

FROM THE CAPE
TO THE ZAMBESI
G. T. HUTCHINSON

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"THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH"; THE CAPE TO CAIRO RAILWAY AT VICTORIA FALLS

Frontispiece

FROM THE CAPE TO THE ZAMBESI

BY G. T. HUTCHINSON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
COLONEL F. RHODES, C.B., D.S.O.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS FROM
PHOTOGRAPHS BY COL. RHODES
AND THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE

IT is scarcely necessary to write even the shortest preface, for I think that the following pages explain themselves. Many people may say that there is no excuse for writing another book about South Africa, but it must be remembered that it is a country in the making, and, as such, is in a state of constant change: for this reason it always provides something new for the traveller to record.

My thanks are due to Colonel Frank Rhodes for some of the photographs, and for the exceptional opportunities of acquiring information which I enjoyed in his company last year.

I visited all the different places mentioned here with him, and was enabled to see more of the country, and to learn more about its problems, than would have been possible for one travelling under the ordinary conditions.

GEORGE T. HUTCHINSON

March 9th, 1905

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INTRODUCTION

BY COLONEL F. RHODES, C.B., D.S.O.

DESPITE the number of books already published about South Africa, I take considerable personal interest in this one, for most of the material for it was collected in my company during the summer months of last year. I have been asked to write an introduction, and do so because I feel that the subject is of great importance just now. Though I do not wish to identify myself with all the views expressed or quoted here, I agree with most of them, and consider it desirable that they should be clearly impressed upon the mind of the British public.

I have always taken the deepest interest in everything connected with the Victoria Falls, and much regret that the present site should have been chosen for the railway bridge. It cannot be denied that the step was taken in a hurry, and without that

careful consideration which should be given when dealing with one of the grandest things in the world. In any case I must protest most strongly against the selection of the site for the Zambesi bridge being attributed to my brother Cecil. It is true that he once said that the railway would pass close to the Falls, but he himself never saw them; had he done so everyone who knew him will admit that the bridge would not be where it now is. Now that the bridge is built it would be unwise to say more on this subject, but it is to be hoped that in the future every precaution will be taken not to destroy the character of the place. These remarks also apply to so-called "improvements" in the Matoppos.

I am glad that a chapter has been devoted to the subject of land settlement, for the future of South Africa must largely depend upon the success of this measure. It needs all the support that can be given to it, and it is to be hoped that the good work done by the Duke of Westminster and Lord Lovat will lead others to follow their example. In my opinion, farming in the different colonies of South Africa has been unduly neglected and has

great possibilities before it—of which a foretaste may be seen in the prosperity of the Orange River Colony. I have seen a good deal of the fruit farms which my brother started at the Paarl, and am sure that, though mistakes have been committed from want of experience, they will before long prove a good investment—and this applies to fruit-farming generally in Cape Colony.

With regard to Rhodesia, I am still, as I have always been, a great believer in its future. In spite of the prevailing depression, I found a better tone of confidence there last summer than I did a year ago. The country has great natural resources and plenty of good men: the first necessity for it is better management, and a better understanding between the directors of the Chartered Company and the Rhodesians. At present they are hopelessly out of touch with one another.

At Johannesburg there are many hopeful indications. Some influential people are beginning to realise that they have a duty towards the country which has done everything for them, and are already doing useful work in South Africa. Hitherto everyone has tried to make what he can, and then

come home to spend it. I hope that in better times those who have stuck to the country, and "borne the burden and heat of the day," will get their reward.

Meantime it is important that Englishmen should not lose interest in South Africa, or despair of its future. It is a country with an 'uphill task before it, but its people have resolutely undertaken that task, and deserve all the help and sympathy which they can get from home.

FRANK RHODES

March 9th, 1905

FROM THE CAPE TO THE ZAMBESI

CHAPTER I

SOUTH AFRICA

“**W**HATEVER you do, don't write a book.” Such was the first piece of advice given to me by a District Commissioner in Rhodesia. It was a friendly warning against the ‘book-writing fever,’ that insidious disease which is said to attack every visitor to South Africa. It was also expressive of the strong local prejudice that exists against the victims of this disease—those enthusiastic penmen who, after a short time spent in the country, have a ready knowledge of all its problems, and, what is more, a solution for most of them.

Yet I must be dangerously near the same pitfall—no doubt my friend the District Commissioner

would say that I am in it—and can only hope to palliate my offence by some sort of an explanation. It is, of course, an axiom of the good examinee, when making any rather surprising statement, not to ‘apologise,’ and perhaps the same principle applies to writing a book. But the statements of the examinee are made for a select board, who are theoretically bound in honour not to disclose them, whereas the statements of an author are exposed to the fierce light of public opinion; he would be a wise man to make his apologies in advance.

These pages do not profess to be based on long experience, nor are they from the pen of the professional journalist, whose instinct and trained intelligence can at once grasp the salient points, arrange, compare, and suggest conclusions. They are emphatically the work of an amateur, who views South Africa through purely insular glasses, and sees only such a picture as might present itself to the eyes of the ordinary traveller. My hope is to provide something light for the serious reader, and possibly something which the light reader may consider serious. The task might have some chance of success in abler hands, for it may perhaps be said

of many books on this subject that—to parody a famous saying—the instructive ones are not entertaining, and the entertaining ones are not instructive.

With this end in view I have recorded a few impressions, and if, here and there, I have ventured rather below the surface, my remarks are inspired by others, who have the advantage of a more special knowledge, and a longer experience than my own. Perhaps those Englishmen who know South Africa may read these pages as a letter from that country, and it is to be hoped that South Africans themselves will regard them with some of that tolerance which they have already had so many opportunities of displaying. And should anything written here serve to inspire strangers to the country with a renewed interest in its welfare, much will have been accomplished, for help and sympathy from England is always welcomed, whatever form it may take.

It is only now that Englishmen are beginning to realise how vast are the resources of South Africa. Practically the whole of it, from Capetown to the Zambesi, may be described as a 'white man's country'—in the sense that there are no climatic conditions to prevent white men from making it

their home. The full significance of this can only be appreciated by those who have had some practical experience of bad climates. Most of it is rich in mineral wealth, a bait that has always had irresistible attractions for the adventurous Englishman. Diamonds have been found in Cape Colony, the Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony, a fact that goes to prove that the deposits are spread over an immense tract of country; at present the chief difficulty is to regulate the supply so that it shall not be in excess of the demand.

The gold mines of the Rand have much of the character of a permanent industry. The precious metal is there in a perfectly ascertainable quantity; the life of every mine, and indeed of the whole Rand, can be predicted with tolerable accuracy. The working of both gold and diamond mines has been greatly facilitated by the timely discovery of coal, of which valuable fields already exist in the Orange River Colony and Transvaal, in Natal, and in Rhodesia, so that it can safely be affirmed that there is sufficient to last for many generations, and no fear need be entertained that the working of the other mineral riches should be hindered

for want of fuel. Considerable quantities of iron ore are known to exist; hitherto this has been practically untouched, but should provide the increasing populations with a staple—and indeed an indispensable—industry in the future. Copper, too, is widely distributed, and many other minerals, of less value than the preceding, but all capable of development.

Thus it may be fairly claimed that few countries are richer in mineral wealth than South Africa, and it must be remembered that this is a double asset—it not only provides immediate industries, but also serves to introduce eventually—as was the case in Australia—that agricultural population which is justly regarded as the backbone of a country. And South Africa has great agricultural possibilities. For more than a century it has had a purely agricultural population, which has steadily spread northwards, and has now reached the Zambesi. This in itself speaks for the character of the country, and it must be remembered that this agricultural population was one which sought to live and nothing more. For all practical purposes agriculture is still in the experimental stage: it remains for the

future to show what the resources and experience of civilisation can effect when applied to the primitive agriculture of the Boers.

But if the country claims our attention for its character, it claims it even more because of the people in it. Since the time that our ancestors made the grand tour fashionable it has been considered an indispensable part of an education to study the manners and customs of other countries, and what more profitable field for this could be found than the land of our relations? The peculiar process known as 'widening the mind' becomes far easier in an English-speaking country than in the traditional, but often uncongenial, atmosphere of France and Germany. To-day the Englishman considers himself the citizen not of a country, but of an Empire, and if he is to be a good citizen, his knowledge must be extended beyond one remote corner of it. If there is one obstacle to its unity, it is that the inhabitants of its different parts are out of touch with one another; in this way colonial problems are misinterpreted at home, and in the colonies the attitude of the Home Government is misrepresented. Everyone who has seen the

different countries for himself, and is able to realise the point of view of the different peoples, must be doing something for that cause of imperial unity, which is magnified in the Press and on the platform, but is afterwards too often disregarded.

It is just possible that the present is a peculiarly suitable time for calling attention to South Africa. It was assumed that with the whole country united under one flag its immediate prosperity was assured. But such has not proved to be the case. Discouraging reports are received at home, and in South Africa there is an almost universal complaint of 'bad times,' which has in some cases produced a pessimistic spirit more exaggerated than the optimism of three years ago. The plan of the following pages—and it is said that to achieve literary success some such plan is essential—is to show that a cloud still hangs over South Africa, but that the rifts in it are everywhere apparent, even to the untrained eye.

CHAPTER II

CAPE COLONY

IT is a truism of the hunting-field that the first fence is generally the worst, and if the same principle applies to the more arduous field of letters, the first chapter must be regarded as the crucial test. Once that is surmounted chapter two may be undertaken with a lighter heart and renewed confidence. Yet even here difficulties crop up. The author may be a perfect mine of information, but he must choose a suitable way of imparting it. The traditional form is something in the nature of a diary, carefully edited, and adorned by certain sage conclusions which could scarcely have occurred at the time of writing. But this method has its disadvantages, the principal one being that it must include so many details of a trivial nature. The author, too, is prone to credit himself with

a power of rapid observation, which must be, to say the least, unusual: the window of a railway carriage is often sufficient to give him an insight into the manners, customs, and possibilities of the country. On these grounds I propose to break the established rules in recording a few impressions of South Africa; my narrative will have none of the continuity of the diary, but will take the form of random notes and inconsequent observations on a variety of topics, in the hope that the reader may here and there light upon some point of interest. But so strong is the influence of the tradition established by previous travellers, that the curtain must be rung up at Capetown.

There is no doubt that after a sea voyage the mind is in the best possible state to receive those impressions which every visitor seeks. For a fortnight he has been cut adrift from all the cares or pleasures, as the case may be, of the world, occupied only with the unenviable task of killing time. For a few days he has preserved a stolid silence, which is supposed to be characteristic of the Englishman, but subsequently, recognising his bounden duty to be amused, he has undergone all those

ingenious tortures known as deck sports and dances. And finally, despite the popular idea that his natural home is the sea, he has been heartily glad to see the welcome heights of Table Mountain.

The first rays of the rising sun are just striking its grim grey cliffs, round which the light mist of morning still hangs; below them are pleasant green slopes, dotted with trees of a darker hue, and at the foot are clustered groups of picturesque white houses, overlooking the bay. In the harbour some stir and bustle dispels the peaceful character of the scene. A big vessel, homeward bound, slowly steams away from the wharf, amid some fitful cheering and waving of hats, and soon the rattling of chains and hawsers assures us that our pleasant captivity is over.

Capetown itself presents a curious mixture of the busy life of an English commercial centre, and the comfortable repose of a country town. Electric trams ply at a dangerous speed in all directions, but most of the inhabitants seem to have all the day before them—some standing idly at the street corners, others strolling along and exchanging greetings with their friends. Policemen are directing



A DUTCH FARMHOUSE, CAPE COLONY

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imaginary traffic with an air worthy of Piccadilly, but the long line of waiting hansoms appears to find trade somewhat slack. In the suburbs there is everywhere a sort of unfinished appearance. The inevitable tram and electric light gives an air of progress which is belied by unmade roads, a primitive system of drainage, and ugly patches of neglected waste land. This is largely due to the peculiar history of Capetown—an old Dutch city enlarged and transformed by private enterprise to play the part of a centre of commerce. Everywhere traces of this double character are to be found standing side by side, in curious contrast to one another.

It is at present suffering from that common disease known as 'bad times.' The war created a wholly artificial period of prosperity, and it was wrongly assumed that this was to be permanent. Now the large and well-stocked shops find few customers, the Mount Nelson Hotel—an establishment worthy of Cairo—is practically empty. Recently 1,500 hands were discharged at the harbour, and nearly every big business house is making similar reductions in its staff.

This state of things is reproduced throughout

Cape Colony, which is at present deep in financial difficulties, though probably only of a temporary nature. The public debt amounts to some £40,000,000, and though the railways are admitted to be a good security, the figure is rather alarming in view of the Budget returns, for while the debt has been annually increasing, the expenditure is scarcely balanced by the revenue. The prevailing distress is increased by the fact that the Government is forced to adopt a policy of retrenchment. Considerable reductions in the Civil Service have been criticised on the grounds that members of this body, with fixed incomes, are the last to benefit by a period of prosperity, and therefore should not be made to suffer in adversity. It has now been found necessary to raise the railway rates, a measure which to some extent affects all classes, and is correspondingly unpopular. An income tax is coming into operation, which will probably be no better liked here than it is at home. The line for exemptions has been drawn fairly high, and a tax of this nature means more officials, but it is the recognised remedy in a crisis, and doubtless its imposition was inevitable.

The present depression is due to a variety of causes. Before the war, land values were kept down by a sort of enforced depression, owing to the existence of the Boer powers in the north, and the consequent uncertainty as to the future of South Africa. As soon as this question was decided a land boom ensued, but has not been sustained, and the reaction is now being felt. It has already been stated that the war created certain conditions of a temporary nature: Capetown got the first benefit of the money coming into the country, it took toll of everything going forward, and the army provided a constant demand for commodities and labour. Cape Colony lived well up to its income. It was taken for granted that the future was assured, for the war would be followed by a boom, whereas the very reverse has proved to be the case. "When they got one pound they spent it and ten pounds more, and now they are being asked for the interest"—thus is the situation summed up in South Africa.

It is at once obvious that in some respects Capetown is geographically a bad centre of government. It is far from the interior, and out of touch with the eastern districts, so that, rightly or wrongly,

the 'Table Mountain administration' is held responsible for much of the trouble.

But if the critics in South Africa are to be trusted, the fountain-head of the evil is that Cape Colony has sought for its prosperity not within its own borders, but beyond them: it has aspired to be a forwarding station rather than a self-sufficing community. It was enabled at first to do this because, being the oldest, it was the best equipped of the South African colonies in the matter of harbours and railways, and has been prone to ignore the appearance of rivals on the east coast. Its early success tempted it to undertake more than it could perform, and at the present moment it is pledged to certain schemes of railway extension which are not likely to be profitable, yet the railways are already responsible for more than half the public debt. Capital has been devoted not to internal development, but to securing a position of dependence upon transit trade; and despite such expenditure, less than two-fifths of the annual railway revenue comes from the transit trade, the remainder coming from the 'up-country' consumer in the Colony itself.

Meantime more solid resources have been neglected. Cape Colony has three considerable ports, a network of railways, but comparatively speaking no 'back country'—the country is there, but it is undeveloped. A notable commentary on the situation is the steady increase in the quantity of imported meat, corn, and timber—all of which the country is capable of producing.

And if the results already secured by this sacrifice of internal development to the attainment of transit dues are disappointing, the future is even less encouraging. Beira is generally regarded as the port of Rhodesia, and with reasonable rates on the Mashonaland railway, should monopolise the trade of that country. Large sums of money are now being spent on Lorenzo Marques, and when these improvements are completed the Rand magnates will not be prevented by sentiment from deserting Capetown. Durban is already a formidable rival, and on the completion of the new lines to Modderport and Kroonstad, will be in direct communication with the New Colonies. All these ports are nearer to the inland commercial centres than Capetown, which has hitherto held the bulk

of the transit trade not in virtue of its geographical position, but in spite of it. Already there is an empty appearance about the harbour; this may be due to the depression which is universal in South Africa, but it may also be a foretaste of the future.

There are, however, certain indications that Cape Colony is now turning to the more solid sources of wealth contained in the land. An admirable object-lesson is provided by the increased prosperity of East London, due mainly to the great development that has taken place in the eastern provinces. The majority of the rural population of Cape Colony are Dutchmen, who, true to the old Boer character, are content to let things be as they are, mistrusting what we call enterprise. New-comers have generally slipped into the same unprogressive habits, though there are notable exceptions. In many places it is impossible to get fresh milk; farmers find it cheaper to buy Australian butter than to make it for themselves; meat is imported from New Zealand, eggs from Madeira. It is true that the best land in Cape Colony is all occupied, but it is generally said that its present output is no real criterion of its productive powers.

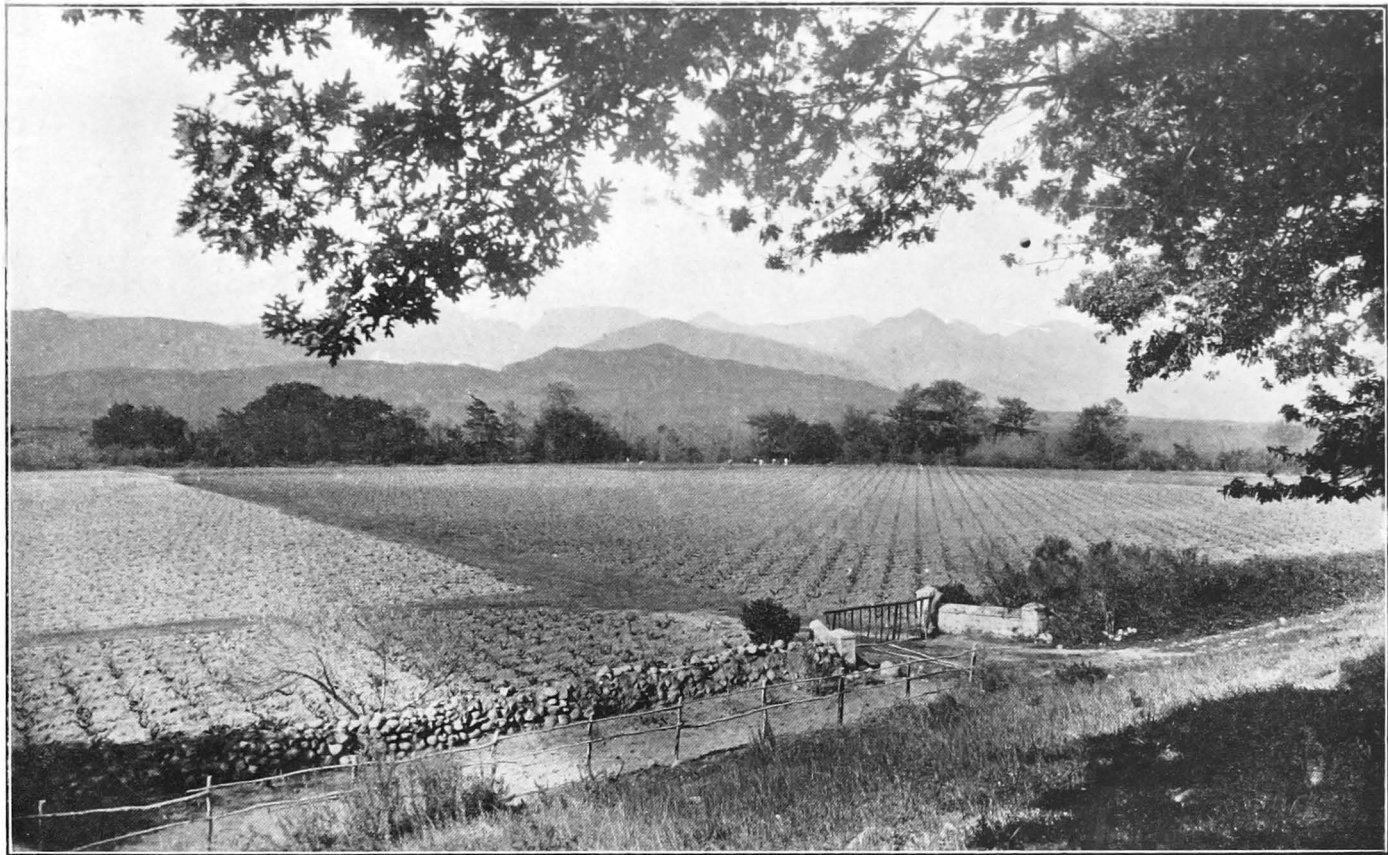
There have been many individual successes in stock, sheep, and dairy farming, and some arable farms have given a fair return. The great obstacle—as everywhere in South Africa—is the want of water, and this can only be surmounted by the action of the Government, for extensive schemes for boring, irrigation, and water storage are beyond the powers of the individual farmer. Fruit-farming seems to have a great future before it, and has an admirable example in the Rhodes fruit farms—near the Paarl—which have, to a great extent, ‘shown the way’ to the rest of the colony.

Few more picturesque spots could have been chosen than the long valley in the Drakenstein mountains, whose barren crags and hillsides serve to accentuate the fertile appearance of the green valley they enclose. It is well wooded with pines and oaks—some of a considerable age: the farms are of the old Dutch type—low, white, gabled houses, with wide ‘stoep’ or verandah in front—nestling among the trees. A river, which might well be an English trout stream, flows through it, and is fed by numerous small ‘sluits’ or brooks during the rainy season. There are about a dozen

farms under one central management, the farmers getting a bonus on their produce: a large packing house has been built close to the railway, and an annually increasing quantity of fruit is put on the London market. In 1899, 10,817 boxes of Cape fruit were imported there; in 1903 this number had been doubled, and last year was increased to 34,723 boxes. This increase is not attributable to one or two kinds of fruit, but is made up, in a large or small degree, of nearly every variety shipped.

Fruit-farming is still in a more or less experimental stage; for example, the Californian peach has been widely planted, and is found in every way inferior to the old Cape variety; the pear trees have not yet reached their full bearing powers, and it has now been discovered that the plums do much better when grafted on a peach root. The task of grading and packing is not yet fully understood, and anyone who knows the native will realise that he is not the ideal man to handle fruit; indeed, it is with the utmost difficulty that he is prevented from testing the ripeness of every peach by putting his thumb into it.

The near future should see the beginning of a



FRUIT FARM IN THE DRAKENSTEIN

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new industry in preserving fruit and making jam ; at present quantities of fallen fruit, and much that is unsuitable to export, is simply wasted. Yet English jams and marmalades are eaten all over South Africa. Some manufacturers have already done well, but the market is for the moment glutted by a quantity of imported jam, sold after the war below cost price.

It is proposed to plant timber on the land that is unsuitable for fruit trees. The oaks, which the Dutch farmers planted, are small but healthy ; the cluster pine grows everywhere in the valley, and in places shows very fair timber. Experts consider that there is a great future for forestry throughout South Africa, and much experimental planting has already been done in the New Colonies and Rhodesia. At present large quantities of timber are imported, but many of the conifers seem to thrive under the new conditions, besides certain hard-wood trees. There is a theory that large tracts of forest would serve to attract rain, the prime necessity of the country, and it has already been proved that the shelter provided by trees is of inestimable service to agriculture. Even in

England it is generally admitted that, compared to Sweden or Germany, forestry is in its infancy, so that it still remains to be seen what the continental methods of close planting and rotation of timber crops may effect in South Africa.

Such an enterprise as the Rhodes fruit farms cannot fail to have an excellent effect on the country. It provides a practical school for fruit farmers, and in all South African farming some practical experience is essential. It has put Englishmen on the land close to the stronghold of the Bond at the Paarl, and above all things it has 'shown the way' to other farmers in Cape Colony. When the farms were started the Dutchmen shook their heads over them, now they are eagerly adopting the new methods. If this example is followed in other branches of agriculture, there is every reason to expect that Cape Colony, whether it continues to be a forwarding station or not, will have in itself resources which will make it independent of the other South African colonies.

It is generally held that the prosperity of Natal has been built up by this excellent policy of internal development. In its different districts it combines

the advantages of a tropical and a temperate climate, of which full advantage has been taken. The history of its agriculture is one of steady progress. Sheep-farming is the staple industry, but a considerable export trade is now being done with the bark of the black wattle, used for tanning purposes; stock-raising has recovered after the rinderpest, and mixed farming is very successful. The result of this steady development is that the debt consists of the comparatively trifling sum of £14,000,000. Durban has the inestimable advantage of an agricultural population at her back, has improved her harbour, and is making great strides with her transit trade. Natalians are now in a position to look beyond their borders, and have recently concluded an agreement with the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, to advance money for the railway extension from Bethlehem to Modderport and Kroonstad. The completion of this will make Durban one of the chief gates for the trade of the New Colonies, and will enable Natal to send her coal there. The scheme has been criticised on the ground that it is the same policy which has proved so expensive to the Cape; in reality there is a wide difference.

Natal developed her internal resources before she looked beyond, and when she did so, she first assured herself of the prospect of a fair return. Much of her success is due to the fact that her affairs are in the hands of good men—her ‘Progressives’ and ‘Conservatives’ are in reality one party, whose only aim is the welfare of the country. She is loyal to the backbone; she was the first to offer a preferential tariff to British goods without obtaining any immediate advantage thereby, and with a view to ending the racial controversy, offered to surrender her constitution. She is not perhaps before the public as much as the other colonies, but enjoys all the happiness which is associated with an absence of such ‘history.’

The political situation at the Cape is far from being as satisfactory as in the sister colony. At a moment when all should combine in the interests of the country she is the victim of conflicting parties, of which one is in the hands of a strong and dangerous organisation. It is not so much the Dutch population that is responsible for this as the ‘predikants’ of their Reformed Church and the astute leaders of the Bond, who impose upon their sim-

plicity and utilise it for their own ends. After the war the situation was acute: rebellion was by no means dead in Cape Colony, and there was an organised boycotting of all loyalists. The latter were disgusted by what they considered the mistaken leniency of the Government towards the rebels, and held that the only result of the war had been to shift the storm-cloud from Pretoria to the Cape.

At the present time the 'Progressives,' under the able leadership of Dr. Jameson, hold a working majority in the Parliament, but theirs is the invidious task of retrenchment, and their party is a difficult one to hold together: the native question looms large in the future, and a successful issue can only be achieved if party questions are kept in the background. It is hoped that in time the situation will adjust itself. Now that there is no longer an independent Dutch power in South Africa, and with the British population in the New Colonies increasing every year, the aims and aspirations of the Bond must be considerably modified, and must become more hopeless as time goes on. It would be unduly sanguine to predict any immediate settlement, but already confidence is increasing at Cape-

town, and the outlook is far brighter than it was a few years ago.

And any improvement in the political situation must react upon the financial position of Cape Colony, most especially because the depression is only of a temporary nature. Though the public debt is a large one, it has been incurred mainly for reproductive works; the internal development of the colony is making headway—of which a striking instance may be seen in the increased exports of fruit. And Capetown itself must always be a place of vital importance to a naval power, whatever its future may be as a centre of commerce.

