

Bound for Pretoria

Letter One

At the request of a great number of friends I am writing an account of the travels of the Bishop of Pretoria and party, and at the outset wish to state that I alone am responsible for all that will be written; and further, that I can only undertake to record facts, time forbidding the use of "padding" and those pretty-pretties which go so far to make travels interesting.

8th AUGUST 1878—The steam-tug the "Fawn" took a great number of passengers and friends from Southampton Dock to the good steamship "Danube," which lay in seven fathoms of water opposite Netley Hospital. Perhaps I had better here say who the future "we" includes when speaking of the Pretoria Party. The following, then, make up the interesting group:—The Bishop of Pretoria, Mrs. Bousfield and eight children, two ladies, two clergymen, two theological students, one servant, and a mason and his wife—in all nineteen.

The farewell scene was very striking. All went well while cabins and saloons were being inspected, but when the bell rung for friends to leave the Danube tears sprang to the eyes of nearly every one.

At 3.15 in the afternoon we hove up anchor and in five minutes we were going ahead at full speed. Southampton was lost sight of, then Hythe, Netley Abbey and Castle, and those two long lines of perhaps the prettiest—and to us the dearest—scenery in England.

Cowes was passed at 4.10, the pilot left at 5.20, and this last incident made us feel that we really were on a 6,000 mile voyage to Natal. The remaining portions of familiar scenery were greedily devoured. Yarmouth, Hurst Castle, the white sands, chalk cliffs, and purple heather of the Isle of Wight, the charming mansions that peep out from thick woods, the fields of corn ripe for harvest, Alum Bay, the Needles, and then came something more digestible—dinner served up at 6.30 to about 40 persons.

At nine o'clock Portland lights were passed, at twelve we sighted Start Point, the other side of Torquay. Upon the Start stands a lighthouse exhibiting a very powerful revolving light, and showing a bright flash every minute seaward. It is said that it may be seen in clear weather at the distance of 19 miles.

About 3 o'clock on Friday morning a pilot came on board to guide us to the largest harbour in South Britain—Plymouth Sound. The entrance to Plymouth Sound lies between very large and remarkable rocks, called Newstone and Shagstone. The noted Breakwater is 5,000 feet long. At its west end is a lighthouse showing a red light, on the east end is a beacon, a granite obelisk, surmounted by a staff and ball. This ball is so constructed that ten persons might find shelter within, should they be cast away on the Breakwater.

In the wake of the fog we came to anchor in seven fathoms of water and thirty fathoms of chain. A fathom, I may remark, is six feet.

As early as six on the morning of Friday, several of us pacing the deck thought that "a shilling to go ashore, Sir," was too good an offer to be refused. A twenty minutes' row brought us to Plymouth Old Town. The row through the Sound was a great treat. Some sixty boats were at anchor, the occupants of each, always two—one at the bow and one at the stern—were fishing; and about 40 large smacks,

having deep red sails, were cruising about, returning home from a night's pilcher fishing. The crew of each—4—leave shore about 12 each morning, and return at eight the following morning, with at least 50,000 fish.

Our row took us past the "Hesperus," having 500 emigrants on board, past a German Man-of-War, and a second ship of emigrants.

After breakfast on shore a tram-car took us to Devonport Dockyard, where visits were paid to the ropery, smithery, steam mills, houses for masts, chains, boats, &c. Returning to Plymouth the fine church of St. Andrew's engaged our attention. It has some very interesting monuments dating from 1583. The building is capable of holding 3,000 persons. Of course the Guildhall and block of municipal buildings stands head and shoulders above all other buildings, and much time was spent in examining the beautiful windows of painted glass.

A stroll on the Hoe finished our land cruise. The view from this far famed parade is just a little too lovely for me to attempt to describe.

At 12.40 the "Sir Walter Raleigh" brought us to the "Danube," and at 1.15 we were going slow ahead. At 2.30 Eddystone Lighthouse was ahead. A moderate breeze springing up, we most naturally hoisted up our main and square sail. Later on wisdom suggested that the fore-sail and fore-trysail should be boon companions to the mainsail, but I grieve to state that at 10.45 p.m. they had to be lowered. Our speed increased from 6 knots at three to 11 knots at eight o'clock.

Perhaps you will be surprised to find that even then we had become old salts, and sang before bedtime right lustily:

"A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies,
And leaves old England on the lee! "

SATURDAY, 10th AUGUST—Has a history all its own. Perhaps I had better not tell tales out of school, but know that we were in the dreaded Bay of Biscay!

With reference to my career, I started well with a bath, but it was never intended that I should go below that day. From one o'clock in the morning we had been going at the rate of 10 knots per hour, but at 11 o'clock we could only make 3½ knots. I should never in my worst moments have accused the Danube of playing us such tricks. The day before I had said—

"Give to me the morning breeze
And white waves heaving high,

The world of waters is my home,
And a merry man am I.”

