto, 151; pro-
 posal to confederate white States,
 152-54; annexation by British,
 156; Paul Kruger's mission to
 England, 156 *n*, 157; Boer
 revolt against British suzerainty,
 157-63; British reverses, 161,
 162; Convention of 1881, 162;
 a further concession of Boer
 independence, 163; settlement of
 native trouble, 164; opening up
 and general prosperity, 165;
 development of gold industry by
 Cecil Rhodes, 181; harasses the
 mining industries, 186; Jameson
 Raid, 188-91; dislike of Great
 Britain, 193; war with Britain,
 194-97; annexation by Britain,
 225; bankrupt condition of
 mining industries, 227; abolition
 of Chinese labour, 229; respon-
 sible government granted, 230;
 area, 236; mineral products, 238
Treponema, 93, 94
 Triehard, Louis, leads Boers to
 Natal, 86
 Tristan d'Acunha, island of, 62 *n*
 Tse-tse fly, ravages of, 84-86;
 parasitic diseases and, 93, 94
 Tuaregs, 30, 336
 Tuckey, Captain J. K., explores
 Congo, 307
 Tugela River, 92
 Tukana, 404
 Tulbagh, Dutch Governor, 67
 Tunisia, life and customs of, 13
 Turner 'peninsula,' 278
 Uganda, *preface*; German and French
 interests in, 382; Chartered
 Company of British East Africa
 in, 383, 384; declared a British
 protectorate, 384; conquest of
 Unyoro, 385; revolt of Sudanese
 troops, 386, 387; inaccessibility
 of, 386; reorganization of finance,
 389; area enlarged, 390; popu-
 lation, 390; work of the
 missionaries, 391. *See* BUGANDA
 Uganda Railway, commencement,
 386; completion, 390
 Ulundi, battle of, 215
 Umhlakazi, prophet, 250
 Umkata River, 121
 Umlanjeni, Kafir medicine-man,
 122, 250
 Umpande (Panda), 251
 Umsilikazi, *see* MOSELEKATSE

- Umvolosi River, 98
 Umzila, native chief, 250
 Umzimkulu River, 74 *n*
 Umzimvubu River, 92
 Unicorn, origin of myth, 34 *n*
 Unification of South Africa, 230-36
 United African Company, *see* ROYAL
 NIGER COMPANY
 United States forbids slave trade,
 274
 Universities' Mission in Nyasaland,
 201
 Unyoro, flora, 4; hostile to
 Europeans, 384; annexation by
 Britain, 386
 Usibepu, Zulu chief, 216, 251
 Utrecht and Republic of Lydenburg,
 144; annexed to Natal, 218
 Utica, founding of, 32
 Uys, Jacobus, 92
 Uys, Pieter, Boer leader, 113
- VAAL River, 87, 88, 121
 'Vaalpens,' race of, 22
 Vandeleur, Colonel Seymour, in
 Uganda, 388
 Van Niekerk, Mr., purchases dia-
 mond, 135
 Van Rensburg, President, 147
 Va-tua tribe, 18, 98
 Vasco da Gama, 46, 92, 371;
 monument to, 91
 Vechtkop, Zulu attack on, 113
 Venable, Mr., American missionary,
 89
 Vereeniging, peace of, 225
 Victoria Nyanza flora contiguous,
 3; area, 9; Zulus of, 102
 Vidal, Captain, annexation of
 Mombasa by, 374
 'Vierkleur,' the Transvaal, 144
 Viervoet, ambush at, 124
 Viljoen, Jan, 147
 Vitu, capture of, 392
 Vogel, Dr., explorer, 312
 Volksraad, founding of a, 144
 Von Bary, explorer, 314
 von der Decken, Count, exploration
 of Kilimanjaro by, 378
 Vooruitzicht, *see* KIMBERLEY
 Vryheid, annexed to Natal, 218
- WAD-EN-NEJUMI, defeat of, 356
 Wadstrom, C., 265 *n*
 Wadi Halfa, 353
 Waghorn, Lieutenant, establishes
 'overland route' in Egypt, 342
- Walfish Bay, annexation of, 126,
 176
 Warden, Captain H. D., President
 of Grikwaland, 121
 Warren, Sir Charles, expedition to
 Bechuanaland, 164; mission in
 Bechuanaland, 177
 Waterboer, Andries, captain of
 Grikwa, 253
 Waterboer, Nicolas, British Govern-
 ment buy land from, 138; title of
 declared invalid, 140
 Weenen, massacre at, 111; town
 of, 117
 Weinthal, Leo, Mr., *preface*
 West Coast of Africa, British^l and,
 46-56; area of, 55
 White Fathers, Roman Catholic
 Mission of the, 382
 Wilberforce, William, and slave
 trade, 274 *n*
 Willcocks, Sir James, subdues
 Ashantis, 290 *n*, 293
 Wilson, Major Allan, death of,
 187
 Wilson George, repels Sudanese,
 387
 Wilson, Mr., American missionary,
 89
 Wilson, N. A., death in Busoga, 387
 Winburg, founding of, 89; Boer
 discontent at, 122
 Windham, Captain, expedition to
 Guinea, 48-50
 Wingate, Sir F. R., 358, 366
 Winneba, 282
 Witwatersrand, gold region of,
 164
 Wodehouse, Sir Philip, delimits
 Basutoland, 133; signs con-
 vention with Boers, 135; protests
 against extension of Transvaal,
 150
 Wolof Negroes, 270
 Wolsley, Lord, march on Khartum,
 132; defeats Sekukuni, 160;
 in Natal, 213; expedition against
 Zulus, 257; conducts Ashanti
 war, 287-89; defeats Arabi Pasha,
 344; ordered to retreat from
 the Sudan, 353
- XESIBE Kafirs, 247
 Xosa Kafirs, belligerent attitude of,
 74, 80-83; rebellions of, 122,
 123, 168, 172; destroy their
 cattle and starve, 170; sections
 of, 245-47

- YAO tribes, 40, 209, 212, 241
 Yaman (Yemen), Semite trading-centre, 23
 Yibir tribe, 399
 York, Sir John, expedition to West Africa, 50
 Yoruba race, 305, 337
 Young, Lieutenant Edward, search for Livingstone, 203
- ZAMBEZI, early traders in region of, 23-25
 Zambezi River, flora, 6
 Zambezia, Northern, 198
 Zanzibar, flora, *preface*, 3, 5; early traders in, 23, 26; early history, 372-74; British intervention, 374-76; slave trade declared illegal in, 376; inception and realization of British protectorate over, 376-79; present governance of, 395; bombardment of, 395
 Zarafi, Yao chief, 255
 Zimbabwe, ruins of temple of 25
 Zobeir Pasha, 352
 Zoutpansberg Mountains, 83
 Zoutpansberg, district of, 144 and *n*; trouble in, 147
 Zululand, coins discovered in, 24; British troubles in, 213-15; internecine war with natives, 216; annexation of, 216-17; native population, 220; rebellious spirit growing in, 224
 Zulu-Kafir peoples, 18, 22, 40, 74, 95-109, 245
 Zulu tribe, 98-101, 245
 Zuurveld, Kafirs driven from, 75

THE END