Much more might be written about Cape Colony, of its past history, or of its picturesque scenery. Something of the latter may be enjoyed by everyone travelling towards the north. For some time the line passes through a wide plain, well wooded in parts, while here and there clumps of arum lilies in full bloom reveal the presence of water. The plain ends in a long mountain range, which seems to bar all further progress, but presently a cleft opens, and the train is soon passing between steep walls of rock, following the course of the Hex river, that

flows in still pools and shallow stickles, a clear mountain stream. Beyond the gorge a long ascent begins, the line winding to and fro, so that we are sometimes within a few hundred yards of a spot that was passed five minutes before. The hillsides are covered with low scrub and clustering plants in varying shades of green, to which the flowers add an occasional touch of colour. As the train creeps higher every variety of mountain scenery opens—here a bare white slope recalls the Cheviots, there a downside dotted with bushes takes us to the juniper-clad Chilterns; beyond is a steep slope, rock strewn, and almost precipitous at the summit, the typical kopje of South Africa. Higher still—and now there is a bite in the breeze, for we are nearing the head of the pass; it is a wild and impressive sight, a long vista of scaurs and cliffs, every crag sharply outlined in the clear mountain air; a fleecy white cloud hides the far peak, and on this side a patch of snow still gleams in the sun. Far below is the green valley, and we can just distinguish the line of the river and the clumps of trees that shelter the farmhouses. Soon the last sign of the low country disappears, and we travel on towards the new scenes and fresh experiences of the interior.

CHAPTER III

KIMBERLEY

IT must be almost impossible for those who travel by the Cape Government Railways to realise how much they have to be thankful for. Thirty years ago the journey to Kimberley had to be made in the stage coach, and most of those who have had that experience declare that, of all the vicissitudes of the early days, this is the one most clearly impressed in their memory. Further north some of these coaches still survive—picturesque objects of American design, built to withstand all the difficulties and dangers of a road which scarcely deserves the name. They are drawn by five span of mules—and the mule can never be an ideal trapper—so that two drivers are necessary, one to guide this rather difficult team in the right direction, the other to urge it into a reasonable pace

with a huge two-handed whip, and from time to time to repair damages to the harness. A week spent among these conditions, with its unending monotony, is sufficient to try the nerves of the hardest pioneer. In England there still lingers some of the romance of 'The Road,' but in Africa it has never existed.

"Nous avons changé tout cela": the old red coach has given place to the *train-de-luxe*, which brings Bulawayo within a three days' journey of Capetown. At the hands of those accustomed to the comforts of the Great Western or the Midland, the South African railways are perhaps open to criticism, but if the different conditions are taken into consideration, they are beyond all praise. The line is a single one, the gauge only 3 ft. 6 ins.; the gradients are steep and curves abrupt; the goods traffic is practically all in one direction, and these causes combine to keep the speed low—indeed, the average is something between ten and twenty miles in the hour. But this low speed gives to South African travel a curious, restful character, due largely to the absence of vibration. At home we are accustomed to the scream of the whistle, the sudden plunge into a

tunnel, and the bustle of the frequent stations, but there is none of this in South Africa. Perhaps the most striking characteristic there is the dust—it rises in dense clouds from the line, it penetrates the inmost corners of the train, it covers the clothes with a fine grey coating, and gives a distinct gritty flavour to the food ; nothing defeats it, and the wise man learns to ignore it. The carriages are of the ordinary corridor type, so that the passengers can traverse the whole length of the train and exchange greetings with their friends, for the railway seems to be a sort of recognised meeting-place. At first it is rather surprising to be constantly meeting the same people in South Africa, until one realises that, despite the size of the country, the population is grouped round a few main centres, and restricted to certain lines of communication. It is also extraordinary to see how distance is disregarded—for it is quite a common thing to make a journey equivalent to that from London to Inverness in order to spend the week-end at a particular place.

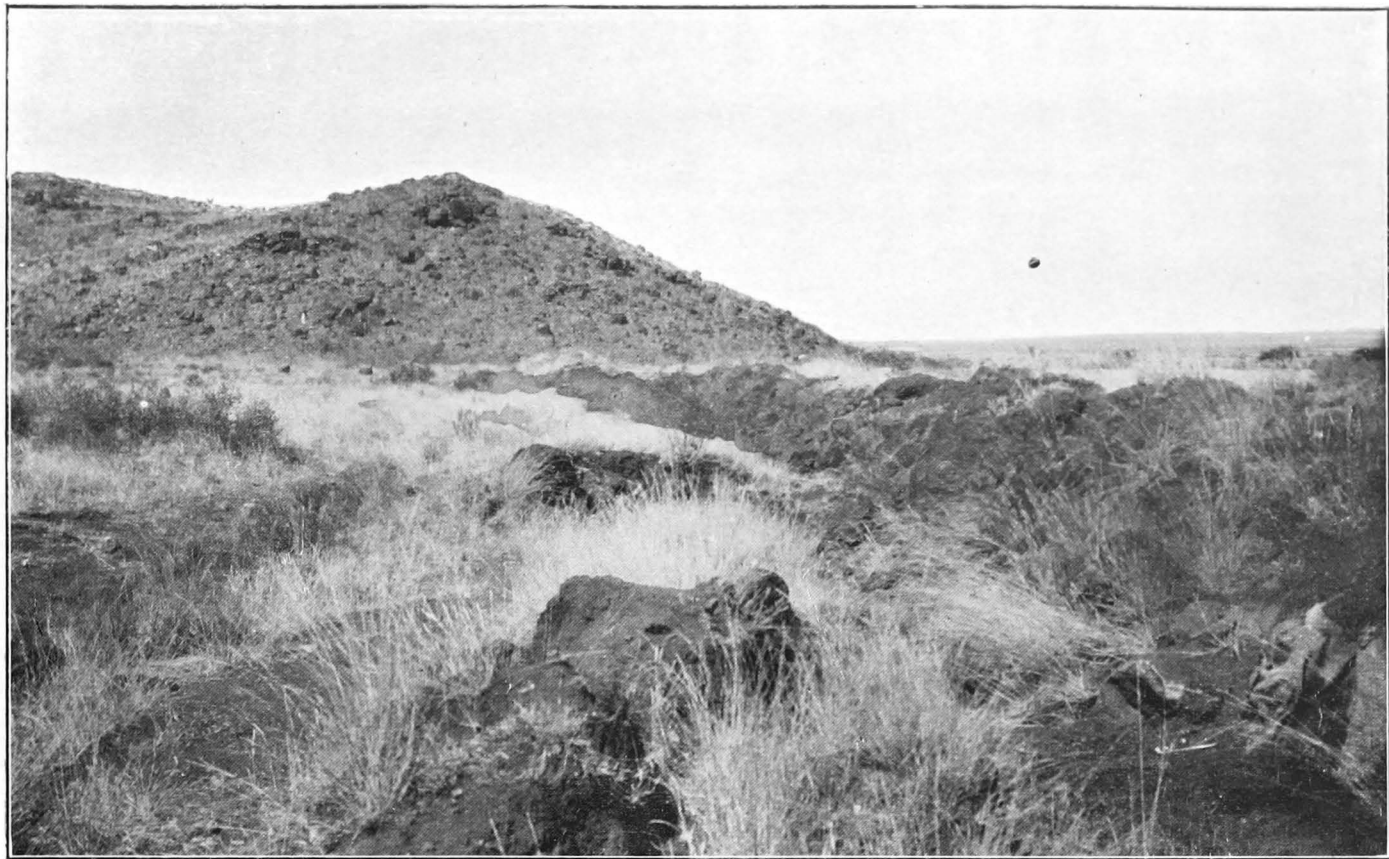
It cannot be denied that the actual travelling is very monotonous, for there are, as a rule, no sudden changes of scenery to give interest to the

journey. From time to time signs of a station appear—a siding perhaps, or a few tin shanties beside the line. The train crawls slowly up to the platform and stops—conveying somehow the impression that for the moment it can crawl no farther. Most of the passengers alight and chat with the inhabitants, or admire the stationmaster's garden, while those of a more practical turn of mind make for the rather primitive refreshment room. The township consists of a few ill-built cottages and the store—a more pretentious building, which generally bears the name of one of the 'chosen people.' South Africa appears to have found special favour in their eyes, a fact which is sometimes quoted as the best possible guarantee for its future, for they are excellent judges of the prospects of a country.

So the journey drags on, strangely monotonous but strangely peaceable; our destination seems to be a long way off, so far, indeed, that space and time may well be disregarded. Signs of the war are constantly appearing, especially on the western line to Kimberley and Mafeking. Tins are scattered thick by the side of the line, and dismantled block-houses, the most dismal-looking objects imaginable,

are everywhere to be seen. By Enslin and Graspan there is an occasional grave, and farther on the line passes by the Modder River battlefield, now a dreary-looking waste. Beyond it again are the Majersfontein kopjes, and soon the train steams into Kimberley, some thirty hours after leaving Capetown. And here—lest this narrative should share some of the monotony of the journey—it would be well to alight, and explore the wonders of the diamond city.

The first impression of Kimberley is that it is asleep. There is none of the stir of the Rand, nor the look of 'waiting to work' which pervades Capetown: there is nothing ostentatious, but there is nothing squalid—everything is intensely respectable. We might be driving into an English country town on Sunday, admiring its well-made, well-kept streets, its substantial houses, and the trim gardens in front of them. But here, we are in one of the greatest commercial centres of Africa, the only indication of which is the businesslike way in which everything is managed, and the fact that prices are comparatively low. All additions to the town are well done; the new theatre deserves



THE MAGERSFONTEIN TRENCHES, LOOKING TOWARDS MODDER RIVER

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special mention, the club is a model of its kind, and the Sanatorium Hotel worthy of Harrogate. The explanation of this prosperous appearance lies in the fact that Kimberley is in the hands of De Beers. It owes its population to their industry, they pay indirectly one-third of the municipal revenue, besides an annual grant of £6,000, and no doubt their controlling influence is felt in every branch of public life. The fame of this great corporation has probably led the stranger to expect to see it represented by hard men of business, of stern aspect, indifferent to the everyday details of life: and this impression has perhaps been strengthened by the respect, akin to awe, with which the name is mentioned in Kimberley. He may even have seen at the station their private car, which is almost regal in its magnificence. Thus he is totally unprepared for the middle-aged gentlemen of kindly appearance—who might under another star have been country squires, or busy town councillors—who issue from it. For the De Beers directors are no mere money-makers: they have enormous wealth at their back, a keen appreciation for the pleasures of life, and are anxious that everything

round them should be in keeping with their prosperity. The result is that Kimberley has an air of solid comfort which cannot be surpassed in South Africa.

The famous siege must have been a sad break in its unruffled calm, but the civil population, under the leadership of De Beers, rose to the occasion, and displayed the greatest prowess; the big gun which was then made still stands in the town, as a monument to the energy and resource of the citizens.

It is a task of some difficulty to give any account of the diamond-mining industry—most especially for the stranger, unlearned in all its technicalities. The diamondiferous soil is found in a so-called ‘pipe,’ a more or less circular space, some 400 or 500 yards in diameter, and enclosed within clearly defined natural walls. It has not yet been ascertained to what depth the ‘pipe’ goes, but some are now being worked at a 2,000-foot level. At the top the soil is of a yellowish colour, but lower down it is blue. Some parts of the ‘pipe’ contain a higher proportion of diamonds than others, and a Kimberley expert can generally tell from certain

characteristics of the stones from which of the five 'pipes' now being worked by De Beers they have been taken. After the 'blue ground' has been brought to the surface it is spread out, and exposed for some time to the weather, until it is softened sufficiently to be treated in the washing plant and finally by the 'pulsator'—the immense machine wherein it is completely disintegrated, and the diamonds extracted from it. These large tracts of 'blue ground,' and the apparently unprotected treasures they contain, inspire the stranger with grave fears for their safety, but he is assured that, though no one is to be seen, they are all most carefully watched. After exposure on the 'floors,' the blue ground is completely broken up, washed, and ultimately passed over plates smeared with grease, which allow the other heavy minerals of the concentrates to pass over them, but retain the diamonds. The final stage is the sorting house, where the stones are divided according to their different sizes, and here diamonds of every description may be seen, beautiful gems, some transparent, others with a faint yellowish tinge and glossy appearance, which they lose after they have been cut.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the industry is the perfection to which the various machinery has been brought. The 'blue' after being extracted is carried for long distances by a wonderful system of mechanical haulage, so that above ground comparatively little manual labour is needed.

Some 12,000 natives are employed in connection with the mines, and all those who come into actual contact with the precious stones are confined in compounds. Illicit diamond buying has provided endless material for the sensational writer, and there is no doubt that in the old days there was a great leakage from the mines. It is said that in many cases the boys who worked there were expected to bring back a 'present' for their chief, and there are stories of diamonds being offered for sale far away towards Central Africa. But now elaborate precautions are taken against it. The boys contract for varying periods, from three months to a year, and during this time they may not leave the compound, which is connected by a covered way with the mine. If they find stones while working they are paid a bonus of 2s. per carat, and a lucky find may produce as much as

£10. Wire-netting above the compound prevents them from throwing diamonds to an accomplice outside, and at the termination of their contract they have to undergo a very rigorous search. They thoroughly enjoy their life. Some 1,500 of them may be seen in one compound, lying in their bunks, washing in the swimming bath, or cooking some savoury meal—a task which especially delights them. Every provision is made for their comfort; they have an excellent hospital, and a large store where luxuries may be bought, and they are allowed a certain ration of Kaffir beer. Their pay is good—4*s.* 6*d.* a day being a common wage—and they can live well for about 5*s.* a week, so that many leave the compound with £40 or £50 in their pocket. They seldom quarrel, and their discipline is excellent; once every week the compound is visited by an inspector, when they are at liberty to make any complaints. The best proof of the success of the compound system is that many of the boys come back year after year to work in the mines.

Nor are the white employés of De Beers neglected. From Kimberley a tram runs to the model village of Kenilworth, two miles distant, where

most of them are installed. Here are shady avenues of gums, a church, and comfortable cottages with gardens in front, and numbers of healthy-looking children playing outside. The adjoining estate is laid out like a large pleasure-park, well planted with different conifers and the inevitable gum: in the enclosures specimens of South African game are preserved—eland, sable, hartebeeste, wildebeeste, and zebra—under conditions which are almost natural. There is also a space reserved for garden produce, and a well-stocked orchard.

Five miles from Kimberley is Alexandersfontein, where a sort of holiday resort is being established—again under the direct auspices of De Beers. A tram line is being laid down, two good hotels are already built, and close by are pretty gardens, tennis-courts, and a swimming bath. Here it is hoped that the *jeunesse dorée* of Kimberley will elect to spend its week-ends, so that in time some return may be had for the capital invested.

Special mention should be made of the De Beers stud farm, for the possibilities open to horse-breeding in South Africa are now beginning to be recognised. The late war revealed the value of the

HORSE-BREEDING

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Afrikander pony, a wiry little animal that can feed on the veld where an English horse would starve, is never 'sick nor sorry,' and apparently up to any weight. There are innumerable tales of its powers of endurance, and many instances of ponies that carried a heavy man all through the war. But despite these virtues it is a deteriorated type, due partly to the effects of inbreeding, and partly to breeding from weedy stock: the foals are seldom fed, being generally left to shift for themselves, thus getting little chance to develop bone and substance: the prevailing type has indifferent shoulders, and is very light in the bone. The aim of the stud farm is to produce a 'general utility' animal of the hunter type, standing 15 or 15'2, combining more substance with all the hardiness of the Afrikander pony.

Such a horse will be invaluable for riding or driving, and probably for army remounts. It is argued that horses will not be required so much for ploughing and the hard work of the farm, as if used for that purpose they must be stabled and fed, and the farmer dislikes this additional expense: besides, he already has a suitable animal in the Afrikander ox.

With this end in view two well-known stallions have been imported—Oakdene from the King's stables, and the Duke of Westminster's Conroy. After the war a number of imported mares were bought, of the Irish hunter type, and some carefully selected Afrikanders. The foals are fed for two years—a comparatively easy task—for if the right time is chosen, excellent forage can be cut on the veld: this gives the required bone and substance. They are then turned out on the veld for two years, during which time they should acquire all the hardiness and other good points of the Afrikander pony. After this they are broken, and should be fit for anything.

Of course, there has not yet been time enough to reveal all the merits of such a horse, but judging by the appearance of the foals and two-year-olds—many of which stand higher than the Afrikander pony—the success of the scheme is assured. Should this be so it should do much to encourage horse-breeding generally throughout South Africa. Its importance has already been recognised in the New Colonies, in both of which an excellent stud-farm has been established by the Government. Several

well-known stallions have been imported and sent to the different districts, so that it is within the power of every farmer to improve his stock. Some of them are beginning to realise that it pays them to feed their mares and foals instead of leaving them to find their own living; this is not difficult, as lucerne and other forage crops thrive in the country, besides the natural hay which the veld provides.

The enterprises of De Beers are not confined to the neighbourhood of Kimberley: in every corner of the country some new proof of their influence is to be found. They are large landowners, managing a block of farms for themselves. They own a third share in the Rhodes fruit farms, which should in time prove a profitable investment, besides being of great value to the Cape fruit industry. They have their own dynamite factory, large timber-cutting contracts on the Bechuanaland border, and an agreement has just been concluded with the Cape Government Railways for De Beers to advance the necessary capital for the new line from Fourteen Streams to Klerksdorp. Some connection between the two main arteries of South Africa has

long been necessary—hitherto there was no railway connection between them north of De Aar—and this will now be accomplished. Nor have they been backward in the field of politics, for they are strongly represented in the present Government of Cape Colony. Even in far Rhodesia they have no slight political influence, for they were among the earliest supporters of the company that added that country to our dominions: in a word, their long arm is felt in every part of South Africa.

It is sometimes said that the existence of gold or precious stones in a country is a very doubtful blessing, for it provides an industry of a temporary and more or less hazardous nature, while preventing men from developing the most permanent sources of wealth. This theory is completely refuted by the history of the Kimberley mines. These have served to employ an immense quantity of labour, white and coloured; their reputation has attracted new men to South Africa, and they saved the situation in Cape Colony when faced with the prospect of bankruptcy. They have been responsible for the growth of Kimberley as a solid commercial town, whose existence at once created a demand for

agricultural produce, and helped thereby the growth of an agricultural population. The capital of De Beers has been utilised for more than mere mining development. It has been devoted to the improvement of Kimberley and everything connected with it; it has also, when invested in the stud farm or fruit farms, done much for the agriculture of the country. It has enabled a very necessary scheme of railway extension to be carried out, and in the past it enabled the Chartered Company to undertake the task of developing Rhodesia.

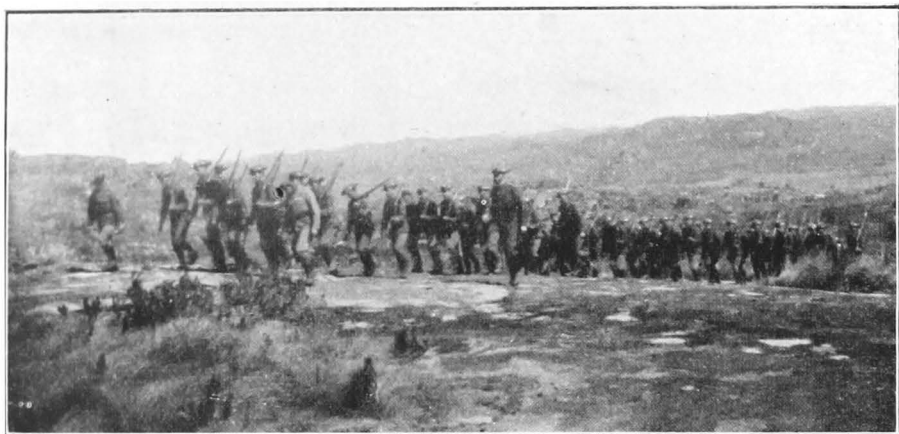
It is significant that Colonel Owen Thomas, in his recently published work on the agricultural possibilities of South Africa, though himself pre-eminently a champion of the farmer, states that the first need of the country is a mining population, to provide the necessary market. This view is fully borne out by the history of the Kimberley diamond mines.

CHAPTER IV

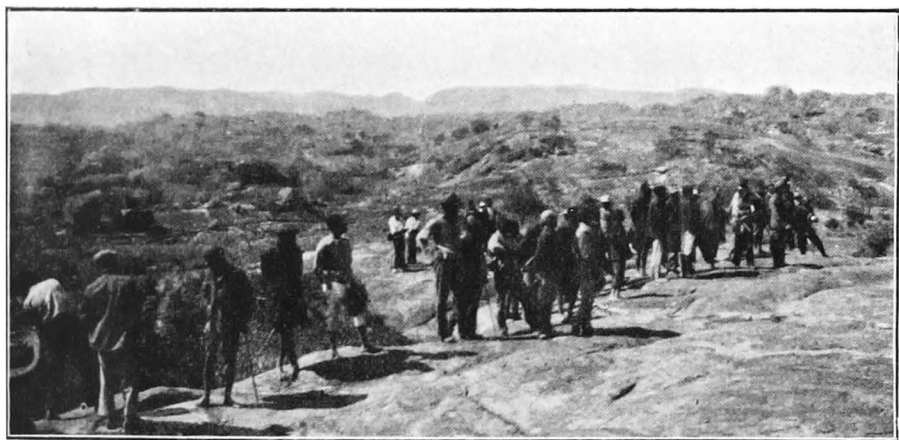
RHODESIA

IT is, of course, proverbial that the spoilt child of the family is generally the youngest one, whose character is remarkable for certain imperfections which only add to its charm. And there is no doubt that there is much of the charm of the youngest child about Rhodesia—the youngest of our South African colonies, and a land of younger sons. True to its rôle, it has had a stormy childhood; its inhabitants have come through many strange vicissitudes, and most of them have seen service more than once.

Its past is enshrouded in mystery, but there are relics of an earlier civilisation, and a primitive mining industry, which have caused it to be identified with the land of Ophir, that provided the riches of Solomon—though the truth of the legends concerning its fabled wealth remains to be proved.



THE SOUTH RHODESIAN VOLUNTEERS



IN THE MATOPPOS

So mysterious a reputation could not fail to appeal to Englishmen, and even in the degenerate nineteenth century called forth some of that spirit of adventure that ran riot in the Elizabethan age. There is still a certain craving, described as the 'lust of horizon,' a longing for the unexplored, a worship of the unknown. Such a craving can be satisfied to the full in Rhodesia, which also has some of the glamour associated with the idea of hidden treasure.

It probably did not occur to the pioneers of the Chartered Company that their venture had its foundations in romance. The Charter was obtained fifteen years ago with the avowed purpose of exploiting the country; the pioneers cut their road through the bush, established themselves at Salisbury, and proceeded to 'exploit,' until in 1893 they were compelled to abandon their task for the even more congenial one of the Matabele War, and one for which they showed themselves to be eminently qualified. After some months the country was pacified, and sovereign rights established in Mashonaland and Matabeleland. Three years later came the Matabele rebellion, with its attendant horrors,

but again the pioneers were equal to the occasion, and since then have enjoyed a more peaceful life, though during the recent war Rhodesia was practically cut off from the rest of South Africa, and denuded of the greater part of its male population, who again volunteered for service. But now it is thought that the fighting days of the country are over, and the large police force has been considerably reduced, the assistance of that workmanlike body the South Rhodesian Volunteers making it easier to take this step. Rhodesia has often been described as the only colony that has never cost the British taxpayer a penny, and it is hoped that in consideration of this the Imperial Government will in the near future incur the additional expense of stationing a regiment at Bulawayo. This would enable the Chartered Company, whose immediate task is retrenchment, to make still further reductions in their police; it would bring trade into the town, and help to give it that mysterious feature known as 'life,' which is inseparable from a garrison town. Incidentally it may be mentioned that from the point of view of the garrison few pleasanter places could be chosen.

Rhodesia may now be described as a settled country. Its area of some 750,000 square miles—larger than France and Spain—has a European population of 12,000, and a native one of nearly a million. The railway communication from Capetown to Beira runs through it, with cross lines to the principal mining centres, and a northern extension has already crossed the Zambesi. The harbour of Beira is only some 400 miles distant from Salisbury—the political capital—and the completion of the new line from Fourteen Streams to Klerksdorp will bring the country into more direct communication than hitherto with the Transvaal.

The administration is in the hands of the Chartered Company, subject to the control of the Imperial Government, represented by His Majesty's High Commissioner, and a resident Commissioner in Salisbury. The country is divided into three sections, North-West and North-East Rhodesia being governed by administrators and district commissioners, while South Rhodesia is under an administrator appointed by the Chartered Company, with an executive council of six and a legislative

council of fourteen; seven of the latter are the Company's nominees, so that it can count upon a majority there. The administration of justice, under Roman Dutch law, is in the hands of local magistrates and native commissioners, with an appeal to a high court, which holds its sessions twice a year. In the matter of roads, hospitals, post and telegraph systems, and public works generally, the country is probably better equipped than any other of its age.

The climatic conditions vary considerably in so large a territory, but it is a generally accepted fact that most of South Rhodesia is a 'white man's country'—that is, white men can make their home there. It is true that men who have been there long have a rather 'tropical' look, and are subject to a mild form of fever, but that is more or less inseparable from new country in Africa. Even Kimberley was unhealthy in the early days, and Salisbury, which is now one of the healthiest places in Rhodesia, was ten years ago—before the rank grass of the veld had disappeared—described as 'full of fever.' The best guarantee for the healthy character of the country is provided by the rosy

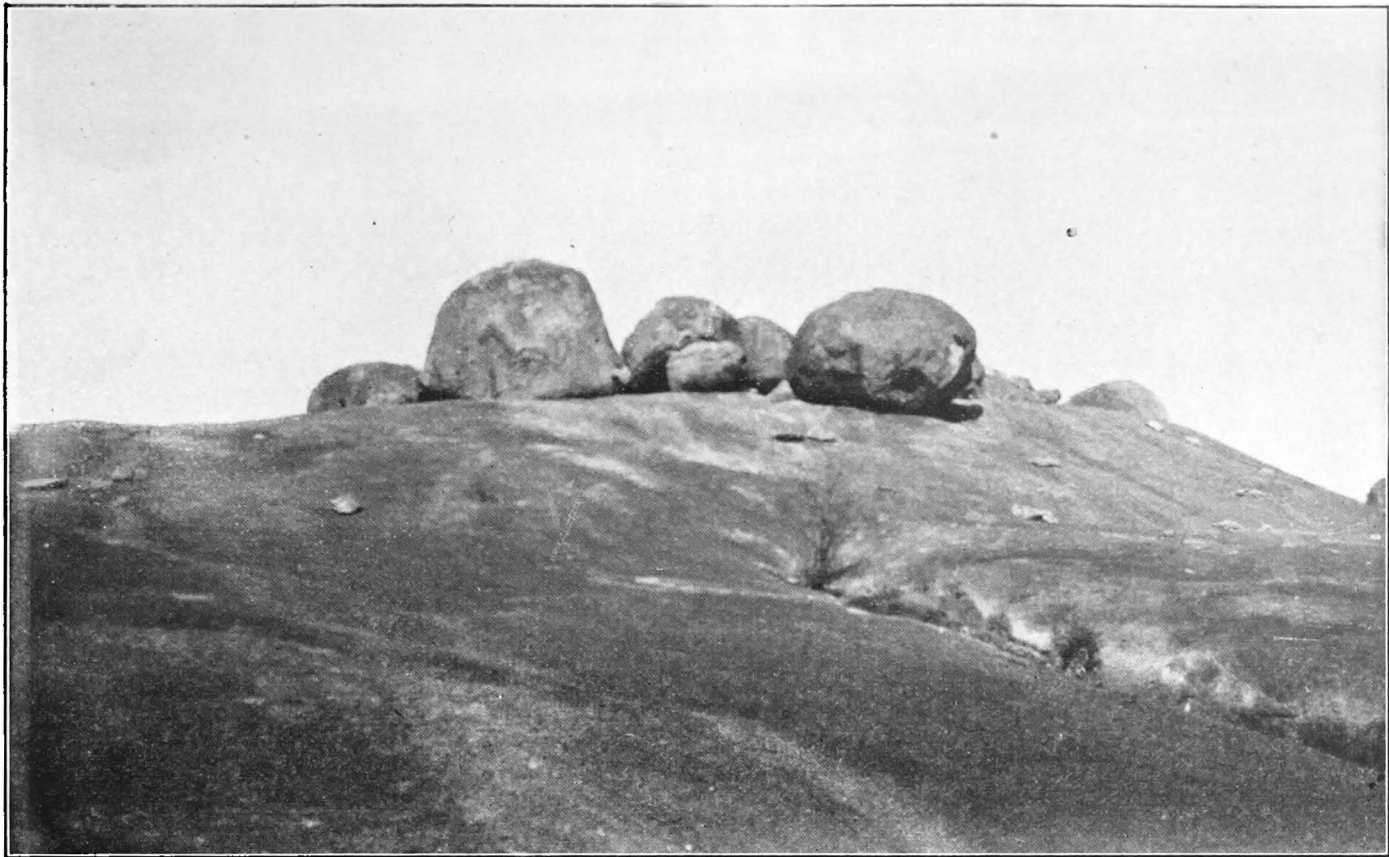
cheeks of the children of Salisbury and Bulawayo, and many of the country districts. During the summer the climate does become tropical, but the winter months—from June to October—are dry and rainless, and recall a very good English summer, the only drawback being occasional high winds with their accompanying dust storm. The inhabitants have learnt to accommodate themselves to the climate, rising early and doing little in the middle of the day, habits which are more or less customary throughout South Africa.