But now I dared not go below—not that I was ill, O dear, no; but that I felt uneasy! That morning, of 40 passengers two only sat down to breakfast. The effects of the vibration, the rolling and pitching, amounted to the ridiculous. Amongst the amusing incidents I may mention a gentleman pitched from his seat onto the floor, and two were completely drenched by a heavy sea breaking over them. There appeared to be only a few yards of safe deck. The wind kept increasing, sails were close reefed, seats lashed to posts, decks quite cleared and the cannon could hardly be kept in their places.

Of the damage done I will let the log tell its own tale. “Shipped a heavy sea, smashing pig-stye, fore-saloon companion, chart table, side light screen, and breaking bridge rail.”

I hasten to say that the pig smoked the pipe of peace that night in the 1st class smoking saloon. Deep regret was felt for his sad loss.

It was the hurricane that kept myself and five others on deck all day—the rest of 40 passengers kept to their cabins. To go below was fatal; so meals were brought up on deck to us. Personally I did not feel ill, and, whilst suffering from a little sea sickness, was enabled to enjoy a very superb sight.

On, over countless miles of angry space rolled long heaving billows. Mountains and caves are here and yet are not, for what is now the one is now the other; then all is but a boiling heap of water. Pursuit and flight, and mad return of wave on wave, and savage struggling, seething and spouting up of foam. Yet the gallant Danube struggled with the elements, her tall masts trembling and her timbers starting on the strain. Onward she goes—now high upon the curling billows—now low down in the hollows of the sea, as hiding for the moment from its fury. Oh, these waves! one is never tired of looking at them. Now in anger they rise up above each other’s hoary heads to look at us, in their eagerness to get at us they press each other down, till high over us they break, and round us surge and roar, and giving place to others, moaningly depart and dash themselves to fragments in their baffled anger.

There was one thing that made all this pleasant—the conviction that all would be well. True there seemed to be a million voices from the sea—a wild uproar—a remorseless dash of billows. True the sea yawned around us like hell, and the huge ribs of our vessel quivered on the yeast of waves, but the common-sense reflection came that we were as safe on sea as on land, so we took to pitying the poor landlubbers, and sincerely trusted that the chimney pots flying about your streets produced only the minimum of harm.

From noon on Friday to noon Saturday we made a run of 206 miles, in doing which 25 tons of coal were burned. One thing I greatly admired during the gale was the promptness with which damages were repaired. No sooner did a ship’s boat threaten to leave us than the whistle of the officer on duty brought up a band of seamen—in fact, nothing escaped notice and very close scrutiny. Four passengers appeared at lunch, and six at dinner, and to conclude a strange day’s history, nine p.m. found every passenger housed in his cabin for the night.

SUNDAY, 11th AUGUST—I only discovered that it was Sunday the 11th when I saw the Bishop of Pretoria in his robes coming on the quarter-deck at 10 a.m., attended by Dean Green and Archdeacon Usherwood. A very appropriate sermon was preached by the Bishop.

We sighted land on the port bow at 10.45 a.m.—the coast of Portugal. The discovery caused strange emotion, for we had almost forgotten that there was such a thing as “terra firma”. At noon we were in latitude 43.38, and longitude 9.35, and since noon on Saturday had run 247 miles, our speed varying from 10 to 10½ knots per hour. In case the term ‘knot’ puzzles any, let me say that 60 knots are equal to 69 miles.

At 8 p.m. Divine Service was held in the saloon. The Dean of Maritzburg preached. At these services, as at daily morning and evening prayer, 2nd and 3rd class passengers attend.

MONDAY, 12th AUGUST—The majority of us are now well, and this is the first day of our studies. I will give details now, and from them you will see once for all the sort of life we daily lead.

At six a.m., a cup of tea or coffee is brought into my cabin with “Here’s your coffee, Sir; and its 6 o’clock and very fine.” So I turn out, and after drinking it and eating a biscuit make for the bath on the middle deck. Study 7 to 8; 8 to 8.30 pace the deck for an appetite; 8.30 breakfast; 9 to 10 study; 10 morning prayer in the saloon. About 30 attend, and we have a piano-forte accompaniment to the hymn. Ten-thirty to 11.15 a.m. I am examined in my studies by the Bishop; 11.15 to 12 studies; 12 to 12.30 again pace the deck for an appetite; 12.30 lunch; then free till 3; 3 to 5 studies; 6 dinner; and after that—anything!

At noon we had traversed since the preceding noon 254 miles, and then found ourselves opposite to Lisbon.

TUESDAY, 13th AUGUST—At 12 we had done 251 miles, and were on a level with Gibraltar. The only incident of the day was passing very close to the steamship “Retriever,” or Telegraph ship. We exchanged civilities with her by running up our flag and dipping it three times. We had seen some eight vessels per day at distances of from 15 to 30 miles, but this incident was quite exceptional.

WEDNESDAY, 14th AUGUST—This was a gala day. At 3.40 a.m., the Islands of Desertas had been sighted, and about 10 we were passing the Island of Porto Santo, a dependency of Madeira, with a population of about 1,700 persons. It is 6¾ miles in length, its mean breadth is 2½ miles, and its circuit 17 miles. The N.E. part consists of rocky pointed mountains, some nearly 1,700 feet in height. All its north coast has high inaccessible cliffs, with detached rocks at their bases. The South has a beautiful white sandy beach. The island produces wine, grain, and vegetables, and plenty of live stock and poultry. Next we passed a narrow rocky islet called Desertas. They have no permanent inhabitants.

