

# From an African Diary

### Interesting Story of a Trip From Kork's Drift to Lady-smith.

### A Ride in 18-1 Across the Natal Battlefields of To-Day.

We have received, says the London Daily Mail, the following extremely interesting article from Mr. J. E. C. Bodley, the well-known author of "France," admittedly the standard work of our times on our neighbor across the Channel. Mr. Bodley's hope of this morning was dashed, and I went to bed reflecting on the prospect of a fifty-mile ride of a heavy route with a tired horse.

Monday—A sleepily rose at 5:30, but it was late for starting, and a morning hour lost in African travelling is never made up. I was in the saddle at 7:30, here for two hours for a short night while 60, was all the Kaffir cost, for a loaf of bread which he didn't expect. We first entered for miles over the grass in the fine morning, till a long descent came, among sweet-smelling mimosa, here deep in stiff mud, and crossed by the horses. At 10:30 a rustic inn we heard the bad news that Sunday's river was flooded, 5 feet deep, with terrific current. So I must go six miles round by the bridge, with no time to linger in this charming wilderness of a garden, full of African flowers such as the Manilla, a beautiful variety of geranium, and tuberoses growing as profusely as

Merigolds in England.

"As I stood to see the horses fed the innkeeper told me he has struck coal, so he is going home to float a company. Passing through Kaffir kraals on the veldt we fell on the Newcastle road, when the solitude became lively. The highway was crowded with wagons going to the gold-fields, and in some hurried in the mud, wheels off, and some being hauled along by thirty-two oxen—the team of one of them being outspanned and yoked on to help another. Sunday's river was made before me, and there was just time to get to the bridge, for twenty minutes with four hours left to ride twenty miles to catch the five train from Ladysmith. I could do it if Modder Spruit were not so high. So after a collation of yellow peaches at the Fox and Goose, we up-saddled and cantered over the bridge and across the wide and heathen under water.

Modder Spruit was reached in under two hours. The river came over my knees, but the little horse had not to swim, and on being off-saddled he ate as if he had come only ten miles. The Zul's horse was done and would not go, so I told him to give me the saddle-bags and to follow. The latter started with a thunderstorm which turned the river into a morass, and came upon a jagged making the new railway to Elands-lagte. I told the foreman of my plight, so the civil man, said he would lend me a fresh horse when he came up, and tell him to reserve work for my little horse in the rain. The latter refused to guide me to money even to the next best station. He pointed to his dried legs—significant of the lazy independence of his race. Night was falling; thunderclouds rolling up, no sign of a road or a house. At 11:30 on the dim skyline I saw some flames, and went straight across the veldt to them. The transport rider told me I was going away from Ladysmith, and after riding ten miles I was only three miles from Modder Spruit. Darkness was rushing on, and the mire grew deeper and softer. Then the storm came, and the rain was blinding, and we were struggling, the oxen sinking to their bellies, while the long whips of the fore-loungers cracked and the natives screamed. I asked a transport-rider to lend me a horse, and I asked my horse to Ladysmith as the rain was blinding, and we were plunging into mudholes above my knees at each moment.

"He said that no horseman could reach Ladysmith alive on such a night, but a mile further on there was a canyon. At last his light appeared, and I made their large, and I was very decent and well equipped with excess for the humbleness of his shearer.

"My little pony ate as though he were none the worse for his cruel sixty miles, and having seen to that, I devoured with equal joy the tinned meats of the store-keeper. As I fell asleep on his hard sofa I heard through the wall of the cart a sergeant of

Natal Carabineers telling stories of Isandhlwana's fight to the accompaniment of the roar of rain on the iron roof.

"Tuesday—At six I rose, and even in the daylight took an hour to ride four miles as the storm had converted the road into a floating swamp, while the hills around Ladysmith were covered with impenetrable mists. After all the discomfort and exposure I never felt better in my life, with plenty of good spirits equal to slaying, through an interpreter, my faithful Zul's policeman, who had reached Ladysmith comfortably before rain. The train took me off. At Colenso the Tugela was a gigantic rushing river, and at each waterfall the spray rose sky-high.

At Oliver's Hoek we caught up the train, it having run off the line. At five minutes to eight I walked into the dining room of Government House, bright with pretty faces and imitating just what a contrast to last night's scarlet when Sir Arthur Havelock had de-

clined that I was sitting on the banks of a spruit waiting 'Dum deum' to be taken by J. E. C. BODLEY.

**KIMBERLEY'S RICHES.**

No One Knows the Value of Diamonds in Store, but They Are Probably Worth \$100,000,000.