The nature of the country, like the climate, varies considerably in the different districts. Much of South Rhodesia consists of rolling plains of grass, with occasional patches of scrub—bushes and small trees—which give it a rather parklike appearance: sometimes this scrub becomes very dense, and there are also tracts of forest, with larger trees and open glades, but these are for the most part marshy and feverish during the summer rains. North of the Zambesi the scrub continues, but on the uplands there are wide open downs, suitable for stock-farming.

The rainfall varies from some fifty inches in the

Melsetter district to less than twenty in the neighbourhood of Tuli, the general average taken from different places in Mashonaland being about forty, and less in Matabeleland. The number of days on which rain fell in one year nowhere exceeded 122, so that, though the country is well watered during the rainy season, it is subject to long droughts. It is probable that in the future much will be done in the way of dams and water storage, for which the presence of abundant streams offers great facilities: in the only place where it has been attempted on a large scale—in the Matoppos—the result has been most encouraging.

The scenery of the Matoppo Hills is entirely different from that of the rest of Rhodesia. They are best described as a succession of kopjes or lines of kopjes, varying in size from the merest hillock to an eminence which might almost be dignified with the name of mountain, each strewn with gigantic granite boulders, and clad with rich tropical vegetation. The view from the heart of this wilderness is curiously wild and impressive. As far as the eye can see there stretches a long vista of bare granite faces and rock-strewn hillsides; the huge crags



"VIEW OF THE WORLD"

To face page 48

and boulders assume a thousand fantastic forms, their dull grey hue contrasting with the green of palm or cactus. But for these unfamiliar plants, the immediate foreground might be a piece of wild Scottish scenery, but bathed in a sunshine such as Scotland rarely knows.

There is an overpowering sense of loneliness and grandeur, a feeling of the illimitable, which has been expressed in the native name for one of the central kopjes—the 'World's View.' Among the boulders that crown the hill there is a plain granite slab, with the inscription 'Here lie the remains of Cecil John Rhodes.'

This year a memorial was raised here to Major Wilson and those who fell with him at the Shangani River, and many of the early pioneers were assembled to see it unveiled. Their numbers are sadly diminished, and the survivors as a rule seem to be far from prosperous. The truth is that in 'the piping times of peace' the lot of the pioneer is a hard one; his work is done, and has left him unfitted for a less stirring task, so that there attaches to him something of the ill fortune of the proverbial rolling stone. He has had fighting to his heart's

content, he has farmed, prospected, and probably mined. He has tried to adapt himself to the march of civilisation—has made bricks, built and kept an hotel, and perhaps tried his fortune at horse-dealing or store-keeping. In fact it would be hard to mention anything which he has not attempted, but his efforts have not generally met with the success they deserved, and in the bottom of his heart he longs for the old days of the ox waggon and the camp fire. His restless nature prevents him from settling down like the Boer to a patriarchal life on his farm. His adventurous past has not instilled those habits of prudence and economy which ensure business success. A hard life has left his marks upon him physically, though he declares that the only disease he has ever suffered from is 'a bad head in the morning.' In a word, his life has its tragic side, and it is this side which is most apparent to-day.

Since the time that he helped to open up the country he has been joined by other kindred spirits of what may be called the 'gentleman adventurer' type; younger sons and others who have left the beaten track for the freer spaces of the veld. They are essentially English—men from the Service or

the 'Varsity, hard workers and good sportsmen, with no special qualifications for any one employment, but ready and likely to turn their hand to anything. They are English gentlemen, with minds enlarged by travel and adventure, often in many climes and countries, with a knowledge of life which cannot be gained in books, and a keen appreciation of its pleasures. There are not as many of them in Rhodesia as there were, for they have felt the full effect of the bad times ; many have left the country, some have failed, and some have died. But a nucleus still remains, reinforced from time to time from England, and manfully strives to keep alive the 'light of other days.' Despite the prevailing depression, their horses, and rifles, and general turnout remain above criticism, for they are not the men to bow before adversity : " If it is our last kick," said the Regency buck when faced with ruin, " let us at least give it with a clean foot," and the same spirit upholds the Rhodesians of to-day. No one seeing them on the well-kept polo ground, or dining in a club which compares well with that of any English town, would imagine that their life had its more strenuous side. Yet one spends the day

working on his farm, another is just back from some fever-stricken spot in the North-West, and a third has been for six months prospecting, with no better home than a Kaffir hut.

It must not, however, be thought that there is only this one type of settler in Rhodesia, for there are many others. There are keen professional men from home, who have come to seize the chances offered by a new country. There are long-headed Scotchmen, who keep somewhat in the background, but often make the steadiest progress, and there are a few enterprising farmers from Cape Colony. But all are more or less infected with the spirit of the country—an adventurous gaiety, which does not conceal the real determination below.

Adventure is in the air—indeed it seems among these civilised conditions to be almost unreal, and gives a sort of ‘through the looking-glass’ character to the place. The old pioneers have endless stories of the native wars—many of them unknown to history—and some are genuinely indignant that the authorities, on one famous occasion, did not allow them to capture Beira. The news of the day is equally stimulating—there is a new lion story, or

talk of some fresh discovery of gold, or perhaps of native troubles in the far north.

The general impression is that of a country of amateurs, the word amateur being used in its very best sense. What is termed private enterprise is the motive power in Rhodesia—it brought the country into existence, it settled and developed it, and now administers it. In the case of countries, as with athletics, we may pin our faith to professionals, but one's sympathies are all with the amateurs, for the latter have many qualities which are denied to the former.

The first result of this 'amateur' element in Rhodesia was that development was carried on very rapidly, and on a very lavish scale. The magic word 'gold' attracted capital and men from home, and a boom ensued. In 1897 the railway from Vryburg reached Bulawayo, and Rhodesia now has no less than 2,000 miles of permanent way. A bridge is being built across the Zambesi, and the line is being carried further on its destined course towards Cairo. It must also be remembered that Bulawayo is the same distance from Mossamedes, on the west coast, as it is from Capetown

and that if railway communication were established it would be five days nearer London than it now is.

But the finest instance of this rapid development is provided by Bulawayo itself. It was argued that, as the country was destined to have a great future, development must be carried out upon a corresponding scale. The town must be laid out in such a way that alterations would never be necessary: good buildings were not only essential, but would be a profitable investment, in view of the high rents which the future would bring. In the heyday of the boom certain ground values rose in six months from £160 to £2,000. The hotel must be worthy of the distinguished visitors who would flock to see this great country: there must be a library, museum, and public gardens for its prosperous inhabitants. The British public entered into the spirit of the thing, capital was forthcoming, private enterprise was not backward, and the work was done: to-day the visitor who remembers that twelve years ago the site of Government House was occupied by Lobengula's kraal—Bulawayo means 'the place of slaughter'—is simply astounded by the spectacle. He passes along wide roads, cut

in the primeval scrub, and boldly marked 'Seventh Avenue': he sees buildings worthy of a European capital, a long line of brass plates at their doors bearing the names of companies, of which the least that can be said is that they do not attract the British investor to-day. Overhead is a complicated system of wires—telegraph, telephone, and electric light. In the 'suburbs'—and Bulawayo is twelve years old—are comfortable houses, surrounded by pretty gardens with orange trees, and bougainvilleas in full bloom. The shops are spacious and well stocked, and all aspire to live up to the character of the place, for even the tin shanty—a relic of the early days—is labelled as the 'Imperial Restaurant,' or some equally imposing title.

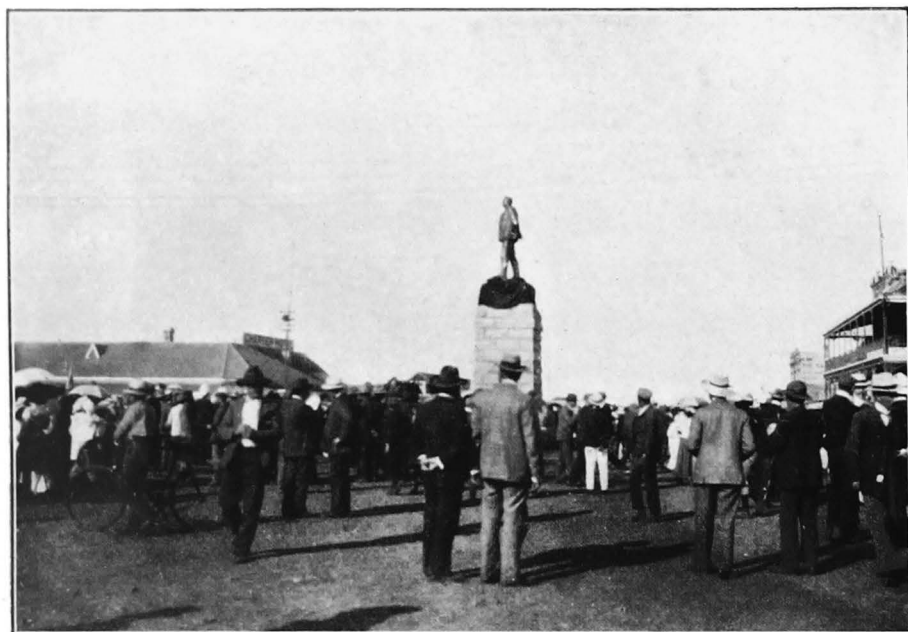
In a word, Bulawayo is the 'boom city' familiar to our American cousins—it has the same mixture of barbarism and civilisation, the luxury in the wilderness, which may be found 'out west' where 'the boys' still hold up the electric tram. And the fact that it has its counterpart in the land of the best business men in the world at once disposes of the statement that all this is useless extravagance. Mr. Rhodes pointed out that in development it is

better to establish the best methods, even if the result should be a temporary loss, for their justification would be in the future, when their advantage over a more cautious policy would be apparent. And so 'rapid development' and 'modern methods' have been the watchwords of Rhodesia. But it is obvious that such a policy has its dangers. Unless the management is of the very best, it may easily degenerate into extravagance, and of this the country has its full share of examples. On one occasion Bulawayo was described as 'a town built on faith'—to which someone added that 'faith without works is of no avail.'

It is perhaps the amateur element—previously alluded to—that has always demanded a certain style, or magnificence, in every department. It may be seen in the Chartered Company's offices at London or Capetown, in the well-appointed club, or Government House—unoccupied—at Bulawayo; in the offices of the typical Rhodesian company, or the general standard of living throughout the country. It is often said too that, from the Government downwards, there is everywhere a certain-casual spirit, which is not far removed from slack-



IN MAIN STREET, BULAWAYO



UNVEILING THE MEMORIAL TO CECIL RHODES, BULAWAYO

ness, an indifference to business methods which soon becomes extravagance, and a tendency—not rare in South Africa—to speak of the prosperity of a country at any given time as though it could be measured by the amount of champagne consumed.

But enough has been said of Rhodesia to reveal its peculiar charm—a charm which is only increased by its undoubted imperfections. It must be clear that such a country, and the men in it, provide the best possible material: all that is necessary is management. There are possibilities about the place and the people not to be found in other places, which enjoy a greater measure of prosperity. In the beginning it was pre-eminently a 'one man country'; the name of Mr. Rhodes was sufficient to inspire confidence at home, or to settle any difficulties in Rhodesia: it is now in the position of an army that has lost its leader—others may direct, but they cannot lead. And for such a work a leader is indispensable—a principle which we tacitly admit by the 'one man' system which we apply to our crown colonies, and which has had its justification in Egypt or the Transvaal. Until the country has a head it is powerless, its resources are wasted, and

its people lost, for they cannot apply that self-reliance which they show in the ordinary conduct of life to its larger issues. It is to be hoped that the near future will reveal some solution of the problem, something that will serve to show the real value of the country, and to bring out the real qualities of 'the spoilt children of Cecil Rhodes.'

CHAPTER V

GOLD-MINING IN RHODESIA

IT is vain for the political economist to try and persuade us that gold, on its own merits, is one of the most useless commodities in the world. It may indeed be recognised that it is only an agent, whereby better things can be obtained, but it cannot be denied that it has also a subtle charm of its own—it is a talisman that has always exercised an insidious power over the human mind. Mankind has failed to profit by bitter experience in the past. The alchemists of the Middle Ages were doomed to disappointment in their search for the secret of manufacturing gold ; the world is strewn with the bones of those who gave up their lives in the search for it, but the 'gold fever' still survives with its powers unimpaired. South Africa is full of its victims, and there Fortune has treated them with

all her proverbial inconsistency : some she has made into millionaires, while others, with apparently no worse chances, have lost every penny they possessed.

A gold-mining country has always appealed enormously to the imagination, and has provided endless material for the different writers of books. Some of them have depicted the cosmopolitan camps of Australia, others have told of the frozen fields of the Klondike, or the lawless townships of the Pacific slopes. But none of these descriptions apply to the mining industry of South Africa. The Rand seems to be deplorably civilised in comparison with the wilder conditions that are supposed to prevail 'out west.' The huge 'tailing heaps' and shaft head-gears, which are spread over a wide tract of country, have no romance about them—the whole place recalls some mining centre at home rather than a mysterious search for hidden treasure.

But in Rhodesia gold-mining is pursued under more picturesque conditions, and an element of romance still survives. The mines are not confined to one district, as at the Rand, but scattered over the country. The 'banket' formation at the former place—where the gold is found in the conglomerate

A QUARTZ COUNTRY

HERVA
of
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which binds together innumerable small pebbles—^A~~P~~ has a uniformity which makes the mining a settled industry. If a certain proportion of gold is found in one part of the 'banket,' it may roughly be assumed that a similar proportion will be found in another.

But the quartz reefs of Rhodesia are very different. The gold-bearing quartz or ore is enclosed within natural walls, and runs in the form of a seam, now widening out, now narrowing or possibly disappearing—sometimes carrying rich gold, at others carrying none at all. Thus it is more of a gamblers' country; careful testing of the reef at different points may dispose to some extent of the element of chance, but it can never have the certainty enjoyed by the industry in the Transvaal.

But if less certain, the gold-mining of Rhodesia is infinitely easier to understand, for it is generally carried on under more primitive conditions. After a long trek across the veld by a scarcely distinguishable road a few Kaffir huts appear, built upon a rather more substantial scale than the ordinary native demands; a horse, and possibly a deck chair, betrays the presence of a white man. A little way

off is a heap of bluish ground, with a windlass above it—marking the mouth of the shaft; near by is a native camp and, if the development has reached that stage, a large shed of corrugated iron containing the crushing battery.

There is little of that mysterious look which is generally associated with hidden treasure, but the unexpected presence of modern machinery and mining implements in the midst of a wilderness does give to the spot a character of its own. Corrugated iron seems curiously out of place among the rocky kopjes and rolling plains, well wooded, and rather resembling an English park.

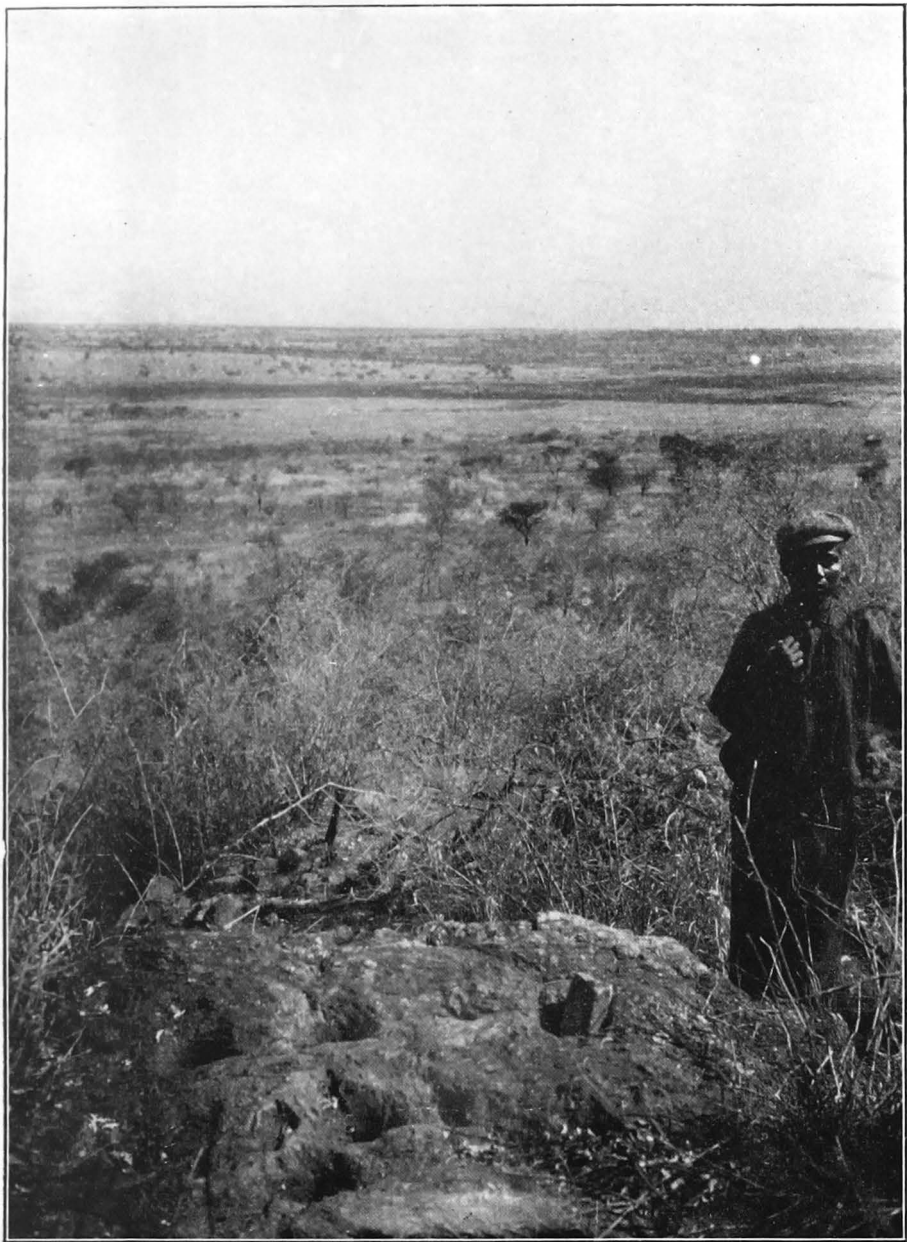
The descent of the mine is an experience in itself. It is rather like being lowered down a well, except that it is done in the dark; the bucket gives a precarious support to one foot, while the other is employed in 'fending off' from the sides. At the bottom a curious scene awaits the visitor: the heat is almost insupportable, and in the dim light he can just distinguish dark forms working at the rock: the course of the reef can be clearly traced, and night and day the work goes on in different 'shifts': the boys drill their 'holes' to the required depth,

the rock is blasted, and the ore taken to the surface. There specimens of it are 'panned'—that is, crushed to powder and washed, until a small 'tail' of gold appears in the pan, to incite the miner to further efforts. It is certainly a remarkable life—this talking, thinking, and dreaming of gold—and seems to have an irresistible fascination, for all other considerations are disregarded.

Before considering the present state of the mining industry in Rhodesia it is essential to recall some of its past history. The country is full of 'ancient workings'—filled-up shafts, and primitive mortars in the rock, wherein the ore was crushed. It has not yet been settled who these workers of a bygone age were: they may have been natives, or possibly Phœnician traders, and many people believe that Rhodesia is the true land of Ophir. But the fact remains that their relics prove that there was gold in the country, and gives a clue to the places where it is to be found. On this its great reputation was mainly based. "The extent and beauty of the gold-fields are such that I stood transfixed," wrote an early explorer; "thousands of people might work there without interfering with one another."

Such were the prospects that dawned upon the vision of the Chartered Company when it obtained its concession from Lobengula. Its first task was to reward its various supporters, without whose help it could not have existed. These claimed their share of the land of promise, just as the Norman baron claimed from the Conqueror the manor of the Saxon thegn. Various sub-companies were soon formed to develop the fabled sources of mineral wealth. The name of such companies were legion, for at home the mere word 'gold' was sufficient to attract capital from the British public. It is said that companies were often formed in the smoking-rooms of country houses, and younger sons were despatched to direct operations in Rhodesia: shares rose to a wholly artificial value, and provided material for some very pretty gambling in Bulawayo. A well-known mining engineer has stated that when he went to inspect one property, not a pick had been put in the ground—but the shares were already at a premium.

And apparently the British public are as sanguine as ever. Even now the reports of 'banket' or 'alluvial gold' are sufficient, not only to send up the



ROCK MORTARS OF "THE ANCIENTS," RHODESIA

value of shares in those companies, but to create quite a temporary 'boom' in all Rhodesian securities. Yet the authorities have been the first to admit that the value of the new finds must be considered as quite unproved. Experts may say what they like—to the British investor the country is still the land of Ophir.

The Government at first encouraged this rapid development in the hands of sub-companies, for by their gold law they retained 50 per cent. of the vendors' scrip on flotation. Such a principle might have been eminently successful in a country of big mines, which were constant in the amount of gold they produced. When the principle was propounded, it was stated that, had the Transvaal Government adopted it, they would have had some £30,000,000 in their coffers. But the past ten years have shown that the chief characteristic of the quartz reef is its inconstancy, and that Rhodesia is a country of 'small propositions.' It soon became necessary to reduce the 50 per cent. of the vendors' scrip to 30 per cent., and the mining interest is now clamouring for further reductions.

It is urged that the flotation of large companies

has in many ways been harmful to the industry. In this way quantities of claims have been 'locked up,' the companies only doing the minimum of development necessary to avoid forfeiture. One company was quoted as the possessor of 3,000 claims—and it is estimated that ten claims are sufficient for a mine.

The 30 per cent. clause was also responsible for over-capitalisation—which was simply a defensive measure. The result is obvious: supposing that a mine starts with a capital of £10,000, £1 shares rise to £5, and 1,000 more are issued. The output might justify a dividend on the original capital, but not on the whole sum subscribed; in this way a genuine mine is stigmatised as a failure.

It is also said that the 30 per cent. clause in some cases prevented capital from being invested in the country, for big business houses would hesitate to invest money in a concern when 30 per cent. of its shares might at any time be put on the market.

And for the small producer the 30 per cent. clause was prohibitory; a royalty of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the gold won has been substituted in the case of those employing a battery of five stamps or less,

and the success of these small batteries during the past year is the best proof of the wisdom of the concession.

But in the country other causes besides the gold law are held responsible for the failures in the mining industry. Chief among these, it is said, were extravagance and mismanagement in the past, due primarily to inexperience. Men with special knowledge were rare, but there were many well-salaried places to be filled. There was no lack of adventurous spirits, who did not regard inexperience as an insuperable obstacle to success, and the places were soon filled. Presently the ample offices in Bulawayo hummed with business; corrugated iron houses and expensive machinery were scattered about the veld—the work of development had begun.

But here the characteristic inconstancy of the quartz reef made itself felt. There had at first been a tendency to jump to conclusions, to assume that because a reef carried gold it would necessarily make a mine, and that all it needed was development. At vast expense a crushing battery was brought up by ox-waggon across the veld, houses,

traction engines, and all the entourage of a gold mine followed, and it was thought that it only remained to shovel out the gold. But disappointment ensued. In some cases the mine had not been sufficiently proved, the few 'pockets' that contained gold in payable quantities were used up, and little or nothing remained. In others the reef continued to 'carry gold'—but not in sufficient quantities to pay for the working expenses, which, thanks to the policy of 'rapid development,' were remarkably high. Or perhaps a twenty-stamp battery had been erected when one of five stamps would have been large enough—in a word, the development had got ahead of the production.

The result is that of the earlier mines the majority are either closed down or 'let on tribute,' that is, have been sublet by their original owners, and are being worked in a small way by others.

All these facts have served to obscure the true character of the Rhodesian gold mines. At first their value was immensely overrated. As recently as 1897 the late Sir Henry Stanley was so impressed by a visit to the Criterion mine that he wrote, "I have seen enough to show me that it is

a highly auriferous country . . . it will be not much inferior to the Transvaal." At the present moment the shed where the Criterion battery stood is being used as a sheepfold.

But now the tendency is to go to the other extreme, and to say that the only use of the 'pockets' of gold in the country is to be a bait to attract population, and thereby establish some more permanent industry—as farming. In Rhodesia it is held the truth lies midway between the two extremes. It is a quartz country—and according to the experts a good one, but any quartz country must have its proportion of failures. It does not appear, at present, that the discoveries recently reported will create a revolution in the mining industry. But though Rhodesia is not a Rand, it has already produced considerable quantities of gold; in 1899 the output amounted to 56,742 ozs.; in 1903 it had reached 234,720 ozs.; and in July last a record was announced for the monthly output, only to be broken again in August.

In the face of these figures it is easy to see how little the gloomy views sometimes taken of Rhodesian gold-mining are justified: on the contrary, it

may be fairly regarded as an improving industry. This is revealed not only in the increased output, but in the tone of confidence found throughout the country. At most of the mines wood is still used for fuel, but when this is exhausted they have the new coalfields at Wankies to fall back on. During the past year there has been a fair supply of labour forthcoming for the mines. In the past 'shortage of labour' has been held responsible for many failures, but it may safely be said that the labour question is not at the moment the most vital one. Should there be a sudden demand for large quantities of labour it might quickly become so, but this has not happened yet.

