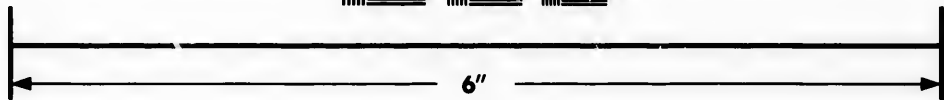
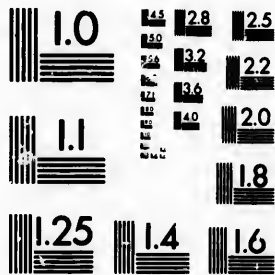


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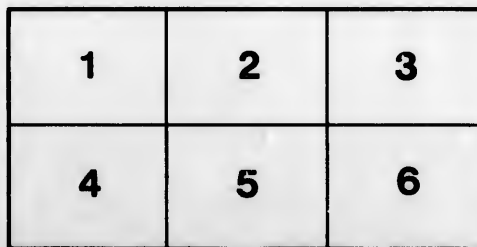
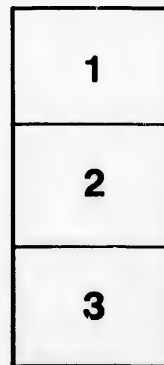
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A TRIP TO AND THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

BY J. H. AIKEN

“I hear the tread of pioneers,
Of nations yet to be;
The first low wash of human waves,
Where soon shall roll a sea.”

It is said that the gold fields of South Africa were known and worked in the days of King Solomon. Historians five hundred years before the birth of Christ speak of a country and its products that would indicate South Africa; but throughout the past ages the world at large has known very little about, and, in fact, has taken little or no interest in the southern part of the Dark Continent.

The average English reader has, for almost generations past, associated Africa with wild animals and war-like savages, with jungles and fever-infested districts, and with missionaries who have languished and died, far away from home and loved ones;—dark pictures and sad tales indeed. Few know or realize that all the southern part of the great continent of Africa has been wrested from the power of savagery; that trade, commerce, politics and art already flourish there; that it is a vast country with beautiful towns and villages, and even magnificent cities, with electric light and electric street cars; that it possesses the greatest diamond mines of the earth, and by far the richest gold fields yet known to the world; a place where law, order, and civilization will, after the present conflict, reign supreme, under the “Grand Old Flag,” that has braved for a thousand years the battle and the breeze.

It has remained for the old Boer president to be the means of enlightening the nations regarding this hitherto almost unknown part of the world. Truly, the great English novelist, Conan Doyle, is right in saying that the British nation ought to erect a monument as high as St. Paul's to Paul Kruger, who has made it possible for statesmen to solve the great African problem and bring about the long-hoped-for confederation of South Africa, and thus secure liberty, justice and equal rights to every white man south of the Zambesi, irrespective of race or creed.

Fifteen years ago this month, I left my home in Canada in a blizzard and was driven to the railway station through great banks of snow many feet deep, to commence my first journey to the "Land of the Southern Cross." To me, at that time, the starting to Africa, and the voyage there, was indeed a great event; everything was so new. New York, with its overhead railways, its hurly-burly and rush of business; the sea; the mighty deep in a storm; Liverpool, with its miles of docks and shipping; smoky Glasgow, with little children on its streets speaking the broadest of broad Scotch; beautiful Dublin, and glimpses of Irish life and character; historic Edinburgh; old London, with all its wealth and reeking poverty, were sights and experiences seen and felt for the first time, and made impressions that can never fade from memory.

Intensely interesting and novel as this part of the journey proved to be, we cannot take time in this brief narrative to enter into details; so let us proceed at once to the steamer—the "Roslin Castle"—lying at anchor in Dartmouth harbor, in the south of England, about to start on her long voyage to the Cape. On board, hundreds of men, women and children were hastily getting settled in their new quarters—their home for the next few weeks. Great

stacks of trunks, portmanteaus, handbags, boxes and parcels of every conceivable size and shape, deck chairs and baby carriages, were being carried about by two or three dozen energetic porters; while sailors galore were throwing on board tons of mail bags. The officers, working at high pressure, were seeing the last of the cargo and baggage stowed away, and everything from stem to stern in proper order; and the captain, performing the functions of host, was welcoming those who were to be under his roof, so to speak, and in his keeping, until landed in Africa. Several hundreds of the friends of the passengers were on board to see us off. All was bustle, excitement and confusion, when the third and last bell rang out the final warning of departure.