Then came the beautiful island called Madeira, which is reported to have been discovered in 1844. It is of volcanic origin, and is very little more than a collection of mountains, the highest of which is 6,056 feet. From our vessel some all too lovely views were obtained of ridges of peaks, stupendous ravines; white clouds were resting on majestic cliffs. Part of the cliff was brilliant with the morning rays of the sun whilst another part frowned blackly. Near the coast cultivation may be found, but scarcely in another place. Vines form the chief feature, and every European and tropical luxury may be found here. Green patches are scattered over the darkened soil, even to the top of the highest peaks. This mountain verdure is really groves of heath and broom, which grow almost to the size of forest trees. The cliffs, which are often 2,000 feet high, are interrupted by a few small bays where a richly cultivated valley approaches the water between abrupt precipices, or surrounded by an amphitheatre of rugged hills.

These narrow bays are the sites of the villages of Madeira. The length of the island is 31 miles and the breadth is 12 miles.

I must abruptly conclude this sketch with this assurance that we are enjoying the voyage immensely.

My next will contain minute details of life on board the "Danube," the history of the vessel, and sketches of characters.

Letter Two

THURSDAY, 15th AUGUST—At noon we were off the Canaries. Our run was 249 miles since the preceding noon. On board all calculations seem to be made at noon, after which another day commences. The event of the day was the first of a series of entertainments I am getting up. I give the programme, as it will prove interesting to those who know the Pretoria Party.

Pianoforte Duett "Oberon" Mrs and Miss Milner

Song "The Bridge" Mrs Green

Duett "The Larboard Watch" Revs. C.M. Spratt and A. Roberts

Reading "The Fall of Wolsey" The Bishop of Pretoria

Song "For Ever" Miss Chapman

Glee "Glorious Apollo" The Bishop of Maritzburg, Dr. Bouner,
and Rev. C.M. Spratt

Song "Still I Love Thee" Mr. F. Dowling

Duett "I know a Bank" Misses Chapman and Dowling

Reading "Selection from 'Alice in Wonderland'"
The Rev. Archdeacon Usherwood

Song "My Ratling Mare and I" The Rev. C.M. Spratt

Glee "Breathe Soft, ye Winds" Bishop of Maritzburg, Rev. C.M. Spratt,
and Dr. Bouner

Song "Nancy Lee" Mr. H. Adams

Duett "I would That My Love" Bishop of Maritzburg and Mr. Green

NATIONAL ANTHEM

All on board were invited to attend, and everyone seemed well pleased at the hours' entertainment, and this pleasure was not lessened by the Captain's invitation to partake of refreshments in the Saloon at its conclusion.

FRIDAY, 16th AUGUST—Caught some flying fish and a canary. This day is a fair representative of many we have since had, in which we see nothing save waves and sky—neither a sail nor a piece of land to vary the view.

I will give a short sketch of life on board. In my first paper I mentioned how the studios spend their days; but all on board are not studios. We have, I think, 46 first-class passengers. Of these 16 belong to the Pretoria party, and 9 to the Maritzburg party. The latter includes the Bishop, Dean, and Archdeacon of Maritzburg. Of the 46, 13 are children, 7 clergymen, and 15 ladies. The second and third-class passengers number 32.

Stroll through the ship with me, and let us see how the inmates of the Danube kill time.

It is about 5 o'clock in the evening, and the Stewards are busy preparing the Saloon for dinner on the quarter deck. The scene is varied. There are passengers asleep, two are studying German, one Dutch, one Greek, three ladies are learning the Zulu language, two nurses are amusing a group of children with picture books and toys; under a large boat a lady is teaching some older children the three "R's." Lounging in easy chairs some five ladies are supposed to be busy at needlework. The two Bishops and the Dean are pacing the deck. The captain, on the easiest of easy chairs, is reading, guarded by his faithful retriever, "Sailor".

Below, a lady is at the piano, playing the accompaniment to "My rattling mare and I," for a tenor friend of ours. At mid-ships a host of merry children are taking turns at the swing the captain has kindly put up for them.

Continuing our stroll "for'ard" we pass the butcher's shop, the kitchen or galley, and the baker's house. Just now the workers in these shops are very busy preparing the good things of this world for our dinner. Stewards are washing plates and dishes. Seamen, not on watch, are lying on deck smoking or "larking" with each other.

We are now at that portion of the ship allotted to 2nd and 3rd class passengers. Here again as on the quarter-deck, we find every provision made for the accommodation and comfort of the passengers. They have the use of the deck as far aft as the engines, i.e. two-thirds of the whole ship. Awnings are spread and seats are out for them, and as the fore-part of the ship is not affected by the screw or any effluvia from the necessary nuisance of the engines, it is, in fact, the most comfortable part of the ship. The second-class saloon is a beautifully finished affair, and, as is usual with this line of steamers, no expense is spared to make everything as comfortable as can be. One of the officers dine every day with the third-class passengers to see that everything is as it should be.