So much for the actual facts, and there are also the possibilities to be reckoned with. The prospects in Rhodesia generally are regarded as most encouraging. It must always be remembered that the country has not been half prospected—the early prospectors simply learnt from the natives of the ancient workings, and began mining operations there, while vast tracts of country have remained untouched. Fresh discoveries of mineral wealth are constantly being made in the comparatively

settled districts of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, so that the future may disclose some altogether unsuspected resources in the wide regions of Rhodesia.

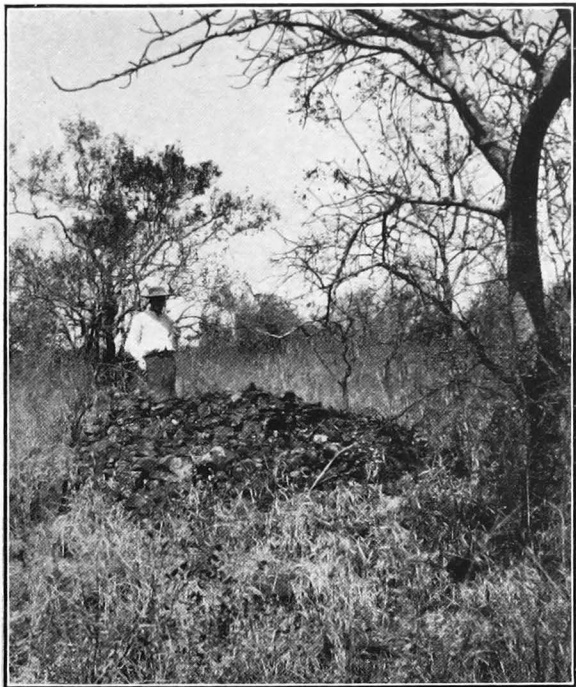
It is now realised that the mere existence of gold does not ensure wealth—it is useless unless it can be worked at a profit, as is the case with any other mineral. It would appear that this self-evident fact has not always been recognised in the country. For example, the Wankie coal mine is prepared to produce 30,000 tons of coal per month: the working expenses and cost of development are so high that it can only be sold at 15s. per ton at the pit's mouth. At this price it was able last year to obtain orders for no more than 4,000 tons in the month. And so it has been with the gold mines. At one of them the working expenses necessary to produce a ton of ore were 40s., and at this price the mine was not 'a paying proposition.' It was therefore let on tribute to men who were able to reduce the working expenses to 16s., and so work the mine at a profit.

One of the best signs about the industry is the success achieved during the past year by small batteries. Several experts—among them Sir George

Farrar—have declared that the future lies with such 'small propositions,' for the initial outlay is small, working expenses low, and in many cases 'office expenses' are avoided. In 1903 there was one battery of less than ten stamps which produced 450 ozs. ; in 1904 there were twenty-one such mills, which produced 3,803 ozs. In 1903 the total output was 201,079 ozs. ; in 1904 it had risen to 234,720 ozs. That is, the small batteries are taking the place of the large ones with the best results. During the past year many claims have been forfeited, and numerous applications received to work them on this small scale.

It is hoped that, if more capital is forthcoming for the development of Rhodesia, some of it will be used to encourage the small batteries in the mining industry. It would not be difficult to discover whether the prospects of a particular mine were good enough to justify the expense of such a battery: if the security were good, money might be advanced to defray the initial expenses, which otherwise might prove too heavy for the small producer.

There are other ways, too, in which he may be helped. With increased prosperity in the country



ANCIENT WORKINGS, RHODESIA



A PROSPECTOR

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it may be possible to lower the railway rates, which would at once cause a great reduction in the working expenses of the mines. At present 13*s.* 10*d.* per 100 lbs. is paid on machinery from Port Elizabeth to Gwelo, a distance of 1,313 miles; whereas from Port Elizabeth to Johannesburg the rate is 5*s.* 2*d.*—equivalent to 9*s.* 6*d.* for 1,313 miles. The average cost to mill, mine, and cyanide a ton of ore is reckoned at 24*s.* 9*d.*: of this sum 6*s.* has been spent on the imported stores necessary, and 1*s.* 4*d.* of this has been paid for railage. It is estimated that during the past year £34,712 has been paid in railway rates for these imported stores.

This then is the present position of the mining industry in Rhodesia: it is a country for the small miner with some capital of his own, who may be very successful if he can keep his working expenses low by the same management and economy which would be necessary in any other industry. His chances of success would be further increased by judicious help and timely concessions from the Government. Such is in outline the opinion of experts, and is fully borne out by the results achieved during the past two years.

It must always be remembered that the subject of Rhodesian gold-mining is one of supreme importance, for it provides the key to all the various problems with which the country is faced. It would hardly be too much to say that the history of Rhodesia is the history of its gold mines. The Chartered Company has a sort of dual character : it is, on the one hand, a patriotic power administering Rhodesia at a loss ; on the other, it is a commercial company which expects to get some return for its capital from the gold mines. But if the view stated above as to the prospects of the mining industry is the right one, this will not take place for some time, that is, unless the whole industry is revolutionised by the reported discoveries in the Victoria district, and this does not seem likely to happen.

But the success of such a venture as the Chartered Company must be measured not by the dividends it pays, but by the general condition of the country committed to its care. If it abandons the hope of making any immediate profit from the mines in favour of helping the small producer, its reward should eventually be found in the vastly increased value of all its various assets in Rhodesia.

In England there is a tendency to consider an agricultural and a mining industry as opposing interests, but in South Africa it is recognised that the one depends for its existence, to a great extent, on the other. A number of small mines may not be a great asset to the Chartered Company, but to Rhodesia they are of inestimable value. The immediate need is population, and this is provided by a number of small mines as much as by a few large ones; moreover, this type of mining offers more attractions to individual enterprise. The existence of such a mining population, besides providing an immediate market for agriculture and work for the railways, also brings a large professional class—engineers, lawyers, and doctors—into the country. Should such a state of things in the future be due to the gold of Rhodesia, it will have had very lasting results, for it will have enabled the task begun by the great founder of the country to be carried to a worthy completion.

CHAPTER VI

FARMING IN RHODESIA

EVEN in our own day there seems to be a valuable lesson in Bacon's often quoted advice to settlers, "that they moil not too much underground," for it is this tendency which has made the Englishman in South Africa neglect the most permanent of all sources of wealth, the land, in favour of the possibilities of the mines. But the truest benefit which mines can confer on any country is to attract there an agricultural population, to fill it with a race of men that can ride and shoot—a race that is fast disappearing in England, but which has been reproduced in Canada and Australia, and to some extent in South Africa.

In that country farming has certain initial obstacles to encounter; they are not insuperable, but too often they are sufficient to check it in the early

and most critical stage of its existence. In the first place it is only natural that a country so rich in mineral wealth should be regarded primarily as a place where a fortune can be made. This mistaken view is caused by people drawing their impression of the country from the few South African millionaires whom they see at home. They do not realise that these are the exceptions, that the truest type of South African is the man who, fortune or no fortune, is content to make his home there.

But it is with this mistaken example to guide him that the enterprising younger son goes out; he means to 'make his fortune.' An open-air life appeals to him, he has a little capital, with which, after a year or two spent, probably because his father insists on it, in learning his business, he buys a farm of his own. But five years later he finds to his surprise that he is not making the desired fortune; he is paying his way, and perhaps saving something, but he is beginning to realise that in South Africa, as in other countries, fortunes seldom are made by farmers. Meantime he sees the young surveyor, who came out with him, drawing a large salary, and so is another friend in the office of a mining company, while an adven-

turous cousin in Rhodesia is developing a gold mine of his own. The temptation is too strong; the farm is given up, and he turns to some more eventful, if less pleasant, life. But in Rhodesia this tendency is not so apparent as in some of the other colonies. There is a type there that prefers the free life on the veld to the greater possibilities of the mines; a type that is content with a home and a life such as England cannot give.

A second obstacle which meets the intending farmer is the need for some sort of a start. Every South African farmer is ready with the maxim, 'Colonial experience is essential.' Young Hodge comes out from the midlands anxious to apply English methods to the wide grazing lands of Rhodesia. On his arrival he finds it hard to get reliable information, or help, in selecting a farm: he soon discovers that the one he has chosen is short of water, that his market is a long way off, and that his methods do not seem to suit the new conditions. Cattle disease and horse sickness did not enter into his calculations; a swarm of locusts plays havoc with his crops, and native labour presents a thousand unsuspected difficulties. He is

buying his experience, and he very soon finds that this is more than he can afford : by the time that it is bought he is ruined, drifts into the towns, and there is another farming failure to record.

The need for experience and help in the early stages is so obvious, that in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony various schemes of land settlement are in progress, which first provide a school for intending farmers, and secondly ensure some sort of assistance when they start for themselves. Rhodesia is at present behindhand in this respect, but when its agricultural possibilities are properly recognised a change is certain to occur.

This necessity must not be regarded as an argument against South African farming, for such experience and assistance would—under modern conditions—be essential for new a farmer in almost any country in the world. And the other great difficulty about the farming in this country is summed up as ‘no market.’ This cannot be taken too literally, for the Customs returns reveal the fact that South Africa imports annually increasing quantities of foodstuffs—meat, grain, butter, eggs, jams, and tinned foods innumerable. Even in Bulawayo

eggs sell for 4s. a dozen, and the Victoria Falls Hotel,—with 1,600 miles of agricultural country between it and Capetown,—is supplied mainly with imported food.

It is a common mistake to assume that because the South African farmer could produce many of the foodstuffs now imported, his future is assured: it must first be proved that he can produce them at a profit, and keep the cost of production low enough to meet foreign competition. But the fact that so much is imported points to the conclusion that there is an opening for the farmer—it only remains to be settled which is the best opening. 'No markets' really means 'long distances and difficult transport'; when this difficulty is overcome, as it must be with the steady increase of railways, and the most suitable branches of agriculture discovered, it would not be unduly sanguine to expect a certain export trade. A beginning has already been made with wool, hides, fruit from Cape Colony, and the bark of the black wattle from Natal. With the advent of an export trade many other troubles would disappear: at present the cost of living is high, because freights

and railway rates are high, as is inevitable where all the trade is going in one direction—to South Africa and ‘up country.’ There must for a long time be a great demand for manufactured goods, and should the future see a substantial export trade, both shipping freights and railway rates would be automatically reduced.

There is a tendency in Rhodesia to think that reduced railway rates can save the country; it is more probable that the converse will prove to be the case—the country must go ahead if the railways are to be saved. There are now some 2,000 miles of railways connecting the south with Bulawayo, the mining districts, and Salisbury—the line being continued to Beira, the natural port of the country. A line from Bulawayo by the Wankie Coalfields to the Victoria Falls has been opened this year, and a northern extension is now in the course of construction towards the copper mines on the Kafue.

It is at once obvious that this railway development has been very rapid—too rapid, say the critics. It would not indeed have been possible but for the fact that the Chartered Company guaranteed large sums to the railway companies. At the

present time the railways expenditure bears a very high proportion to its revenue, and it is found impossible to make any appreciable reduction in the rates. But if the development has been too rapid it is a fault on the right side, for railways are the first essential of a new country. It has only been carried out where it seemed to be justified by the prospects of the district it opened up, and if such prospects have not yet been fulfilled, it may no doubt be urged that there has not yet been time for this to come about. It is certainly surprising, in view of the financial position of the Chartered Company and of the railway companies, that they should propose to carry the line north of the Zambesi, but it is not yet time to pass judgment on them.

A second point about the railways of Rhodesia is that they have opened up the mining districts—often with disappointing results—while neglecting such rich agricultural districts as the Melsetter country, where grain is being wasted for want of transport. But it must be remembered that the agriculture is useless unless it finds a market at the mines—they must be the first case: it is an axiom

of a great authority on railway development in America that a mine at the end of a line is better than farms all along it. Expert opinion in South Africa all goes to support the view.

A third point is that the management has been severely criticised—but this is not a privilege confined to railways in Rhodesia. It is quite possible that there are defects, that if the whole system were under the Cape Government Railways the working expenses would be much reduced, for there would be no need for the separate staff now necessary in Rhodesia ; but it is equally possible that the Cape Government Railways would decline to take over the management.

Whatever justification there may be for such criticisms, it is clear that those interested in the country must face the situation as it now stands—it is no use discussing past history. And the present situation cannot be regarded as encouraging. The expenditure, as has been mentioned, bears an alarmingly high proportion to the receipts—and the latter are at the present time falling off considerably. It is generally said that the construction line to the Victoria Falls did not pay, which bodes ill for the

northern extension.. And all the time there is the same cry of 'high rates.'

The Chartered Company must to a large extent control the railways—their directors are also directors of the railway companies, and they have guaranteed the interest on Railway Debentures. Thus it should be easy for them to face the present situation, and adopt the railway policy which is best for the country as a whole. If development has been too rapid, it must stop; if the high rates are fatal, they may perhaps be lowered, and possibly some compensation would be found in an increased traffic. But no one measure can solve the problem; if Rhodesia, under the régime of the Chartered Company, really goes ahead, the railways will go ahead too—they stand or fall together with the Chartered Company.

Coming now to the actual prospects of Rhodesian agriculture, it must at once be admitted that it has scarcely passed the experimental stage. But certain principles may be already taken as established, and are stated at some length in the various reports of the Agricultural Department, supported by the evidence of practical farmers in the country.

Experts consider it one of the finest stock-raising countries in the world, and this view is borne out by the immense herds of cattle held by the natives in the days of Lobengula. Since that time stock-farming has suffered from three successive blows—the rinderpest, the Matabele rebellion, and the African coast fever. It is generally admitted that such misfortunes are inevitable in a new country, before the proper remedies and preventatives are discovered. Rinderpest is no longer feared since the discovery of inoculation, and means are now being found to deal with the African coast fever, by preventing cattle from being moved, and so spreading it through the country. An additional preventative is being found in fencing, for the tick which carries the disease moves at the rate of one foot in a month, and dies of inanition if there are no cattle: it is reckoned that with proper precautions the veld will be 'clean' in four years' time.

There is a general idea that in Rhodesia the grass is too rank for sheep-farming, but it has been tried in certain districts with the best results, and sheep have not shown themselves so liable to disease as cattle.

Of the prospects of agriculture proper—as opposed to stock and sheep farming—it is difficult to speak with any certainty, as the industry is still very much in the experimental stage. It has been shown that the climate is suitable to a rich variety of crops—ranging from the tropical to the temperate. Mealies and Kaffir corn have always been grown on the ‘dry lands,’ and the harvest has been much increased in some cases by applying modern methods.

Wherever irrigation is possible wheat, oats, or barley can be grown, and Rhodesia with its abundant streams offers scope for water storage and irrigation. On the farm of the Rhodes’ trustees in the Matoppos this has been tried on a large scale with the best results. A dam was built at a cost of £30,000, and, despite dry seasons, and a rather limited catchment area, the farm pays five per cent. interest on the capital invested in it. From the pretty farmhouse one may see a well-stocked market garden, with fruit and vegetables in an equally flourishing condition, a patch of lucerne, and fields of oats, looking unnaturally green by contrast with the parched, yellow veld. The farmer is proud of it,

but does not regard it as a 'show place.' It is true that £30,000 dams are beyond most people's reach, but he contends that this example has shown what can be done by irrigation, and that irrigation on a small scale is possible almost anywhere in the country.

Few portions of the earth's surface will produce, within such a limited area, so large a variety of fruits as Rhodesia—apples, plums, and our ordinary English fruits, as well as grapes, bananas, mangoes, and others of a tropical nature. A great future is predicted for cotton, and tobacco already holds an established position; in the latter industry what is needed is some Government establishment where the tobacco will be fermented, graded, packed, and sold to the factors. Such a system would ensure uniformity of grading and packing and the development of the best qualities of each tobacco.

At present large quantities of timber are imported into South Africa, but experimental forestry is being vigorously carried on in the various colonies. Rhodesia has wide tracts of teak forest, and an almost unlimited supply of the mapani tree—a wood hard enough to defy the white ant, but too

hard to be a favourite with the carpenter. Different experiments show that several of the conifers thrive in the country, more especially cedars and junipers—besides the different varieties of gum. Much still remains to be known about the best methods of forestry to be pursued—for example, how to protect the young trees during the dry, windy winter—but already enough progress has been made to show that timber can be grown, and it only remains for time to prove that it can be grown at a profit.

Thus there can be no doubt as to the possibilities open to the Rhodesian farmer, and he has the further advantages of a picturesque country and a delightful climate—indeed, his lot appears at first sight to be a far from unhappy one. A fairly substantial house, half shaded by a few trees, looks out over a wide, park-like expanse, dotted with clumps of mimosa and occasional scrub; in front is the river, a strip of arable land beside it, beyond the rolling veld, and in the far distance a line of rocky kopjes sharply outlined against the sky. Behind the farm are the usual buildings and stock-yards, with the long-horned Afrikander oxen coming



A RHODESIAN FARM

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up from water, and a few fat Yorkshire pigs in the sty. The farmer is doing tolerably well on his 6,000 acres—by fencing and dipping he has kept the African coast fever at bay, his mealie crop has been a good one, and he has a contract to ride wood to the neighbouring mine. There is an air of prosperity about the place—imported machinery, a smart pony, a couple of greyhounds for coursing buck, and a good meal in the house. Altogether the general standard of living is far higher than would be expected in this remote part of the world.

But though it seems to be an ideal place in which to make a home, this has not really been done. There is a temporary look about everything; the garden consists of a few pepper trees, a broken window has been ingeniously mended with a bath towel, and the furniture seems to consist mainly of unpacked Gladstone bags. No attempt has been made to fence off the stock-yards from the house—the first necessary step in the direction of that cleanliness and order which characterise an English home. Mentally we contrast it with the labourer's cottage at home—its trim garden and snug parlour—or even with the bothy of a High-

land shepherd, where a certain amount of solid comfort is always to be found.

This disregard of comfort, this appearance of 'here to-day and gone to-morrow,' is more or less typical of South Africa, and more especially of Rhodesia; it is in the atmosphere of the place, and soon extends its influence over all new-comers. In Rhodesia it is largely due to the fact that there is a want of confidence in the country and its administration. It is felt that its future is so uncertain, the policy of its present Government so erratic, that it would be unsafe to regard it as a permanent home. The farmers complain that their Government and the various land-owning companies have hindered rather than helped them; they have tried to make money out of them instead of encouraging them, and the agricultural department has been filled by inefficient men, whose blunders have been responsible for many of the disasters of the past.

Grumbling is the proverbial privilege of the farmer, and must no doubt be largely discounted, but in this instance it serves at least to support the established view that in South Africa farming can

only hope to succeed if it is helped through the initial stages. The conditions of farming in a new country must be to a certain extent artificial; to meet them the farmer must have artificial support. The Chartered Company would no doubt maintain, with some show of fairness, that it has done its duty in this respect, for larger sums of money have been spent than would be possible in a Crown Colony: donkeys were imported when the trek oxen were destroyed by disease, and imported stock has been carried by the railways at reduced and even non-paying rates. But perhaps the most pernicious idea in Rhodesia, and one which is refuted by all its past history, is that money is the only thing essential to achieve success; in reality the prime necessity is management—money mismanaged is not only useless, but harmful. The truth of this is shown in the history of nearly every venture in South Africa—mines, farms, or railways—the successful ones have owed their success to good management.

Thus it is not enough that the settlers on the farms should be helped; they must be helped in the proper way, and it must be admitted that experts often differ as to which is the proper way. How-

ever, an examination of the views of different authorities on the subject seems to establish certain general principles which must be a great guide in the future.

It is generally agreed that direct money advances to settlers by the Government are bad. The best farmers are always those who have succeeded more or less on their own merits—as, for example, in Queensland—and this view is supported by many authorities on South African farming. In the Transvaal, after the war, ‘approved settlers’ were lent money, often on insufficient security; as soon as this money was spent many of the approved settlers disappeared. Such a policy does not encourage that self-reliance so essential in the uphill task of the farmer.

The first duty of the Government is to discover what the land will grow, and how it can best be grown, by means of an experimental farm. The nearest approach to this in Rhodesia is the farm of the Rhodes’ trustees in the Matoppos, and it must be remembered that this is not the work of the Government, it is in reality a business venture. What is wanted is a farm, which need not be run

with the idea of making a profit, but simply of showing what are the best methods for the ordinary farmer to pursue.

Having 'shown the way,' the next task of the Government is to get men into the land. The first need of Rhodesia is population, and it is probable that it would pay the Government, following the example of Canada, to throw open some of their wide territories to settlers. It is true that land values are much lower here than in the rest of South Africa, but it is notorious that there they are ridiculously inflated. The general complaint is that land is 'locked up' by the Chartered Company and the land-owning companies, and that the settler is always faced by innumerable difficulties in the way of getting reliable information and acquiring a farm. North of the Zambesi there are large tracts of country suitable for farming, but with no markets, a climate that is far from good, and utterly cut off from civilisation. Yet there are men willing to settle, even under these conditions, and are only prevented from doing so because the terms offered by the Government are looked upon as prohibitive.

Nor is it enough to throw open the land to the

farmer. It has already been said that some experience is necessary—there must be some ‘school’ in which he can learn his business under the new conditions. Such ‘schools’ are provided by the different schemes of ‘land settlement’ in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, and something of the same sort is wanted in Rhodesia. There it is generally said that the best thing for the settler to do is to work for a year or two on a farm, before taking one of his own, but such a course would be much easier if it were taken up by Government.

A third way in which it is said that farming can be helped is by the establishment of farmers’ co-operative societies and credit banks, and such a scheme is now coming into operation in Rhodesia. The latter have been very successful in Germany, and are able to maintain a reserve fund out of the profits that are made. Some form of co-operative society is necessary in a new country, for it would make it possible to import stock, machinery, seeds, and other things on a large scale: at present such a step is beyond the powers of the individual farmer. With good management it could be ensured that all

that was imported was the best of its kind, and sold at a reasonable price—making a profit of perhaps five per cent. to cover the working expenses of the scheme. It may be added that such a system has had a marked success in Ireland. On the same principle co-operative stores might be started, for it is a universal complaint in South Africa that the farmer is everywhere at the mercy of the local storekeeper.

At present the number of farmers in Rhodesia may be too small to justify these measures, but it is steadily increasing: the farmers themselves have neither the time nor experience to start such institutions for themselves—they must in the first instance be the work of the Government.

This applies to other measures, too. Stock-farming is generally regarded as the most successful branch of agriculture, if the word agriculture may be used in its wider and more general sense. The great obstacle to stock-farming is the continual appearance of some fresh disease. The history of cattle diseases in England during the past hundred years has shown what can be achieved in this respect by Government action. The same applies

to agriculture proper. The first need is water, and large schemes for water storage and irrigation can only be carried out by the Government.

It is a very hopeful sign that in Rhodesia itself it is generally held that farming has a great future before it: these prospects can only be realised if the Government espouses the cause not of individuals, but of the average farmer: it must get him into the country, and help him in the early stages, and will find its reward in the greatest asset which any Government can have—a prosperous agricultural population.

Should this come about, it will go far to assure the future, not only of Rhodesia, but of all South Africa. It may not be possible to make the Englishman predominant in the New Colonies, but it is quite possible to make him predominant in South Africa—as has been pointed out by Colonel Owen Thomas, one of the greatest authorities on the agricultural and pastoral possibilities of the country. He has also singled out the wide plains of Rhodesia as the best home for those Englishmen who decide to try their fortunes in the new countries south of the Zambesi.

CHAPTER VII

THE FUTURE PROSPECTS OF RHODESIA

AFTER attempting to give a general sketch of Rhodesia, and dealing in some detail with the mining and farming there, it is natural—if one is to sustain the character of ‘the visitor who writes’—to make some suggestions as to the future prospects of the country. This is the more necessary because it has during the past few months been rather ‘before the public’: there has been a breach between the settlers and the Chartered Company, the latter has been forced to increase its capital by a further issue of shares, and on top of this there comes the news of fresh discoveries of gold.

It is impossible to describe the present situation without touching to a certain extent upon past history, for the key to the problem lies in the

peculiar conditions under which the country is governed. Fifteen years have now passed since the Chartered Company obtained a charter giving it practically a free hand to exploit the fabled mineral wealth of the territories north of the Limpopo; entrusting it with the task of administration subject to the control of the Imperial Government, and bound 'to promote trade, commerce, civilisation, and good government' there. Thus the Company had a dual character to sustain. On the one hand, it was an imperial venture, carrying out by private enterprise a patriotic work, relieving the home Government of some of the expenses and responsibilities of Empire. On the other hand, it was a commercial company whose shareholders had invested their capital with the avowed hope of presently obtaining a handsome return for it. The management of the venture, both on its imperial and commercial side, was entrusted to the directors. Their task was one of some difficulty, for it made them responsible for the interests of two distinct parties—their duty to their shareholders was to get them some adequate return for their capital, and their duty to the settlers in

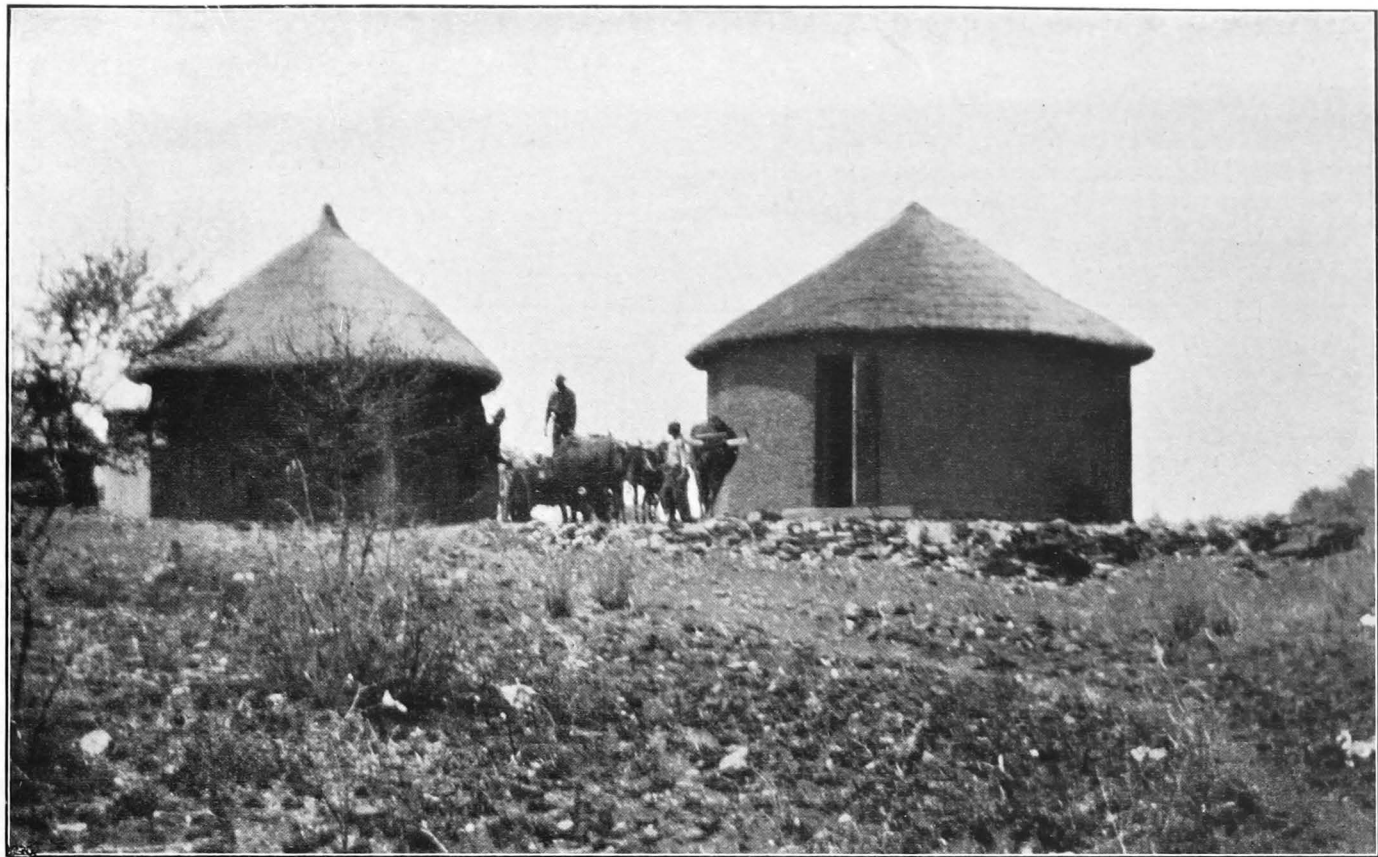
Rhodesia was to give them every possible encouragement and assistance. To a certain extent these interests might coincide—for example, both settlers and shareholders desired good administration and the rapid development of the country's resources.