The last good-byes and fond farewells were being uttered, Jack's faithful and devoted sweethearts being much in evidence. The captain and pilot took their place on the bridge, the anchor was weighed, and, amid cheers and waving of handkerchiefs, enthusiasm and tears, the noble ship, obeying the propeller and helm, moves out; and soon the beautiful harbor, and the green cliffs of Devonshire, recede from view, and we are at sea.

Two great steamship companies, the "Castle" and "Union," each with large fleets of new, handsome and commodious passenger steamers, ply between England and South Africa. The voyage, which occupies from two to three weeks, is generally a most delightful one. There are several ports called at by different steamers, at various times. Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, is a magnificent city, beautifully situated, with clean, broad and well-paved streets, and possesses one of the finest catholic cathedrals in the world. Funchal, the capital of the Portuguese Islands of Maderia, is an exceedingly pretty and interesting place, although to the casual

visitor, the hundreds of beggars—the blind, the maimed the ragged and dirty—are in strange contrast to the beauties of nature, and the ocean of flowers, that make this little island of the sea such a delightful spot.

Leaving Madeira, the steamer seems like a huge conservatory of fruit and flowers; the passengers have become acquainted, and all are in the best of good humor. At this stage of the voyage, the weather is invariably fine, and the ocean like the proverbial "sea of glass;" and as there are many days' continuous sailing, the passengers feel that they are entirely cut off from the outside world, but that they constitute a little world of their own; and all seem to vie with each other in making it a bright and happy one. Lawyers, doctors, ministers, merchants, farmers and mechanics, all mingle together like the members of a happy family. Cricket, tennis, and athletic sports and games of all kinds, are in order by day; and cards, music, dancing and flirtations by night. So the days and nights go by. We pass the Canary Islands, gaze at the snow-capped peak of Teneriffe, towering 12,000 feet into the heavens, and, after crossing the equator, skirt Cape Verde, and for a few hours view the dim and distant shores of Western Africa. Thus we sail along, until one fine morning, we go on deck and find all excitement, for we are approaching the island of St. Helena, famous and interesting as having been for some six years the prison-home of the Great Napoleon. This lonely rock in the South Atlantic is likely to become even more interesting and famous, as the British are inviting the Boers' great fighting general, the redoubtable Cronje, and his friends, to pay it a visit. From St. Helena, we sail direct to Cape Town.

The popular verdict of travelers from all parts of the world,

is, that for beauty of scenery and general excellence of climate, Cape Town with its suburbs approaches perfection. Grand old Table Mountain, with its lofty and precipitous walls of granite, looming up some four thousand feet above the sea level, gives this important port and metropolitan city of South Africa, a unique and imposing appearance. The city reposes peacefully at the foot of the great mountain, in a sort of semi-circle extending for about twenty-five miles. It has in parts a somewhat Eastern aspect.

On landing at the docks, one's attention is immediately drawn to the hundreds of hansom cabs, driven by Malays and Cape Boys. These drivers are generally reckless, dare-devil sort of fellows, but are usually good horsemen. The "Cape Boy" is a sort of Creole or half-caste, a class quite numerous throughout the whole country. The servant population of many parts of South Africa is recruited largely from these "Cape" people, as they are called.

The population of Cape Town is decidedly cosmopolitan. Both British and Dutch are well represented; young men from all the colonies, as well as the enterprising Yankee, are there; and representatives from all the nations of Europe are to be found; in fact, all sorts and conditions of people, races and creeds; the Salvation Army lads and lasses with their barracks, the Jew with his synagogue, the Malay with his mosque. Of Cape Town it may truly be said that the East meets the West, and the old and new join hands.

Among the people of all shades of color, from ebony black to Saxon fairness, who are to be met with, the Malays, with their clear, olive-brown skins, dark, sparkling, heavily-shaded eyes, and gorgeous Oriental costumes, are decidedly the most picturesque. Their footwear still consists of the old wooden sandals of the East. The dresses of the women are not only striking, but often

immensely becoming. Over an apparently unlimited number of stiffly-starched petticoats, is worn a skirt of brilliant colors, attached to a bodice with full sleeves. Over the shoulders is worn a bright shawl, or large silk square. On the head is daintily arranged a smaller square, or silk handkerchief, of many colors, coquettishly fastened under the chin, and usually showing a few stray locks of curly, jet-black hair. They are, indeed, as one writer has aptly said, "the most rainbow-appareled feminines at present on view on this sublunary sphere." Their priests, however, present the most gorgeous appearance of all, with their snowy white silk turbans, arranged in true Oriental style, their long, full beards, and rich flowing robes of sacred green, or crimson silk, or plush, opening in front to show an underdress of purest white; their high-heeled patent leather shoes, worn on special gala days, and inevitable green umbrella, giving the finishing touches to a stately and striking costume.

