A HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN AFRICA
BRITAIN ACROSS THE SEAS

AFRICA

A

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

OF THE

BRITISH EMPIRE IN AFRICA

BY


LONDON

NATIONAL SOCIETY'S DEPOSITORY

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

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

It has seemed to me in my own revision of the
proofs, that here and there I may have given the impression that I reprobated the imperial enterprise of other European Powers in Africa; that while approving of the attempts of the British to keep open for their future advancement the road from Cape Colony to the Zambezi, I thought it reprehensible on the part of the Dutch States of South Africa to attempt to baulk such a scheme or to contemplate an alliance with the German Empire; that I cordially approved of a British Nigeria or Sudan, but not of a French Empire in these regions. Such were not my intentions; but as this book is mainly intended for students, for the use of the young men and women who will assist in framing the policy of the British Empire when the present generation of workers and politicians has passed into inactivity, I should like to make it quite clear that I have followed Thomas Carlyle's advice to 'clear myself of cant.' (But he and Huxley and Charles Kingsley so purged their minds of the national tendency to be hypocritical that they approved of, or did not condemn, the atrocities committed in Jamaica during the early 'sixties.) It is my personal opinion that on the whole the British have been more righteous in their dealings with the native races of Africa than have some other of their European rivals; but they do not hold the monopoly of virtue and disinterestedness. Who that has studied at first hand the present condition of Algeria, Tunis, French Guinea, Ivory Coast, Dahome, French Nigeria, and Sudan, can refuse a meed of praise —of the heartiest—to the results of France's sacrifices and achievements in the cause of true civilization? Who, on the other hand, could fail to condemn the French
treatment of Western Congoland, based on the Leopoldian régime in the defunct Congo Independent State? And in this last, though the diatribes and criticisms of Mr. E. D. Morel are confirmed and justified by what has taken place, can any fair-minded witness deny that the Belgians have wrought much good elsewhere in the Congo basin, outside the area affected by the direct management of King Leopold II, or of several of his concessionnaire companies? The British record in Uganda in the early days, or in Zanzibar for a brief period, or in the far-back formation of the West African Colonies was not devoid of blame. Chicanery, combined with pitiful indecision, marred our South African Policy at intervals between 1806 and 1900, but these faults were accompanied by the noblest achievements in true Christianity, Science, Valour in warfare with men and beasts and with the Devil of unregenerate nature, and victories over these enemies which must make us proud of our national records. An impartial outsider cannot always defend the details or the whole of the ‘native’ policy of the Natal government, but is bound to bear in mind the main fact that the negro population of Natal and Zululand in 1843 was only about 220,000, and has since risen to not far short of 1,000,000; also to give the comparative handful of whites in that garden colony full credit for their amazing success in the development of their country’s inherent resources, to the great profit and welfare of blacks, as well as yellows and whites.

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

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

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

H. H. JOHNSTON.
# CONTENTS

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XIV. NIGERIA</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes—(A) THE PRINCIPAL TRIBES AND PEOPLES OF BRITISH NIGERIA</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) THE HAUSA PEOPLE</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) OTHER TRIBES OF BRITISH NIGERIA</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. EGYPT AND THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note—THE NATIVES OF THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI. EAST AFRICA</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note—THE NATIVE TRIBES OF THE BRITISH EAST AFRICAN DOMINION</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEX</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Great Libyan Desert on the Western Frontiers of Egypt</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Typical Scene in Arid South Africa, Near the Orange River: The Dry Bed of a Once Powerful River in Namakwaland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'Thorn' Country</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Parklands of Africa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Scenery: A Mountain Stream</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Forest of Equatorial Africa</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Scenery in South-Central Africa</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Highest Peaks of Ruwenzi Range</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Okapi (Okapia Johnston)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Berg-Damara, or Haukwoin Woman</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Bushman of Cape Colony</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Muhima of the Uganda Protectorate</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Hottentot Man</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fula Type</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Arab Sheikh</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Fellahin</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamites</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Libyan Type</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cape Oryx or Gemsbok</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kavirondo of Eastern Equatorial Africa: A Comely Type of 'Bantu' Negro</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushman Paintings on the Rock Surfaces of a Cavern in the Drakensberg Mountains, Natal</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Stream in the Dense Forest of West Africa</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasco da Gama</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 'Caravel' of the Genoese Style</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Coast Castle: Gold Coast Colony</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration Description</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmina Castle: Gold Coast Colony</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmina Castle: Looking Towards St. Jago</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Fula: Gambia Hinterland</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christiansborg Castle, Near Accra</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Bathing in the Surf: Gold Coast Colony</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Tangier, Morocco</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangier from the Harbour</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamestown: St. Helena</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lighthouse on the Extremity of the Cape of Good Hope</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Springbok (A Genus of Gazelles)</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Graceful Stanley Crane (Tetrapteryx Paradisea)</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Typical Boer Farmer in South Africa: Over Six Feet Tall</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Portion of Cape Town</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Kafir Chief</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Hex Mountains, Western Cape Colony</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Benjamin D'Urban</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Old Method of South African Travel and Exploration—Waggons and Teams of Oxen</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boer Costume of the 'Forties of the Nineteenth Century (as worn by the French Explorer, M. Delegorgue)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Great Zulu War Dance: Zululand</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kudu Pass in the Drakensberg Mountains, on the Borders of Basutoland</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasco da Gama's Monument, Durban, Natal</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Town and Harbour of Durban, Natal</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Bavenda Village in the Northern Transvaal</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Typical Zulu Chief</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow in South Africa: The Vicinity of Giant's Castle in the Drakensberg Mountains</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Bechuanaland</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 'Kraal' or Village in Basutoland</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Zula Warrior</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Zulu Prince (Debuka); Son of Panda</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Temporary British Camp at Congella, Near the Site of Durban, 1842</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Dick' King, The Hero of the 600 Mile Ride in Ten Days from Durban to Grahamstown in 1843</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pieter-Maritzburg in 1853</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A BAOBAB TREE IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecil Rhodes' Home at Grootschuur, Rondebosch, near Capetown</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Southern Rhodesia</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right Hon. Dr. Leander Starr Jameson, Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1904-7</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Office: Johannesburg</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johannesburg To-Day</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A House in Modern Bulawayo</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Grim Realities of War: The British Dead in the Trenches of Spion Kop</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A House in Pretoria, The Capital of the Transvaal</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Realities of War: A Burnt House and Destroyed Homestead in the Transvaal</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tugela River at Colenso, Showing the Natal Government Railway Bridge Destroyed in 1899 at Commencement of South African War</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladysmith</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhodes' Grave in the Matoppo Hills</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. David Livingstone</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab and Yao Slave Traders of Nyasaland</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masea and Mwitu, The Last Two Survivors of Livingstone's Makololo on the River Shire, 1893</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The South End of Lake Tanganyika and the Little Steamer 'Good News,' Put on the Lake in 1886</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mlozi, the Arab Chief of North Nyasa</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tawakali Sud!: Jumbe of Kota-Kota</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Corner of Mlozi's Great Stockade on the Rukuru River, North Nyasaland: Taken by the British Forces, Dec. 5, 1895</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hoisting of the British Flag at Makanjira's, South East Nyasa, 1893, at the Place Where Captain Maguire Was Killed, and Dr. Boyce and Mr. McEwan Were Murdered</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Harry Johnston in a Camp on the Upper Shire, Which Was Besieged at the Time (1893) by Arab and Yao Slave Traders</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Scenery in Northern Rhodesia</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Čechwayo in 1875</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isandhlwana: Or The Hill of the Little Hand</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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