But a time was certain to arrive when they would be contradictory, and the Board of Directors would have to choose between them. A liberal expenditure would be necessary in Rhodesia to help the settlers already there, and to attract others: but this would not perhaps commend itself to the shareholders. Or, again, the flotation of large mining companies, of which the Chartered Company retained thirty per cent. of the vendors' scrip, was desirable from the shareholders' point of view, whereas the settlers maintained that land and claims were locked up by such companies, and private enterprise thereby stifled.

In reality the position was impossible, and previous examples had shown it to be so. It is easy to recall how Warren Hastings himself failed to solve the problem of combining an imperial policy with big dividends. The Chartered Com-

pany attempted to satisfy both parties and succeeded in satisfying neither of them. But its task has not been undertaken in vain, for from the Imperial point of view its efforts have been crowned with success. It has secured for the Empire wide territories, which but for it might have gone to Germany, and it has peopled them with men whose loyalty has been one of the features of recent history in South Africa.

Commercially it would not be unfair to describe it as a failure. The mineral wealth of the country has fallen far short of expectations, and where it existed has in many cases been wasted by mismanagement. The farming has not yet recovered from the successive blows inflicted by the Matabele rebellion, the rinderpest, and the African coast fever; indeed the country cannot yet produce enough to feed the comparatively trifling population of some 12,000 people. At the present time there is a deficit of £8,000,000 on the administrative expenses of the past. The deficit on the budget for 1903 was £300,000 and the estimated deficit for 1904 was £146,000. Experience has shown that such estimates are prone to be rather sanguine, the estimated deficit for 1903 was only £226,087. It



A MINERS' CAMP, RHODESIA

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cannot be denied that the Customs returns—one of the chief sources of revenue—for the current year show a decided falling off. The same applies to the traffic returns of the railways, with which the Chartered Company is closely identified, granting them an annual subsidy and making itself responsible for the interest on their debenture shares. The last census showed a slight increase in the population, but it is now said that many good men are leaving the country, and there is no doubt that more are prepared to do so as soon as they get the chance.

And if the economic position of Rhodesia is bad, the political situation there is worse. The recent conference in London between the Rhodesian delegates and the Board of Directors, and the subsequent recriminations in the Press, have made it clear that the settlers are thoroughly discontented with their government, and that the latter consider them to be utterly unreasonable. There has been a heated discussion as to the conduct of the Chartered Company in every department during their term of administration.

The Company maintains that its first care has

been the mining industry. It has by its railways opened up the different mining centres, and has attracted capital to develop the mines themselves. It is, therefore, justified in retaining for itself a share of the profits, in the form of 30 per cent. of vendors' scrip, upon the flotation of a mining company. The settlers assert that in this respect the Company has been actuated solely by self-interest; it has treated the country like a gold mine, with the idea of getting what it can out of it. Different companies were granted absurdly large numbers of claims, extensive gambling in shares ensued, and the result is that the country has got a bad name. The existence of various rotten companies, and the 30 per cent. clause, have proved fatal to private enterprise.

At the conference in London the Board showed a disposition not to help the mining industry by granting concessions, but rather to make a hard bargain with those engaged in it. The proposed royalty of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was said to be worse than the old terms of 30 per cent. vendors' scrip; if applied to the Globe and Phoenix, one of the few successful mines in the country, it would reduce its annual profits from £2,163 to £1,300.

And with the farming it is the same. The directors say that large sums of money have been spent over it: stock has been imported, donkeys were procured for the settlers when their oxen had been destroyed by rinderpest, an American expert has been brought out to superintend the tobacco-growing, and when the African coast fever was raging Dr. Koch, a *savant* of world-wide reputation, was brought to Bulawayo. All this is admitted by the settlers, but they consider the company responsible for most of the disasters that have befallen the farmer. Many of them lost their cattle in the Matabele rebellion of '96, which came to a head when the Chartered Company's police were engaged in the Jameson Raid; the result was that the settlers were fighting when they should have been coping with the rinderpest which broke out at the same time. A few years later the African coast fever appeared; the farmers at once urged the Government to prevent cattle from being moved, and thereby spreading the disease; no such steps were taken, the country was again devastated, and it was not until this year that the plan of not moving cattle was adopted, after individual farmers had proved its

success. It is said too that the Company does not attract new settlers by offering them land on liberal terms, but rather tries to drive a hard bargain with them : the intending settler is expected to pay the value set on farms by the Company's surveyor (between £300 and £600), on which he has to pay 6 per cent. yearly and the purchase price at the end of five years. Failing fulfilment, the farm lapses to the Company with all improvements. The value in open market of similar ground is from £50 to £100.

There is an equal divergence of opinion on the question of the actual administration. On the side of the Company it is said, truly enough, that but for it there would have been no Rhodesia for the people to settle in. It opened up the country to settlers under peculiarly favourable conditions ; the 2,000 miles of railways, roads, telegraphs, post offices, Government offices, barracks, police posts, hospitals, schools—in a word, the whole of the excellent administrative plant—are all quoted as instances of its liberal policy in the past. Such a policy would hardly have been possible in a Crown Colony. Further, it has established a very complete administrative system, with a large staff of officials,

and claims that in this respect it has done far more than the Imperial Government would, or could, have done. It has offered every facility to the settlers, but they have shown a 'certain extravagance and little knowledge of business methods' in the past, which has prevented them from taking advantage of these opportunities. In consideration of all this the Company has held that Rhodesia should make itself responsible not only for the solid assets, such as public buildings and administrative plant, but also for the past administrative deficits.

But in Rhodesia a very different view is taken of the Company's policy. Admitting that it has 'acquired merit' by adding the country to the Empire, it is held that the settlers have acquired even more by facing the difficulties and dangers of a new country—and of these Rhodesia has had its full share. It is true that the Company has brought large sums of money there, but its effects have been nullified by mismanagement. The 'large official staff' has been utilised as a dumping-ground for inefficiency in South Africa; owing to successive losses from this cause the Company has tried to protect itself against bad officials by a system of red

tape, which hampers the efforts of the many really able men that are there. Quantity rather than quality has been their watchword in the past. In North-West Rhodesia alone there is a staff of some forty or fifty officials, and a large force of native police, the latter largely recruited from the district, and therefore not likely to prove a very reliable force in case of rebellion. If the settlers are taxed by the Company with extravagance and ignorance of business methods, they retort with a similar complaint—pointing to the palatial offices in Cape-town, and London Wall, and the ‘office expenses’ at the rate of £57,000 a year. In a word, they consider that the Company has simply attempted to exploit the country for its own ends—to secure its mineral wealth—and that it has failed. The shareholders were willing to risk their capital in a rather precarious venture, and can expect no more than the sympathy which is always accorded to the unsuccessful speculator. Had Rhodesia proved to be the El Dorado that was expected, the Company would not have invited the settlers to share its profits: nor can it now expect them to make themselves responsible for its losses.

Such is the gist of the dispute now in progress between the Chartered Company and the Rhodesian settlers: it is largely concerned with past history, but a comparison of the opposing arguments may establish certain points which should help to the solution of the problem.

In the first place it is clear that it would be unfair to accept unreservedly the view of the case given by either side, for it would be an *ex-parte* view. The highly coloured reports of the condition of Rhodesia published by the Company are not altogether borne out by the actual state of things there, and the same applies to different articles that have appeared in the English press as to the attitude of the settlers. It is perhaps natural that at home the point of view of the Company should be the popular one, for it has powerful friends, and many of the reading public are shareholders, whereas the settlers are a more or less unknown quantity. But if a permanent settlement is to be arrived at their case too must get a fair hearing.

It would be equally unwise to listen only to their version. It must be to some extent inspired by the discontent which accompanies bad times—and in

such a case the proverbial remedy of the Englishman is to attack the Government. It is possible that they are inclined to overrate the present depression in Rhodesia, because they compare it with the wholly artificial standard of prosperity created during the period of the 'boom.'

A second point is that the dispute has made it clear that the Board at home is utterly out of touch with the people of Rhodesia. In the early days it was pre-eminently a 'one man country.' Cecil Rhodes supplied the necessary link between settlers and shareholders, and had the full confidence of both: no one has yet been found to take his place. The settlers have asked for a resident director, with a free hand in Rhodesia, instead of a series of flying visits by members of the present Board.

Another point which has happily been established by recent events is that the country itself is all right. Directors and settlers are unanimous in their praise of its resources, and their belief in its possibilities. Many of the former have also admitted the sterling qualities of the men in it, so that despite present difficulties the outlook is bright.

And finally it must be admitted, after considering

both sides of the question, that much of the discussion is purely academic; it only concerns past history, whereas the question of the moment is the present—and even more the future—of Rhodesia. Past differences can well be left to right themselves, with the help of Sir Roger's excellent maxim, that no doubt there is much to be said on both sides. If there is to be a change in the future the question must be approached from a wider point of view: hitherto there has been a tendency to think that the remedy can be found in special measures—that Rhodesia can be saved by concessions to the farmers, or a new mining law, each suggestion largely inspired by personal considerations. In reality such special measures are useless unless they form part of a general policy, wherein both the Company and the settlers are united, and of which the one object is the welfare of Rhodesia.

It would be mere presumption in a work of this nature to try to define such a policy, but it is perhaps permissible to examine various suggestions, and to quote the views of those whose experience of South Africa entitles them to offer advice.

Apparently the Chartered Company see the solu-

tion of the difficulty in more money. Soon after the Conference in London they published a report, and issued a million new shares, which have been eagerly taken up by the public. There is no doubt that money is essential, but enough has been said about the past history of Rhodesia to show that it is useless without management. The most sanguine shareholder must by this time have realised that he cannot hope for any immediate return on his capital. It is of course possible to adopt the Micawber-like policy of keeping the country going, and waiting for 'something to turn up'—a new Rand perhaps, or a new Kimberley, which would put everything right. But Rhodesia has already had its full share of such windfalls; the number of its gold mines is legion, its coal is said to be some of the best in South Africa, and the northern copper has enjoyed no slight reputation—but none of these have saved the country. In fact such a policy is not the one to commend itself to practical men, who prefer to deal with existing facts rather than vague possibilities.

In this connection many will recall Mr. Rhodes' speech to the shareholders in 1895: "I cannot see



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in the future any reason which should cause us to increase our capital: if the country is a failure we had better not increase it, if the country is a success it won't be wanted."

Next comes the remedy suggested by the settlers, and about this there is some doubt, partly because their views have been much misrepresented, and partly because they are not ready with a cut-and-dried scheme. It may be unhesitatingly asserted that they realise that self-government is impossible for a white population of 12,000 in a country containing nearly a million natives. And it is equally certain that the large majority does not desire Crown Colony Government—though it has been suggested as the only alternative to the present state of things. It has been said with some truth that 'almost everyone in Rhodesia is a thinking man'—they have none of the hopes, with which they are credited, of governing themselves, or of being fed by the millions of a benevolent British public. They are agreed that the prime necessity for Rhodesia is management: they would like reorganisation and reform. They pin their faith to a business man—preferably a resident director—in Bulawayo or

Salisbury, who would also provide the necessary link between them and the Chartered Company. They would like to see judicious help given to the different industries, and above all to feel that the government is being carried on with an eye to the country's welfare, and not to the pockets of the shareholders, or the fluctuations of the stock exchange prices.

Thus the question to be decided is how far such a policy can be reconciled to the claims of the shareholders who expect some return for their money. Originally it was hoped that this would come from the gold, as was explained by Mr. Rhodes at the second annual meeting of the Company in 1892. "I have now dealt," he said, "with most of the question, but you may ask what prospects you have as shareholders of a return. Well, I will say frankly that it depends on the result of the minerals in our territory. My experience of the past is that just as *qua* Government, so *qua* a Company, we cannot expect to do more than balance revenue and expenditure."

It is now admitted that the gold has not been found in the quantities expected: had it been so the present difficulties would not exist, for the evils

due to extravagance, mismanagement, or over-capitalisation would in time have righted themselves.

The result is that so far there has been no return forthcoming for the shareholders, nor can it be said that there is any immediate prospect of it. It is not difficult to understand why the Company has found it necessary to raise additional funds, for cash at bankers and in hand on March 31st, 1903, amounted only to £32,425; the sum borrowed from London bankers had advanced from £75,000 to £140,000, and among the assets appears £1,412,200, "nominal value of shares in companies received under the mining regulations," while it is also stated that "the Company holds shares and debentures of the nominal value of about £2,517,023 in companies engaged in mining and other enterprises in Rhodesia, though these have not been brought into account in the balance sheet." But judging from the attitude of the Press, these different paper assets are not considered very valuable securities. Nor does the actual state of things in Rhodesia give any hope of a quick return for the shareholders. It is true that great progress is being made in the different branches of the mining and farming industries, but

the first necessity everywhere is more 'help' from the Government—for example, land on easier terms for the farmers, concessions to the small batteries in the mining industry, a reduction of railway rates to lower the general cost of living; and all this means more expenditure.

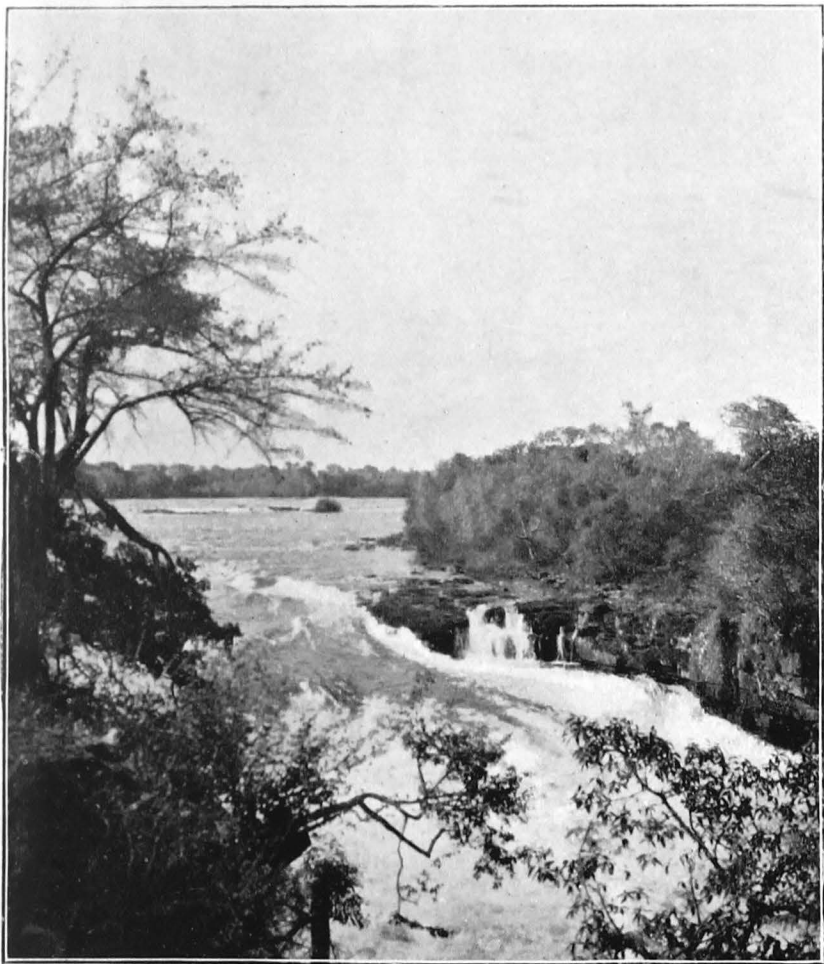
It remains to be seen whether the Chartered Company will be content to abandon all hope of immediate profits, to take up the difficult task of retrenchment and reform in Rhodesia, and to look for its reward in its future greatness. Otherwise it would be better, in the opinion of many who are entitled to speak with some authority, for the administration of Rhodesia to be in the hands of a body that does not attempt to make profits, in fact to become a Crown Colony.

At the present stage of its development a stationary position is impossible—the country must advance or recede; the longer a settlement is delayed, the greater the difficulties in the way, for time is being wasted, good men leave Rhodesia, and others are prevented from coming to it. A lack of confidence in the Government gradually extends to the country also.

But it must not be thought that it is beyond repair. The pessimism of to-day is no doubt as exaggerated as the optimism of the past ; the fact that many of the business men on the Rand have wide interests in Rhodesia shows that the shrewdest judges have not yet lost faith in its possibilities. To the skilled administrators of the New Colonies the solution of the problem does not seem difficult : the great point at issue in August last was whether Rhodesia should make itself responsible for a debt of £8,000,000 ; they say rightly that this is a comparatively trifling sum if such a step would ensure the future welfare of the country. But before such a step can be taken by the Rhodesians they must feel certain that the money raised will be spent to the best advantage, and above all they must have confidence in their Government. Reorganisation and reform cannot be carried out by an administrator at Salisbury whose hands are tied, or a board of directors in London Wall. The country must have some real 'head,' whether he be a resident director or a Crown Colony Governor, with a free hand, and resources at his back. Retrenchment cannot be carried out by decreasing the salaries of

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officials, but by increasing their efficiency at the expense of numbers. A man must be 'on the spot,' so that he can understand the true condition of things in Rhodesia, can judge what industries require assistance, and direct the means whereby such assistance is to be given. In this way the mining population would increase, and this would bring about a corresponding increase in the agricultural population. Confidence would be restored both at home and in Rhodesia, which might then hope to enter upon that period of prosperity, which has often been predicted for it, but is at present long delayed.



AT THE HEAD OF THE DEVIL'S CASCADE

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CHAPTER VIII

THE VICTORIA FALLS

SCARCELY fifty years have passed since Dr. Livingstone steered his course down the Zambesi, landed on the island that still bears his name, and gazed at the wonders of the great Falls, hitherto unseen by European eyes. He always said that he considered this discovery the greatest event of his life.

But now the Victoria Falls may be reached on the twenty-third day after leaving London, and during the months of August and September there is a constant stream of visitors to see them, from every part of the world. Already the character of the place is changing, and in a few years' time it is probable that the account given by Dr. Livingstone will be regarded as an interesting piece of past history, rather than a careful description of the actual scene.

A brief account of the remarkable formation of this part of the Zambesi's course is necessary, before attempting to give any picture of the Victoria Falls. Above them the river is a mile and a half from bank to bank, contracting at the actual lip to some 1,900 yards; here it suddenly disappears. No further trace of its onward course is visible, for it falls into a gigantic fissure which cuts right across the stream, at right angles to its main course. It is, in fact, as though the river were poured into a deep trench, or trough, 1,900 yards in length, 350 feet in depth, and perhaps 80 feet wide. Beyond it the land is of the same level as the river above the Falls.

One side of this trough, or cañon, is hidden by sheets of falling water; the other rises, grim and forbidding, in sheer cliffs of black basalt. The only outlet is near the eastern end, where the whole river is reunited in a whirling, seething pool, known as the "Boiling Pot." Here the famous Zambesi gôrge begins, in a series of zig-zags, and continues for a distance of more than forty miles. Thus the Zambesi at this point offers a rich variety of river scenery—each picture dis-

tinct from the last, and gaining additional effect from the contrast.

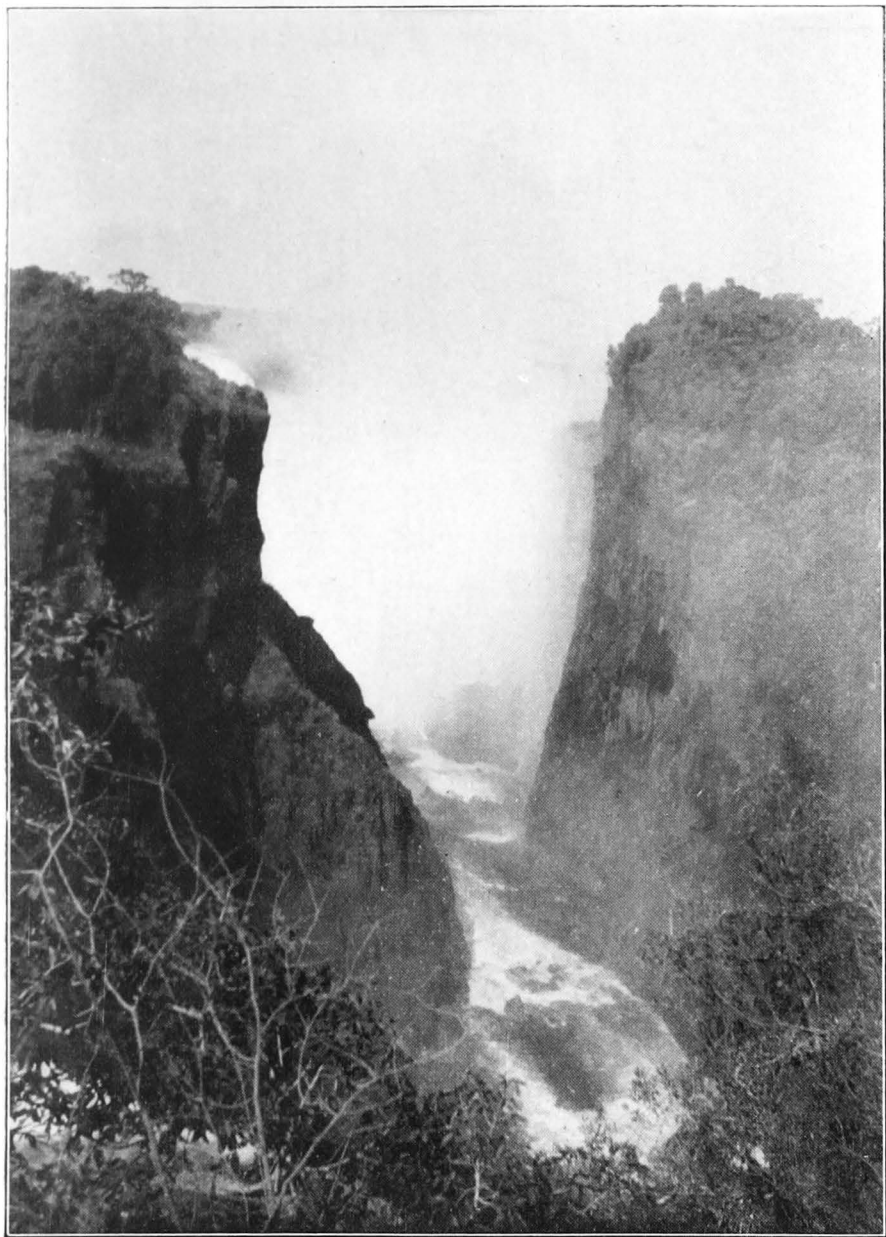
The railway journey from Bulawayo gives little promise of these splendours. The line winds through the rather monotonous country to the north of Wankies—boundless tracts of scrub and mapani forest, all with the same parched appearance during the dry winter season: sometimes the train passes a so-called river, represented by a few stagnant-looking pools, or stops at a wayside station, where the two or three residents, showing manifold traces of fever, come out to welcome their last link with civilisation. The general impression of the country is that it is brown—trees, shrubs, and grass alike—all baked to various shades of the one prevailing colour.

But at the journey's end a distant line of green appears, marking the course of the Zambesi, a veritable oasis in the desert. The stunted mapani are now replaced by trees worthy of the name—the grotesque baobab, groups of palms, and others, not unlike the ilex, whose evergreen foliage is reflected in the waters they overhang. Below are tall waving grasses, and whispering reed beds, with here and

there some plant of the tropics, unfamiliar to European eyes, all adding to the strange character of the scene, and beyond flows the great river.

It is perhaps the stranger's first sight of the real river of the tropics—hitherto he has had to rely on his imagination, reinforced by travellers' descriptions—and if so, he is at once relieved to find that none of his illusions are going to be destroyed. Here are the deep muddy-looking waters, flowing lazily along—sometimes in still bays and backwaters with no perceptible current, sometimes with slow eddies and miniature whirlpools where they rejoin the main stream. Here too are the rapids—and now the restful appearance has gone, and the river is rushing down a shallow rock-strewn bed—taking the mind back to Teesdale, or a spate in Glen Tilt: there is the same roar, the same mad race of waters, and the same white-crested waves where the jagged points of rock break the surface. Presently the rocks disappear, the stream grows deeper, and rolls on with still silent force to the edge of the Falls.

The further bank is a mile away, but hidden by the innumerable islands, each of them clad with rich tropical vegetation, feathery grasses, palms and ever-



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green trees whose long limbs stretch far over the water, and are reflected on its glittering surface. The colours are all heightened by the bright African sunlight, which gives even to the muddy brown water a silvery gleam which is not its own.

At first there seems to be no sign of animal life ; all is bright and still, the only sound being the faint lapping of the water on the bank, and the distant roar of the rapids. But if one lies down in the shade and waits, or better still rows silently among the islands, one is no longer alone. Close by there is a sudden splash, and the familiar 'boil' in the water, as a big tiger fish jumps—a true 'head and tail' rise. A few small birds of gorgeous colouring are chattering in the branches above, and presently a dot in the sky grows larger, and a big handsome bird, known as a 'fishing eagle,' flaps slowly past.

Far out below the islands there is a sign of movement among some dark rock-like objects, and when viewed through the glass they are no longer rocks, but 'hippo' basking in the sun. There are about a dozen of them, some with head and back showing above the surface, others almost entirely hidden.

Two small ones can be clearly distinguished, resting on the back of their mother. The big bull is rather apart from the rest, and gives an occasional yawn, disclosing a vast red cavern studded with gigantic teeth—a truly formidable sight. At present they look peaceful enough, but there are many stories of their fury when annoyed or wounded, and the natives cherish a wholesome respect for them. There has been some talk of destroying them, but such a step would meet with much opposition, as they are harmless unless disturbed, afford poor sport, and add greatly to the charm of the place.

