

The people got their first regular school system, and their first postal system from their new British rulers, who also did away with the system of punishing offenders by the cross, the wheel, and the rack, those brutal instruments of torture being destroyed at the very outset of the British regime.

Such, in a few words, was the contrast between British and Dutch rule at the Cape. It is not to be denied that between the Home Government and the colonial rulers many mistakes have been made in the subsequent history of British rule in South Africa; but more often than otherwise these errors were made through mistaken leniency or mistaken philanthropy towards Boer and native alternately. Perhaps the most unpardonable grievance nursed by the Boers in the present century was the emancipation of the slaves in the Cape Colony in 1834. Many Boers to the present day believe with apparent honesty that a Kafir has no soul, and class him with the wild beasts of the veldt. While other nations besides the United States have freed the slaves without compensation to the slave owners, Great Britain voted to the slave holders of the Cape £1,247,000. This was only half the amount of the appraisal, but it must be remembered that the slaves of the West Indies and other parts of the empire had to be freed at the same time at a total cost of £20,000,000—an enormous sum for those days, and the sublimest exhibition of the awakening of national conscience ever recorded in the history of nations. Though the Boers must have known from the agitation that had been going on in England for the preceding thirty years that the emancipation of slaves must come, there was a great outcry when the amount of compensation was announced, and, to make matters worse, from their standpoint, a horde of self-appointed agents, working on the circumstance that the money had to be paid in London, bought up the claims of the farmers for a mere song in many cases, and the enraged slave-owning farmers trekked into the interior to the number of several