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

IN THE NEGRO QUARTER OF THE TOWN OF LAGOS .......................... 305
NATIVE IDOLS OF THE NIMBI OR 'BRASS' RIVER PEOPLE: NIGER DELTA .......................... 306
A VILLAGE IN THE LAGOS HINTERLAND ........................................... 307
THE BUSA RAPIDS, LOWER NIGER ................................................. 308
ON THE SHORES OF LAKE CHAD .................................................. 309
COMMANDER HUGH CLAPPERTON, R.N., THE FIRST BRITISH EXPLORER TO REACH SOKOTO AND NUPE .......................... 310
IN BORNU (NORTHERN NIGERIA) .................................................. 311
ON THE LOWER NIGER, IN THE DELTA .......................................... 313
RIGHT HON. SIR GEORGE TAUBMAN GOLDIE, THE FOUNDER OF NORTHERN NIGERIA .......................... 315
A CHIEF IN HIS STATE CANOE, BONNY RIVER, NIGER DELTA .................. 316
A CHIEF OF THE LAGOS HINTERLAND ............................................ 321
SIR FREDERICK DEALTRY LUGARD ................................................. 325
A FULÁ WARRIOR: NORTHERN NIGERIA .......................................... 326
IN SOKOTO .................................................................................. 328
THE RAILWAY FROM LAGOS TO THE NIGER ..................................... 329
A FULÁ HERDSMAN AND HIS CATTLE: NORTHERN NIGERIA .................. 331
A FULÁ WOMAN ........................................................................... 332
HAUSA PEOPLE BATHING IN THE NIGER AT LOKOJA ............................ 333
A KANURI HORSEMAN: BORNU, NORTHERN NIGERIA .......................... 335
THE PEOPLE OF LAGOS .................................................................. 336
THE SPHINX AND THE PYRAMIDS ................................................ 339
A CIRCASSIAN OFFICER OF THE OLD STYLE IN THE EGYPTIAN SERVICE .......................... 341
AHMAD ARABI PASHA .................................................................... 343
ALEXANDRIA: PLACE DES CONSULS ................................................. 344
THE CITY OF CAIRO SEEN FROM AL AZHAR UNIVERSITY .................. 345
SIR SAMUEL BAKER, DISCOVERER OF LAKE ALBERT NYANZA, AND AT ONE TIME THE GOVERNOR OF THE EQUATORIAL PROVINCE OF THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN .......................... 346
GENERAL GORDON .................................................................... 347
DR. EMIN PASHA (EDUARD SCHNITZER), GOVERNOR OF EQUATORIA .......................... 349
GENERAL CHARLES EDWARD GORDON, R.E., GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN .......................... 350
GENERAL VISCOUNT WOLSELEY .................................................... 351
A VILLAGE IN UPPER EGYPT, NEAR MEMPHIS ................................. 353
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE EARL OF CROMER, G.C.B., BRITISH AGENT AND CONSUL-GENERAL IN EGYPT FROM 1883 TO 1906</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'PHARAOH'S BED': THE HALF-SUBMERGED TEMPLES IN THE DAMMED-UP NILE WATERS</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE NILE AT LUXOR</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE 'FUZZIE WUZZIES': HAMITE TRIBES OF EASTERN EGYPT, HADENDOWAS, BISHARIS, ETC.</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR FRANCIS REGINALD WINGATE</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SITE OF OMDURMAN</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MAHDI'S TOMB: OMDURMAN</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE GORDON STATUE: KHARTUM</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE WHITE NILE: NEAR KHARTUM</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE TRAIN CROSSING THE DESERT FROM PORT SUDAN (RED SEA) TO KHARTUM</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE TRAIN AT KHARTUM STATION</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A LIBYAN VILLAGE ON THE CONFINES OF EGYPT (OASIS OF SIWAH)</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN THE NUBIAN DESERT</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SEA FRONT AND CLOCK TOWER AT ZANZIBAR</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KILIMANJARO, THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN AFRICA: 19,720 FEET</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR JOHN KIRK, G.C.M.G.</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR HENRY MORTON STANLEY, G.C.B.</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A STREET IN MOMBASE</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A NEGRO PORTER OF EAST AFRICA: MNYAMWEZI</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MASAI OF EAST AFRICA</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RIPON FALLS AND THE BIRTH OF THE VICTORIA NILE</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE VICTORIA NYANZA</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN THE BANANA GROVES OF BUGANDA</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE UGANDA RAILWAY DESCENDING INTO THE RIFT VALLEY, BRITISH EAST AFRICA</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLEEPING-SICKNESS PATIENTS, ENTEBBE, UGANDA, 1903</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADEN</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPICAL SOMALILAND LANDSCAPE: STONES, RUBBLE AND THORNS</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A SOMALI HUT</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN SOMALILAND</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A CHRISTIAN NATIVE OF BUGANDA</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPES OF BRITISH MEN WHO HAVE OPENED UP AFRICA: THE MISSIONARY SCHOLAR</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPES OF BRITISH MEN WHO HAVE OPENED UP AFRICA: THE MILITARY OFFICER</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LIST OF MAPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA FROM THE EARLY PART OF THE TERTIARY EPOCH</td>
<td>Facing page 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKETCH MAP OF KAFFRARIA</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRITISH WEST AFRICA</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGYPT AND THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRITISH EAST AFRICA</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITICAL MAP OF AFRICA</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AFRICA and SOUTH AMERICA
from the early part of the Tertiary Epoch
down to recent times: a hypothetical sketch
to show variability of land surface and water.
The Whites show Ocean depths below
6,000 feet; the Dark Blue indicates the existing African lakes;
and the deep portions of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf; the
Mauve represents areas of the Ocean bed which were probably once dry land;
the Pale Blue spaces are the former extensions of fresh water lakes or the
shallow incursions of the Sea; and the Red colour implies land mainly of
Primary formation which has not been under water (within the black outlines)
since the Secondary Epoch, with the exception of a few small patches in Morocco,
Eastern and Southernmost Africa; or which, as along the African Coast and,
in South-East South America, has only recently been submerged.
INDEX

Ababpeh tribe, 370
Abatetwa Zulus, 100
Abdallah et Taaishi, Khaliifa, 358 n., 366
Abokuta, 304, 305
Aberdare plateau, 8
Abukir Bay, battle of, 338
Abyssinia, mountains of, 8; Semites in, 23; Hamitic tribes colonize, 28; Italians defeated in, 360; co-operation in subjugation of Somalis, 402
Accra, settlement at, 54, 282; Capital of Gold Coast, 299, 301
Adabuka, Zulu chief, 246
Adamawa, mountains of, 8
Adderley, Charles (Lord Norton), opposes convict settlement in Cape Colony, 168
Aden, Semite trading-centre, 23; seizure of by British Government, 342
Adventurers of London Trading to Africa, Company of, 53, 54
Afafit, battle of, 357
Aframomum plant, 48, 60
Africa, area of, 1; deserts, 1, 3–6; flora, 2–6; climate, 6–8; mountains, 8–9; lakes, 9–10; fauna, 10–12; inhabitants, 13–22; Arab traders penetrate, 22–26; Jewish trade with, 24; ancient Egyptians in, 26–30; Libyan immigration, 30; Phoenician colonists, 30–33, 398; Roman invasion, 33; French and Italian exploration, 34; Portuguese discoveries and influence, 35–37, 40, 372; sources of food supplies, 37; English and Portuguese on west coast, 46–60, 259–329; European discoveries and settlements in Cape Colony, 61–93
African Association, the, 268, 306
African Lakes Company, 182, 205
African Steamship Company, 314
'Afrikander,' the term, 71 n.
Afrikander Bond, establishment of, 172
Agapanthus lily, 66
A-giriama tribe, 408
Akamba tribe, 408
Akassa, 317 n.
Akitoge, made king of Lagos, 304
Albany settlements instituted, 75
Albert, Lake, 4, 8
Albert-Edward, Lake, 9, 10
Albert Nyanza, 9, 10
Aldabra, discovery of, 259
Alexander, Sir James, 156
Alexandria, bombardment of, 344, 345
Alfred, county of, 125 n.
Algoa Bay, 80
Almirante, discovery of, 259
A-lungu tribe, 240
Amabaca clan, 248
Amah!, subjugation of, 213
A-mambwe tribe, 240
Amamfungu tribe, 105, 247
Amandlambale clan, 248
Amangwane Zulus, movements of, 102–4
Amapondo Kafirs, native State of, 121
Amaswazi tribe, 245
Amatembu Kafirs, 246
Amatongaland, German flag raised in, 177; annexation by Great Britain, 217
Amaxesibe tribe, 247
Amazulu, the, 98–101. See Zulu
Ambas Bay settlement, 318, 319
Amoeful, 288
Anamabu, settlement at, 54, 282
Anglo-Congolesian treaty, 381
Anglo-German Convention of 1890, 186
Angola coast; 4; mountains of, 8
Angoni-Zulu tribe, movements of, 101–2; raids by, 209, 212
Angoshe, Arab traders in, 26
Angra Pequena Bay, 176
Anuak Negroes, 371
A-nyika tribe, 408
Arabi Pasha, Ahmad, insurrection of, 344, 345
Arabs, early trading in Africa, 22–26; revolt against Christianity, 33; conquest of Africa, 34; on West Coast, 56; of Egyptian Sudan, 369; of Mombasa, 373
Archdall, Rev. Mr., assists Boers, 69
Arnold, Colonel, 327
Arnold, Sir Edwin, 132
Arnot, David, British advocate, 138
Arrhenius (Swedish traveller), 265
Ascension, island of, 6
Ashanti war, the first, 281; the second, 287–89; later rebellion, 290
'Asiento,' the, 267
Assini, 286
Atbara, battle of, 363
Atlas Mountains, flora, 6; altitude, 8
Atonga tribe, 241
Aures Mountains, flora, 6; altitude, 8