A Malay wedding is only surpassed in interest by a Malay funeral, which is a brilliant spectacle, the defunct being carried in a sitting position, and buried on a hillside with his face turned towards Mecca. They practice polygamy, a custom which, in them, is tolerated by the Cape government, and they invariably keep four days each week for rest and holidays; yet they seem a happy, contented, and fairly-prosperous people.

To an American, accustomed to the sky-scrapers of Chicago and other cities of the United States, the buildings of Cape Town do not appear pretentious. This was especially true fifteen years ago, but the past decade has brought about marvelous changes. When I first went there, the population of Cape Town was about thirty or forty thousand, and a three-story building was almost a

novelty; while to-day there is a population of about one hundred and fifty thousand, and there are scores of fine four and five-story buildings. The general postoffice, in Adderley street (the main thoroughfare), is a splendid structure of five stories, built of Saldanha Bay stone. There is probably no building of the kind in Canada approaching it, either in cost, appearance and beauty of design, internal fittings, arrangements or convenience. The Standard Bank, next door, is a handsome and well-equipped building, and is the headquarters of a banking institution larger than anything of the kind in Canada, and which has over one hundred branches throughout the country. The House of Parliament, centrally and charmingly situated at the entrance of the beautiful Government Avenue, with a frontage of 264 feet, built principally of Paarl granite, and costing over \$1,000,000, is an edifice to astonish the average Canadian with the generally-accepted "Dark Continent" ideas.

The avenue just mentioned, with its rows of great, hoary oaks, is nearly a mile in length, and was planted by the early Dutch settlers, more than two centuries ago. It is flanked on either side by lovely botanical gardens and forest-like squares of huge oak trees.

The railway station, across the street from the postoffice, is a commodious structure, and is always a veritable beehive of life and animation. Residents of Cape Town are deservedly proud of their splendid suburban railway service. It is a most creditable, double-tracked line, well managed and equipped, and affords a large number of citizens an opportunity of attending to their daily vocations in the city proper, while residing many miles out in the beautiful suburbs; and this privilege is taken advantage of by

greatly increased numbers each year. As I have just said, Cape Town railway station is a decidedly busy place. I suppose that, including the suburban service, upwards of one hundred passenger trains arrive at, and depart from, this station daily. It is the southern terminus of the Cape government railways. The main line of the railway already extends inland about fourteen hundred miles, to Buluwayo, the headquarters of the government of Rhodesia, and the ancient capital of the old despot, King Lobengula; and in the near future, in all human probability, one will be able to take the train at Cape Town, and travel right through Africa to Cairo on Mr. Rhodes's great trans-continental line.

Cape Town possesses really charming and fashionable suburbs. Wynberg, Kenilworth, Claremont, Newlands, Rosebank and Rondebosch are almost smothered in verdure; while beyond, at Constantia, are extensive vineyards and fruit farms. On the seaboard side, suburban Cape Town is equally fortunate, Green Point and Sea Point being exceptionally favored localities. Some of the most beautiful coast scenery I have ever witnessed is to be found in that delightful drive through Sea Point, to Hout's Bay, and thence by rounding Table Mountain, returning to Cape Town by way of Constantia and Wynberg.

It is a most enchanting spot for the naturalist, the botanist, and the lover of flowers. There being no frost or snow the year round, there is no season of the year when the eye is not rested and delighted with the luxuriant foliage and bright flowers. On the slopes of Table Mountain are rich heaths in great variety and abundance, and higher up are numberless brilliant wild flowers, including a great many varieties of exquisite orchids. Beautiful arum lilies, by the acre, grow wild under the blue canopy of

heaven, while geraniums, poppies, zennias, gladioli, and a great many other familiar flowers grow in wild luxuriance.

Driving, cycling, or walking through the many delightful suburban roads and avenues, on either side are seen homes embowered in climbing roses and gay creepers. Gigantic cacti and century plants, occasional palms and tree-ferns, magnolias, moon-flowers, camelias and other shrubs of many colors intersect the lawns.