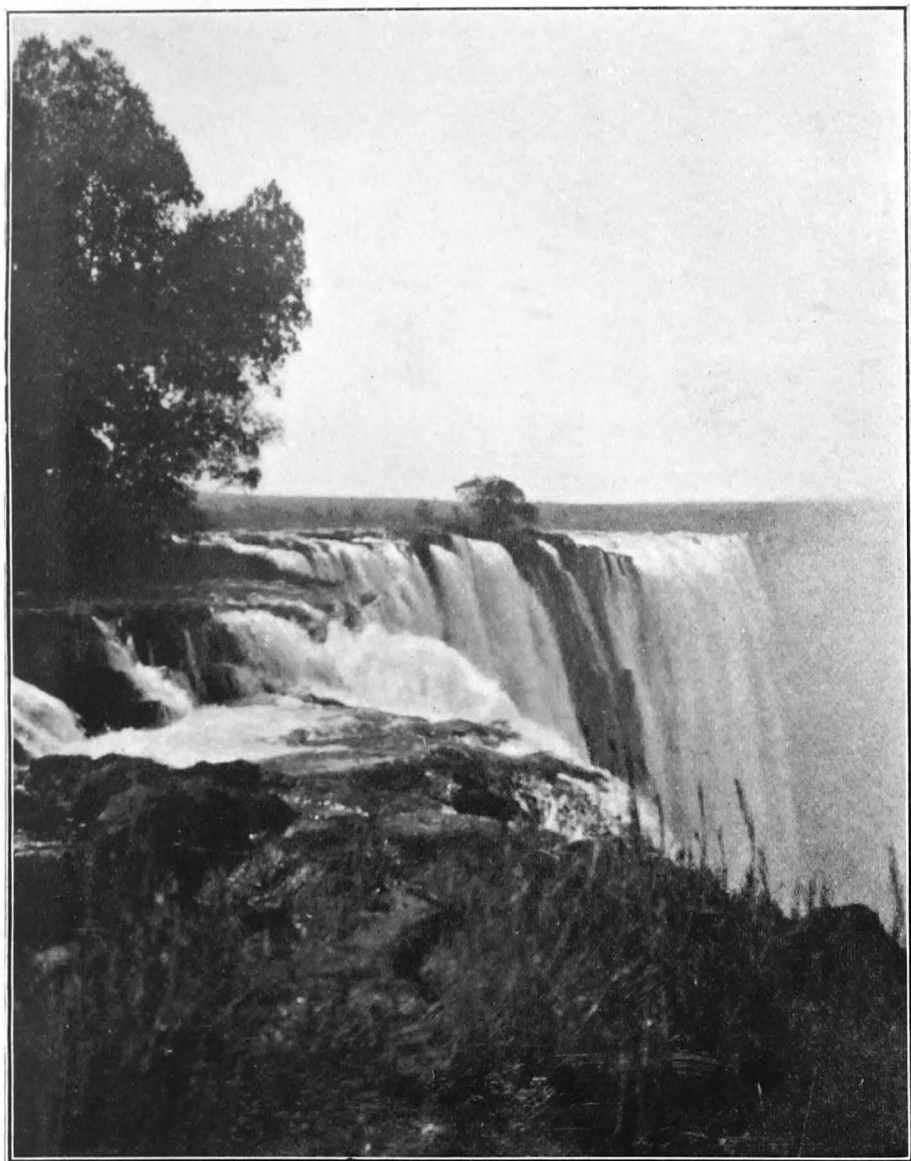
As one moves slowly downstream one finds everywhere the same peace and repose—in all the wooded islands and in the quiet channels that divide them: but there is a hint of something new in the distance, for every moment one is more conscious of a dull roar, as of the sea, and high over the treetops there hangs a long, low cloud. At first its colour is a gleaming white, but presently the sun's rays catch it, and it reveals for a moment changing tints of saffron, pink, and blue. The colours are never the same: they appear, linger for a moment, and are gone, or seem to change, for the cloud is not still,

but ever moving, composed of fine spray shifting in the wind.

Below it is a spectacle worthy of such a canopy. Words can hardly describe the mile-long vista of falling water, broken here and there by islands perched, as it were, on the extreme edge of the cataract. From one of these it is possible to peer down into the depths of the fissure, while on either side the water flows, in strangely different ways, to the brink. At the Devil's Cascade it races down a steep slope—a fierce mountain torrent—before taking the final plunge. At another place it rolls on in a still unbroken stream—and suddenly disappears: further on again it flows in rippling shallows, and seems to trickle aimlessly down to the depths below. From the lip the water first falls headlong, and then breaks into gently dropping clouds of fleecy whiteness—it no longer seems to hurry but floats down, softly as snow, to the bottom of the gorge. Here the river becomes a raging torrent, hemmed in by sheer rock walls on the right, its volume ever increasing from the line of Falls on the left, until all its waters meet again in the Boiling Pot, whence it streams onwards towards the sea.

There is no one view of the Victoria Falls. So vast a spectacle provides many pictures, each with its own characteristic and peculiar charm. You may stand on the south bank above the Devil's Cascade, gazing down the long gorge until its outlines fade in a mist of whirling spray. On the left runs the lip of the Falls, over which fresh torrents are ever pouring, first the Devil's Cascade, then a small island, beyond it the main fall, with Livingstone Island in the distance. On the right are grim black cliffs, crowned with evergreen trees—the 'rain forest' that grows in the perpetual moisture of the spray. The roar of many waters is in your ears, and as you crane forward you can scarcely see the rushing stream beneath your feet for the clouds of spray that rise from its surface.

Or you may row downstream to Livingstone Island, where the tree with 'D. L.' roughly outlined on its bark may still be seen, and stand on the very brink of the cascade. The tree-clad cliffs are but a stone's-throw distant across the gorge, and close by the water is falling into its hidden depths. Turning upstream, there is a very different picture—the placid river with its green islets



VICTORIA FALLS FROM LIVINGSTONE ISLAND

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THE BOILING POT

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and tree-clad banks, and the all-pervading spirit of repose.

But it is perhaps from the point immediately above the Boiling Pot that one can best realise the full majesty of the Falls. It is immediately above the pool where the whole stream is reunited, its waters seething as though in some gigantic cauldron; in front is the long panorama of falling water, and so dense is the spray at this point that the bottom is practically invisible. The dark, dreary cliffs are here and there covered with moss of a vivid green, and an occasional ledge gives scant foothold to some shrub or overhanging tree. There is something about the irresistible force of the waters that inspires awe no less than admiration, for here man is powerless before the might of nature. It is mere presumption to attempt more than a vague description of such a spectacle, for there are no words that can convey a true impression of its grandeur; but after seeing it, it is easy to understand the feelings of the natives, whose custom was to fling down offerings to the great deities that ruled amid the 'Mosi-oa-tunya'—the 'smoke that sounds.'

Below the Falls the scene again changes, for here

the deep Zambesi gorge continues; the walls are of the same dark rock, in some places sheer and precipitous, in others broken by narrow clefts and ledges, and dotted with trees and shrubs; many similar gorges join it from either side, making it almost impossible to follow its winding course. At this end the rock walls are some 600 feet apart, and the great river, which above was a mile wide, is pent within this narrow space, so that it becomes a racing torrent, whose waters rise during the rains to fifty or sixty feet above their normal level.

Mr. Sykes, the Conservator of the Falls, has followed its course down, a task of the utmost difficulty, owing to the many clefts and gorges which join it on either side. He found very few spots where it is possible to get down to the water-level, some of them known only to natives, who have in time past established a sort of sanctuary there. There are many legends of game herded on to some of the narrow necks of land, and destroyed there, or of natives driven over the precipice in the different tribal wars, all of which are in keeping with the romantic character of the place.

It may be that with the advent of railways and



VICTORIA FALLS AND BOILING POT, FROM THE NEW RAILWAY BRIDGE.

hotels this element of romance will disappear, but at present it still survives. The Victoria Falls are now the meeting-place of civilisation and the desert, and this gives a certain charm to the everyday life there. At first sight it seems to be almost too 'civilised'—the new hotel, the Canadian canoes, the crowds of camera-laden visitors, or the scene of bustle and activity at the railway station and the bridge head, all appear singularly out of place; indeed the Victoria Falls have been described by one who knew them in the old days as 'a mass of water surrounded by tourists.' But in the rainy season it is very different, for the only inhabitants then are a few officials, and enterprising traders, content to endure the feverish climate of the Zambesi valley.

During the last rains two lions were killed within a few miles of the Falls, and from time to time travellers appear, laden with sporting trophies, or shivering with fever, from the illimitable interior; some have come from the new copper fields, others from further north, from Tanganyka or the Congo, with a thousand tales of travel and adventure.

It is of course inevitable that the great power

known as 'Civilisation' should soon 'extend her realm beyond the Zambesi, and it is now clear that she will set her mark upon the Falls themselves, for already there is a hotel, a railway station, cuttings and embankments, and watering-places in close proximity, and it has been necessary to surround the 'rain forest' with a wire fence. Within a year it is said that the passengers by the Cape to Cairo railway will cross by the new bridge, less than two hundred yards distant from the Boiling Pot, with the spray beating on their faces, and the roar of the waters in their ears.

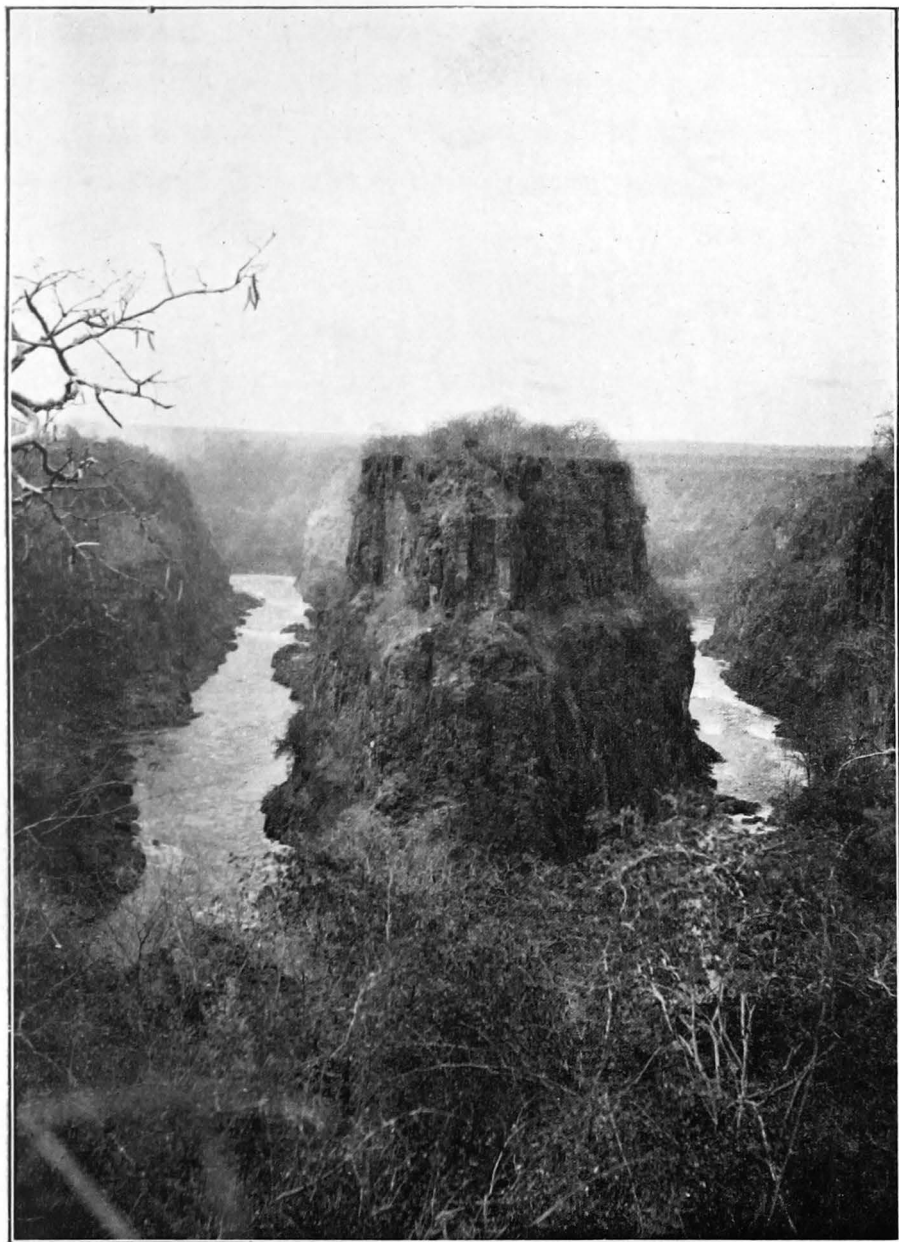
It is the bridge that is regarded as mainly responsible for all this, for when the present site was chosen it meant not only that the Falls should be accessible, but that all the accompaniments of civilisation should be deposited at their very edge. During the past year the choice of the site has been much criticised upon these grounds, but now that the bridge is more or less a *fait accompli* further discussion is useless. It has, however, served to open the wider question of what is to be the future of the Falls. It is of course within the bounds of possibility that they should simply be 'exploited'

as one of the commercial assets of the country ; indeed, one argument used in favour of the bridge was that it would give to visitors in the future a view of the Falls which was previously unobtainable. And if this attitude is taken their fate is sealed.

But it is more probable that they will find in public opinion an ally strong enough to defend them against further desecration. In England a storm of indignation is aroused by a proposal to destroy an old bridge, or to build a railway up a mountain, and the sentiment which inspires it should be able to preserve the natural beauties of a scene, which may fairly claim to be considered one of the wonders of the world.

It is difficult to indicate the source whence this place derives its peculiar charm. It is a unique spectacle, so much so that the first sight of it may be regarded as one of the experiences of a lifetime, for it provides one of those moments, known to everyone, which time can never efface from the memory. Most people can recall some scene, which impressed them at first sight as something almost supernatural—baffling even the powers

of the imagination ; it may afterwards have become familiar, but the first impressions which it inspired can never be forgotten. And unquestionably the Victoria Falls must be included among these notable scenes.



THE ZAMBESI GORGE BELOW THE FALLS

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CHAPTER IX

ON THE VELD

IT is with very mixed sensations that one wakes at 6.30 in the morning to slowly realise that one is in the heart of Africa, in a big game country, and that one's immediate duty is to swallow the cup of boiling coffee which the boy has just brought, and take the field. With a heroic effort the warm rugs are deserted—for that hard trek yesterday deserved a long rest—dressing is soon over, and a reconnoissance made outside the tent. It is a still clear morning, though some mist hangs above the river; in the east the arc of the rising sun is just appearing, but there is an undeniable bite in the air that suggests a frosty night. In front of the tent the camp fire has been rekindled, and one of the party is pulling on his boots in its friendly warmth; further off the boys are huddling in their blankets,

looking cold and half stupefied by the chill morning air; the ponies are just being led up—and there is no time to waste.

Half an hour later we all feel much better: thanks to this early start, there should be a better chance of seeing game, which in the midday heat will be lying down, or in the thick bush. The little Basuto pony steps out briskly, and the boys behind no longer seem to be walking in their sleep.

The path leads up a long, winding valley, varying in width from a few hundred yards to the best part of a mile; its flanks are clad with dense scrub—tall grass, bushes of the thorniest kind, and stunted trees—which stretches away on either side to an unknown distance. The valley itself is fairly open, and the tall grass has all been burnt by a veld fire; already patches of young green grass are replacing it, offering most attractive feed for game. Their tracks are to be seen by the river, which flows down the valley, and it is more than likely that a stray riet buck or puku is now lying in the forest of reeds that fringes its banks. The sky is absolutely cloudless, and the whole landscape bathed in the fierce light of the African sun.

The new-comer cannot fail to be struck by the intense wildness of the picture. The nearest white man must be a hundred miles away, indeed the natives here have not seen one since a wandering trader appeared some two years ago. Yesterday we saw lion spoor, and feel that at last we have really reached a spot worthy of those books of travel and adventure by which our minds have been fired. In these wide tracts there must be antelope that have never heard the crack of a rifle, and the narrow Kaffir path is the only sign of man's presence ; indeed, we seem to be intruders in a place which Nature has marked out for her own. Some guinea-fowl coming down to water express their resentment by racing back to cover, but the huge cranes by the riverside are philosophers, and calmly ignore our presence. Further on a small ruddy-coloured antelope is feeding ; it is a puku, but a female, and as no hostilities are threatened she moves off very slowly, stopping from time to time to stare at these strange creatures that have disturbed her morning meal.

Half-way up the opposite slope, and some distance on, a bigger beast is to be seen, which on a nearer view proves to be a roan antelope—

apparently a young bull. He is obviously restless, having no doubt been driven from the herd as an undesirable young bachelor, and disliking his solitary condition. At present he is in a rather unapproachable place, and his head is not a good one, so he is left in peace, for some worthier quarry may be found before the midday heat drives the game to shelter. As we pass he catches sight of us, and stands—a picture never to be forgotten, and worthy of the pencil of a Landseer—gazing across the valley; a moment later he gets our wind, and throwing up his head, he gallops off uphill: at the top he turns to have a last look, and then plunges into the scrub, to think over his strange morning's experience.

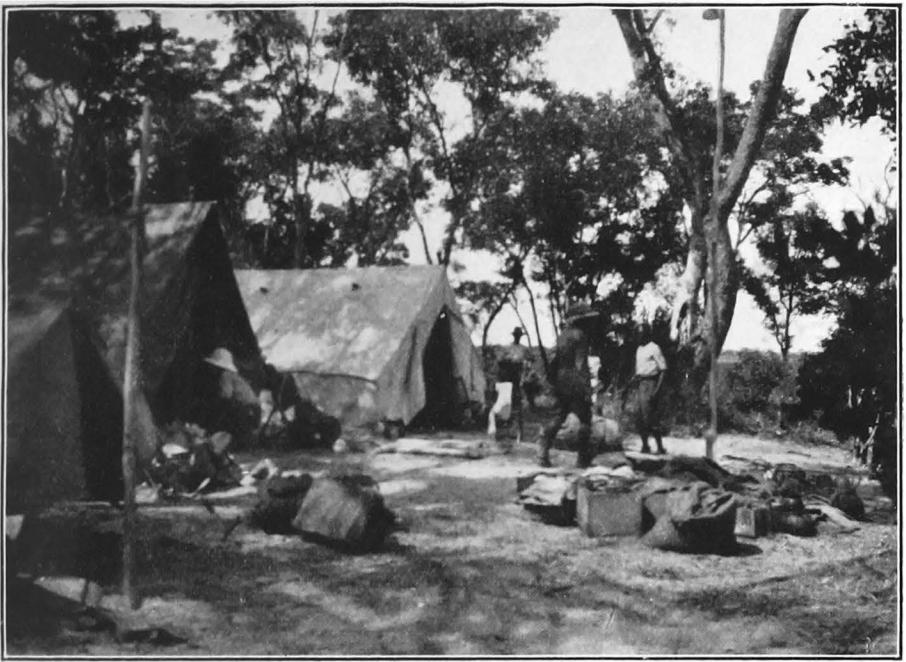
Nothing more is to be seen until we reach a spot some five miles up the valley, where it widens out into a bare flat or 'vlei' with some broken ground by the river. Three hartebeeste are feeding here, and beside them some zebra, a few standing, others lying down, but protected by one watchful beast who has undertaken the post of sentry. The pony is at once entrusted to the boys, who wait with it behind the trees that fringe the scrub, and from

this shelter the intervening ground is carefully spied—with many a wish for some absent Macpherson or Maclellan, who has a knack of finding cover where the amateur can see none, and whose “We’ll just craal doon a wee bit” inspires him with immediate confidence. But now he is left to his own resources, for the Barotse boy Segundo,—who has been appointed ‘head stalker’ in virtue of his quick eye and skill in tracking—takes it for granted that this is the Inkoos’s part of the business. Beckford relates that when the Turin staghounds checked, and the royal piqueurs were at a loss, the King would always appeal to the ‘milord Anglais,’ as the representative of a race of hunters. Segundo appears to hold similar views, for though he must realise that his eye is better, and his knowledge of game far ahead of his master’s, he dislikes responsibility, and will never take the initiative. He has too the most unbounded belief in the powers of a Mannlicher, and urges the sportsman to attempt the most impossible feats with this piece of white man’s magic.

The ground does not improve on closer acquaintance; it is true that a slight fold hides one for the

first hundred yards, but after that the stalk will have to be carried out more or less in view. There is nothing for it but a long crawl, and one small bush must be kept in a line with the sentinel zebra, in the hope that by this means his watchful eye may be evaded. There is practically no cover, and the sharp stumps of burnt grass play havoc with the hands; the sun on one's back is broiling, and a topee is a picturesque but impossible hat to stalk in. It soon becomes clear that the hartebeeste are unapproachable; but zebra meat is very welcome with the carriers in camp, and the one that is playing the part of sentry seems by his suspicious conduct to invite some sort of reprisals.

Gradually a nearer position is gained, and a few moments' rest taken behind the small bush; then on again, hugging the earth, and stopping dead whenever a beast looks up. A small strip of grass, that has escaped the fire, helps for a time, and fortunately brown clothes do not show up against the dull red soil; but at last a point is reached beyond which further progress would be impossible, though it is far outside the 150 yards which may be considered a suitable range for an indifferent rifle shot.



IN CAMP



BRINGING IN A BUCK

However, the light is so good that a long range does not look hopeless; it seems to be a case of now or never, and the big zebra offers a fair mark. Of course, the right maxim for these occasions is above all things to 'tak' time'—but how can one 'tak' time' when that nasty brute is already getting uneasy? Up goes the 300-yard sight, a long pause, and the trigger is pressed.

A puff of dust rises, apparently just above the back of the zebra, and wild confusion ensues: the report echoes across the valley, and he cannot locate the sound. He turns, sees the dust, and again turns—this time towards his enemy. The rest at once make up their mind, and follow. Up the hill they come, their necks arched and legs well under them, rather like the conventional horses of the Greeks. Now they are within easy range, and this time there is no mistake; the leader staggers as the bullet takes him, just in front of the shoulder, struggles on for fifty yards, and then rolls over kicking on his back.

Meantime the hartebeeste were galloping straight on. At the report they swerve to the right, then catching sight of the zebra bending away to the left,

they suddenly stop dead. It was an easy chance, and there was no excuse for hitting that big fellow far back in the ribs: he slowly canters off, and stops again, but this time the excitement is fatal, and a clean miss is the result. He resumes his canter and disappears in the thick scrub opposite.

There is hardly time to think over the curious mixture of good and bad luck which the last few seconds have brought. The '350 cordite, which those who know the country swear by, would have stopped the hartebeeste, for the bullet was not far from the right place. However, he is not lost yet, and as Segundo has appeared we at once start in pursuit. This Segundo is a picturesque figure as he crouches over the spoor, a couple of hunting spears in his hand, and clad in an old black tail-coat—a mark of civilisation of which he is enormously proud. He has been called Segundo not because it is his name, but because it is a good name, and certainly he seems very contented with it.

As a tracker he is marvellous, and appears to know after a glance at the ground exactly what the animal has been doing—his only difficulty being to impart his news, for he does not know a word of

English. The result is a sort of glorified dumb crambo, helped out by a few words of 'kitchen Kaffir,' by which means one is able, after a few days' practice, to converse with tolerable ease. By a rapid piece of acting he now explains that the hartebeeste is hard hit, and will soon lie down, his impersonation of the latter process being particularly realistic. We blunder on through some very thick bush, until suddenly Segundo stops dead, and shows that he sees the hartebeeste; unfortunately less trained eyes are totally unable to do so. Segundo is in despair, when a patch of something yellow appears for a moment through the trees. There is only time for a snap-shot, which serves to drive it deeper into the scrub. But Segundo is quite undefeated; he works up to it again, and this time a careful crawl is rewarded by an easy shot. _

There is nothing like beginning the day well, and it is with feelings of rare satisfaction that we walk back to the dead zebra, to eat some breakfast, and wait until the boys come out from camp to bring in the meat. The pony is terrified by the sight of the zebra, though he will take no notice of a buck, and it is easy to understand the prejudice against killing

an animal so like a horse. But this prejudice is not shared by Segundo and his friends, who fall to work on the carcase in a way that would ruin the skin unless a vigorous protest were made. What they want is meat, and plenty of it, the niceties of sport have no meaning to them. Recently a South African took his 'boy' with him to England, where he saw the hounds meet—a spectacle that impressed him so much that in the evening he was found hungrily sharpening his knife, and asking "when they were going out to cut up the meat!"

Even Segundo, though he has some claim to be considered a sportsman, inherits the same theory of hunting, and does not always insist that some favourite morsel should be cooked before he eats it. However, this does not destroy anyone else's appetite for an excellent, if rather late, breakfast, eaten under the shade of the trees, and followed by a peaceful smoke during the heat of the day. The pony takes a well-earned rest, and presently the boys come out from camp, and march off laden with game.

It is past midday, and still too hot to expect to see buck, but while idly spying up the vlei—more with the idea of passing the time than anything



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ZEBRA

A SABLE ANTELOPE

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else—something dark appears by the edge of the scrub. It is a long way off, and from its dark colour it looks like a wildebeeste, whose big neck and mane give him, at a distance, a most imposing appearance. But presently such a pair of horns can be distinguished as call for immediate action, for this must be a long-hoped-for prize, a sable antelope. There are endless stories of his nobility and grace, of his arching horns and glossy coat, of his speed in flight and his bravery when brought to bay, and now he is present in the flesh.

The stalk is not difficult ; a long détour through the scrub is necessary to reach a straggling belt of trees towards which he is feeding; the only risk is the wind, which has been shifty all day, and is now blowing in irregular puffs, and never from the same direction. Segundo comes too, for in the scrub he is invaluable, and we soon succeed in reaching our point. All seems well ; the sable is feeding steadily towards us, throwing up his head from time to time with a very kingly air, and giving us a view of two long, curving horns that makes us tremble with excitement. He is facing us now, and as soon as he turns broadside he should be ours, but that wind

is torturing us with anxiety, as we keep cautiously testing it with handfuls of sand. Presently he turns, but before the rifle can be raised he gives a sudden snort, and is off at a gallop; the wind has played us false after all, and we have looked our last on those magnificent horns.

Some very bad moments ensue; there are feelings too deep to be described, and even Segundo displays a quite unsuspected knowledge of colloquial English. It is getting late, and there is nothing more to be done but move down the valley after him, in the very faint hope of seeing him again, and this will be on the way back to camp. We see a couple of oribi, graceful little buck, with a glorious tinge of red in their coats, but they are very much on the alert, and move off in a series of gigantic bounds. As we go we keep a sharp watch on the opposite hillside, where the sable has disappeared, and are suddenly rewarded by the sight of a black speck, far along the ridge, and moving along the edge of the bush. We follow cautiously on the other side of the valley, and half a mile further on he moves into some low scrub, where he is almost hidden, but he stops there.

This time there must be no risks with the wind, but another difficulty presents itself. Anyone who has tried to stalk for himself knows how hard it sometimes is, even in Scotland, to mark the place where the deer are. Little knolls and rocks are apt to look very different on a nearer view, and it is quite easy to reach what has been marked out as the best position, and find them completely hidden by some unsuspected fold in the ground. And so it is now—to cross the valley, and get down wind, we must lose sight of the sable; and with no distinctive landmarks in the scrub, it will be almost impossible to find him on the other side. It is explained to Segundo that this is to be his task, for in the bush he has a bump of locality which is denied to Englishmen; but when in the fast-gathering dusk we reach the scrub, even that worthy is at fault. Suddenly he stops and points, and it is just possible to make out the now familiar figure, not two hundred yards away. There is plenty of cover, and stalking is only a question of moving quietly, and avoiding broken boughs and twigs; we reach a good position, wait a moment, and get on to an even better one. The light is very bad, for in South Africa there is

only half an hour's twilight; but this is the chance of a lifetime, and there must be no missing. The big beast drops to the shot, and as we cautiously approach we find him sitting in his favourite attitude of defence, mortally wounded, but game to the last; a merciful bullet finishes him, and the final honours are concluded in almost total darkness.