Ba-amba tribe, 403
Ba-al-Mandeb, 27
Ba-chagwe tribe, 403
' Ba-fransa' missionaries, 383
Ba-ganda tribe, 404. See GANDA
Baggara Arabs, 370
Bahr-al-ghazal region, 10 and n, 349, 350, 364, 365, 381
Ba-hurutse people, 244. See BAROTSE
Baikie, Dr., explorer, 313
Ba-ila tribe, 243. See IIA
Bank, Professor, 181
Baines, Thomas, explorer, 181, 201
' Ba-ingrezi' missionaries, 383
Ba-iru tribe, 244. See IRU
' Ba-islamu' party, 383
Ba-kalahari people, 244
Ba-kalahana tribe, 97 and n
Ba-karaña tribe, 241
Bakaranga tribe, 18, 22
Baker, Sir Samuel, 341, 347, 348, 363
Ba-kono tribe, 240
Ba-kuwena people, 244
Balala people, 240
Balenje people, 240
Baluchi, in Nyasaland, 205
Ba-lui country, native conquest of, 104; people, 243
Ba-mangwato people, 244. See BECHUANA
Bambute tribe, 90
Ba-nanswa tribe, 241. See NANSWA
Bangweulu, Lake, 10, 203, 376
Bantu, tribe, 18–22, 25; language, 42–44; divisions of, 74; habitat, 97; in Transvaal, 148
Ba-warei tribe, 104
Ba-nyai tribe, 97, 241
Banyoro, conquest of the, 387
Baobab tree, 183
Ba-pedi people, 148, 151, 244
Barakonda, fall of, 269
Barberton, founding of, 164
Barghash bin Said, Sayyid, 374, 395
Bari people, 406
Baring, Sir Evelyn, see Cromer, Lord
Barkly, Heinrich, explorer, 311, 312
Baron, Sir George, expedition to W Africa, 50
Ba-rooola people, 244
Barolong (Bechuana), 88, 89
Baronga tribe, 18
Barotse tribe, 104
Barotse, 207
Barth, Heinrich, explorer, 311, 312
Ba-rue tribe, 98
Basel Mission, 284
Ba-sese tribe, 404
Ba-shangane tribe, 97. See SHANGANE
Bashi River, 172
Ba-soga tribe, 404
Ba-subia tribe, 242. See SUBIA
Basuto nation, 120; raids and ravages of, 103–6; massacre of at Weenen, 111
Basutoland, beauties of, 106; native tribes in, 120; area, 236; exports, 238
Ba-swina tribe, 97. See MASHONA
Bataung tribe, 87
Batavian Republic, Cape Colony a part of, 70
Bathurst, 267
Ba-tlapifi people, 244
Bataping, 130
Ba-toana tribe, 244
Ba-tonga tribe, 97, 243
Batallim Arabs, 370
Battenberg, Prince Henry of, 290
Battle of the Pyramids, 338
Bauchi pagans, 337
Bausi people, 240
INDEX

Bavenda, 97, 148, 244
Bavenda, murder Dutch, 148
Baw-faketsi people, 244
Beaconsfield, Lord, buys Suez Canal shares, 343
Bechuana tribe, 18, 22, 88, 89, 91, 243; habitat, 97; recovery of as a race, 120; in Transvaal, 148; origin of name, 244
Bechuanaland, annexation of, 164, 180, 184; area, 236; products, 238
Beecroft, Consul, exploration of Niger by, 310
Beersheba, conference at, 130
Belgium, interest in East Africa, 378, 381
Bell, king of Duala tribe, 318
Bello, Fula sultan, 309
Bemba tribe, 212, 240
Benguela, mountains of, 8
Beni-Amer tribe, 370
Benin, city of, capture of, 323; king of, 49, 305; kingdom of, 305
Benin River, 48
Benyovski, Polish adventurer, 68
Berea, Battle of, 127
Berg-Damara tribe, 175
Berkeley, Ernest, Commissioner of Uganda, 386
Berkeley, Fort, 388
Berlin, Congress of, 317
Bezuindenhout, Frederik and Jan, deaths of, 77, 78
Biggar, Alexander, 114
Biggarsberg, 114
Binger, Captain L., discovers the Volta, 291
Birkenhead, wreck of, 123
Bisa people, 240
Bisharin tribe, 370
Blake, Admiral, in Straits of Gibraltar, 57
Blantyre, founding of, 204
Blauberg, battle of, 72
Bloem, German freebooter, 121
Bloemfontein, site of, 121; Boers march on, 122; capture of by British, 195
Blood River, battle of, 114, 160
Blunt, Lady Anne, 344
Blunt, Wilfrid, 344
Boer war of 1899, 194–96
'Boer,' derivation, 71
Boers' treatment of Hottentots, 73; insurgents hanged, 78; migration from Cape Colony, 83–87; in Natal, 88, 110–19; found Orange Free State, 87, 89; defeat Matebele, 88–91; and the Basuto tribes, 120, 121.
Boisragon, Captain, escape from Benin, 322
Bolts, English adventurer, 68
Bonaparte, Napoleon, and Central Sudan, 308; descent on Egypt, 338; scheme conceived by, 340
Bonny, 320 and
Boomplats, battle of, 122
Boorckenhagen, Mr., establishes Afrikander bond, 172
Borgu, 336
Bosch, Jacobus, President of Orange Free State, 128, 130, 132, 145
Botha, General Louis, Prime Minister of Transvaal, 230
Booce, Dr. Sorabji, murder of, 255
Braganza, Catherine of, and Charles II, 58
Brand, President, claims diamondfields, 136; accepts indemnity, 140; acts as mediator in Boer war, 162
Brava, 400
'British Central Africa,' conception of by Rhodes, 183
British East Africa, protectorate of: administration by British East Africa Company, 391; taken over by British Government, 392; extension of boundaries, 392; population, 394; area, 395; native tribes of, 403–8
British East Africa Company, 381, 383, 384, 391, 392
British Kafiraria, 168, 172
British South Africa Company, see Chartered Company
Broadley, Mr. A. M., 344
Bromhead, Lieut., 214
Brookhorst's Spruit, battle of, 161
Brownlee, Mr. Charles, made head of Xosa Kafirs, 122
Buchanan, Consul, 255
Buchanan, John, pioneer coffee-planter, 207
Buduma negroes, 335
Buffalo River, 102
Buganda, flora and kingdom, 4, 384, 386
Bukonjo-Burega-Burundi plateau, 8
Bulawayo, occupation of, 187
Bulom tribe, 275
INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bunseu, Mr., and African exploration</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu, chief of Swaziland</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgers, Thomas François, President of Transvaal</td>
<td>150, 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Burgher,' meaning</td>
<td>71n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burton, Sir R. F.</td>
<td>203, 375, 401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buxton, Sir Thomas Fowell, and slave trade</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busa Rapids</td>
<td>268, 308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushmen, origin</td>
<td>15, 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byzantine influence on Africa</td>
<td>33, 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable Companies, monopoly of telegraphs</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo, British occupation of</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Calabar Coast,'</td>
<td>48n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabar River</td>
<td>48n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caledon River</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron, Commander V. L., crosses Africa on foot</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroons, volcanoes of</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, John, British arbitrator</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canary Islands, mountains of</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Colony, flora</td>
<td>6, 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Mounted Police</td>
<td>135n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Mounted Rifles</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape of Good Hope, lighthouse</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape to Cairo</td>
<td>182n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape to Cairo Railway</td>
<td>191, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde Islands, mountains of</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnarvon, Earl of, proposes confederation of whites</td>
<td>151-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnarvon, Earl of, proposes annexation of Transvaal</td>
<td>154-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carthage, founding of</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casati, Signor</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathcart, Sir George, attempt to subjugate Basuto</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Mounted Police, 135n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine, the</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian invasion</td>
<td>18, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavendish, Captain, rediscovers St. Helena</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Čehcwayo threatens Transvaal, 156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad, Lake, discovery of</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaillé-Long, Col. C.,</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaka, 92, 93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>annexation of Natal by two Englishmen, 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tse-tse fly and parasitic diseases, 93, 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>boundaries of in 1852, 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>establishment of municipal government, 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Road Boards, 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>educational system, 167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>increase in population, 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attempts to found penal settlements, 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a Constitution granted, 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>introduction of Merino sheep and Angora goats, 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the Franchise Act, 170n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>destruction of cattle by Kafirs and its result, 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negroes replaced by white settlers, 171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>railways and telegraphs instituted, 171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prince Alfred's visit, 171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accretions of territory, 172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>present system of government introduced, 172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>equal language rights granted, 172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dismissal of Sir John Molteno, 173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Palgrave's mission and its outcome, 174-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>German aspirations, 176, 177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>area of the Colony, 237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape of Good Hope, lighthouse, 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape to Cairo, 182n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape to Cairo Railway, 191, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape Verde Islands, mountains of, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carnarvon, Earl of, proposes confederation of whites, 151-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>annexation of Transvaal, 154-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carthage, founding of, 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casati, Signor, 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cathcart, Sir George, attempt to subjugate Basuto, 127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>forms Cape Mounted Police, 135n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catherine, the, 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caucasian invasion, 18, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cavendish, Captain, rediscovers St. Helena, 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Čehcwayo threatens Transvaal, 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>war of, against British, 213, 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>capture of, 215; death, 251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Čehcwayo threatens Transvaal, 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape Mounted Police, 135n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape Mounted Rifles, 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape of Good Hope, lighthouse, 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape to Cairo, 182n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape to Cairo Railway, 191, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape Verde Islands, mountains of, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carnarvon, Earl of, proposes confederation of whites, 151-53</td>
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<td>annexation of Transvaal, 154-56</td>
</tr>
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<td>Carthage, founding of, 32</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Casati, Signor, 341</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Cathcart, Sir George, attempt to subjugate Basuto, 127</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>forms Cape Mounted Police, 135n</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape Mounted Police, 135n</td>
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<td>Cape Mounted Rifles, 168</td>
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<td>Cape of Good Hope, lighthouse, 65</td>
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<td>Cape to Cairo Railway, 191, 211</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Cape Verde Islands, mountains of, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carnarvon, Earl of, proposes confederation of whites, 151-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>annexation of Transvaal, 154-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carthage, founding of, 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casati, Signor, 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Cathcart, Sir George, attempt to subjugate Basuto, 127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>forms Cape Mounted Police, 135n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape Mounted Police, 135n</td>
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<td>Cape Mounted Rifles, 168</td>
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<td>Cape of Good Hope, lighthouse, 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Cape to Cairo, 182n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape to Cairo Railway, 191, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cape Verde Islands, mountains of, 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDEX

Chali, native chief, 249
Chard, Lieutenant, 214
Charles II, betrothal negotiations, 58
Chartered Company of South Africa, 180, 182, 184, 186, 189–92, 207, 208, 211, 212
Chamberlain, Right Honble. Joseph, opposition to Rhodes' scheme, 184, 189
Chambezi River, 203
Chease, Customs Station at, 290
Chelmsford, Lord, campaign against Zulus, 214–15
Chermside, Sir H., defeats Dervishes, 356
Chikwasi, defeat of, 258
Chinese labour in British South Africa, 228, 229
Chipatula, native chief, 254
Chitambo, 203, 211
Chi-venda language, 244
Christian VII of Denmark forbids slave trade, 273
Christiansborg, 54, 284, 301
Church Missionary Society, 313, 375, 378, 383
Church of Scotland Mission, 203
Cilliers, Carel, 114
Clapperton, Captain Hugh, explorer, 308, 309
Clarkson, Thomas, writes against slave trade, 274
Clerk, Sir George Russell, and abandonment of Orange River Sovereignty, 128
Cloete, Henry, British Commissioner in Natal, 118, 119
Cola acuminata, 303
Colenso, Bishop, 217
Colenso, Miss Frances, champions Dinizulu's cause, 216
Colenso, Tugela River at, 197
Colley, Sir George, victories of Boers against, 161, 162; death of, 162
Colquhoun, A. R., control of concessions in Matebeleland, 186
Colvile, Sir Henry, Commissioner of Uganda, 384–86
'Commando,' derivation, 130
Comoro Islands, flora, 6; Negro colonists, 14; Arabs in, 34
Congella, British camp at, 116
Congo River, 10
Congo Free State, 379, 381
Congo pygmies, 13, 16, 34, 38, 371, 403
Congololand, Western, flora, 4
Convicts, attempts to send to Cape Colony, 168
Corso, Cape, settlement at, 54
Cosmedinos, discovery of, 259
Crawshaw, Captain Richard, 205, 206
Cromer, Lord, 352, 355, 358
Cronje, Commandant, captures Potchefstroom, 160, 161
Crystal Mountains, 10
'Cullinan' diamond, 137
Cunningham, Mr. J. F., preface, 389
Cyrenaica, 27
Dagari Negroes, 293
Dagomba Negroes, 293
Dahomey, France declares protectorate over, 292
d'Albuquerque, Alfonso, 372
d'Almeida, Francisco, 372
Damaraland, 8, 165
d'Anaya, Pedro, 372
Dan, 285
Darfur Mountains, 8
Daudi Chua, king of Buganda, 388
De Beers Diamond Company, 178, 180
Delagoa Bay, Austrian designs on, 68; Boer party reaches, 86; Portuguese settlement at, 116; dispute over, 154
Delegorgue, M., Boer costume of, 85
De Lesseps cuts Suez Canal, 342
Delmé-Radcliffe, Colonel Charles, in Uganda, 389
De Mist, Dutch Commissioner, 70
Denham, Major Dixon, explorer, 308, 309
Denmark sells Gold Coast possessions to Britain, 284
Derby, Earl of, deputation of Boers to, 163
Dervishes, 356
Diego Garcia, discovery of, 259
Dieppois discoveries, 35
Dilolo, Lake, 201
Dingane, assassimates Chaka, 108; deceives and massacres Boers in Natal, 110–12, 251; defeated by Boers, 114, 115; assassination of, 115, 251
Dingiswayo, chief of Abatetwa, 100 and n, 251
Dinizulu, troubles with, 216–17, 224, 251
Dinka negroes, 366, 371
Dixcove, 282
Docemo, king of Lagos, 304
Dodowa, battle of, 281
Dongola province, conquest of, 300
INDEX

Dopper Church, warfare over, 147
Dorobo nomads, 404
Drakensberg Mountains, Bushman paintings in, 41; Giant's Castle, 102
Drifts, closing of, 186
Dualla, Somali follower of Stanley, 403
Dunn, John, chief in Zululand, 215
Durban, derivation of name, Sz, English at, no, ns, II7; harbour, 220; town hall, 223
d'Urban, Sir Benjamin, administration and policy in Cape Colony, 89–92, 93; policy of, carried out, 122
Dutch East India Company, 68, 69
Dutch Reformed Church, 79, 146