The surroundings of Cape Town are so delightful, that one would fain linger there; and were I to devote a whole chapter to it alone, I could not do full justice to its many interesting features. "Groote Schuur," the country residence of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, built away back in the seventeenth century, in true Dutch style, and for long years the residence of the famous old Dutch Governors of the Cape, lately destroyed by fire, and rebuilt on the exact model of the old building, together with the magnificent estate, and the zoölogical gardens in connection therewith, in which are found rare specimens of most of the birds and animals of Africa, would of itself be a subject worthy of a whole volume. I should add also that this estate, the private home and property of Mr. Rhodes, purchased and maintained at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars, is freely thrown open to the public at all times; while once or twice each week a trained band, composed of his employees, discourses sweet music to the hundreds of visitors. Dear old Cape Town! I always leave you with regret and return to you with feelings of delight.

However, we must proceed to other parts, many of which, unfortunately, have little to attract the eye, or satisfy the mind or the ambition of man. We now start on a journey by rail of some

six hundred miles, to the great diamond mines in the interior. Leaving Cape Town, a short run of about thirty miles brings us to Stellenbosch, a pretty, quaint, old Dutch town of about five thousand inhabitants; where may still be seen many old-fashioned, one-story, thatched-roofed houses, with wide halls, large rooms, and spacious verandahs, or "stoeps," as the Dutch call them. These old Dutch houses, which are wonderfully cool, and generally kept spotlessly clean, are quite common throughout this part of the Western Province. The town is beautifully situated, well-watered, and sheltered by low mountains. The slopes of these mountains are often well-wooded, and the valleys produce fruits and grain of all kinds in abundance, while great herds of cattle roam over the fertile pastures.

Proceeding on our way about thirty miles, we come to the town of Wellington, known by many throughout the English-speaking world as the home of that pious and devoted Dutch Reform minister, Rev. Andrew Murray, the gifted author of "Abide in Christ"—a work that is found in many homes and theological libraries the world over. What Martin Luther was to Germany, John Knox to Scotland, John Wesley to England, such is the Rev. Andrew Murray to South Africa; foremost in every work having for its object the moral, social, intellectual as well as spiritual advancement of the people. About a quarter of a century ago, Mr. Murray founded in Wellington a seminary for the daughters of South Africa, and teachers from America were engaged. This institution prospered, and to-day there are dozens of similar ones throughout the country. Many of the girls attending these seminaries have come from homes in the back districts, where, through adverse circumstances, ignorance prevails; where home life is dull and

gloomy, where there is neither literature nor music; and where the English language is held in contempt—homes of the tallow-candle age. But these young women are going back to these districts; and the new homes that they are establishing are centres of a better civilization and social life. The English language is spoken. Literature, music and art have a place. The electric light is taking the place of the tallow candle.

Stellenbosch and Wellington are typical of the towns and villages in this part of Cape Colony, known as the Western Province; throughout which are many large vineyards and wine farms. Life in these towns is quiet and restful, with none of the mad rush, and whirlwind of excitement, characteristic of many American towns; and a doctor would look in vain for a case of nervous prostration.

Max O'Rell says all the most beautiful landscapes of America are spoiled by great flaming advertisements of patent medicines, cure-alls for indigestion, and the sundry other ailments that afflict the over-energetic Yankee, who at midday puts up the card, "Gone to dinner—back in five minutes," on his office door. The genial Frenchman admonishes the American, and tells how his countryman under similar circumstances goes home at noon like a sensible man to spend an hour or two in the bosom of his family. The average Dutchman in these towns goes one better, for he locks up his place of business and goes home, not only for an hour for dinner, but to sleep for two or three hours in the afternoon. They are never in a hurry, their motto being "Wacht een bietje," that is, wait a bit.

Continuing our tour, we pass through most interesting, rugged, and romantic mountain scenery, where may be seen a wonderful

triumph of railway engineering; and, climbing by winding curves the slopes of the great Hex River Mountains, we find ourselves, immediately upon reaching the elevated plain known as the Great Karoo, at the small railway station called Matjesfontein—the chosen home for many years of that little woman of genius, Olive Cronwright Schreiner, the gifted author of the "Story of an African Farm," who has done more than any other writer to make life on the Karoo known to readers of the English language. Here also repose on the lonely hillside the remains of the late lamented General Wauchope, who fell while leading the ill-fated Black Watch in their famous charge at Magersfontein. The Karoo, which has been likened unto a huge elongated pan-cake, is a vast, treeless, trackless, sandy, barren-looking plain, crossed at intervals by chains of low, table-topped hills, and is most uninteresting and monotonous to the tourist; being made doubly so by its sudden and sharp contrast to the beautiful landscapes, green valleys, and rugged mountain scenery which we have just passed through.

