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VOLUME VI

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1486-1913

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THE ENGLISH PEOPLE OVERSEAS

VOLUME VI

SOUTH AFRICA

1486-1913

BY

A. WYATT TILBY

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The nineteenth century, in short, had settled the position of the two white peoples in their relations to each other but not to the blacks; the twentieth century was to settle the more momentous question of the relations of the whites with the blacks in a country which both could claim to possess.

THE END

ing of the Empire, unless he undertook the wholesale suppression of names of pioneers, explorers, traders, missionaries, and governors from Dunedin to Nova Scotia. But one rather curious and significant fact emerges from these studies. Not one Scottish colonial enterprise succeeded before the Union with England in 1707; few indeed have failed since the Union.)

The six volumes now completed treat in the main of the founding of the English type of civilisation; the remaining volumes will be engaged with the development of that type. They may on that account lose something of variety and picturesque incident, for they will be less concerned with pioneering and adventure than their predecessors; but unless the fruits of the tree are held to be less important than the roots, the growth of the English people overseas will be not less worthy of study than their original establishment.

But in the meantime the completion of these chapters on South Africa provides the weary traveller, author and reader alike—if any readers have patiently toiled with me so far—with a convenient halting-place, a kind of half-way house, like the Cape itself in older days, where one may rest and refresh awhile before adventuring forth again. These first six volumes have given, however crudely, the history of the founding of every English-speaking colony or possession throughout the world, from Virginia and Newfoundland under Elizabeth to Rhodesia and Nyasa under Victoria. In a work of this length there must be errors of judgment, errors of fact, omissions, imperfections, and mistakes, authorities I have overlooked, documents I have not seen; but in excuse for these shortcomings I would plead that where the activities of so many human beings had to be judged one human being is

certain to stumble from time to time, and that where so large a mass of material had to be sifted the book would never have been written at all had I waited until every document was available.

One may perhaps claim as a virtue, what at least one critic has imputed as a vice, that the book shows little party spirit and reflects neither Whig nor Tory doctrine ; and for another fault I remain obstinately unrepentant—the fact that while I have attempted to picture the social life of the people of every colony, and have given numerous and occasionally trivial details of their habits, houses, occupations and the cost of living, I have omitted mention of many unimportant governors and refused to cumber these pages with the quarrels of provincial Cabinets or the intrigues of provincial Premiers.

Against these omissions or mistakes I may perhaps claim that the wandering annals of the British Empire have been placed in proper perspective, that the brief and broken records of some forgotten failures in colonising have been rescued from the complete oblivion which was their natural fate, and that to the history of some successful colonies I have added new and not uninteresting details. It has been my reward for many weary hours wasted over incredibly stupid writers to have added some points to Nova Scotian history which Parkman overlooked, some items of Canadian settlement of which Kingsford was not aware, some materials to Australian annals which Rusden forgot, some relics of old New Zealand which were new to Pember Reeves, some settlements in the tropics which are not in Lucas, some incidents in South Africa which even the multitudinous Theal has failed to see ; and that I have discovered some overseas variants of the British constitution which might have interested May and

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Bagehot. The constitutional development of Pitcairn and other South Sea islands, the Anglo-Zulu senate of old Natal, the missionary parliament of Namaqualand may be trivial beside the greater institutions of Commonwealth and Dominions, but the smaller consequences of our political ideas nevertheless deserve a footnote in history. It is my hope, too, that the full comparative studies of the various constitutions of the Empire and the analyses I have given of the swing and play of opposing forces which have made them may also be of use.

I am far from suggesting that these points excuse the obvious imperfections of a work which has taken ten years to write, but I think they may be urged in mitigation of the heavy sentence which should be passed on any author who inflicts six substantial volumes on his fellow-men.

It is a graceful custom of the day to thank in a preface those who have rendered assistance to the author. I have preferred to discharge my gratitude in occasional footnotes; but I may here properly acknowledge the chief debt of all, to one whose constant encouragement during a period of not always easy work has largely helped me to draw this labour to its present conclusion. I mean my wife.

A. WYATT TILBY.

December 13, 1913.

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