EBONY tree, destruction of, in St. Helena, 64 and n
Edinburgh, Duke of, visits Cape Colony, 171
Edward IV, embassy from Portugal to, 47
Edward VII, King, at opening of Suez Canal, 342
Edwards, Major C. A., campaign in Nyasaland, 209; Edwards, Lieut.-Colonel Charles, 258
Efik race, 337
Egerton, General Sir C. C., in Somaliland, 402
Egypt: Lower, i; life and customs of, 13; ancient fauna, 14; Semitic influence in, 23; ancient Egyptians settle in Nile valley, 26. See also Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan
Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan: French occupation of Egypt, 338–40; Turkish control, 340–44; making of the Suez Canal, 342; occupation by British Government, 345; collapse of the Egyptian Sudan, 347; defeat of Hicks Pasha at Kashgil, 349; evacuation by British, 349, 350; General Gordon's scheme, 351; fall of Khartum, 352; movements of army under Lord Wolseley, 352, 353; an onerous problem, 353; Lord Cromer's administrative ability, 355, 358; revolt of Osman Digna, 350, 357; British advance on Sudan, 358–61; the Fashoda incident, 361–63; trouble with Belgium, 364, 365; Sudan again under British rule, 365; present prosperity, 366; natives of the Egyptian Sudan, 369–71; area, 371. See also Egypt, Lower
Elais guineensis, 302 n
Elgon plateau, 8
Elgon, volcano of, discovery of, 379
Elizabeth, Queen, grants African trading charter, 53, 56; commercial intercourse with Morocco, 57; liking for pepper, 60
Elmina, slave mart, 52; Ashanti attack on, 287, 299
Elton, Consul Frederick, 178n
Emin Bey, Dr., administrator of Equatorial province, 350; relief of, 381; ingratitude towards Stanley, 382
Entebbe, 390
Eocene period in Africa, 12
Ethiopian Church, 254
Ethiopian tribes, 370
Euphorbia, 103
European influence on Africa, 37
Evatt, Colonel John, in Uganda, 388, 389
Fanti people, 293
Farewell, Lieutenant, in Natal, 92, 93
Fashoda incident, 362, 363
Fernando Po, 8, 275, 318, 319
Festing, Sir Francis, defeats Ashantis, 287
'Fingo' tribe, 81, 105, 123, 247, 252
Fitzherbert, Captain, in Cape Colony, 61
Fodi Kaba, murders British officials, 270
Fomanah, peace signed at, 288
Forest Negroses, 38, 371, 493
Fotheringham, Monteith, 205
Foulkes, Capt. C. H., preface
Foulkes, Wm. A., preface
France declares protectorate over Dahome, 292; occupation and loss of Egypt, 338, 349, 343, 345: surveys and explores east coast of Africa, 374; agreement entered into with Britain, 379; interest in Uganda, 382; protectorate in Somaliland, 401
Franchise Act, in Cape Colony, passed, 170 n
Freetown, landing-place for freed slaves, 276
Fremantle, Admiral Sir E., capture of Vitu by, 392
French Guinea, mountains of, 8
Frere, Sir Bartle, Boers present petition to, 157; dismisses Sir John Molteno, 173; cause of, 174; Zulu polity of, 213
Froude, James Anthony, discusses confederation of whites, 152, 153
Fula, race and language, 21, 30, 40, 53, 293, 330-33; campaign against, 324, 327
'Fuzzie-wuzzies,' 357, 370
Gaika, Kafir chief, 249
Gaika clan, 248
Gala people, 408
Galaland, Hamitic tribes colonize, 28
Galeka clan, 248
Gambetta, Leon, designs on Niger territory, 314
Gambia, administration of, 268, 269; prosperity, 270
Gambia River, 4, 52, 53, 267
Ganda, see Buganda, Baganda, Uganda
Gardiner, Captain Allen, founder of Durban, 92
Gardiner, Captain Allen, missionary in Natal, 110
Gbari, 336
Gbomyan Negroes, 293
Germany, actions of in South Africa, 177; annexes Togoland, 292; interest in East Africa, 378, 379, 381, 382; subjects of, massacred in Vitu, 392; annexes Zanzibar, continental dominions, 395
Gessi Pasha, 341
Giants’ Castle, 102
Ginginhlovu, massacre at, 111; Zulu ambuscade at, 113; Boers destroy, 114
Ginginhlovu, battle of, 215
Gladstone, William Ewart, opinion of affairs in South Africa, 160; and the occupation of Egypt, 345, 346, 349, 352
Glasgow, Bishop of, preface
Glenelg, Lord, reactionary policy in Cape Colony, 81-83, 93; policy reversed, 122
Glossina, 93, 94
Glover, Sir John, movements against Ashantis, 287, 288
Gold Coast, derivation of name, 48 n; trading settlements on, 267, 280; early government of 280; transferred by Great Britain to committee of merchants, 282; Colonial Office resumes control, 283; made a self-contained colony, 284; climate troubles, 285; Dutch possessions on, 286; temperature, 286 n; Great Britain obtains entire control, 287; the Ashanti war, 287-89; boundaries fixed, 292; native people, 293-96; gold exports, 297-99; other commercial resources, 302
Goldie, Sir George Taubman, commercial development of Nigeria by, 314-24, 327
Gonakwa, people, 248
Goosen, land of (Goshen), 163
Gordon, Captain Robert, discovers Orange River, 67
Gordon, General Charles, made Governor-General of Egyptian Sudan, 348; sent to Khartum, 349; nominated Governor of Congo Free State, 350; death of, 352; memorial to at Khartum, 366
Gordonia, district, annexation of, 176
Goschen, Lord, averse to expenditure on African colonizing, 182, 184 n
Graaf-Reinet, Republic of, 70
Graham, Sir Gerald, 352 n
Grahamstown, founding of, 75
'Grain Coast,' 48 n
Grant, Col. J. A., 347, 363, 376
Grant, Sir Charles, see Lord Glenelg
Great Fish River, 75
Great Kei River, 80
Great Trek, the, 83
Greek influence on Africa, 33, 37
Gregory, Professor J. W., cited, 373 n, 376 n
Grenfell, Lord, defeats Dervishes, 356
Grey, Sir George, arbitrates between Boers and Basuto, 128-33
Grey, Earl, attempts to institute penal settlement in Cape Colony, 168; and slave trade, 274 n
Grikwa tribe, 42
Grikwaland East, native reserve, 132
Grikwaland West, native tribes in, 120; annexation of, 138-40
INDEX

Grootschuur, Rondebosch, 185
Guinea Coast, 48 n
Guinea, forest land of, 4; Portuguese in, 47
Guinea, Gulf of, 300
Guineas, minting of the first, 55
Guresi-Teme Negroes, 291, 293
Gurunsi Negroes, 293

HADAREF tribe, 370
Hadjendowa tribe, 370
Hadsramaut, Semite trading-centre, 23
Hamamaba, 94
Haggard, Rider, cited, 155, 178 n
Halawin Arabs, 370
Hall, Mr. R., 25
Halligay, Rev. J., Preface
Hamak tribe, 370
Hamitic people, 356
Hannington, Bishop, 389
Hanno, cited, 32
Hardinge, Sir Arthur, 392
Harrismith, 133
Harrison, Mr. F., Preface
Hartley, David, and slave trade, 274 n
Hausa Negro, 40, 56, 334
Hawawir Arabs, 370
Hawkins, Captain John, in slave trade, 52
Heidelberg, Boer flag hoisted at, 160
Helichrysum, 66
Henga natives, 205
Henga-Tumbuka group of natives, 241
Henry IV, Moorish embassy to, 57
Henry the Navigator, 35
Herero invasion, 175
Herero tribes, 95
Hewett, Mr. Edward Hyde, 292; annexes Cameroons, 318
Hex Mountains, 77
Hicks Beach, Sir Michael, see St. Aldwyn, Lord
Hicks Pasha, expedition against Mahdi, 348, 349, 366
Hillman, William, explorer, 308, 309
Hima Negroes, 21, 28, 250
Hincks, Capt. T. C., Preface
Hinza, native chief, 250
Hobart, Lord, and West Coast of Africa, 268
Hofmeyr, J. H., establishes Afrikander bond, 172
Holland, surrenders Gold Coast possessions to Britain, 285
Hornemann, Friedrich, explorer, 306
Hottentots, 74-75, 79, 81, 89; habitat, 97; massacre of at Weenen, 112; join Kaffir revolt, 123; warfare with Herero, 174-76; divisions of, 248; number of in British South Africa, 248
Hottentot Regiment, 72, 77
Huguenots, in South Africa, 66; treatment of Hottentots, 73

IBERIAN race, 14
Ibo (E. Africa), early traders in, 26
Ibo communities (Nigeria), 322, 323, 337
Ibrahim, victorious general, 340
Igara race, 337
Ijo communities, 322, 323, 337
Ilorin, 305
Imperial, the Prince, death of, 214
Imperial German East Africa Company, 68
Isandhlwana, capture of, 214
Islam, crash of, 33
Ismail, Khedive, 344, 348, 355
Ismail Pasha, 341
Italy, occupies Masawa, 349, 358; defeats Dervishes, 358; reverse in Abyssinia, 360
Italian discoveries, 35
'Ivory Coast,' 48 n, 286

JAALIN Arabs, 361, 370
Jackson, F. J., in Uganda, 387
Jacobs' Farm, discovery of diamonds on, 135
Jaja, chief of Opobo, 320, 322
Jameson, Dr. Leander Starr, in Matebeleland, 101, 186-88; raid into Transvaal by, 188-91; sentenced to imprisonment, 191; Prime Minister, Cape Colony, 188
Jameson's Raid, 141, 142, 188-93
Jamestown, St. Helena, 63
Janssens, General, Dutch Commissioner, 70; battle with British, 71, 72
Jekri race, 337
Jenne, 268
Jews, trading in Africa, 24
Jibuti, 362
Jobson, Captain Richard, ascends Gambia, 53
Johannesburg, and Jameson's Raid, 189-91
INDEX

Johnston, Sir Harry, 182 n; action against Jaja, 320; in Nyasaland, 207, 210, 319; enlargement of Uganda protectorate under, 390 n
Johnstone, Commodore, 65
Jorissen, Dr., mission to England, 156 n
Joubert, Pieter, leader of Boer insurrection, 160; defeats British, 161; signs Convention, 162
Juba River, 378 n