Hour by hour, by day and night, the slow, tedious passenger train creeps along through an apparently interminable desert. The railway stations are mostly mere stopping-places; and are all so similar in appearance, and have such a striking family resemblance, that, when you have seen one, you have seen them all. The small towns and villages are few and far apart, and, strange to say, the railway appears to have been arranged so as to avoid them. Of farms, as understood and known to Canadians, there are none. The land is wholly unfettered by fences, and innocent of enclosures of any kind, and you travel mile after mile without seeing a single green shrub, tree, or human habitation. Yet you know, that, scattered all over this seemingly limitless expanse, are tens of thousands of

farmers, mostly of the Dutch class, living a life of extreme loneliness and isolation, which would be almost intolerable to the average Canadian or British farmer. The farms are immense, often consisting of ten, twenty or more thousand acres! and consequently the houses are so far apart that there is very little social life; and the education of the children is a problem difficult of solution, which, unfortunately in the past, has been seriously neglected, thus accounting for the superstition, the bigotry, the careless and filthy habits, and the hatred of the English, so characteristic of many of the Boers brought up in this school of ignorance.

Bare, barren, and desolate, as the Karoo seems, it is, however, much more hospitable and nourishing than appears to the casual tourist; and it is remarkable how well sheep and cattle thrive on the Karoo-bush, roaming at their sweet will over pastures not measured by acres, but square miles in extent.

Many times when traveling over the Karoo, especially in the old coaching days, while parched with heat, and choking with the dust kicked up by the ten tired mules dragging their weary feet along, and longing for cool shade, water and rest, I have been delighted with the sudden appearance in the distance, of beautiful little lakes, surrounded by buildings and weeping willows casting their shadows in the clear water, and hills, kopjes, and green sloping valleys in the background. They seem so real, so refreshing to view, that, as we jog along over the dry, dusty track, one can only very reluctantly be brought to realize that it is only the phantom of the plain, the much-talked-of mirage, so wonderfully common on the open veldt of South Africa.

But the longest railway journey, even on the Karoo, must end; so, after being two whole nights, and nearly two days, cooped up

with probably half-a-dozen other passengers in a space about six feet square, for the South African passenger cars are built on the English system of small compartments, which you enter from a door at the side, one is delighted to see the heaps of debris, and the small, corrugated-iron houses, and irregular streets of the "Camp," indicating that we are at last approaching Kimberley, the famed "diamond city" of Africa's plains; a spot on this earth, so unique and interesting in its history, that it would take a most facile pen, and whole volumes, to tell its story.

Away back, about the year '70, when that poor trader, bearing the familiar name of O'Reilly, bought for a song, and carried away, the bright pebble toy of a little child of the Dutch farmer, Van Niekerk, and sold it for the price of a good farm in Ontario, there commenced a new epoch in the history of South Africa. It is said that when O'Reilly got possession of this sparkling stone, not being at all sure of what it was, he forthwith proceeded to take both medical and spiritual advice; that is, he consulted a doctor and a bishop, who, after examination, pronounced it a genuine diamond; and such it proved to be. O'Reilly's luck was quickly followed by Van Niekerk's starting on the trail and getting possession, from a Kafir, of a white stone, which proved to be a gem of the first water, and which he sold for over \$50,000. This diamond, christened the "Star of South Africa," is now, I believe, in the possession of the beautiful Countess of Dudley.

Other rich finds followed in quick succession, and, as the news went abroad, gathering force and volume as it travelled, there commenced a rush of adventurous spirits, from not only all parts of South Africa, but also of mining, roving men from all over the world; and, almost instantaneously, there sprung up a town in the

wilderness, hundreds of miles away from the railway, with churches, theaters, hotels, clubs, and busy thoroughfares, and, I might add, with canteens almost as common as homes.

About this time, there went to the diamond fields, a tall, thin, delicate young man from one of the sheep farms of Natal, who had gone out to the Cape a year or so previously, on the advice of his physician, in the hope of, perchance, prolonging a life threatened with consumption. Quiet and unassuming in manner, thoughtful and studious of disposition, there was little about this young man to attract special attention; but there was in him the latent germ of greatness. Kimberley soon became too small for him. His name and work commenced to be talked of in Cape Colony, and then throughout all South Africa. His fame spread to England, and to-day his name is a household word in the four quarters of the globe. I refer to the Right Hon. Cecil J. Rhodes, the most admired, and best-hated man, in all South Africa. For a young man entirely without capital, and in delicate health at twenty, to accumulate a fortune of tens of millions of dollars; to control the great diamond industry, and be recognized as the "diamond king" of the world; to become Prime Minister of a British Colony; and, withal, to found a vast country (which bears his name) and present it to John Bull before reaching the age of forty, is a record that one would think ought to satisfy the most insatiate ambition of mortal man. But "Good old Cecil," as his friends are wont to speak of him, only sighed for more worlds to conquer; for, later on, when addressing thousands of his admirers in his beloved town of Kimberley, he assured them that he felt that his career was only just commencing. Truly, he is a most extraordinary man, and so great, that, as Mark Twain says, "when

he stands on Table Mountain, his shadow falls on the Zambesi." May his shadow never grow less!