Nobody knows just how much value in the shape of diamonds is kept in store at Kimberley, says a letter to the Standard from London. Quite possibly it is \$100,000,000 worth. The company has offices in London, but its headquarters are in the South African city, and there, in a building resembling a bank, the bulk of the gems is kept, stored in the vaults.

If only a fraction of them were offered for sale at once, the price of diamonds would promptly tumble; but the great corporation, owning as it does deposits which produce 98 per cent. of the world's entire yield of these precious stones, is able to control the market absolutely, and holds back, and only a limited number of carats per annum.

The yield of the mines is about 5,500 carats every twenty-four hours, and the diamonds obtained from the diggings are sent daily, under an armed escort to the Company's headquarters.

and there delivered to the appraiser in charge. First they are cleaned by boiling them in a mixture of nitric and sulphuric acids, and then they are carefully sorted in respect to size, color, and purity.

In one room are kept an exhibition 60,000 carats, and, as may be imagined, the spectacle they afford is most striking. Beneath large windows runs a broad corridor, covered with sheets of white paper, upon which are laid out ever so many glistening heaps of diamonds of indescribable variety. They are of all shades, from deep yellow to blue-white, from deep brown to light brown, and in great variety of blues, greens and pinks.

Only a dozen years ago the Kimberley mines were worked as over 3,000 acres of arable lands, each thirty-one feet square, and separated from each other by narrow roads for hauling the gem-bearing earth. In 1868 Cecil Rhodes brought about a consolidation of all these properties into a single corporation, which now practically monopolizes the diamond production of the world, with a capital of \$10,000,000. Two of the mines, the De Toits-Pan and the De Beers, are the largest holes ever sunk in the earth, the mouth of the former being nineteen acres in extent, while the latter has a surface of fifty-five acres. They are lighted by electricity, and the machinery used is of the most ingenious and powerful description.

From the central shaft of each mine runs a system of galleries.

At various levels, like so many burrows, in which laborers dig out the diamond-bearing earth and load it upon hand-carts, or on the rails of a narrow-gauge railway, which is worked by electricity, and as fast as it is spread out over the ground. Being thus left for some weeks, though hard and tough at first it becomes friable and easily broken up by exposure to sun and moisture, and the precious stones are going over it again and again with hammers and taken to the huge washing machines, in which, by means of running water, the precious stones are separated from the bulk of the material. The machines are great vats, containing centrifugal wheels, by which, as they rapidly revolve, the material is pulverized, the light stuff being floated off, while the diamonds and other heavy particles are concentrated at the bottom.

The concentrate, when removed from the washing machines, is placed in moist bags, and a few years ago brought to wet by white men, and again after in the dry by Kaffirs. The sorters work with small tweezers, and not a diamond the size of a pinhead escapes their notice. Indeed, there is no great difficulty involved in this task, inasmuch as such gems

are by no means the dull pebbles they are commonly described as being. On the contrary, though not so brilliant as the bright and sparkling lapidary, they are bright and sparkling in their own right.

After being conveyed to the company's headquarters, they are disposed of in parcels to local buyers, who represent the leading diamond merchants of Europe. The size of a parcel varies from a few thousand carats up, in one instance, to a cart with blue clay, and, containing 100 carats were disposed of in one lot to a single purchaser. The stones are taken to London to be cut.

Geologists think they know just how the diamonds of the South African fields were made by nature. The surface layer of the earth thereabouts was originally a shale, or, in other words, a kind of rock containing a large percentage of carbon. As everybody knows, carbon in its pure state is the sole material of the diamond. By and by volcanic stuff from the bowels of the earth was vomited up through the shale, and the enormous heat thus generated caused the carbon in the rock to crystallize out in the form of diamonds. So now, as a result, there is a vast body of blue clay, through which gems are scattered.

Like Plums in a Pudding, and so evenly are they distributed that 100 tons of the material can be counted on to yield about 100 carats of the precious stones. The deposits, apparently, are inexhaustible.

As is usual in such cases, the discovery of diamonds in South Africa was purely accidental. A stranger, traveling through the country stopped overnight at the house of a hospitable Dutch farmer, who showed him as curiosities some bright pebbles found by his children. The visitor, who expected that they were diamonds, and, being a honest man, suggested the idea to his host, who, taking them to the nearest city, sold

them for a sufficient sum to make him rich for life. Later on many valuable stones were found in the gravels of the Vaal and Gong-Gong rivers, but it was not until 1870 that prospectors came upon the real source of supply from which these accidental gems had been washed out by the streams. Even then, only the yellowish surface of the earth was worked, and when the miners got down to the blue clay, which later proved to be the true matrix of the stones, they imagined that the deposits were exhausted. The Kimberley mines now yield 2,500,000 carats annually, representing a value of \$25,000,000, of which two-thirds is clear profit. During the last quarter-century they have

Added to the World's Wealth ten tons of diamonds, worth \$300,000,000 uncut and \$600,000,000 after cutting.