There is undoubtedly a certain contentment of mind which is peculiar to the sportsman after a good day, whether he is jogging home on a tired horse after a long run in the vale, or trudging back through the heather with forty brace of grouse to his credit. He is just tired enough to appreciate the thought of dinner and bed, and perhaps conscious of some incident, some small triumph, which will always make this particular day live in his memory. And so it is on the veld. Everything seems delightful; the evening meal washed down by long cups of cocoa, the smoke round the camp fire, and finally the little camp bed, where one retires to find more adventures in one's dreams.

It is of course impossible for a mere novice, however enthusiastic, to do justice to the glories of the 'hunting veld.' In the past the reproach of

butchery has often been cast at the sportsman in South Africa, but that need no longer be the case. Nearly every part of Africa is now protected by judicious Game Laws with the best results, and if one dwells at some length on a more than usually successful day, the same is surely the case with a big bag covert-shooting, or a good day in 'the forest.' There is a lot to be said for the old huntsman who, when someone remarked that he was glad they had not killed so good a fox, could think only of his hounds, and looking in blank amazement replied: "Oh, Lord, sir, whatever else do we come out for?" Our object is to kill something, and it is hypocritical to deny it, provided always that it is done in the most sportsmanlike way possible, and that the killing does not degenerate into slaughter.

And Africa provides that element of wildness so essential to the best sport. Every day brings it home to one more and more—whether it is the long, weary trek, or the night march through a belt of tsetse-fly, the sight of the great 'hippo' basking in the river, or the weird, wild sounds that break the stillness of the night. The same wildness appears in the actual pursuit of game. It strikes

one when lying at the end of the stalk, watching strange beasts through the glasses, and learning something of their ways. Or it strikes one during the mad gallop across the veld, with the herd racing in front, and the wind hissing in the ears. It takes one back to the days of the old hunters and their wild tales, and serves to bring home the fact that, even in the twentieth century, there are places where man is not, and Nature reigns supreme.



ON TREK

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CHAPTER X

THE NATIVE QUESTION.

IT is a task of some difficulty to write about the different problems of South Africa without appearing to dogmatise, more especially when unconsciously quoting the opinions of those who may be considered authorities. But since these problems—thanks to the influence of the Press—are constantly before the public eye, there may be some excuse for a few observations in connection with some of the principal ones—and none of them can have a more vital importance than the so-called native question.

The average Englishman has not been long in the country before he begins to reconsider any preconceived opinions on this subject, and the more he sees of the natives, the better he can realise the difficulties of the native question and the number

of side-issues which it involves. In the past there has been a tendency to think that when we had brought the natives under the influence of civilisation our work was done. "Our rule," it was said, "has secured to the natives security for life and liberty, for personal rights and private property. It has, for the first time in history, offered to them well-paid industrial employment: it has conferred the British blessing of peace and security upon them, without the British curse of alcohol and disease. The natives are increasing in numbers and prosperity, and the steady influx from beyond our borders is sufficient evidence of the treatment they receive."

No doubt this is strictly true, but it is impossible to see the actual state of things without realising that though we may have solved one problem, we have *ipso facto* created another. The old conditions of native life have been swept away—the question now is what is to replace them. Until this question is satisfactorily settled we are under a deep responsibility for our conduct in the past; our work is but half done, and the most difficult half is before us.

The crux of the native question is their large and

increasing' preponderance of numbers. In South Africa there are roughly some seven or eight million natives to less than a million whites, and even in Cape Colony they outnumber the white population in the proportion of three to one. Most of the native races that go to make up these numbers tend to increase under conditions of civilised rule, for the old checks of war and pestilence have been removed.

The problem is further complicated by the fact that in South Africa there is no one type of native, but many types, each with its own language, habits, and general characteristics. These range from the savage who has scarcely seen a white man, to the few well-educated natives to be found in Cape Colony, who have a knowledge of affairs and an aptitude for political life such as many party politicians might envy. In some districts the native has been left with his old institutions and tribal organisation—in Natal, for example, or in Basutoland; in others these have been completely effaced, and he has been for two generations a chiefless man, without land and without a home.

The white man has never pursued a uniform

policy towards him. The Boer commanded a wholesome respect in virtue of his sjambok; he taught him one lesson—that he must do what he was told and keep on doing it, and under this discipline he was at least a very faithful servant. The various missions have differed widely in their methods, and in the results they have achieved. One party appeared at Capetown and gave him a franchise; another now exists at Johannesburg which insists on keeping him off the pavement. Not only every colony, but almost every party in the colony, has been ready with a different native policy, while from time to time a murmur of sage advice or well-meant, but often ill-inspired, criticism is wafted from the shores of England.

It is little wonder that the native is somewhat bewildered by all this, nor is it surprising that, as a race, he has no great progress to record: indeed, the view generally held in South Africa is that the effect of civilisation upon his character has been entirely harmful.

But if he has not made that intellectual progress which in theory he should have made, he is at least no fool. He has a very keen eye to his own

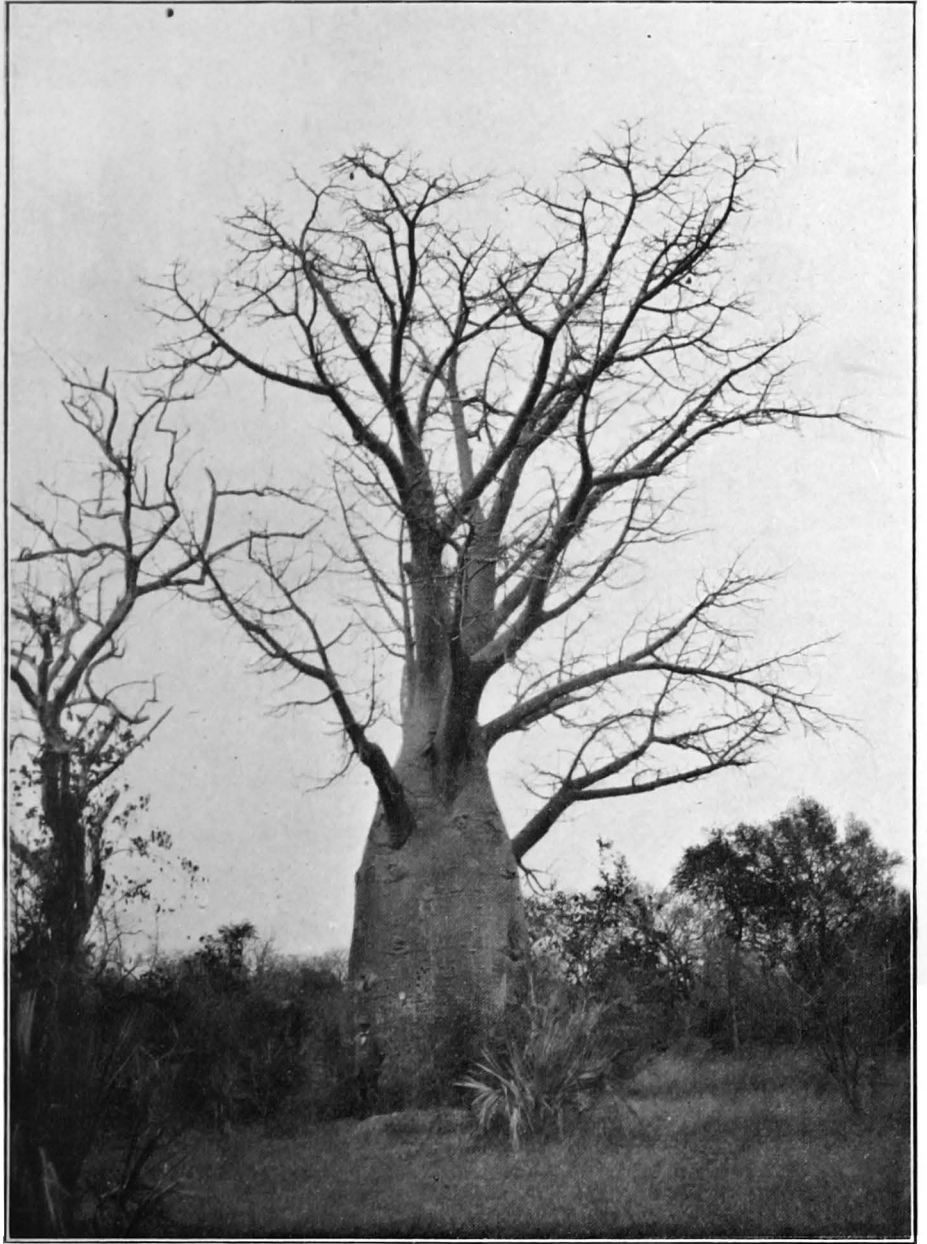
advantage,' he knows roughly what he wants, and has now realised that money will probably get it for him. During the war he discovered that this was to be easily obtained, thanks to the high wages offered by the Government, and after the war he expected that his new-found prosperity would continue. When high wages were no longer offered, he fell back on a policy of masterly inaction, made possible by the high earnings of the few previous years.

Gradually he gathered that this inaction was causing serious trouble—he was after all a power to be reckoned with, a bone of contention between rival parties. It is true that he does not understand the different points at issue, but he vaguely sees that he is in a strong position, and wishes to make the most of it. In Cape Colony, for example, his franchise has made him a serious factor in political life, and in the Transvaal his refusal to work has almost stopped the pendulum of the South African clock. He sees that his position is threatened by the importation of Chinese labour, but does not yet mean to give up his idea of working only for a short time and for a high wage. "Now that the

Chinese are eating us up," he says to the Native Commissioner, "the Government will have to reduce our hut-tax."

Thus it is impossible to be satisfied with the present situation, or with the progress which up to now the natives have made under British rule. Their numbers and the need for labour have given them importance which might conceivably be in the future a serious menace. But this is now understood in South Africa, and with the whole country united under one flag there is some hope that active measures will be taken to solve the problem, whereas hitherto the tendency has been to leave it to solve itself. It is clear that the desired result will not be achieved in our day; time will be required to deal with the various types of native, and their various conditions of life. Particular remedies will have to be found for particular cases before those general principles can be evolved which can fairly be described as a 'native policy.'

It may perhaps serve to illustrate the difficulties in the way, if the case of a native who has only recently been brought under the influence of civilisation is taken, and its effects upon him examined.



A BAOBAB TREE, RHODESIA

Such an example may easily be found in Rhodesia. There may be seen the typical Matabele warrior, whose father came up with the great invasion from Zululand, and settled on the fertile plains north of the Limpopo. He comes of a fighting stock, and has looked upon war as his legitimate occupation, living in the good old barbaric way by the spoils of his spear. Under king Lobengula he was an induna—a headman with wives and cattle to his heart's content; implicit obedience to his king was rigidly enforced; there was no elaborate code of laws for him, but a murderer, a thief, and a faithless wife or husband was punished with death, and this rough-and-ready justice preserved a tolerably high standard of order and morality. Presently the pioneers of civilisation appeared. He saw in them adventurous spirits after his own heart, and like his king was profoundly impressed by their powers—if possible he meant to avoid a conflict with them. But by degrees he became frightened by their strength: they treated the country as though it were their own, and he was not even to be allowed his old privilege of raiding the Mashonas. The result was the Matabele war: when it was over his king was

dead, the royal kraal at Bulawayo taken, and the country lost. He did not want to fight again, but the new conditions were intolerable. He saw men of his own kraal made policemen, armed with a rifle, and apparently invested with a right to insult and bully their betters. Other grievances were not wanting, and he was persuaded by the young men against his better judgment to make a last bid for the country. But his heart was not in the business, his defeat was inevitable, and his is now a subject race.

It is true that in many respects his position has improved; the iron hand of Lobengula has gone, and he is free to enjoy that 'peace and security' which is associated with the British rule—he may even turn to 'well-paid industrial employment,' and can appeal at once against any sort of unlawful oppression.

But in reality he is heart-broken. He was born to be a fighter, and his vocation is lost. He was a leader of men, master of a kraal and cattle. They are his no more, and he is hanging about some farmhouse, dressed in an old coat and hat, decorated with the metal plate bearing the arms of

the Chartered Company, which is given to the head men, the last relic of his past greatness.

The lot of the younger native is a happier one, for he has been better able to adapt himself to the changed conditions. He finds under them more opportunities for that life of leisure which has always appealed so strongly to the native mind, but which was impossible when he might at any moment be summoned to join an impi, and march against a neighbouring tribe. Now that the harsh but strong justice of Lobengula has gone he may, with some impunity, depart from the strict path of honesty and morality. He has seen a lot of these white men, and knows that they are no gods, but very prone to err themselves.

He lives on a farmer's land, to whom he pays an annual rent of 10s. or £1 : he cultivates some four or five acres, and grows perhaps fifteen bags of mealies or Kaffir corn, which keeps him in food and beer. His contact with civilisation has rather increased his wants—further south the native needs quite a lot of creature comforts—so that he must make a certain amount of money. This is also necessary to pay his annual hut-tax of £1 to the

Government, and 10s. apiece on his extra wives—though the latter payment may be regarded almost as an economy, in view of the amount of work which he can get out of them.

Happily money is easily obtained, for in the mines he can earn 35s. or 40s. a month, so that on an average he need not work seriously for more than three or four months in the year.

The rest of the time he spends in idleness at home, for he is by nature an opportunist, he has no idea of saving, and the future is left to take care of itself. Or perhaps he attends a series of 'beer-drinks' with his friends, going on from kraal to kraal, until it is time for him to bethink himself again of making a little money.

He may have certain aspirations—for example he thinks it a fine thing to speak English, and he is full of envy for the 'boy' he sees in Bulawayo clad in a black coat and stiff white collar—that is indeed civilisation. It would be a glorious thing to be like that educated Fingoe on the Bembesi location, to wear white man's clothes, to instruct the other natives, to be greeted by them as 'Mr. Sahambo,' to employ them in the capacity of contractor,

and incidentally to make a pretty penny out of them.

In the old primitive life he was a savage, but he was at least a man: in relation to the new conditions he is a child—he thinks like a child, and acts like a child; his opportunism is childish; he has a little of children's ingenuous cunning, their eager ambitions, their dislike for trouble, and their disregard for detail. He needs some guiding force, but at present can find none, for there is no central power, with a consistent policy, to control him. He is brought into immediate contact with the farmer upon whose land he lives; but this man is clearly an oppressor, for he demands a rent of no less than 15s. a year, and enforces payment in the most rigorous manner. This practice of 'native farming'—that is, of allowing them to 'squat' on a farm in return for a certain amount of money or labour—is often said to be a bad one, for different farmers make different terms, a thing which is certain to breed discontent. But his friend Joseph from Salisbury, a very shrewd boy, tells him of a chief known as the 'Commissioner' to whom he can appeal against the flogging which he has hitherto

regarded as the final argument of his' employer. The result is an unfortunate tendency among the white inhabitants to regard His Majesty's Commissioner as a thwarting power, set up to prevent the natives from being dealt with in the way that local knowledge and experience would suggest.

The nominal heads of the different districts are the native commissioners, but the districts are so large, and communication so difficult, that a uniform policy can scarcely be possible. Under them are the native police, who are no longer armed in South Rhodesia, for in the Matabele rebellion all that the most successful commissioners could do was to march their men into Bulawayo, and disarm them there. The practice of recruiting police from the men of the country is seldom successful, for they are not respected by their fellows, while they are hated for their overbearing use of their powers; in the event of real trouble they are more than likely to use their rifles against their officers. The experiment is again being tried in Barotseland, and is the subject of much criticism.

It must always be remembered that the natives travel immense distances—there are many boys at

the Kafue' who have worked at Kimberley, or the Rand—and that during their travels they experience every kind of treatment. In one place they are better off than many white men—in another they must kneel on the ground, and clap their hands to salute the official of their district. It is little wonder if they are wholly bewildered by all this, and find it impossible to realise what their position really is.

This can only come about when they can recognise one central power which pursues a uniform policy towards them. The difficulties in the way are enormous, for in Rhodesia alone there are a number of more or less conflicting powers, and Rhodesia in relative importance represents a very small section of South Africa.

It is fortunate for those concerned with the native question in South Africa that they are not altogether without a precedent, for they have before their eyes the example afforded by America, and should be able to draw their own conclusions from it. The native there, when first imported as a slave, inherited a character which in many respects resembles that of his cousin in South Africa, though he did

not belong to the Bantu race. He was 'in his own country an opportunist : it was easy to live from day to day, and the future could well be left to look after itself. Such a life increased the laziness and irresponsibility which civilised races believe to be inborn in the native.

Thus the period of slavery was a school in which the master—the astute, enterprising American—was in every way the antithesis of his pupil. The school was a hard one, but it at least taught the pupil the primary lessons of civilisation.

Then came emancipation. It was assumed that the lessons were learnt, education was offered to the native, and he was given a vote : it only remained for him to take his proper place in the civilised world. But this he failed to do. It soon became clear that the laws of development had been overridden : there were certain privileges which it had taken civilised peoples a thousand years to attain—these were now, after a few decades, thrown open to the native. But what he really required was discipline, and the period of discipline had not been long enough : he had no sense of responsibility, and was like a child in questions where money was

concerned.* In America, of all places, there was no room for him: there are of course exceptions, but the general tendency is now for the native to take to lower forms of industry. Indeed it is often said that since he obtained his freedom he is economically in a worse position than before. Morally too he has no progress to record, for the controlling power was removed before he had developed the quality of self-control. Mentally he has in some instances improved, for America has established certain systems of education for him which do not deal only with the head, but appeal to the heart as well. Such systems have already proved their success by their results, for they have produced a type of native—not over-educated, but fitted for useful industrial employment. But politically it can hardly be said that the native has made any progress at all.

In a word it may be said that America has failed. Freedom made the natives dependent upon their self-command—and of this they had practically none. The influence of heredity was strongly against their acquiring the qualities necessary in a civilised state. At the present time they can only be regarded as a deteriorating race.

All this can hardly fail to provide an object-lesson for South Africa. There the question is at last being seriously taken in hand. It is realised that some uniform policy, some general action on the part of all the colonies, is essential, for at present the policy of one colony may be rendered nugatory by the attitude of the next. With this end in view a representative Commission has been sitting in the different colonies during the past year: it is early to predict its results, and the varying conditions, already insisted on, must make a uniform policy difficult. But it is reported that certain general principles are now being established as the result of their investigations, and such principles should prove the groundwork for the native policy of the future.

At present it is impossible to do more than determine what our main attitude towards the natives is to be. Roughly there are now two alternatives. On the one hand are those who are—though they may not frankly avow it—the enemies of the native race. They may urge that they cannot be improved, or that they ought not to be improved; they may advocate the old policy of extermination

by means of drink and disease, or one of preserving them, like some curious form of game, cut off from all the influences of civilisation. But the basis of all their theories is the same—they have no belief in the possibility of a civilised native.

There is, however, another party which, rightly or wrongly, does cherish such a belief. Its members may differ from one another in the means they advocate, but they are inspired by the same ideas, and this party may now be said to be the dominant one in South Africa. This policy was voiced by Mr. Rhodes in his speech to the Cape Parliament: "It is our duty as a Government to remove these poor children from this life of sloth and laziness, and to give them some gentle stimulus to come forth and find out the dignity of labour. . . . But if those gentlemen who say that they really wish to consider the welfare of these poor people would think less about their votes, and more about their future, they would effect more."

And that is the point about the native which chiefly strikes the stranger—he is before all things a child. One may see it on the quay at Capetown when a liner is coaling: the eager com-

petition to get the first sack from the cart, the jostling and chaffing, the laughter at another boy's misfortunes, the careless way in which the coal is upset, and the whole business is treated as an enormous joke. Or one may see it in the De Beers compounds: the delight in cooking a little meal, the conscious pride in a new hat, the envious respect inspired by the possession of a bicycle or some other new toy, the solemn air with which some childish game is played, or the look of pathetic bewilderment on the faces of the patients in the hospital.

And if his character is to be brought to maturity it can only be by the process of gradual development that is applied to children. The other method, that of throwing open to him at once all the privileges of civilisation and expecting him to live up to them, is already a proved failure. The beginning must be with little things; from these he can advance stage by stage to the greater questions of life. The Glen Grey Act is a good example of this gradual process; it does not aspire to make the native a politician, but to show him how, by the exercise of a little foresight and economy, he may

become a freeholder. Presently he may learn to manage his own local affairs : he and his neighbours must be responsible for the roads, bridges, and general welfare of their district, and subsequently for the administration of law and order. In this way they gain a sense of responsibility and a self-command—necessary qualities which were before quite undeveloped.

And all the time they must feel the influence of civilisation. They must be protected against its vices, as has already been done by legislation in connection with the liquor traffic, just as children are shielded from any harmful influence. And they must also be brought into contact with its virtues. As soon as the spur of ambition begins to work, the native must have some future open to him, otherwise there will be a definite point at which all progress will stop.

It cannot be denied that the random observations of which this chapter is composed are of a very vague nature, and include few of those hard-and-fast rules that mark a constructive policy. But it may well be urged in excuse that the general tendency is to err in the other direction. If there is one thing more

certain than another in connection with the native question, it is that it can only be settled by the help of long experience and local knowledge. Much harm has already been done by those who are over-ready to dogmatise with an insufficient knowledge of the facts. It is easy to assume that there is only one type of native in South Africa, and that we have a certain duty towards him, which must be carried out in a certain way. But it is not so easy to undo the mischief for which such a theory is responsible. It would seem from the attitude of a certain party at home that in its opinion a sea voyage must have some insidious and fatal effect on character, so little confidence do they show in our relations in South Africa. It is needless to say that there is nothing to support such a theory. If the Englishman at home has a duty, it is not to hamper the efforts of the people in South Africa, but to help them when possible, and at least to make a conscientious attempt to understand their problems before offering to take an active part in their solution.

South Africans themselves are animated by the utmost good will towards the native, and the most



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profound interest in his future. They also realise the magnitude of the problem more fully than their English critics. It is not a mere question of domestic policy in South Africa, but a social problem worthy of the deepest thinkers. The progress of society, according to Sir Henry Maine, is from status to contract: in England the individual has after a thousand years replaced the Anglo-Saxon vill as the unit of society. But in Africa the native is just emerging from the "village community" stage, and is blindly groping for his place in a twentieth-century civilisation.

CHAPTER XI

LAND SETTLEMENT IN THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

THE casual stranger enters the Orange River Colony with feelings of relief, or disappointment, according to his particular temperament. He finds here no 'political situation'—he is confronted with none of those 'vital problems,' which seem to await him in every other colony except Natal. He is at once conscious of a certain spirit of repose, combined with a general appearance of prosperity, which comes as a pleasant change after the rather 'electric' atmosphere of the rest of South Africa.

And this first impression is confirmed on a closer acquaintance with the country. What is generally termed the 'racial difficulty' appears to be in the background. It is true that the Bloemfontein 'Friend' fulminates against 'official tomfoolery and

Polish rule"—but the phrase smacks rather of the Anglo-Saxon journalist than the patriotic Dutchman. In point of fact both Dutch and English are too busy on their farms to find time for that mischief which is the proverbial privilege of the idle. This is borne out by the placid appearance of Bloemfontein: here is no city seething with sedition, but a rather sleepy country town with a few farmers in the streets, an occasional officer from the garrison, and signs of many recent improvements. It seems almost impossible to imagine it as the headquarters of an army of occupation, so completely has it regained its normal calm. In the future it may show renewed activity as a railway centre, for already the work of railway development has been proceeding in the Orange River Colony, and further schemes are under discussion. Or perhaps unsuspected mineral wealth may be discovered: coal is already being worked, and finds of diamonds are continually being reported.

But at present the backbone of the country is its farming, and it is to this that it owes its prosperity. It may be seen in the wide, treeless plains and the flocks of sheep that graze there, in the long list of

exports—wool, hides, grain, and other farm produce—and best of all in the Budget returns, which show a substantial balance on the right side.

The Government has not been slow to realise the resources of the country, and to make the most of them. Boring for water is being carried on everywhere, with satisfactory results. Experimental forestry has already made some progress. The Government stud farm at Twee Spruit has done much for horse-breeding; a dairy has recently been opened there, to which the farmers can bring their milk, and the future should see a great increase in the dairy produce of the country.

An experimental farm has been established within a few miles of the capital, on a piece of Government land of some 2,400 acres, which under the Boer government was worth £5 a year. Boring has procured an adequate supply of water there, and a lot of land is under cultivation—some of it irrigated. At the steading are Clydesdales, Short-horn and Devon bulls, sheep from Leicester and the Oxfordshire downs, Yorkshire pigs, and many different kinds of poultry. Every farmer can visit it and judge for himself what kind of stock, or

what methods of cultivation, are best adapted for the conditions of the country.

And above all things the Government has recognised the necessity of increasing the number of English farmers in the Orange River Colony, and has given its support to every scheme that has been started with that end in view.

It is almost impossible to over-estimate the importance of the various problems connected with land settlement in South Africa. It was of course generally assumed after the war that the great question, whether the country should be Dutch or British, had been settled once and for all in our favour. But at the present moment there are many men—most of them entitled by their experience or special knowledge to speak with some authority—who consider it doubtful whether we shall be able to hold the country that we have won. It is true that we have 30,000 troops there, that there is little sign of actual disaffection, and that we have even felt justified in granting to the Transvaal some approach towards responsible government. But past experience has shown that a colony is not necessarily loyal because there is no rebellion: true

loyalty does not grow up beneath the shadow of a garrison, but must exist spontaneously in the hearts and minds of the people. And unless such loyalty is to be found in South Africa our sacrifices of men and money will have been made to no purpose. It is not of course suggested that it does not exist there to-day, for there are many convincing proofs that it does, but it must always be remembered that it is a plant of tender growth in any country with a mixed population. Natal and Rhodesia are essentially English, but in Cape Colony and the New Colonies there is a large Dutch population, and in each of them are to be found signs of a racial question.

This is the danger which those who are called pessimists in South African affairs have always before their eyes, and it is one which cannot be disregarded by anyone with an interest in the country. Experts differ as to the means which must be taken to meet it. On the one hand it is proposed to "swamp" the Dutch by introducing a large English population—more especially in the country districts—and already considerable efforts have been made in this direction. But others contend that such a scheme is foredoomed to failure.

Such, settlers, they say, will gradually drift towards the towns and various mining centres. The old division—Dutch in the country and Englishmen in the towns—will always continue. As an alternative scheme they propose to 'educate' the Boer by judicious treatment, until he becomes a loyal subject; the problem will then solve itself.

Probably it is quite possible to combine the best points in both schemes. If Englishmen are encouraged to settle on the land there will be the bond of a common interest between the two races, which may eventually help towards their fusion. Each has something to learn from the other. The Boer has the advantage of experience and local knowledge—he knows something of the limitations of the country, if he is inclined to underrate its possibilities. The Englishman brings with him enterprise and modern methods, many of which have achieved an unhoped-for success. Already in the Orange River Colony, where land settlement has made most progress, farmers of both nationalities are firm friends and friendly rivals, and similar instances may be seen in the Transvaal and at the Cape.

