

The country assumes a more level aspect in the Orange River Colony, and is very like the rolling plain in the North-west of Canada, though the soil is not nearly so rich. At intervals a small field of grain or a few fruit trees around a house serve to relieve the monotonous landscape, though the farmer is still the same unambitious being as in the northern part of Cape Colony. In no part of the country have I seen a large field of grain all together, but the rule seems to be to have little half-acre patches here and there at all angles to one another.

Bloemfontein is the first large town we came to since leaving Cape Town. Before the war started the city could lay claims to cleanliness and beauty, but now everything seems to be dirty. Streets, gardens and squares have been occupied for months by thousands of horses and mules, and in other open spaces large quantities of stores have been piled, which makes walking very unpleasant. The public buildings are very fine, and every private dwelling has a garden, so that the city has all the appearance of a large county town. The native village, or Kaffirfontein, as it is officially called, is situated about four hundred yards south of the town. It is built chiefly of sun-dried brick, and, compared with other native villages, is quite a superior place. The streets here are well laid out, and regularity, a thing almost totally wanting in the smaller Boer towns, is at least attempted.

The country continues nearly the same until the Vaal River is reached, where we enter the gold-bearing district. Fine, white sand is its chief characteristic. At Elandsfontein, quite a number of gold mines are to be seen, the intricacies of whose works I had not an opportunity to examine. Hills can be seen at a distance from here, and as the capitol of the Transvaal is reached, the railway crosses over numerous small rivers and turns some very sharp curves. The approaches to Pretoria are guarded by a number of forts situated on the tops of hills which overlook the city and command a view of the outside country for miles. When one sees the natural strength of the place it is hard to imagine why the Boers did not make an effort to save the city, as much damage could have been done to the British while forcing the entrance. Having only ridden through the city once, I saw little of it, but it is very similar to Bloemfontein in the matter of buildings and streets. Wood is more plentiful