These mines employ 1,500 Europeans and about 6,000 Kaffirs. Necessarily, the utmost precautions have to be taken against theft, and yet, notwithstanding all preventive measures, the company loses about \$25,000 a year. The business of purchasing stolen gems occupies many enterprising persons, and the methods devised by the illicit diamond-buyers exhibit an ingenuity worthy of a more honorable calling. Laws framed to put down this offence are exceedingly strict—so strict, in fact, that a person guilty of it is always considered as standing against an accused person unless he can prove his innocence, and sentences of five to fifteen years are commonly imposed in cases of conviction. As for the miner, he is whipped with extreme severity, or else set at breaking rocks for a term of years.

Exceptionally good wages serve to attract the Kaffirs to the mines, and, for the sake of the high pay they are reconciled to certain conditions of servitude, which while white men could hardly be induced to put up. These relate to the precautions above referred to against thieving. Every evening when the laborers come from the diggings they are obliged to strip themselves to absolute nudity—usually the latter consist of a breech cloth merely—upon passing on the way.

Then they are subjected to an Elaborate Examination, even their mouths, ears, etc., being examined. From the examining room they go to the quarters in the compound, where they pass the night, blankets being provided for their comfort, and the clothing they have left behind is carefully looked over. The latter they put on when they go to work again in the morning. Customarily they are engaged for a period of three months, and they may renew the contract as often as they desire, but during the term of employment they are not permitted to leave the enclosure, which is surrounded by a wall many in length and of considerable height.

How so many diamonds are stolen under such conditions is a mystery even to the officials of the company. On one occasion a black fellow was found to have concealed a black stone, worth many thousands of dollars, in a wound in the calf of his leg, covering it over with a piece of sticking plaster just the color of the skin. It was discovered by the analyst, and since then the examination has pursued the method of tapping each laborer gently with a mallet over various portions of his anatomy, so that the presence of a precious gem may be revealed by sound. It should be explained that an underground passage connects the mine with the compound, and this is the means by which the workmen from tossing stones over the wall to a confederate.

Some of the Largest Diamonds ever known have been dug out of the Kimberley deposits. One of these, from the De Beers mine, was exhibited at the Paris Exposition in 1889, and was purchased by an Oriental prince. It weighed 225 carats after cutting, and was a pale yellow in color. The Nizam of Hyderabad a few years ago bought the famous Victoria, otherwise known as the Imperial diamond, which weighed 180 carats after cutting. It is a remarkably beautiful stone, of a bluish white color, and flawless. Strange to say, this gem, then the largest diamond of modern times, came to London without a history. It was from one of the Kimberley mines, and was owned by a London syndicate. Afterward it was ascertained that it had been stolen by four men, three of whom lost their shares in it at cards the very first night after it came into their possession.

In 1894 the Jagersfontein diamond was discovered at one of the Kimberley mines. It weighed 971 carats, or nearly half a pound avoirdupois, and was three inches long, one and one-half inches thick, and two and one-half wide. A Kaffir picked it up while he was loading a cart with blue clay, and, concealing it about his person, gave it to a manager directly. In return he received 750 in cash, a horse and a saddle. The stone is valued at \$2,000,000. It is blue white in color, and faultless except for a very small flaw in the centre. It was presented to the Pope by Oom Paul Kruger.

**LOCOMOTIVES.**

There are 19,914 locomotives at work on the railways of the United Kingdom, and each of these on an average runs 10,096 miles in a year, and earns for the railway company \$1,500. Out of this the working expenses of stations, the upkeep of permanent way, and the cost of signaling, etc., as well as the drivers' wages and the coal burned, amounting in all to nearly 85, have to be paid. Like the human engine in all industries, the locomotive to-day is doing less than that of twenty years ago, for the 19,914 locomotives then on the railways earn 19,035 miles, but, unlike the human factor, the engine now now earns less—\$4,629 per annum. If, therefore, we take the cost of an average locomotive at \$2,700, it is found that it earns in gross receipts her total cost in seven months; but net receipts are quite another matter. For only the expenses of the locomotive, engine, and train, and all the extensive organizations, have to be met, and are payable from the receipts got directly from the locomotive's work.