History will have little to say of Rhodes, the millionaire, the Diamond King, or Prime Minister of the Cape; but he will be famous throughout the ages, as the greatest Empire-builder of the nineteenth century. He has opened up to civilization the vast territories of Matabeleland and Mashonaland, now bearing the name of Rhodesia—a territory larger than France and Germany combined, and which, in the coming years will be inhabited by millions of English-speaking people, over whom will float the British banner.

Leaving Kimberley another railway journey of about four hundred miles brings us to Port Elizabeth, the principal seaport town of the Eastern Province of Cape Colony, and often spoken of as the "Liverpool of South Africa." It is a pleasant place of about ten or fifteen thousand inhabitants, mostly British; with electric street cars, good substantial public buildings, pretty residential villas, and lovely botanical gardens, on what is called the Hill. The wool and ostrich feather markets are important features in the life of Port Elizabeth. The Karoo produces millions of dollars worth of wool each year, and here it finds a market. This port boasts the proud distinction of being the largest ostrich feather market in the world. All the large English, European and American firms send their buyers there, and the sales each year amount to millions of dollars.

Wheat, oats, barley, peas, fruit, and horses and cattle are raised in this part of the country, but the two main sources of wealth are sheep and ostriches. Many farmers have several thousand sheep, and often one hundred or more ostriches are to be found on a single farm. To Canadians, "ostrich farming" sounds some-

what romantic, but there the raising of these strange, majestic, fleet-footed and beautifully-plumed birds, is recognized as one of the staple industries of the country.

Under ordinary circumstances, the ostrich is a mild, inoffensive creature, indeed the female is always so; but during the nesting period the male bird is never disposed to be friendly; in fact, no lion of the desert, no tiger of the jungle, is more ferocious, or more savagely bent on the death of any who dare intrude on his domain. Shortly after my arrival in Africa, I was going up-country from Port Elizabeth, by train, when we came to a railway junction, where I had to wait about three hours to make connections. I decided to fill in the time by taking a walk out about two miles to a large ostrich farm, and making the acquaintance of the farmer and his birds.

I was going along quietly, when I observed, at the far end of a field by the road, a large black ostrich, which had also evidently observed me, and appeared anxious to make the acquaintance of a Canadian. He immediately raised himself to his full height (about ten feet, I should judge), spread his great wings, cocked his tail-feathers, and rushed toward me with the rapidity of lightning. I had little time to decide upon a course of action. I was taken so completely by surprise that I simply stood and faced the charging animal. There flashed through my mind the many sad stories of people being killed by ostriches. I felt that my time had come. On he charged, but stopped so suddenly at the low wire fence separating us, that I was astonished that he did not tumble over it. He could have stepped over it quite easily, for certainly it was not more than three feet high; but instead of that, he marched up and down, close to the fence, flopping his wings and stamping his feet, with every evidence of terrible rage. Then, suddenly, with a

sort of shriek, he threw himself violently upon the ground, and rolled over and over, as is their habit when greatly enraged. As a boy at school, I was the champion runner, and I have cups and prizes as evidence of my ability in that direction; but when that ostrich threw itself on the ground, then, dear reader, let me assure you, I broke all previous records.

On looking back, I remember that when I first landed in Port Elizabeth I considered the great tented wagons drawn through the main thoroughfares, by eight, nine or ten yoke of oxen, a most novel and curious sight.

The natives also appealed to me as intensely interesting, consequently my first Sabbath in South Africa found me an attendant at a Kafir church in this town. Such sights! Such sounds! What the Kafirs lacked of harmony in singing was amply made up for in volume and heartiness. The men's deep bass voices rolled out like peals of distant thunder. In the afternoon of the same Sunday, an American, who had lived for many years in Africa, called at my hotel, and invited me to accompany himself, his wife and lady friend, to the Kafir location. It was just what I wanted to see, so I gladly accepted the invitation. A few minutes' walk over a perfectly open country, literally covered with brilliant wild flowers, brought us to the hundreds of huts of the heathen Kafirs, in all their ancient, fig-leaf simplicity. It must have been a sort of gala day with them, for they had "beer drinking," war dances, throwing of assegais, and fighting galore. These drunken savages were in great contrast to their more civilized brethren of the church in the morning.