Nearer mid-ships are pens of cattle, including six horses, a Spanish donkey, six pigs, about 30 sheep, some very lively cocks and hens, and the cow that gives us our daily milk. Close by is the smoking saloon for first-class passengers, occupied now by gentlemen who add to smoking, reading, chess, cards, and gossip.

Returning to the quarter-deck we find the scene is changed, and passengers are playing draughts, backgammon, chess, go-bang, and ship-quoits. After lunch the passengers resolve themselves into cliques, and each clique is read to by some self-denying gentleman for an hour or two. I must not forget to mention two favourite classes held each afternoon by the Bishops of Pretoria and Maritzburg, for the study of the Prayer-book and Greek Testament, with an attendance of 15 and 9 respectively.

The laziest time on board is after dinner, when it is too hot to remain in the saloon, so all are driven to gossip or to spinning yarns. The loudest rings of laughter are heard at this time. Here, again, there are those of us who contemplate the sky and sea—

“O! it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily persuaded eyes,
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould,
Of a friend’s fancy; or, with head bent low,
And cheek aslant, see rivers flow of gold,
’Twi’ crimson banks; and then a traveller, go
From mount to mount through cloudland, gorgeous
Land.”

With Shakespeare—

“Sometime we see a cloud that’s dragonish:
A vapour, sometimes, like a bear, or lion,
A tower’d citadel a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon’t that not unto the world,
And mock our eyes with air.”

We have had some loveliest nights, and few have cared to leave the splendour of the moon, the majesty of waves, and the delicious breeze for the confinement of the cabins below.

As there is nothing special to write about Saturday, I pass on to

SUNDAY 18TH AUGUST—At 7.15 the Holy Communion was administered to about 16 passengers. The offertory, which amounted to 27s, was devoted to the funds of “The Merchant Seamen’s Orphan Asylum,” London.

At 9 o’clock we cast anchor in the largest and best bay of the Cape Verde Islands, Porto Grande, in the Island of St. Vincent. Prayers were read at 9.30, after which we made preparations for landing. Prior to this we found ourselves surrounded by noises of a most deafening description. No sooner was the anchor dropped than four barges were alongside discharging cargoes of coals. The quarantine boat with its official came to see if we had a clean bill of health, and directly he left a scene ensued that to us was

of a very novel kind. Some 15 rowing boats were hotly contending with each other as to which could get nearest to our ladder. Here, for the first time, we saw the black race "at home";—saw them (but with few exceptions) unadorned by dress of any kind. The shrieks and yells of these natives as they fought for the honour of being the first to board were truly deafening. A little management, and then some came on the ship; the agent of the Union Steamship Company, tradesmen, and then the native vendors of bananas, apples, cocoa-nuts, oranges, birds, and strings of small shells. We landed about 10.30.

St. Vincent is one of the Cape Verde Islands. These Islands derive their name from the nearest point of the coast of Africa, and were discovered, it is said, in 1450, by a Genoese.¹⁸ They consist of ten islands and several small islets. Of these isles the largest is St. Iago, the chief town of which is the seat of Government. In 1851 the population was estimated at 85,393. Salt is the principal article of commerce. Porto Grande is the first port in this archipelago. The island of St. Vincent is 11 miles long from east to west, and about six miles broad. It has two chains of mountains which form a central valley that terminate in the bay of Porto Grande. The general aspect of it is mountainous, with sharp peaks. The coast is rocky, and rises abruptly, but the tide ebbing leaves a sandy beach. The general character of the island is volcanic. The interior is formed by ranges of hills of different heights.

Porto Grande bay is capable of holding 300 sail of large ships, is well sheltered under the high lands, and has a very fine appearance. In 1822 the population of Porto Grande did not exceed 100, but I should say that it has 700 at the present day. Of this number about 40 are Portuguese, 40 English, and the remainder negroes who originally came from Africa. The officials of the place are Portuguese—the troops—negroes commanded by Portuguese—muster 100. All the negroes on the island are free.

The island has risen importance during the last 15 years, being used as a coaling and refitting station, as well as an excellent place for safe anchorage. The soil is very dry and sterile. The view we had of the island was unique. The houses were without plantations, and with the exception of a few palm trees and a few patches of green on a mountain's side, it had the appearance of a large rock. And yet from our vessel the view was pleasant. The blue waters of the bay were motionless; below a bold series of rocky peaks lay the little town with its quays, Custom House, Governor's Palace, Church of Leopoldina, and white houses with red tiles and green shelters.

In the bay was a vessel from the North of England with coals; a vessel from the Pacific which had sprung a leak; a Portuguese vessel with mahogany and ground nuts; a French vessel from Brazil, coaling; a vessel from Liverpool, running to the Brazils with general cargo; and slowly steaming in came a vessel from France, having on board 40 passengers who had got up a little excursion round the world, for which they had paid £800 each. We exchanged field-glass views with them, but later on, not content with this, they would fain have given us money for ice, but our captain said "not so!"

