

## THE BOERS AND MISSIONS.

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Among the many new and interesting missionary developments of the present day, that which is revealing itself among the Dutch farmers, or "Boers," as they are often called in South Africa, is one of the most remarkable and cheering. Their two hundred years of life in that land have been years of a most unique commingling of the romantic with the real,—a life characterized for domestic simplicity, wild adventure, independence, and a high regard for at least the forms and observances of a sound Christian faith. They have ever had a great love of liberty, been vigorously tenacious of their own rights; and yet have had a firm belief, at least many of them, that the natives, the black people, were divinely appointed to be the servants of the white race. Out of all this have come many border wars, repeated collisions and conflicts with the English, and sometimes a hostile feeling towards Christian Missions, all which has led many of them to a most unsettled, migratory way of living. But now, at length, their ideas of liberty are taking on a more intelligent, scriptural aspect; their formalism giving place to spirituality, and their feelings and conduct towards the natives beginning to undergo a happy, beneficent change. The spirit of that true and living faith which their pioneer fathers carried to that land, is beginning to be revived, and one of the most important reasons they originally assigned for going there and taking up their abode among or by the side of the natives—to aid them in their religious well-being—is beginning to be honored in the mission work they have already entered upon in their behalf. During the two centuries of their abode there, the Boers have had much to do towards developing and utilizing the secular resources of the country, and in giving shape to the social and political affairs of all South Africa. Their molding influence was never greater than it is to-day, nor will it fail to increase and extend as the years go on. Their past career is fraught with instruction, if not also with admonition; their present trend with encouragement to all true friends of law and religion. To all who are interested in the ever-changing fortunes of men, the different phases of social life, and especially in knowing something of the many mighty forces now at work for the speedy redemption of that long neglected and much wronged land of the sun, which has come to be called the "Dark Continent," a brief sketch of the early life, general character, and present promise of the Dutch Boers in South Africa can hardly fail to be instructive and encouraging.

When Diaz discovered the southern angle of Africa, 1486, and proposed to his royal patron, John II., of Portugal, to call it "the stormy cape," the King said: "No; call it 'the Cape of Good Hope,' because of the promise it gives of my finding in it a good way to