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

Krugersdorp, 160
Kudu Pass, 90
Kumasi, fall of, 288
Kunene River, 175, 176
Kwathiambla-Drakensberg Mountains, 9

LACERDA, Dr. José, 182 n, 199
Lado, Belgian occupation of, 364, 365
Lagden, Sir Godfrey, 253 n
Lagos, inclusion in West African settlements, 275
Lagos, annexation of, 304
Laing, Major Alexander, exploration work of, 309, 310
Laing’s Nek, battle of, 161
Laird, MacGregor, explorer, 310, 313
Lamu, Persian settlement at, 26, 372
Land question in Cape Colony, 81
Lander, John, explorer, 310
Lander, Richard, explorer, 306 n, 309, 310
‘Landins,’ the, 101
Lang, Major J. J., preface
Langalibalele, Kafir chief, 213, 252
Lango tribe, 404, 406
Lanyon, Sir Owen, administration of Transvaal by, 156
Lavengerie, Cardinal, founds mission in North Africa, 382
Lendu tribes, 406
‘Leopard’ societies, 276
Leopold, Lake, 10
Leopold II of Belgium and African exploration, preface, 378, 381; concession granted to, 381
Lerothodi, Basuto chief, 253
Letso, Basuto chief, 253
Levaillant, French naturalist, 66
Lewaniaka, king of Barotseland, 253
Leyds, Dr., hatred of Great Britain, 193
Liberia, 8, 48
Libya, ancient fauna, 14
Libyan Desert, 1, 10; characteristics of, 6, 27, 28
Libyan race, 14, 18
Libyans, influence of on Negroes, 30
Lichtenstein, H., naturalist, 244
Limba tribe, 276
Limpopo, early traders near, 24
Limpopo valley, 84
Lindley, Mr., American missionary, 89

Lion, the, 48
Livingstone, Charles, 201
Livingstone, David, cited, 81
Livingstone, Dr., and the Maka-lolo, 104; dislike of Boers, 147; explorations in Zambesia, 198–203; death, 203
Livingstonia Free Church Mission, 203
‘Livingstone Search Expedition,’ 203
Lixus, founding of, 32
Lobenguela, 181, 182, 186, 187, 250
Lok, Mr. John, expedition to West Africa, 50
Lokoja, founding of, 313
London Missionary Society, 72, 79, 81, 205
Lotuka tribe, 404, 406
Lourezenço Marquez, Boers at, 86
Lovedale Mission College, 80 n
Lualaba River, 4, 203
Luangwa River, 102, 201
Luapula River, 4, 376
Lüderitz, Ludwig, obtains concession for Angra Pequena Bay, 176
Lugard, Sir F., operations against Arab slave-dealers, 205, 206, 258
Lugard, Sir F., governor of Nigeria, 326–28
Lugard, conquest of Uganda by, 383
Lumbwa tribe, 390, 406
Lungu tribe, 249
Lupton, Bey, 350, 381
Lydenburg, republic of, 144–46
Lyon, Captain George, explorer, 308

Macarthy, Sir Charles, expedition against Ashanti, 281
Macarthy’s Island, 269
Macaulay, Zachary, governor of the Sierra Leone Company, 274
Maccabees, discovery of coins of, 24
Macdonald, Sir Claude, commissioner of Niger Coast, 321, 322
Macdonald, Sir J. S. L., survey of, 387, 388
McEwan, Mr., murder of, 255
Macguire, Corporal, explorer, 312
Mackenzie, Bishop, 201 n
Mackenzie, Sir George, solves slavery difficulty, 392
Mackenzie, Rev. John, 178
Maclean, George, explorer of Gold Coast, 282, 283
MacMahon, President, arbitrates in Delagoa Bay dispute, 154
INDEX

Mad Mullah (Muhammad Abdallah), 401, 402, 403
Madagascar, area, 1; flora, 6; fauna, 10–12; Negro colonists, 14; Arabs in, 34; French in, 64, 68; Austrian designs on, 68; French protectorate established, 262
Maddox, Captain H., in Uganda, 388
Madi Negroes, 406
Madikane, Fingo chief, 251
Mafeking, 189
Magadosho, 372, 400
Maguire, Captain, 255, 258
Maguire, Rochfort, obtains gold-mining concession, 181
Mahdi Muhammad Ahmad, 348
Makapan, cruelty and death of, 248
Makaranga, 18, 22, 97, 186, 241
Makololo tribe, 104
Makololo, accompany Livingstone, 203, 204
Makoma, native chief, 249
Makwana, Boers purchase land from, 87
Malindi, early traders in, 26, 373
Mambwe natives, 205, 240
Mampursi Negroes, 293
Manjirja, Yao chief, 209, 255
Makapan, cruelty and death of, 148 n
Makaranga, 18, 22, 97, 186, 241
Mashangane tribe, 18, 241
Mashona tribe, 97, 186, 241
Maskat, 373, 374
Maskati Arabs, drive Portuguese out East Africa, 373
Mason-Bey, 341
Masupha, Suto chief, 253
Matebele, 87 and n, 89
Matebele war, 192
Matebeleland, mining in, 186
Matiwane, native chief, 250
Matoppo hills, Rhodes' grave in, 199
Mauch, Karl, discovers gold in Tati River, 148, 181
Mauretania, countries embraced in, 1 n; flora of mountains of, 6; fauna, 12; inhabitants, 14
Mauritius, French occupation of, 68; discovery of, 259; capture by British, 260; population, 262
Mazrui, dynasty of, 373 and n
Merriman, John X., 174; Prime Minister, 237
Mfumbiro, volcanoes of, 8
Middle Ages, customs of, in Africa, 13
Midgan tribe, 399
Milner, Sir Alfred (afterwards Viscount), 191
Milton, John, cited, 52 n
Miocene period in Africa, 10–12
Missionaries in Africa, 72, 78, 79, 81, 106, 110, 123, 147, 163, 176, 178, 273, 318, 319, 375, 378, 382, 383, 391
Manje, Mount, peaks and cedars on, 11
Mlauri, native chief, 254
Mlozi, Arab sultan, 206, 209, 255
Moçambique, early traders in, 23, 26
Moir, Frederick, 205, 206
Moir, John William, 205, 206
Moiresi, Suto chief, 253
Molitsane, Kafir chief, 124
Molteno, Sir John, position as to confederation, 153; dismissal as Prime Minister, 173; cause of, 174
Mombasa, early traders in, 26; Arabs capture, 373; British occupation of, 374; missionaries established in, 373
INDEX

Monomotapa, kingdom of, 26 and n
Moravian missionaries, 72, 78; crusade against slavery, 273
Morel, Mr. E. D., preface
Morland, Colonel, 327, 328
Morocco, life and customs of, 13; British designs in, 57–59
Mosega, battle of, 89
Moselekatse, warfare with, 87, 89, 90, 91; his rise and fall, 105; death, 250
Moshesh, inaugurates Negro confederacy, 107, 108; Basutoland under, 120–24; harassing of Europeans by, 126, 128, 133; expeditions against, 127, 130, 134; becomes British subject, 135; death, 253
Mpezeni, native chief, 209, 258
Mponda, Yao chief, 254
Mpondo Kafirs, 246
Mubarak, Sidi, trouble with, 392
Muhammad Abdallah, see MAD MULLAH
Muhammad Ali, Pasha of Egypt, 340, 341
Muhammad Granye, 400
Muhammad es-Senussi, teaching of, 327 n
Munshi cannibals, 323, 337
Munzinger, Bey, 341
Murabitin people, 333
Mutesa, king of Uganda, 383
Mwanga, king of Uganda, 383, 388
Mweru, Lake, 4, 10, 203, 376