Six negroes rowed us to shore in the good boat "Flor-di-bahia," for 9d each, and after a quarter of an hour's pull we landed and struggled through the so-called streets. With the exception of the Church, Governor's House, Telegraph Station, and one or two houses, the streets consist of rows of rude cottages made chiefly of stone, and many of them have only earthen floorings. At the doors of these cottages were negro women dressed in the gayest of colours. Some preferred scarlet dresses, others blue, but none black. Their head gears were generally the most fantastic feature of the costume, and consisted of the turban, in every hue of the rainbow. After going into a few shops we went over to the Barracks. The soldiers wear French hats, black serge jackets and duck trousers, and are armed with the Enfield rifle.

Our last visit was paid to the Telegraph Station—a large and very pretty house with a verandah, and Union Jack flying from the flagstaff. The clerks number 13, and are all English. I received much kindness from them, and no small amount of information. Of course they belong to the “upper ten” in St. Vincent, and their balls are always attended by the Governor. A few weeks ago they played a cricket match with the officers of an English man-o-war, and gave them a good thrashing. Next to the Union Jack the things that charmed me most and reminded me of my long stay in England were some pretty etchings of “Her only playmates,” “Looking back,” “Violet,” “I’ve been roaming,” and “Our Gardener.” The price of a telegram to England is about one dollar per word. The dollar is the favourite coin here on account of the chief business being with Americans, who chiefly use St. Vincent. The hours of business at this office are from nine till six.

Before returning to the Danube I visited a few wells (water here, like vegetation, is very scarce), and watched the women drawing water and washing. They sing as merrily over their work as “sandboys,” and taking their pipes from their mouths cracked many a joke in their native tongue at my expense.

I think that all of us were on board at 12.30 to lunch, for the island did not merit a long tour. Amusement, however, was by no means at an end. From one till six the sides of our vessel were lined with passengers watching the antics of the negroes. Among their other accomplishments they dive to great depths, never failing to obtain the sixpence you throw in the water some yards away from their reach. As sixpences became scarce, coppers were thrown in with the same results. Two boats containing negro divers remained near to the last. Each boat had about six negroes from the ages of five to eight. At first I was much astonished to see such brats managing a boat in the way they did, but after being met by fifteen such swimming a good distance from land to meet our rowing boat, and after watching their numerous and clever antics in the water I was surprised at nothing.

The Danube had reduced her stock of coals down to 792 tons. They were probably bought at 15s per ton, but here 240 tons were put on board at about 30s per ton. I should have imagined that the men must have been smart to have put 240 tons on board in 9 hours. At 7.30 we hove up anchor, and left the pretty bay and its grotesque background of rugged rocks. By-the-bye one of the rocks is called “Washington’s Head,” on account of its summit bearing a strong resemblance to the head of that famous man.

It is probable that some on board had forgotten that it was Sunday, but the Bishop of Maritzburg brought all to at least keep the last hours of the Sabbath holy by preaching from the words “There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.” Corinthians 1, 10th chapter, 13th verse.

MONDAY and TUESDAY were only famous for excessive heat, which rendered studies almost impossible, and made many search for what could not be found—a cool spot.

Letter Three

WEDNESDAY 21st AUGUST—For the last nine days the sea has been quiet as a mill-pond, but today

“The south and west winds joined, and as they

blew,

Waves, like a rolling trench, before them threw,

Sooner than you read this line did the gale,
Like shot, not fear'd till felt, our sails assail;
And what at first was called a gust, the same,
Hath now a storm's, anon a tempest's name,
Come confined in their cabins lie, equally
Grieved that they are not dead and yet must die;
And as sin burdened souls from gave will creep,
At the last day, some forth their cabins peep,
And tremblingly ask—What news?"

Many got on deck, but only to feel thoroughly ill, and few sat down to meals.

FRIDAY, 23rd AUGUST—Crossed the Equator during the hours of sleep. Some asserted that they felt the vessel striking it!

SUNDAY, 25th AUGUST—The Holy Communion was administered at 7.15 by the Bishop of Maritzburg. At 10 there was a full muster of the crew, Morning Prayer being said directly after the roll was called by the Dean of Maritzburg. The lessons were read by the Revs. C.M. Spratt and the Bishop of Pretoria preached from the words—"What! know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?"

The sermon in the evening was preached by the Rev. J.W. Alington, a gentleman who is on his way to Utrecht to reconnoitre the field which is now a subject of dispute between Cetwayo and the British Government, with the view of establishing a permanent mission of the Church of England there if possible.

MONDAY, 26th AUGUST—The Danube Serenaders gave an entertainment this evening amidships. Awnings were so rigged up that a good concert hall awaited "ye brack niggers." All hands were piped, you may easily imagine. The saloon passengers were accommodated with stalls, and the others stood in rows. The "Serenaders" were some of the Stewards, aided by Joe Bagstock and friend. After the usual "yah, yah" and rattle ob de bones, the overture was played by the band. The band consisted of a piano, concertina, bones, and the toast rack—the latter doing duty for triangles.

The programme was as under.