We now take steamer, and, sailing direct along the southern coast for about 500 miles, come to Durban, the seaport of the "Garden Colony" of Natal. Durban is also the principal clearing-

port for goods for the Gold Fields, some 500 miles inland. Natal, with its luxuriant and almost tropical vegetation, groves of bananas, fields of sugar-cane and pineapples, plantations of tea and tobacco, orchards of oranges, lemons, guavas, figs, and other sub-tropical fruits, can only be mentioned in passing on our way to invade the Transvaal, and the fabulously rich gold fields of the Rand.

On our way to Johannesburg, over the Natal Government Railways, climbing ever up and up, over ranges of mountains, we come to Petermaritzburg, the pretty capital of Natal, the home of many cultured and hospitable people. We cross the Tugela River; pass through Ladysmith, the scene of General White's heroic defense, the point to which the eager attention of the world has been drawn for months, and which will be historic throughout the ages; we view Bulwana Hill; the great rugged chains of the Drakensberg Mountains, and the kopjes and passes, now so familiar to Canadian readers. We pass Elandslaagte and Glencoe, and view Dundee and Talana Hill. Further on, we pass through the English town of Newcastle, which was taken possession of by the Boers, in the first days of the present war, and re-christened Viljoensdorp; then, passing through the tunnel at Laing's Nek, we see Majuba Hill; and so, reflecting on the struggles and slaughter that these places have witnessed, and the different stories they tell, we enter the Transvaal; and, passing along, hour by hour, over the prairie-like veldt, we find ourselves approaching the Johannesburg, of a year ago, on the Natal train, after nightfall.

Knowing that he is still nearly two hours from Park Station, his destination, in the center of Johannesburg, the stranger is startled by suddenly beholding millions of electric lights in front, and to the right and left, and everywhere. They burst upon one

as by magic. It is one of the most surprising spectacles that I have ever witnessed; and as you speed along mile after mile, with fresh lights looming up in all directions, as mine after mine is passed in rapid succession, you begin to realize the immensity of this greater Eldorado of the African veldt.

To say that Johannesburg is one of the most wonderful places on the face of the globe is putting it mildly. It is a city of gold, gold, gold. The people think of gold, they talk of gold, they dream of gold; Alas! too often their God is gold. In their haste for gold, the eager, anxious faces of the people, and the hustle, excitement, pell-mell and rush of the streets, more nearly resemble those of an American city, than does any other place in South Africa. Here, too, the contrast between affluence and poverty seems more marked than elsewhere. In Belgravia, one of the fashionable suburbs, all is wealth and luxury; beautiful homes, expansive grounds, costly equipages, stylish ladies, rich dresses, flashing diamonds; while in Fordsburg, close by, rags, dirt and abject poverty are to be found; people of all nationalities and shades of color, common thieves and harlots, being crowded in small tin shanties in unkempt, squalid confusion.

Society in "Johannesburg the Golden" is a rather mixed commodity, as might be expected in a place of such rapid growth and quickly-made fortunes. There is a decidedly strong element of the gay, gambling, fast, music-hall class; but the plain, work-a-day, home-loving, church-going citizen is, after all, in the majority.

Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, a small town of only ten or twelve thousand inhabitants, is thirty miles from Johannesburg. It is pretty without being pretentious, and so quiet and peaceful does it seem, resting in a green valley among sheltering

hills, that one would think it impossible for its inhabitants to bring about the turmoil, strife, and clash of arms that for months past have been the wonder of the world, and, for a time, threatened to overwhelm the Mother of Nations. It is not unlike an English town in appearance, but in language it is decidedly more Dutch than any other on the sub-continent. Here the struggle for predominance between the English tongue and the "Taal" is strikingly noticeable; commerce as ever favoring the former, and officialdom the latter. In common with all the other Dutch towns and villages in this land of gold and diamonds, there is a large Dutch Reform church in the centre of a public square; and here the streets radiate from it in all directions. Facing the square are most of the finest public buildings. The Raadzaal, or government buildings, built in a French style of architecture, is very handsome and commodious, and is crowned with a bronze statue of Liberty. Most of the government offices, and the two chambers of the Volksraad are accommodated in these buildings. The Grand Hotel, a fine three-story structure, is on the same side of the square; and opposite these are the Pretoria Club and the Temple of Justice; the latter a magnificent edifice not yet completed. On the other sides are the Post Office, the different banking institutions, the Public Library, and other blocks of stores and offices.