But enough has been said to indicate that the question of land settlement in South Africa is a vital one, for it has a political aspect which far outweighs its economic importance. So well has this been realised that it has been taken up by the Government in both the New Colonies, while even in England it is now attracting considerable attention.

It is clear that the question is by no means a simple one. It is not enough to throw open the land to the settler—he must be taken to it and induced to stay there. There is always something artificial about the conditions of farming in a new country; the settler must be helped—he must be given an opportunity of acquiring the necessary colonial experience, and of securing a farm on easy terms. Otherwise the counter attractions provided by the mines are likely to prove too much for him.

At the close of the war the task of 'helping the farmer' devolved upon the Government; considerable sums of money were devoted to it, but it is doubtful whether the results at present achieved have been proportionate to the expenditure. The

Government is faced by a host of difficulties. It is occupied with innumerable other tasks, and cannot always find men of the necessary experience to superintend the work; it is also regarded as a legitimate victim to be bled by landowners and settlers alike. In the New Colonies, as soon as it was known that the Government was buying, land rose to a quite artificial value, and the settlers now complain of the heavy terms which the Government in its turn asks of them. Direct money advances to the settlers proved a failure. The friendly interest which the Government took in the farms was by many regarded as unwarrantable interference, for the average Englishman has a deep mistrust for anything in the nature of an official.

But, despite these difficulties, and some failures, land settlement can only be successful if the Government supports it. Public money must be spent, for private enterprise cannot produce the capital necessary to meet the initial expenses. And it seems only logical that public money should be spent; it has cost more than two hundred millions to take the country, and it must be worth spending ten more to keep it.

But the action of the Government may well be supplemented by private enterprise. The best guarantee for the soundness of any venture lies in the willingness of individuals, whose judgment can be relied on, to support it. Moreover, such a venture has the further advantage of personal and self-interested supervision—and it is an axiom in the affairs of South Africa that ‘management is everything.’

What may be termed private enterprise—as opposed to direct action by the Government—has already had some success in the form of a British Settlement of South Africa Company. It originally secured from the Government, on reduced terms, a large block of land in the Heilbron district, and other blocks have since been added. Personally approved settlers are received here and set to work on the company’s farms for one or two years. They are kept and paid wages in proportion to their qualifications—part of such wages being invested in the Company and handed over to them at the end of their term of apprenticeship. They are then helped to take a farm of their own. They have gained the necessary experience, and if

they have any capital, their task is comparatively simple. Some, having little or no capital, are obliged to depend on the help given them by the Company. No hard-and-fast rules are laid down about such 'help'; the Company finds it best to consider each case on its own merits, and is always prepared to make a bargain with a good man. For example, they will help him to hire a farm, or let him have one of their own on the hire-purchase system, on the security of his stock. The Company's interests are safeguarded by their manager, who is also at hand to advise the new farmer—his late pupil. Much of the requisite machinery, which would be beyond the resources of the ordinary farmer, is provided by the company; considerable improvements have been effected in the way of fencing, and by the introduction of imported stock, and the Company also assists its protégé in the matter of transport—always one of the greatest difficulties to be faced in South Africa. By this means, within three years of coming out, a settler may acquire valuable experience, and be in a position to take up a farm of his own under peculiarly favourable conditions.

But land settlement cannot be entirely dependent upon companies; the shareholders can hardly hope for any immediate interest on their capital, and must in the first instance be largely influenced by patriotic motives. It is true that much has been done by the action of individuals, though not perhaps as much as might be expected in that land of millionaires. Indeed, one of the worst features of South Africa is the way in which people, who have made their money there, prefer to spend it in Park Lane, rather than put it into the country to which they owe everything. A notable example has been set by the Duke of Westminster, who is now devoting very large sums to the interests of a colony which has no claim whatever upon him. Inspired by a real love for South Africa, and a great faith in its possibilities, he has purchased some 18,000 acres in the Thaba 'Nchu district, which is to be divided up into about twenty farms of eight hundred acres each, many of which are already occupied. Each settler is handed a cheque for £100; this is a present from the Duke of Westminster, and is supposed to defray the expenses of the voyage out, and to help towards the purchase of the neces-

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sary farm implements. Rent for the farms is not demanded, but the tenant pays a certain percentage on his profits—nothing for the first year, a tenth for the second, a fifth for the third, and so on until the sixth year, after which he pays one-half.

The land is all arable, very fertile, and with a fair supply of water ; it is said to be capable of growing any cereal crop. The Modderport-Bloemfontein railway runs through the estate, and the line is now to be carried on to Natal, so that a good market should be assured. The new station of 'Westminster' presents a scene of great activity. Building material and farm implements are being unloaded and carried to the different parts of the estate ; steam diggers are at work close by, preparing the ground for the settlers ; here and there in the rolling plain picturesque farmhouses and outbuildings of grey stone are to be seen, and in the background is the long wall of the Basuto hills. Few more attractive spots could have been chosen in which to make a new home for Englishmen. In the near future a church and school will be built, so that there may be every inducement for men to settle down with their families. All arrangements

have been carried out upon so lavish a scale that the capital must be regarded as devoted to a patriotic purpose, rather than invested in a business venture; but with good management some return should be secured in the future, and should this happen, it would be an additional proof of the great possibilities offered by farming in South Africa. At present the intention is that the estate should be mainly arable, and that none of the land should be alienated. Perhaps a successful farmer will presently aspire to something more than a farm of eight hundred acres, and if such men are helped, after a few years, to start on a larger scale, their places at 'Westminster' being taken by new men from home, the Orange River Colony will have a permanent 'school' for farmers, and one which offers peculiar attractions. Men will be brought from England by the generous terms that are offered, and in South Africa the lavish expenditure and excellent management should ensure their success.

It must always be remembered that farming in South Africa is still in a more or less experimental stage. The Boer was content to follow the conservative, not to say unenterprising, methods of his

MIXED FARMING

fathers, which really amounted to living on the increase of his flocks and herds. Even now any information given by the farmers is curiously contradictory; the climate and general conditions vary considerably in the different districts, and only a few principles of a very general nature can be taken as established.

The first of these, as has been already stated at some length, is that the settlers must be helped, for they cannot stand by themselves. The different experiments in the way of land settlement should serve to indicate the lines on which such help should be given.

Another is that the best form of farming is what is termed 'mixed farming.' A block of 1,000 or 1,500 acres is generally considered large enough to begin with in the Orange River Colony. This can be stocked in the proportion of one sheep for every two acres, or possibly less in the richer districts; some two hundred acres can be reserved for arable land, in many places lucerne can be grown for winter feed, and perhaps a small plot of tobacco. The great encouragement given by the Government to horse-breeding will enable the farmer further to

supplement his income. Thus if he fails in any one branch he is not necessarily ruined, for he has others to fall back on. And though it is always said that South African farming is still in the experimental stage, this 'mixed farming' may be regarded as a proved success.

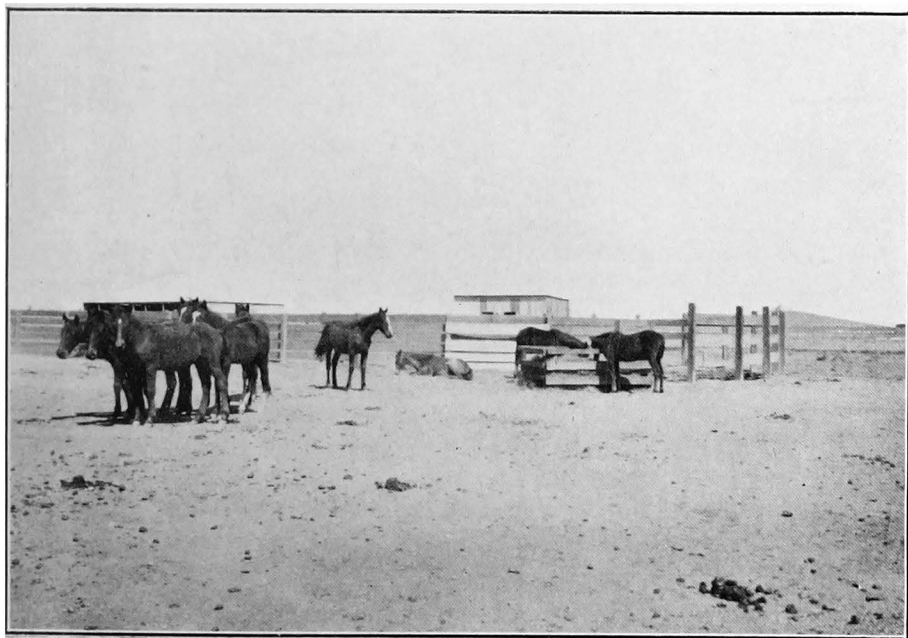
A third principle may be summed up as the necessity for not believing all that is said by the detractors of South African agriculture. The innumerable diseases are quoted—but these are always to be found in a new country, and as fresh remedies are discovered, the worst of them lose their terrors. 'No markets' is another popular cry,—but South Africa is to-day dependent for her existence on imported foodstuffs, and since the success of Chinese labour, her mining population is increasing every month.

The question is not so much 'markets' as 'access to markets,' and the work of railway development is steadily progressing.

Thus, despite the temporary difficulties with which it is faced, it would not be unduly sanguine to predict a great future for farming in South Africa, and a foretaste of this has already been



ON THE VELD



N THE STOCK-YARDS

provided in the Orange River Colony. The more that these agricultural possibilities are realised in England, the better are the chances of success. The land is there—the only need is men to occupy it, and the various schemes of land settlement have shown how this end may be achieved. The mines may be the golden key that opens the gates of South Africa, but it is only on the land that national life can find a foothold, and national character can develop.

CHAPTER XII

JOHANNESBURG

A STORY is now current of an English visitor to Ireland, who when relating his experiences there, remarked with surprise that he had found the latest newspapers and magazines "even in the interior." The first sight of the Rand must inspire the visitor with somewhat similar feelings: he has perhaps formed some mental picture of the place, wherein corrugated iron and empty meat tins play a prominent part, and is totally unprepared for the busy commercial city, or the comfortable suburbs, that constitute the real Johannesburg.

There is perhaps some excuse for his mistake. One of the most striking characteristics of South Africa, as a whole, is the 'temporary' appearance of everything, the absence of those attempts at comfort or improvement which mark a permanent home. It is this feature of our English home life

which makes the greatest impression on the visitor from America or South Africa. The typical Boer farmhouse is a dreary-looking place, despite the clump of gums and patch of irrigated ground which represents a garden: the wayside store seems to stand knee-deep in a waste of packing-cases, empty tins, and dirty paper; and a village is often no more than a few tin shanties, and Kaffir huts, in the neighbourhood of a mine. People as a rule have not 'come to stay,' but to make what they can, and then to move on. But at Johannesburg things are different. There is first the town, with its large buildings, spacious squares, and wide streets filled with a busy hurrying crowd. On the hills that surround it are the suburbs—shady avenues and pleasant houses, encircled by gardens and shrubberies. Here and there the native rock of the kopje appears among the shrubs and flower-beds, or has perhaps been cut and blasted to form miniature terraces, all adding to the picturesque appearance of the place. Some of the houses are of the villa type, others have been built on the old Dutch model—long low buildings with 'stoep' in front—and everywhere new ones are springing up.

It is possible that this description, which seems to give a picture of a fashionable London suburb, or the more 'residential' part of the Thames valley, does not do justice to the real attractions of Johannesburg. It serves, however, to indicate the chief of them—a look of 'permanence,' that comes as an agreeable change after most South African townships. The people here, or at any rate many of them, have decided to make it definitely their home, and to surround themselves with as many home comforts as possible. Thus there is everywhere a novel appearance of luxury and wealth, imported motors and carriages in the streets, Maple's furniture in the houses, real turf imported from England in the gardens, and at every social function a fashionably dressed crowd, where even an occasional top hat and frock coat is to be seen. Public buildings, theatres, and clubs are all upon the same scale; the racecourse and stands are equally striking—for racing is the national sport of South Africa.

In a word, it is a place where people have elected to spend their lives; it may not, perhaps, be the kind of life that would appeal to everyone, but the

fact that they have done so constitutes one of the most hopeful signs for the future of South Africa—it is already in one sense ‘a white man’s country,’ and it is now becoming a white man’s home.

The actual town is laid out in a network of streets, running at right angles to one another, lined with large shops and offices, and an occasional building of the ‘sky-scraper’ type. The bustling crowd is quite different from anything else in South Africa—distinct from the calm of Kimberley, the enforced idleness of Capetown, or the air of gentlemanly leisure which pervades Bulawayo. Johannesburg is said to be suffering from a period of depression, but no one—except perhaps those who have seen it in the days of a ‘boom’—would suspect it. Everyone seems to have something to do, and to be in a hurry to do it, while signs of wealth and prosperity are, if anything, too abundant. Lunch at the New Rand Club is a particularly striking scene: round the tables are men of every kind and of every occupation—here a mining magnate in eager converse with a young barrister from home, or a native commissioner from some remote district is detailing his experience to a group of Government

officials. It must be one of the most cosmopolitan crowds in the world, but all are infected with the same spirit of cheeriness and bustle.

Beyond the town are the mines, from which there comes an unceasing murmur, growing on a nearer approach to a dull roar, as of the sea, the sound of the batteries crushing the ore. The scene below ground is one which can never be forgotten. After descending the shaft in the cage, an uncanny process which seems to deposit the visitor in the very bowels of the earth, he is confronted with a new and strange spectacle. There are long, winding galleries, well lighted, opening into low chambers, wherein crouching black figures are drilling holes into the rock for blasting, or clearing away the rubble. It is almost impossible to speak owing to the harsh clash of the hammers and the shriller scream of the mechanical rock drills.

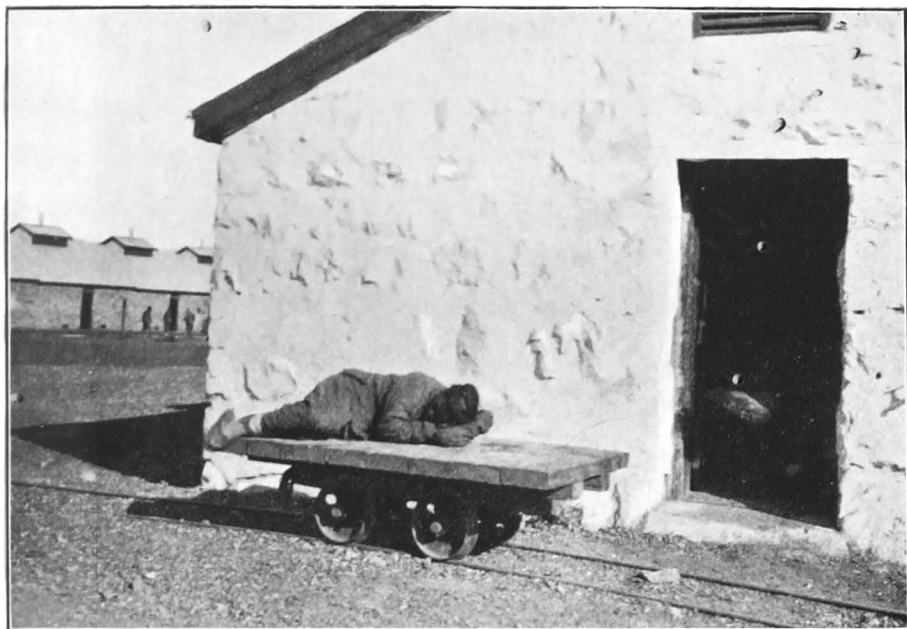
As the ore is extracted it is transferred to trucks and run to the shaft. A few white men are at work, for a certain number is essential to direct the gangs of natives, and the high pay tempts them to undergo this rather wearing life. But the bulk of the work is necessarily done by native labour, for

much of it is of a nature that simply requires, ^{so} many pairs of hands, no matter whether skilled or unskilled; if white labour only were available, the high wages would make it impossible to work the mines at a profit. The experiment has actually been tried, but it was found on one mine that the substitution of white 'machine helpers' for Kaffirs involved an outlay of £32 instead of £8 to accomplish the same amount of work, and that 'hand-stopping' when done by Kaffirs cost 3s. a ton as against 8s. a ton when done by white men.

It would be unwise in this connection to say anything of a controversial nature about Chinese labour, for happily the controversy is at an end. Up to now the much-criticised experiment has been completely successful, the men, if carefully handled, proving to be good and willing workers. In the compounds they appear to be surprisingly happy under their 'conditions of slavery,' resting after their work, or strolling about in alert cheery groups, and taking the keenest interest in everything round them. They are very comfortable in their new quarters, and certainly have no cause to complain of their food; the only thing they

are anxious about is making money, and they are agreeably surprised to find that there is no chance of their being swindled in the matter of their wages. The first batch of labourers came out of the mine with masses of quartz bulging below their clothes, and proceeded to try and crush it with their feet in a corner of the compound, much to the amusement of the white spectators. Most of them are full-grown men—many of them old soldiers, but there was one small boy who had come as a 'stowaway,' attracted by the prospects of the Rand.

The general impression given by Johannesburg is that it is the pivot upon which all South Africa turns. When travelling about the country one finds everywhere some fresh instance of its widespread influence: it is the heart of the mining district, the market for the farmers, the centre of political influence—in fact, the body and brain of the country. A boom was expected immediately after the war, and when this did not come a period of temporary depression ensued. Now that the labour difficulty is in a fair way to being solved, Johannesburg may be regarded as 'round the corner'—as



A CHINESE LABOURER



IN THE COMPOUND

entering upon a course of steady development, which should give more permanent results than the artificial progress created by a 'boom.'

A great contrast to Johannesburg, the type of the new era in South Africa, is afforded by the old Boer capital, Pretoria, which still preserves abundant traces of the old régime. Johannesburg is before all things English—of a new kind perhaps, but still English; a section of the 'City' might almost have been transplanted to this new centre of activity, with a ready-made suburb by its side—but Pretoria is emphatically a Dutch town. This may be seen in the placid appearance of the place, quite different from the hurrying Rand, nestling in a hollow which seems to be cut off from the busy world without by the encircling hills. It may be seen also in the big, bare Government buildings, or in the Dutch church in the square, and above all in the faces of the inhabitants. Yet it is a picturesque place, cradled in the hills, and well planted with trees, the vivid green of the young willows giving it a cool, fresh look, which is, however, belied by the summer heat.

Undoubtedly the greatest point of interest about

Rhetoric to-day is that it is possible, there to see something of the Boer, in his own place; though more still may be learnt by spending some time in the country districts among the various farms. The Boer character has been so much discussed that nearly everyone in England has some vague idea about it, such ideas often being curiously contradictory: to one he is the simple countryman, the survivor of the seventeenth-century Puritans, while to another he is the 'slim' fellow, the corrupt politician, the type of old Transvaal officialdom. The truth is that the genuine Boer, the son of the soil—as opposed to Hollanders and foreigners who have exploited him for their own ends—is a curious paradox, or rather a collection of paradoxes. In many respects he is the uneducated countryman that he is generally portrayed, whose simple honesty has always attracted so much sympathy. But he has also a certain cunning common to all countrymen—known as 'slimness'—an eye to the main chance, a great capacity for getting the best of a bargain—and a rare satisfaction in the achievement, though the victim may be his dearest friend. He is very religious, for he has

inherited many of the old Puritan characteristics, but in other respects is quite unscrupulous, and appears to possess a complete incapacity for telling the truth. He is a good husband and a good father, and is kind and hospitable to strangers, but has treated the natives with a savage brutality which has earned their undying hatred. He has also a certain amount of sound common sense, for his life must have taught him prudence and self-reliance, and in many respects he shows a well-balanced judgment and moderation; yet he is often a hopeless braggart; he always thought that he could sweep the English into the sea, and still has an idea that they made peace because they were beaten. He has shown powers of endurance and a surprising indifference to hardship, but he has always been famous for his absence of dash, and also for a caution not far removed from cowardice.

The typical Piet or Paul of the Transvaal lives on his 3,000 acre farm with his wife and a large family, and perhaps two or three other relatives or connections. The increase of his flocks and herds provides him with his income; by the spruit he has irrigated and cultivated a small patch of ground for his own

use, and also grows mealies for the market. His capital is represented by a bag of gold buried in the garden, and a team of Afrikander oxen : and he has also a new plough, of which he is inordinately proud, and over which he was magnificently swindled by the Jew at the store—with whom, by the way, he means to get even some day, and has already sold him an unsound horse. He does not do much work himself, but likes to ride round his farm, and smoke his pipe, with a certain self-satisfaction at the prospect. He may be briefly described as 'a dirty country gentleman,' and the description probably contains a good deal of truth.

During the war Piet was out on commando, and rather enjoyed shooting at the 'roineks,' for whom he has always had a profound contempt, from the safe shelter of a trench. But the latter period of the war was one of unutterable misery for him : his farm was burnt, one of his sons killed, and another taken prisoner to Ceylon, while he himself was driven from pillar to post, short of food and short of clothes, entrapped from time to time in wire entanglements, and shot at from the ubiquitous block-house. Peace came as a very welcome release from

these troubles, and he again turned his attention to his farm. These absurd Englishmen appeared with large sums of money for some purpose known as 'repatriation.' Piet wanted a lot of repatriation; and still chuckles at the thought of how completely he 'did' the Resident Magistrate. He was soon shrewd enough to see that he was by no means badly off under the new régime, and was content to watch the efforts of the new Government with a sort of amused contempt—after all some of these Englishmen were not bad fellows. Captain B., of the agricultural department, was round the other day; he talked to him in his own language, and showed a surprising knowledge of the points of a bull. And he is beginning to suspect that there may after all be something to be said for their new methods of farming, at which he has so often laughed. He liked the look of those stallions at the Government stud farm—perhaps his Afrikander ponies are rather short of bone: the Scotchman's sheep on the next farm are looking remarkably well, and he hears surprising reports about the mealie crops of some of the new settlers.

It is true that he is rather dismayed by some of

the violent innovations in the country. He does not quite understand a Government composed of absolutely disinterested men, and is inclined to think that they must be fools. But he has a great respect for management, and if the administration is good, that is enough for him. He is beginning rather to mistrust the stories of British oppression, with which his old political leaders used to regale him, and feel that the latter rather deserted him during the war: indeed, he is quite disposed, if he is let alone, to accept the new régime on its merits.

But the dominant power in the Transvaal to-day is one of a very different type—the mining interest. It is a favourite cry of the Radical press that the country is being administered in the interests of the mining magnates; and it is true that the first care of the Government must be the mining industry, for the strength of South Africa is Johannesburg, and the strength of Johannesburg is the gold. It is the vast mining population which provides a market for English imports, and the South African farmers; it gives employment to a large professional class in the country—lawyers, doctors, engineers, and others:

it includes, in its ranks the ablest men in South Africa, and it provides the solid material resources without which the Government would be powerless. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of the mining magnates as a class, it is quite clear that their welfare is inextricably bound up with the welfare of the country. It is, moreover, quite impossible to defend or condemn them as a class, for among them may be found men of every type and nationality. There is a tendency at home to judge them by a few unfortunate examples who, after lowering financial morality in South Africa, have returned to vulgarise the public taste in England.

But there are others, and these form the large majority, who have honestly determined to throw in their lot with the country to which they owe so much. Many of them have built large houses in Johannesburg, and some have purchased estates in the country districts, which are managed more or less on the English model. Perhaps in time something of the country life, which is so great a feature at home, may be reproduced in South Africa. It is curious that in England of all places the word 'capitalist' should be used in connection with the

mining magnates as a reproach, for as a general rule we regard the want of capital, rather than the possession of it, as criminal. The mining magnates are undoubtedly capitalists, and are making a certain sacrifice by staying in South Africa instead of leading a life of leisure at home. But some of them recognise that their duty lies there, and that there they have more scope, which will be further extended when responsible government is established. A task awaits them which is full of difficulty, but it should enable them to do their share towards the making of South Africa. They are already in a very strong position. Many of them have fought in the war, and are respected accordingly; their commercial ability inspires confidence, and they represent the dominant interest in the country. And if the reins of government are entrusted to such men as these, it seems at least reasonable that the home critics should produce men better qualified for the task before attacking them. These attacks are bitterly resented in the New Colonies; indeed, it is sometimes said that the division of parties there is not so much the racial one as what may be termed the 'African party,' wherein all who aim at the best

interests of the country are united against the spirit of opposition which appears to emanate from home. The loyalty of the country is beyond all proof, but it is felt that it will be strained to the utmost if its interests are to be sacrificed in England, to satisfy the claims of party, or to provide subject-matter for the demagogue.

The political situation in the Transvaal is already difficult enough, without being further complicated in this way. It is clear that a system of Crown Colony government must be more or less of an anomaly in such a place, and there is a tendency for the people, while recognising that for a time it is inevitable, to criticise its administration. It was impossible to find men in the country to fill the different administrative posts, for in such a community the type that combines constructive ability with purely disinterested motives is not to be found. Such posts had to be filled from home, and have proved a godsend to the critics, more especially as many of the new-comers were guilty of what Pitt described as 'the atrocious crime of being a very young man.' But, despite some failures, their merit as a whole has been recognised by the more intel-

ligent section of the community, and many of them have already made themselves indispensable.

And whatever solid results this period of Crown Colony government may have to show, it has at least given to South Africa a much-needed example of disinterested men, from the High Commissioner to the humblest official, working their hardest in the interests of a country that is not their own. The different posts are not highly paid, and are avowedly of a temporary nature, but they are filled by men who are not inspired by personal considerations, but by a strong belief in the possibilities of South Africa.

But it is probable that criticism of the Government is inspired mainly by that spirit of independence which is characteristic of the country. Young nations are proverbially prone to stand on their dignity, a fact which is not always taken into consideration at home. Whatever her difficulties may be, South Africa is determined to solve them for herself, resenting criticism or interference which is not based upon a knowledge of the actual facts. But it must not be thought that this independent attitude shows that she is not in need of help; she

feels that all that can be offered is needed to repair the damages of the war, and welcomes any sign of interest or assistance that bears the stamp of good faith.

And this the author hopes may be his excuse for attempting the dangerous, and perhaps impertinent, task of 'writing about South Africa.' Many of these 'impressions' may be unimportant, others may be entirely wrong, but at least they were gathered in the country, among the men of the country, and are certainly inspired by a genuine love for it, and a firm belief in its future. It may be said that these pages do not reveal all that optimism which is commonly applied to South African affairs, but that perhaps should be the best guarantee for their sincerity. Undue optimism is of doubtful value. It was responsible for a glut of white labour in the New Colonies after the war, for innumerable disasters in Rhodesia, and to some extent for the present difficulties in Cape Colony. South Africa cannot prosper on a series of 'booms,' for these are followed by periods of depression, as surely as the wave recedes in the inevitable back wash. But the tendency of the moment is towards the other

extreme, and undue pessimism is fatal. These chapters will have entirely failed in their purpose if they indicate that all seems to be plain sailing in South Africa; everywhere there are difficulties to be met, and in many cases help is required from home. But they will have failed even more completely if they give the impression that things are beyond repair. The tone of quiet confidence that is universal in South Africa is an eloquent testimony to the contrary; the country may be said to be 'marking time,' but nearly ready for the word 'advance.'

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