Overture	The Band
"Cheer up Sam" Squash	
"Ring, ring de Banjo"	Pompey
"Three little niggers"	Joe Bagstock
"The old log cabin"	Pompey
"Dr Gregory, Bolus Squill"	Julius

“Never look behind” Squash

Step Dance Bones

“Mulligan Guards” Jumbo

While Pompey was repeating for the fourth time his request to be put in his little bed (all beds on board are little, we have discovered!) Bones, I grieve to say, fell from sleeping. We mentally hoped that he his “evening prayer had said.” The step dance was cleverly executed, and the songs “Dr Gregory” and “Mulligan Guards” went off well. Of course, we had many a joke between the songs—“Bones, I got small question to ax you.” Bones naturally gubs it up. I could mention many excellent sallies of wit, but space prevents. The second part concluded with the screaming farce entitled “The Kafir Barber,” which made the most morose laugh.

TUESDAY 27th AUGUST—At 8.30 p.m., our first dance commenced, and was kept up till after midnight. The quarter-deck looked very gay with flags, and was rendered very comfortable by side and sky awnings. Lanterns were numerous, as were seats—in fact, nothing was wanting. Iced claret was handed around at intervals by the Stewards, and that and a jolly spread, which included chicken, ducks, tongue and ham, iced creams, jellies, tartlets, champagne, sherry, &c., was generously given by Captain Draper, to whom very hearty cheers were given before all separated.

I must say here that musical talent on board is very scarce, and this makes it so difficult for me to get up programmes. The two concerts, Negro entertainments, and the dance have kept me occupied for hours every day. Our dance programme commenced as follows:—Quadrille, Polka, Lancers, Galop, Waltz, Mazurka, Polka, Galop, Quadrille, a few others, and Sir Roger de Coverly brought a very jolly evening to a close.

THURSDAY 29th AUGUST—Our second concert took place in the evening, and was considered very nice, programme as under—

Song “The Dream” Miss Dowling

Duet “What are the wild
waves saying?” Miss Chapman and Mr Adams

Song “They face” Rev. C.M. Spratt

Reading “A night in a belfry” The Rev. Dean Green

Song “Thy voice is near” Miss Taylor

Glee “Canadian boat song” Bishop of Maritzburg, Rev C.M. Spratt and
Dr. Bonner

Song “Walter’s Wooing” Miss Bamber

Song “Go, forget me” Mr. Dowling

Reading "The Chameleon" Rev. J.W. Alington
Duet "Tell us where shall we find" Miss Taylor and Miss Chapman
Song "Dreams of Youth" The Bishop of Maritzburg
Song "The Sailor's Bride" Miss Chapman

NATIONAL ANTHEM

After the display of loyalty on our part, the Captain displayed his usual kindness in inviting us to a spread similar to the one after our first concert. But to-night we have more to see—some very clever conjuring by a passenger—and yet more. I am strolling on deck with the captain, when suddenly he blows his whistle, and up comes the Quarter-master, who is sent for rockets and blue lights. You may be certain that all hands are soon piped, and we testified our great delight by exclaiming, as they do at the Crystal Palace—"Oh!"—after each ascent of a rocket, when the sea was lit up by blue lights, or when the Devil cut capers among the tailors. Lights are allowed to-night an hour later.

I have been trying to get up a newspaper on board to be called "The Danubian Express," but there is not quite enough "go" in the passengers for that; surely the following should have been responded to.

PROSPECTUS

"This paper will be devoted to the cultivation of polite literature; the chronicling of interesting occurrences; the interchange of wit and humour, and the advocacy of all matters connected with the Danubian Principality.

It will be a joint stock concern, conducted on the most approved principles of limited liability, in which the Editor will be made responsible for any injury, fancied or real, which may arise from the admission of any article into its columns.

Damages can only be claimed after award by jury after a fair trial in regular form. All contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged. Those accepted by the editor to be paid for at their value as assessed by the authors, out of the accumulated funds of the company.

Original poetry to be paid for at double the rate of prose, for the encouragement of the muse, on a scale inversely to merit.

Announcements of Births, Deaths, and Marriages at the usual rates.

The fair readers of the "Danubian Express" may rest assured that particular attention will be given to the latest MALE news.

Given a lively set of passengers, and a paper of this sort is a capital source of amusement; some undertake to write the advertisements, others contribute reviews of books that were never written, plays that have never yet been concocted, leading articles are sent in, but the greatest feature is the humorous way the daily life on board ship is depicted, to say nothing of satirical sketches of "men of our own time"—or in other words, of the passengers.

I have also tried in vain to get up amateur theatricals, and tempted eligible-looking players with "Slasher and Crasher," "Turn him out," "Who's who," "Ici on parle Francais," and "Box and Cox," but all to no purpose at present.

The fact is, our passengers are rather a tame lot. I could use a more expressive word than “tame” and give a little longer description of them, but prudence keeps me reticent; suffice it to say that the officers of the vessel and the old travellers find life on board almost unsupportable.

