

In this rebellion they were led by a man, who, when the history of that land comes to be written, will be set down as the evil genius of the Dutch race in South Africa—Paul Kruger. This man, who was born a British subject in the Cape Colony, first came into prominence among his countrymen as a hunter and fighter—a fighter first against the Kafirs and then against his own people, as well as the English, whom he hates as cordially as the British sailor of Nelson's day did the French and Spaniards. It seems curious that a man of Kruger's pretenses to piety should be so tenacious of liberty and natural rights for himself and his fellow-Boers, and yet refuse the most elementary rights to British people in his country; and that he should see nothing but iniquity in Dr. Jameson's quixotic dash to rescue the Outlanders from misgovernment, and yet see no wrong in his own invasion of a friendly State with no better motive than a lust of power. Some forty years ago, at a time when the Transvaal and the Orange Free State (a neighboring Republic, composed of his own fellow-countrymen), were at peace, Paul Kruger formed a plot with M. W. Pretorius, another Boer leader, to overthrow the government of the Free State. While Kruger invaded the country, at the head of a commando, inciting the Free State Boers to rise, as he proceeded, Pretorius was set to instigate the Free State natives to revolt. The Free State forces were, however, brought together in much quicker time than he anticipated, and when Kruger saw himself confronted with double the number of cannon his own force had, he discreetly withdrew.

That Kruger's intrigues during the days of the first Republic were a cause of the country's troubles is shown by the statement of the last President, Thomas Burgers,* who, referring to the events that led up to the annexation, said: "Fruitlessly did I press upon him (Kruger), the fact that by showing how our danger lay in want of unity, the British Government would have cause to step in, on the ground of humanity, to avert civil war, and to present a general rising of the natives.

* * He would not hear of retiring. Had I not endured in silence, had I not borne patiently all the vile accusations, but out of selfishness or fear, told the plain truth of the case, the Transvaal would never have had the consideration it has now received from the British Government. However unjust the annexation was, my self-justification would have exposed the Boers to such an extent, and the state of the country in such a way, that it would have been deprived of the sympathy of the world, and the consideration of English politicians."

After the annexation, he was appointed field cornet (a position corresponding to our sheriff, but

including also the duties of tax collector and other functions), of his district, at a salary of £200, which in those days was a good income. By false representations, however, he drew £300, or what came to the same thing, withheld tax moneys to that amount over his salary. The administration called upon him to make good the amount, but he did not do so then, or since. He only met the Government's request by demanding an increase of salary! The correspondence in the case is on record. How much the consciousness of this fraud had to do with the intrigues he engaged in against the British Government, it is hard to say. At all events, while holding an office under the British Government, he was engaged in agitations against it, and became the leader in the armed rebellion that followed. After the British defeats in the skirmishes at Laing's Nek, Majuba Hill and Ingogo, and while British reinforcements, to the number of 10,000 men, were gathered, the Gladstone Government stayed the sword-arm that was ready to strike back, and an armistice was arranged, followed by the convention of 1881, by which the Republic was restored, subject to the suzerainty of the Queen. By this instrument, the right of internal self-government was given to "the inhabitants" of the Transvaal, without prejudice as to nationality, and in the discussions by which the intent of its provisions was explained, Mr. Kruger distinctly declared that all would be put on an equality, as regarded the franchise and other rights. These discussions were taken down at the time, and form part of the records in the colonial office. At that time the Boers were in a large majority, and it is possible Kruger might have kept faith had the population remained thus, but Englishmen began to come to the country in greater numbers, and in 1886 the discovery of the now celebrated Witwatersrand gold fields brought people from all quarters of the globe, until the alien or outlander population, which of course included Englishmen, outnumbered the Boers. Kruger had from the first aimed to keep all power in the hands of the Dutch, and hence began the evasions and trickery by which the plain intentions of the negotiators of the original convention were to be thwarted. His ambition did not stop here. He purposed the formation of a great military state, which would centralize the Dutch influence in South Africa, and establish a Dutch republic extending from the Cape to the Zambesi, with Pretoria as the capital. For a long time this ambition, though steadily pursued, was concealed, and even now there are many well-informed public men in England and America who have either not grasped the situation or refused to believe the designs so steadily pursued by this cunning trickster. The people of the Orange Free State, under the misleading influence of their present head, President Steyn—a third-rate attorney, possessed of none of the commonsense statesmanship of the late Sir John Brand, who so wisely guided the little State for twenty-five years previously—were easily led into these designs, and in the Cape Colony, the widespread ramifications of the Afrikaner Bond—a sort of granger organization, having for its motto, "Africa for the Afrikaners"—afforded good ground to work upon, as its membership was almost exclusively Dutch. The plan, as regarded Cape Colony, was to overturn British authority gradually, allowing Britain to retain the

* In the course of his last address to his Volksraad, President Burgers said: "I would rather be a policeman under a strong government than the President of such a state. * You have ill treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty. * The fourth point which we have to take into account affects our relations with our English neighbors. It is asked, what have they to do with our position? I tell you as much as we have to do with that of our Kafir neighbors. As little as we can allow barbarities among the Kafirs on our borders, as little can they allow that in a state on their borders anarchy and rebellion should prevail. * To-day a bill for £1,100 was laid before me for signature, but I would sooner have cut off my right hand than sign that paper, for I have not the slightest ground to expect that when that bill becomes due there will be a penny to pay it with." President Burgers—who left the Transvaal broken hearted, not because of the annexation, but because of the intriguing which brought about the condition of things rendering that step inevitable—just before he died left a statement of the case for the benefit of posterity, in which he shows how Kruger plotted with the annexation faction in order to oust Burgers and get the presidency for himself. Kruger overdid his part, but though his ambition was balked for the time by the annexation which he did not count upon, he continued his intrigues against the British with the result which history tells.