Towards the straggling, untidy end of one of the business streets, there may be seen every morning a smart little cavalcade, which pulls up sharply in front of the small, white cottage, that is dignified as the residence of the iron-willed despot of the republic. There is nothing about the place to mark it as different from those around it, save the presence of a couple of sentries pacing slowly up and down, and the two great white marble lions, which were

presented to the President by the late Barney Barnato, the ill-fated Jewish millionaire, which guard each side of the doorway. In front stands the state coach, with its four fine, prancing, chestnut horses, accompanied by a bodyguard of eight or ten mounted and armed men, in blue-trimmed gray uniforms. The footman holds the coach door open, while a rather rustic-looking, elderly, thickset somewhat stooped, but still vigorous figure, comes quickly and lightly down the steps and enters the carriage, which rolls rapidly away in the direction of the Raadzaal, accompanied by its outriders. In a very few minutes the government buildings are reached, the eager, bent figure in black frock coat and soiled silk hat, steps out, greets in the Taal his friends in the porch, and enters the building, the town clock strikes nine, the flag runs up over the Raadzaal, and the official day at Pretoria has begun.

During a visit to the capital a year ago, I had the pleasure of meeting the president personally. Fortunately, I had known for some time, Commandant Potgieter, the liberal-minded and progressive Burgomaster of Pretoria, and one of the most genial of men; and he kindly invited my wife and myself to accompany him to the presidency. With such a well-known escort, we passed the sentries unchallenged, and entered unannounced into the presence of His Honor, who was at that moment enjoying the solace of a pipe of strong Boer tobacco, after the morning session of the Volksraad. Beside him was a handsome cabinet, presumably filled with the fragrant weed. There was nothing very noticeable in the long, plainly-furnished and ordinary-looking room, except a fine portrait in oils of the old man himself, executed by the late Mr. Schroeder, an eminent artist whom I met in Cape Town when I first went there. I happened to be in Pretoria many years ago, and was the

guest of Mr. Schroeder at the time he was painting this portrait, and it reminded me now of the many interesting stories he had then related of the old Boer President. As we entered, Mr. Kruger rose and shook hands pleasantly; and through Mr. Potgieter, who acted as interpreter, the conversation commenced. He seemed greatly interested in our native country, and asked many questions about it. It is said that this astute old gentleman, who understands English thoroughly and speaks it passably, makes it a rule to talk to Englishmen through an interpreter, so as to gain time to consider what is best to say. Seeing him thus closely, he gives one an impression of great natural fire and impetuosity, hidden most of the time behind the impassive exterior of the typical, stolid Boer. He seemed to think it very strange that having lived so long in the country I could not speak Dutch; but telling him that I was too old and too busy to learn it myself, but would have my children do so, we withdrew, and passed out into the brilliant sunshine, leaving our host, presumably, to the enjoyment of his midday meal.

Pretoria possesses a well-equipped tram line, as the street railways are called out there, which takes one across the river to the pretty little suburb of Sunnyside, where some very fine residences are to be seen. Joubert Park is a lovely spot, with fountains, and ponds, and magnificent trees, presenting a very beautiful appearance, especially when illuminated. Small as the capital of the Transvaal is, its society is divided into cliques; the Hollander (as they are called locally) and Africander ladies jealously vying with each other in the taste and richness of their dress, their style of equipage, and the elegance and costliness of their entertainments. Frocks from Paris and London, and carriages built in Bond street,

are of common occurrence. What is known as the Boer element has no place in society. The President himself belongs to the old school, retires invariably about eight o'clock, and takes no interest whatever in the frivolities of fashionable society.

The ubiquitous Scotchman is well represented here, and forms a very important and prosperous part of the population. It is essentially a social and hospitable place, and, were it not for the presence of the guns frowning from the strongly fortified hill-tops, and the huge arsenal and barracks, which are constant reminder, of the ruling power, it would be an ideal spot in which to spend a restful, peaceful life. Apparently no one worries or works hard—that is all done for them by the toilers and hustlers of Johannesburg, who have made it possible for the government officials and employees to live a life of ease and affluence, "far from the madding crowd."

What the future holds in store for this place, who can tell? Here, last September, the members of the Volksraad, assembled in session, after much discussion and prayer, adjourned to undertake a task which they have not as yet completed. They parted, apparently hopeful, in the significant words of their chairman "until we meet again."

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