The Danube, however, has its changes—take the temperature alone. We left England’s thermometers showing 69 degrees Fahrenheit—that was on the 8th August; now note the changes. On the 12th the temperature was 76, on the 13th, 80; 14th, 82; 19th, 84; 20th, 87; from the 20th it has been going down daily till to-day it is 62, and everyone is crying out about cold winds, and resorting to rugs and blankets; whereas on the 19th and following days three-fourths of us were utterly prostrated by the heat, and three or four others and myself slept on deck.

Changes again—the duffers on board now begin to know everyone. Early rising is generally discontinued. The four o’clock tea has many more admirers than of yore, on account of time being with them, a hard thing to kill. Music going down for last day or two.

SUNDAY, 1st SEPTEMBER—The Holy Communion was administered as usual at 7.15 a.m., to about 16 persons. At 10 o’clock all hands mustered and answered to their names, the men so clean and neat that it is difficult to recognise them, especially the fireman;—all seem to wear blue serge blouse and blue cap with ribbon bearing the name Danube.

Divine service commenced after the muster in the saloon, it being too cold to hold it on deck. The Bishop of Maritzburg preached to about 100 from 25 Matthew, verse 10—“While they were going to buy, the bridegroom came.” In speaking of the foolish virgins he said they were not scoffers—not those who turned up their noses at religion—they had taken their lamps, had risen promptly, had a supply of oil, and yet they were too late, and heard the dreadful words spoken to them, “I know you not.” Had Christ not before warned them that it was not everyone who said “Lord, Lord,” that should enter into the kingdom of heaven. But a time was when He had been the supplicant and they had closed their door against Him. It was useless for them to urge that they did not know his tones. With too many every voice is heard but Christ’s, every claim recognised but His—the claims of fashion, pride, family interests, and that case which shrinks from a contest with worldlings—when they hear our Saviour’s voice they do not say with St. Peter, “If it be Thou, bid me come to thee.” The parable of the ten virgins was intended to show unreadiness, the mistake of the foolish being not that they had no oil, no lamps—but that they had no reserve of oil.

Too many think that the bare profession of Christianity will suffice for life; so they lack patience, forethought and prudence; they refuse self-discipline, and what they call spiritual crutches, or else they are only those who conform to Christian observances, having only a name to live, and not worshipping God in spirit and in truth. Theirs would be indeed an ill-founded security.

Our vessels were to be continually replenished with oil by means of earnest prayer and the Holy Sacraments. When that was done our Saviour’s Second Coming would be a matter of great joy and not dread. We should do our duty faithfully and fearlessly, careless of the passing fashion of the world. Above all we were exhorted not to halt between two opinions—between God and Mammon—not to continually live in the future tense—always going to give ourselves to God, lest at last, we be found to have been men of good intentions only.

In the afternoon the Litany was said and a sermon preached by the Bishop of Pretoria in the second-class saloon. The sermon in the evening was preached by the Dean of Maritzburg.

We have been very much struck with the frequent references to the sea contained in the Psalms which are read at Morning and Evening Prayer. When on land, the fact has not been noticed, but you can to some extent realise how a lady whose cheeks have that unbecoming greenish hue born of sea-sickness, would say and feel (while the ship was giving a lurch)—“The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly.” I purpose giving you every reference made to the sea in the Psalms, believing that to the majority of readers they are very interesting, and who knows but what they may serve as texts for clergymen who hereafter may preach on the seas.

References are made to the sea in 25 Psalms, which are read 18 days out of every 80, and I can testify to any sceptic that they give to the believer and follower of the only true God, perfect peace and a security in the midst of storm and rough weather which the world cannot give.

The first figure I quote refers to the day of the month, and the second to the number of the Psalm.

1—8. ‘Thou has put all things in subjection under man’s feet, the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the sea.’

8—18. ‘God shall send down from on high to fetch me, he shall take me out of many waters.’

4—24. ‘The Lord hath founded the earth upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods.’

5—29. ‘It is the Lord that commandeth the waters, it is the Lord that ruleth the sea.’

6—22. ‘He gathereth the waters of the sea together as it were upon a heap, and layeth up the deep waves as in a treasure-house.’

8—42. ‘One deep calleth another—all thy waves are gone over me.’

9—46. ‘We will not fear, though the waters of the sea rage and swell.’

12—65. ‘Thou are the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea. Thou stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of the waves.’

12—66. ‘He turned the sea into dry land.’

12—69. ‘O let me be delivered out of the deep waters. Let not the water flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up. Let heaven and earth praise God, the sea and all that moveth therein.’

14—72. ‘His dominion shall be from the one sea to the other.’

14—74. ‘Thou didst divide the sea through thy power. Thou breakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.’

15—77. ‘The waters saw thee, O God, and were afraid, the depths also were troubled. Thy way is in the sea

15—78. ‘He divided the sea and let them go through. He overwhelmed their enemies with the sea.’

17—89. ‘Thou rulest the raging of the sea, thou stillest the waves thereof when they arise.’

18—98. 'The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly, and yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier.'

19—95. 'The sea is his, and he made it, and his hands prepared the dry land.'

19—96. 'Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is.'

20—104. 'The great and wide sea is full of thy riches, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan whom thou hast made to take his pastime therein. These all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season.'

21—106. 'He rebuked the Red Sea and it was dried up, so he led them through a deep as through a wilderness.'