NACHTIGAL, Dr., mission to Bornu, 314
Nakedness, 240, 408
Naku, Pondo chief, 121
Namakwaland, dry river-bed in, 3; annexation of islets off coast of, 126
Nama Hottentots, 248
Nana, conflict with, 321–23
Nandi plateau, 8
Nandi regions, natives of, 390, 406
Napoleon, Emperor, on St. Helena, 64
Napoleon III and East Africa, 374
Natal, early inhabitants, 22; coins discovered, 24; Boers penetrate, 110; massacre at Weenen, 111; Zulus capture and destroy Durban, 113; defeat and death of Dingane, 114, 115; British re-occupy Port Durban, 115, 117; Pieter-Maritzburg founded, 117; English besieged in Durban by Boers, 118; termination of Boer republic, 118; delimitation of in 1845, 119; boundaries of in 1852, 125; military occupation of, by Boers, 195; Zulu campaigns, 213–15; native quarrels in Zululand, 216; annexation of territory up to Portuguese boundary, 217; addition of Transvaal districts, 218; area, 218, 237; representative government granted, 218; railways, 219; products, 220, 238; Indian immigration, 220; number of native population, preface, 221; franchise restriction, 221, 225; institution of the poll-tax, 222; insurrection of Kafirs, 223; objection to importation of Asiatic labour, 228
National African Company, see ROYAL NIGER COMPANY
‘Native’ question, 72
Natives of South Africa, number, 239; enumeration of tribes, 240–48; Hottentots and Bushmen, 248; list of native chiefs of Bantu peoples, 249–55; wars between natives and British, 255–58. See also under TRIBAL NAMES
Ndalume, Kafir chief, 80, 250
Neanderthaloid type of man, 14
Negro labour-supply, 229 n
Negro race, origin, 14; division into two groups, 15, 38–40; Congo pygmies, 16; early migration, 17; intermarriage with Hamites, 28; primitive existence, 36; in the Gambia colony, Nilotic Negroes, 370; Sudanian Negroes, 371; Forest Negroes, 371. See also NATIVES OF SOUTH AFRICA
Nelson, Lord, defeats French, 338
Neolithic Age, remains of, in Africa, 13
Newcastle, Duke of, Colonial Secretary, abandons Orange River Sovereignty, 127
Ngami, Lake, 97
Nicoll, John Lowe, 205
‘Nieuwe Republick,’ the, 216
Niger delta, 317 and n
Niger River, 4, 10
Nigeria, annexation of Lagos, 304; area, 305, 309; exploring expeditions sent to, 306–13; trading operations in, 313; German designs in, 314, 318; French advances, 314; commercial war, 315; jurisdiction of Royal Niger Chartered Company, 317; commercial development difficulty, 319; placed under a Commissioner, 321; trouble with king of Benin, 322, 323; fighting with Munshi, 323; expedition against Fula, 324; charter of Royal Niger Company annulled, 324; direct British rule instituted, 325; present day condition, 328; principal tribes and peoples, 330–33; the Rausa people, 334; other tribes, 334

Nile, Mountain, 388
Nile, Valley of, 2
Nile watershed, 4
Nilotic Negroes, 13, 21, 38, 370, 404
Nkonde natives, 205
Nkoranza people, 295
Nqwiliso, Kafir chief, 253
Nubian Alps, 8
Nubian Desert, 1; characteristics of, 6
Nu'er Negroes, 371
Nupe people, 336
Nyamnyam tribe, 366
Nyangwe, 378
Nyanja tribes, 105, 241
Nyasa, Lake, flora, 5; mountains adjacent, 8; Zulus of, 102
Nyasaland Protectorate: Zulus of, 102; British designs regarding, 183; Rhodes and, 183, 184; explorations of Dr. Livingstone, 199–203; missionary societies in, 203; founding of its capital, 204; trading company created, 205; war with slave traders, 205, 209; separation as a protectorate, 207; area, 208, 236; cotton-growing capabilities, 209, 211; coffee-growing, 210; tobacco cultivation, 211; prosperity under British rule, 212; products, 237

Obok, port of, 401
Ogadein, Somali rebellions of, 393
Oil Rivers Protectorate, 319, 320
Okapi, the, 15
Oldfield, Mr., explorer, 310
Oman, Arabs of, 372, 373
Omdubreikat, battle of, 366
Omdurman, capture of, 361
'Ophir,' the land of, 24
Orange Free State: inauguration of, 128; declares war against Basutos, 130, 133; enlargement of territory, 132; conference with Moshesh, 133; boundaries delimited by British, 135; dispute re diamond fields, 135–38; bitter dislike of England aroused, 139; indemnity paid by Great Britain, 140; the Jameson Raid, 142; annexation by Great Britain, 143; treaty with Pretorius, 145; asked to annex Transvaal, 150; volunteers flock to help Transvaalers, 162; assists in war with England, 194; annexation by Britain, 225
Orange River, discovery of, 67
Orange River Colony, 73; a Crown colony, 225; opposition to Asiatic labour, 228; self-government granted to, 230; area, 236; products, 238
Orange River Sovereignty, creation of, 120–22; conference with Boers, 124; abandoned, 127–28
O'Reilly, trader, 135
O'Reilly, Anthony A., Transvaal arbitrator, 138
Oryx or Gemsbok, 35
Osman Digna, revolt of, 356, 357, 366
Oswell, William Cotton, explorations in Zambezia, 200
Othman dan Fodio, Fula leader, 333
Oudney, Dr., explorer, 308
Overweg, Dr., explorer, 311
Owen, Captain, treaty with Zulus, 116, 154; survey expedition of, 374
Owen, Major Roderick, 388
Owen, Mr., with Boers in Natal, 110, 111
Ozo River, 392

Paardekraal, 160
Palgrave, W. Coates, mission of investigation and its results, 174–76
Panda, supports Boer settlers, 114; agreement with British, 119
'Paradise, grains of,' 48 and n, 60
Jameson Raid, 188–90; resigns premiership, 191; builds railways and institutes telegraphs, 191; helps to quell Matebele rebellion, 192; his responsibility for second Boer war, 193; witness in forgery case, 194; death, 194.

Rhodes, Colonel Frank, 178 n.
Rhodes, Herbert, 178 n.

Rhodesia, mountains of, 8; first application of name, 191; early explorations of by Portuguese, 199; Livingstone’s travels and, 199–203; division into two provinces, 207; area, 208, 236; general prosperity, 208, 210–12; products, 238.

Rhodesia Railways, Limited, 191 n.

Richardia, 66.

Richardson, James, explorer, 311.

Ripon Falls, 389.

Ritchie, Mr., explorer, 308.

Roberts, Earl, in Boer war, 143, 195.

Robinson, Sir Hercules (Lord Rosmead), 191.

Rodriguez, discovery of, 259.

Roman Empire, customs of, in Africa, 13.

Romans in Africa, 33, 37.

Ronga race, see Thonga.

Rorke’s Drift, defence of, 214.

Rosebery, Lord, and Uganda, 384.

Royal African Company, 54, 55.

Royal Geographical Society, 203, 379.


Rudd, C. D., obtains gold mining concession, 181.

Rudolf, Lake, 3, 403.

Rustenburg, 144.

Ruvuma River, 202.

Ruwenzori Mountains, flora, 4; altitude, 8; lakes contiguous, 10.

Sahara Desert, 1, 3, 10; characteristics of, 6.

Sayyid Ali, Sultan of Zanzibar, 395.

Sawarab Arabs, 370.

Schoeman, Stephanus, causes civil war, 146, 147.

Scott, Mr., death in Busoga, 387.

Scott, Sir Francis, action at Kumasi, 289 n.

Sebastian, King of Portugal, death, 58.

Sebhaza, chief of Swaziland, 252.

Sebituane, Zulu chief, 104, 105, 252, 254.

Se-choana language, 244.

Sekelutu, son of Sebituane, 201, 254.

Sekondi, 282, 301.

Sekukuni, ravages Lydenburg district, 151; defeated and taken prisoner, 169, 253.

Semiliki River, 4.

Senegambia, 56, 267.

Senga people, 241.

Senussi sect, 327.

Sese Islands, 384.

Sesheke, 200.

Se-suto language, 244.

Seychelles, flora, 6; acquired by Great Britain, 260; area and population, 264.

Sharifian dynasty in Morocco, 58, 59.

Sharp, Granville, slave abolitionist, 274 and n.

Sharpe, Sir Alfred, 205, 207.

Shera, Queen of, 24.

Shepstone, Sir Theophilus, delegate from Natal, 153; proclaims annexation of Transvaal, 156; pledges of, 157.

Sherbro, island of, 276.

Shillinge, Captain, in Cape Colony, 61.

Shilluk Negroes, 371.

Shire, River, 178 n, 201.

Shukeriah Arabs, 370.

