

and sent to the stamping mills, where it is reduced to a very fine powder. Streams of water rushing into the mortar boxes under the stamps carrying this finely powdered stone over the copper plates coated with mercury, which collect the gold from the muddy stream and allow the dross or tailings to float away. The copper plates are scraped daily and the amalgum formed of gold and mercury is separated through being roasted in retorts. The mercury or quicksilver passing off in vapor is afterwards secured by condensation, while the pure gold is retained in the retorts. At first this was the one method of retaining the gold, but during the last three or four years valuable discoveries have been made, whereby it is possible by the use of Cyanide of Potassium, in solution, to extract from the tailings almost as much gold as was in the first instance secured in the form of amalgum. It is needless to say that all the accumulated tailings of former years have recently been worked over, realizing magnificent profits to those who secured them from the mining companies before the value of the Cyanide process was fully understood. Coal of good quality for working the mines is found in large quantities within thirty miles of the city.

In addition to the railway completed in 1893 connecting Johannesburg with Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London, within three months the road from Delagoa Bay has been completed, and by the middle of March, 1895, the road from Port Natal, already operated as far as Charlestown, on the border of the Transvaal, will be completed.

Before this letter will be in your hands Johannesburg will enjoy good railway connections to all the coast ports.

Rich alluvial deposits of gold are found in the DeKapp goldfields, and had time permitted I should gladly have spent a day or two at Barberton. Many rich finds of pure gold have been made there, single nuggets weighing from 40 to 63 pounds, but then the return is very uncertain, and while a few operators have made much money, hundreds of poor fellows, after months of hard and patient work, have been compelled to abandon the diggings without a single coin to show for what they have done. Pretoria, the capital, lies in a sheltered valley thirty-two miles from Johannesburg, and 1,100 feet lower. The climate is consequently much warmer, and it is at times very humid. Beyond the Government buildings there is little in the city to interest visitors. Best of all it now enjoys a good supply of perfectly pure water. Quite near the town some silver mines are operated, while the the Albert mine, forty miles north of Pretoria, yields exceedingly rich silver and copper ore. Leaving Johannesburg for Durban, Natal, the 130 miles to the railway at Charleston was made in two days by mail coach. Old time "Yankee" swing coaches are used, and these are drawn by eight or ten horses, which are changed every two hours. The journey through its novelty alone was interesting, as the country itself is monotonous and almost altogether uncultivated. Just before coming into Charlestown we could see the famous battle grounds, on which the Boers had secured to themselves the valuable Transvaal country. The final battle took place on the summit of Majuba Hill, where, for the loss of a single man, the Boers

inflicted on the English a loss of more than 300 men out of a total command of 600.

Natal may be called the garden of South Africa. Its verdure and its trees indeed were welcome after weeks spent in a brown and treeless country. Natal produces a little wheat, but it is of poor quality and very subject to rust. In the sections adjacent to Pietermaritzburg, Indian corn is extensively grown. Near the coast, sugar cane, arrowroot, tea and fruits are the principal products. Coal of a good quality is found in the northern part of the Colony.

My journey was broken at Pietermaritzburg, where Natal's Government buildings are located. The land there is in the hands of good farmers and evidently carefully cultivated. Sugar cane is grown in a small way. The town itself, with a population, white, black and Indian, of 17,000, is open and straggling, but its situation in the bottom of a rich valley, walled about with forests, has been well chosen. The drives through the shaded streets, past good houses, splendid gardens, public and private, and through the fine park, are very beautiful. Maritzburg is in the centre of the most picturesque part of Natal, and is one of the most delightful residence places in all South Africa. The vegetation is not as tropical as at the coast, but its altitude of 2,200 feet makes it much cooler, and all the tropical fruits may be had daily from the port 70 miles away. The journey through the partly wooded hill country to the sea is delightful and all too quickly made.

Durban, Port Natal, is a good city with a rich tributary country and a fine harbor. To a stranger it is particularly interesting on account of being so entirely different from the other cities of Africa. More than half her population is black, and more than half the black population is composed of coolies from India, striking in their white turbans and spotlessly white clothing. The negroes, mostly Zulus, are as a rule splendid fellows, with magnificent physique, tall, muscular and active, and they are in every way superior to the Blacks of the Colony, the Free State and the Transvaal.

They whirl you along at a great rate in the jinrickshaws, the small, cosy two-wheeled rubber-tired carriages, adapted from Japan and universally used in Durban. Their usual clothing, a loose white sleeveless shirt and white kneebreeches, makes them at least appear to be clean.

The Durban native police are a fine body of men and look very natty in their dark blue helmets, jackets and tight knee breeches. For weapons they carry a "knobkerry" and a stick or two. The Zulus do not daub their faces with color after the manner of the Kafir women. More comely they are, as well as more cleanly, and rub their faces, arms and bodies with oil until they shine like polished bronze.

The way in which they dress their hair, of which they are by the way most proud, is often unique and not unfrequently becoming. Their ornaments are very elaborate. The men, fond of taking snuff, usually carry their snuff box, made of bamboo or ivory, in the slit in the lobe of the ear; to balance matters the ivory snuff spoon is carried in the other ear. A favorite ear ornament is the brass shell of an exploded cartridge. The Natal teas, while not to be compared with the teas of India or Ceylon, are very

palatable, and as new varieties more suitable to the soil and climate are introduced, it is probable that tea-growing will shortly become an important industry, adding largely to the wealth of the colony. The extensive sugar plantations in the Mount Edgecombe district are well worth a visit. The climate is not sufficiently hot to give a yearly crop of cane, but a bountiful harvest is gathered every eighteen months. Pine apples, custard apples, greendillas, bananas and similar tropical fruits grow in great abundance, all of which may be had at moderate prices. Berea, Durban's beautiful residence quarter, is a very bower of foliage and blossom. To one accustomed to the modest vegetation of our northern country, this place seems little less than fairy-land. The climate of Durban is humid and trying. From October to March the average maximum temperature is a little more than 85 degrees Far., but withal it is healthful, and people who have become acclimatised have nothing that is not good to say of their city and of their country.



THE
BATTLE

THE bravest battle that ever was fought,
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not,
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.

Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
With sword or nobler pen;
Nay, not with the eloquent word of thought,
From mouths of wonderful men.

But deep in a walled-up woman's heart
Of woman that would not yield,
But bravely, sternly, bore her part—
Lo! there is that battlefield.

No marshalling troop, no heroic song,
No banners to gleam and wave!
But oh! these battles they last so long—
From babyhood to the grave.

Yet faithful still as a bridge of stars
She fights in her walled-up town—
Fights on and on, in the endless wars,
Then silent, unscathed—goes down!

Oh! ye with banners and battle shot,
And soldiers to shout and praise!
I tell you the kindest victories fought,
Are fought in these silent ways.

O spotless woman in a world of shame!
—With splendid and silent scorn
Go back to God as white as you came,
The kindest warrior born!