The Scotch locomotive seems to do the most work. There they have one locomotive for every 1 mile 6 furlongs of

railway open, whereas in England and Wales there is an engine for every seven furlongs, or so; and although in the latter case there is 45,136 worth of traffic to be dealt with, against 23,010 in Scotland, the former is 100 per cent. more of the volume of traffic. Thus, a Scotch locomotive in a year travels 23,361 miles, against 18,504 miles in the case of the English locomotive, while the Scotch engine takes, in the gross revenue, 44,855, and the English engine 44,844.

In Ireland there is only one locomotive for every four miles of railway, the amount of traffic being £1,112 per mile of railway, against £1,112 per mile of railway in England, and the Scotch running 20,111 miles and earning £4,410—£1,112.

**HOW HORSES GO TO WAR.**

Elaborate Precautions Taken to Keep Them in Condition.

One of the most important matters connected with the transport of troops is the embarkation of horses. Equine soldiers do not love the sea, and to get them on board, and to keep them quiet and healthy during a long voyage is by no means an easy task. Horses are always kept in a cool state before embarking, and are put on board ship rather low in the hold, in too high condition. Horses which are in the latter state are disposed to be fractious and kick, and are also liable to inflammation. Long, slow, steady work is given to horses previous to their embarkation. They are kept fasting and without water for some hours before being put on board.

This minimizes the bad effect of stinging on overfed animals. They also become much sooner reconciled to the change of quarters and take to their feed on board when these measures have been adopted. As a rule, horses' shoes are not removed, as the animals are generally used directly they land.

Horses to be embarked are drawn up by troops as near the point of embarkation as possible. Their saddles and harness are taken off and packed in large sacks, while they are provided with ship's collars.

No fewer than five men are required to saddle a horse quickly and well. One man holds the headstall, which is made fast to the ship's head-cable. Two men stand on each side of the animal and hold up the sling until the horse's legs leave the ground, and the two remaining soldiers stand at the head and tail to fasten the headstall and breeching respectively.

A horse on board ship eats 10 lb. of hay, 5 lb. of oats, 5 lb. of bran, and 1/2 lb. of vitægrain, and drinks allowance is half a gill of water, and eight gallons of water.

Sir James Wintlet, the premier of Newfoundland, will replace Mr. Morine, the dismissed minister of fisheries, by Mr. Goodridge, member for Twillingate.

America has 1,000,000 Jews; New York, 200,000.

**Certificate of Improvements.**

MABEL, TEXADA AND CHEMISTS

Situate in the Nanshan Mining Division of Nanshan District, which is made up of the islands of Nanshan, located on Lot 15, Texada Island.

Take notice that I, A. S. GOING, agent for J. A. Humbler, free miner's certificate No. 10,948; E. J. Palmer, free miner's certificate No. 10,949; and B. E. Johns, free miner's certificate No. 10,950, intend, sixty days from the date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for certificates of improvements, for the purpose of obtaining Crown Grants of the above claims, and further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such certificates of improvements.

Dated this 12th day of October, 1899.

A. S. GOING.

Notice is hereby given that an application will be made to the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, at its next session, for an Act to incorporate a company with power to construct, maintain and operate a railway from the mouth of the Fraser River, and the International boundary line, to the town of Chilliwack, and to extend the same to the town of Chilliwack, and to operate a railway from such last point through the Municipalities and Districts of Delta, Surrey, Langley, Matsqui, and Chilliwack to the town of Chilliwack, and such branch line in connection therewith, with all necessary equipment, machinery, tools, and to do all other things necessary and expedient to carry out the objects of the said Company.

Dated, this 29th day of November, A.D. 1899.

A. L. BELTRA, Solicitor for the Applicants.

Notice is hereby given that 30 days after date I intend to make application to the Honorable the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works for a special license to dig and carry away timber from the following described lands situated in the district of Chilliwack, to-wit: a 1/2 section north from French road and 3/4 miles in an easterly direction from the mouth of the Fraser River, thence southerly 50 chains, thence easterly 50 chains, thence northerly 50 chains to the point of commencement, containing 600 acres more or less.

JOHN J. MASON, Queen's Bench, B.C., Nov. 1st, 1899.

WANTED—We will pay \$12.00 a week salary to a man to go to the Midland to represent the Midland Monthly Magazine subscription solicitor. The Midland Monthly Magazine is a special issue of the Midland Monthly Magazine, published in London, and is now in its sixth year. It is the only Magazine of this kind published in Great Britain. The Midland Monthly Magazine is published by the Midland Monthly Magazine Co., Ltd., 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

Agents for the Applicants.

SEAGRAM'S PORT WINE

TAN SAN

MINERAL WATER.

Ambrusser Busch

MALT LAGER.

R. P. RITHET & CO., LTD.

WHOLESALE MERCHANTS,

LIQUORS, GROCERIES, CIGARS, ETC., ETC.,

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