Sierra Leone, fort built at, 54; chartered company acquires land near, 266; settlement as ex-slave colony, 274; area, 275; slave-trade courts established at, 275; indigenous natives, 276;
'Leopard' societies of, 278; climate, 278; native encroachments on, 279; internal government, 280; Gold Coast detached from, 284; retardation of development of, 299
Sigcau, Kafir chief, 253
Simen, Mount, 8
Siwah, Oasis of, 367
'Slagters Nek,' 78
'Slave Coast,' 48 n
Slave trade, 52, 53, 72, 268, 271-74, 276, 307, 372
Slavery, in Cape Colony, 79; abolition of, 80, 186
Slatin Bey, Rudolf, 350, 355
Sleeping sickness, 383 n, 390
Smeathmann, Dr., 265 n
Smith, Captain, defeated by Boers, 118
Smith, Colonel Sir Harry, repulsion of Kafir invasion by, 80; delimits Orange River Sovereignty, 122; defeats Boers, 122; operations against Xosa, 122, 123
Smith, Colonel Hailed, defeats Osman Digna, 357
Soba race, 337
Sochangana, devastates Portuguese South East Africa, 101, 105; defeats Chaka's army, 108
Society of Friends, oppose slavery, 271-73
Sofala, early traders in, 23, 26, 372
Sokoto, 327, 328
Sokotra, early inhabitants, 398; annexation by Britain, 399
Solomon, King, 24
Somali race, 399, 408
Somaliland, scrub-land of, 3; early traders in, 23, 26; Hamitic tribes colonize, 28
Somaliland, inclusion in Egyptian dominions, 341; division of, 349; early history, 397, 398; fauna and native inhabitants, 399; Portuguese occupation of parts, 399, 400; area and population of British portion, 401; expeditions against the 'Mad Mullah,' 401-3
Somerset East, 77
Somerset, James, Negro slave, 274 n
Somerset, General Lord Charles, Albany settlements and, 75-78; harshness to Boer insurgents, 78
Songhai Negroes, 277, 335
'South Africa,' preface, 155
South African Legislature, membership limitation, 234, 236
South African Republic, founding of, 113, 120. See also Transvaal
Sparrman, Swedish botanist, 66, 265 n
Speke, Capt. J. H., 203, 347, 363, 376, 401
Spion Kop, 194
Sprigg, Sir Gordon, becomes Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 173
Stanley, Sir H. M., surveys Lake Tanganyika, 203; on the Congo, 378; journey to relieve Emin Pasha, 380; results of his journey, 381; invites missionaries to Uganda, 383
Stanley, Capt. W., preface
Star of South Africa, the, 136
Stephen, James, and slave trade, 274 n
Stewart, Lieut.-Colonel, J. D., murder of, 352
Stilleland, republic of, 163, 164
Stockenstrom, Andries, appointed Governor of Adelaide, 82
Stuhlmann, Dr., explorer
Suakin, 349, 352 n, 353
Sudan, life and customs of, 13
Sudanian Negroes, 371
Suffren, Admiral, defeats British, 65
Sük tribe, 404
Suez, Isthmus of, 27
Suez Canal, opening of, 342; England purchases shares in, 343; neutralization of, 353
Swahili people and language, 409
Swann, Alfred J., 207
Swaziland, area, 236
Swazi Zulus, 148, 245
Swayne, Colonel E. J., defeats Mad Mullah, 402
Swayne, H. G. C., preface
Swellendam, Republic of, 70

Table Bay, 61, 65, 71
Table Mountain, 61
Tafilat, Oasis of, 58
Tajurra, 400
Tajurra Bay, 401
Takana tribe, 404
Tanganyika, 4, 8, 9, 102
Tangier, British and, 57-59
Tantum-Kweri, 282
Tati district, gold mining in, 149, 181
Taufik, Khedive, 344
INDEX

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

Uganda, preface; German and French interests in, 382; Chartered Company of British East Africa in, 383, 384; declared a British protectorate, 384; conquest of Unyoro, 385; revolt of Sudanese troops, 386, 387; inaccessibility of, 386; reorganization of finance, 389; area enlarged, 390; population, 390; work of the missionaries, 391. See Buganda
Uganda Railway, commencement, 386; completion, 390
Ulundi, battle of, 215
Umhlakazi, prophet, 250
Umkata River, 121
Umlanjeni, Kafir medicine-man, 122, 250
Umpande (Panda), 251
Umsilikazi, see Moselekhatse
Umvolosi River, 98
Umzila, native chief, 250
Umzimkulu River, 74
Umzimvubu River, 92
Unicorn, origin of myth, 34
Unification of South Africa, 230–36
United African Company, see Royal Niger Company
United States forbids slave trade, 274
Universities’ Mission in Nyasaland, 201
Unyoro, flora, 4; hostile to Europeans, 384; annexation by Britain, 386
Usibepeu, Zulu chief, 216, 251
Utrecht and Republic of Lydenburg, 144; annexed to Natal, 218
Utica, founding of, 32
Uys, Jacobus, 92
Uys, Pieter, Boer leader, 113
Vaal River, 87, 88, 121
‘Vaalpens,’ race of, 22
Vandeleur, Colonel Seymour, in Uganda, 388
Van Nierkerk, Mr., purchases diamond, 135
Van Rensburg, President, 147
Vasco da Gama, 46, 92, 371; monument to, 91
Vechtkop, Zulu attack on, 124
Venable, Mr., American missionary, 89
Vereeniging, peace of, 225
Victoria Nyanza flora contiguous, 3; area, 9; Zulus of, 102
Vidal, Captain, annexation of Mombasa by, 374
‘Vierkleur,’ the Transvaal, 144
Viervoet, ambush at, 124
Viljoen, Jan, 147
Vitu, capture of, 392
Vogel, Dr., explorer, 312
Volksraad, founding of a, 144
Von Bary, explorer, 314
von der Decken, Count, exploration of Kilimanjaro by, 378
Vooruitzicht, see Kimberley
Vryheid, annexed to Natal, 218

Wad-en-Nejumi, defeat of, 356
Wadstrom, C., 265
Wadi Halfa, 353
Waghorn, Lieutenant, establishes ‘overland route’ in Egypt, 342

Walvis Bay, annexation of, 126, 176
Warden, Captain H. D., President of Griqualand, 121
Warren, Sir Charles, expedition to Bechuanaland, 164; mission in Bechuanaland, 177
Waterboer, Andries, captain of Griqua, 253
Waterboer, Nicolas, British Government buy land from, 138; title of declared invalid, 140
Weenen, massacre at, 111; town of, 117
Weinthal, Leo, Mr., preface
West Coast of Africa, British and, 46–56; area of, 55
White Fathers, Roman Catholic Mission of the, 382
Wilberforce, William, and slave trade, 274
Willcocks, Sir James, subdues Ashantis, 290, 293
Wilson, Major Allan, death of, 187
Wilson George, repels Sudanese, 387
Wilson, Mr., American missionary, 89
Wilson, N. A., death in Busoga, 387
Winburg, founding of, 89; Boer discontent at, 122
Windham, Captain, expedition to Guinea, 48–50
Wingate, Sir F. R., 358, 366
Winneba, 282
Witwatersrand, gold region of, 164
Wodehouse, Sir Philip, delimits Basutoland, 133; signs convention with Boers, 135; protests against extension of Transvaal, 150
Wolof Negroes, 270
Wolseley, Lord, march on Khartum, 132; defeats Sekukuni, 160: in Natal, 213; expedition against Zulus, 257; conducts Ashanti war, 287–90; defeats Arabi Pasha, 344; ordered to retreat from the Sudan, 353

Xesipe Kafirs, 247
Xosa Kafirs, belligerent attitude of, 74, 80–83; rebellions of, 122, 123, 168, 172; destroy their cattle and starve, 170; sections of, 245–47
INDEX

·Yao tribes, 40, 209, 212, 241
Yaman (Yemen), Semite trading-centre, 23
Yibir tribe, 399
York, Sir John, expedition to West Africa, 59
Yoruba race, 305, 337
Young, Lieutenant Edward, search for Livingstone, 203

Zambezi, early traders in region of, 23–25
Zambezi River, flora, 6
Zambezia, Northern, 198
Zanzibar, flora, *preface*, 3, 5; early traders in, 23, 26; early history, 372–74; British intervention, 374–76; slave trade declared illegal in, 376; inception and realization of British protectorate over, 376–79; present governance of, 395; bombardment of, 395
Zarafi, Yao chief, 255
Zimbabwe, ruins of temple of, 25
Zobeir Pasha, 352
Zoutpansberg Mountains, 83
Zoutpansberg, district of, 144 and n; trouble in, 147
Zululand, coins discovered in, 24; British troubles in, 213–15; inter­ne­cine war with natives, 216; annexation of, 216–17; native population, 220; rebellious spirit growing in, 224
Zulu-Kafir peoples, 18, 22, 40, 74, 95–109, 245
Zulu tribe, 98–101, 245
Zuurveld, Kafirs driven from, 75

THE END

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