22—107. 'They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters—these men see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For at thy word the stormy wind ariseth which lifteth up the waves thereof. They are carried up into the heaven and down again into the deep; their soul melteth away because of the trouble. They reel to and fro like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, he delivereth them out of their distress, for he maketh the storms to cease, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they are at rest, and so he bringeth them into the haven where they would be.'

23—114. 'The sea saw that and fled, Jordan was driven back.'

28—135. 'Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in the sea and all deep places.'

28—136. 'God divided the Red Sea into two parts, and made Israel to go through the midst of it. But as for Pharaoh and his host he overthrew them in it.'

These verses show very beautifully, I think, the power of God over the sea. We use twice daily a shortened form of prayer, which includes the following petition. "O Eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens and rulest the raging of the sea; who hast compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end, be pleased to receive into thy Almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us thy servants, and the ship in which we sail. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea that we may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of the land, with the fruits of our labour and with a thankful remembrance of thy mercies, to praise and glorify thy holy name."

Letter Four

Before I recount the capers cut by our boat during a heavy swelling sea this evening, I wish to work in some particulars I have got together about the way in which we live now, the vessel, and how she is managed.

The living on board the Danube is something too nice. I give below specimen bills of fare.

BREAKFAST.—Porridge, grilled steak and onions, dry hash, eggs and bacon, mutton chops, hashed fowl, liver and bacon, bubble and squeak, curry and cold meats, biscuits, marmalade, hot rolls. This is varied with pork chops, liver cutlets, grilled ham, Yarmouth bloaters, pork sausages, hashed sheepshead, salt fish, and egg sauce, savoury omelettes, rump steak, and tomato sauce, and Irish stew.

LUNCH.—Soup, grilled steak and kidneys, Welsh Rarebit, roast potatoes, cold salmon, lobster, sardines, mutton, beef, ham, cheese, fresh Plymouth butter, buns, twists, cucumbers, beetroot.

DINNER.—Ox tail soup, boiled cod and oyster sauce, two or three entrees, roast duck and green peas, boiled shoulder of mutton and onion sauce, roast sirloin of beef and horseradish, curry mutton, oyster of veal and ham, baked potatoes, cheese cakes, rice puddings, jam tartlets, rhubarb tarts, dessert of oranges, apples, walnuts and Brazils, the whole concluding with a cup of coffee or tea.

I intended shewing the variety of our bills of fare, but the variety is so great that I cannot keep pace with them. There is scarcely a dinner but what a new dish of some sort or another is placed before us.

After seeing life to such an extent no wonder some have courted the muse. Listen then to the following lines written by some officers of the 90th and printed at Natal in February last. We heartily echo the sentiments they contain.

“We, the undersigned,
Are of a mind,
To put our thoughts on paper,
To say that we
Have been to sea,
Along with Captain Draper.
All outward bound,
From Plymouth Sound,
In Danube trim and taper,
We steam away
To Algoa Bay,
In charge of Captain Draper.
We’re left the shore,
Three weeks and more,
And twice we’ve cut this Cape’r,
Our thanks are due
To mates and crew,
As well as Captain Draper.
Attendance, food,
Have all been good,

Upon this smart sky scraper;

We some we may,

Return one day,

In her with Captain Draper.

And we reflect

That with respect,

To this bateau a' vapeur,

The undersigned,

No fault can find—

Three cheers for Captain Draper!"

The names of Major, Captain, and Lieutenants of the 90 are appended to the poem.

I shall now proceed to give a few particulars of our vessel and crew. The crew consists of 71 hands as follows: captain, 4 officers, surgeon, carpenter, boatswain, 2 quartermasters, 14 able seamen, 3 ordinary seamen, 2 boys, 4 engineers, 15 firemen and trimmers, 1 chief steward, 19 stewards. The 19 include 2 cooks, a baker, butcher, scullion, boots, bathman, stewardess, pantryman, barman, storekeeper, and assistant butcher. Servants for the officers and engineers make up the 71.

In case of fire each of the above have posts allotted to them. The other morning the crew were drilled at the fire and boat stations. The sharp tones of the bell brought very promptly each man to his post. The second officer and quartermaster at once took charge of the boats. The carpenter having screwed on the hoses, ran up with the axes. The chief officer, boatswain and watch were on the spot where the fire was supposed to be; the coal trimmers manned the Downton pumps, the saloon servants, under charge of the surgeon and chief steward, were handing up blankets which, in case of fire, would have been immersed in water, ready to extinguish the flames. They were also busy securing provisions. The third officer and cook's department were presiding over the mails, and the fourth officer acted as messenger to the Captain.

In the drill it is always supposed that the fire gets the upper hand, and the boats have to be lowered. The crew very quickly fell into their right places, the officers in charge of each boat reading over the roll. The crew were divided as follows: The mail boat had seven men commanded by the 4th officer; starboard lifeboat, 2nd officer and 15 men; port lifeboat, 1st officer and 15 men; starboard cutter, 3rd officer and eight men; port cutter, boatswain and seven men; Captain's gig, carpenter and six men, and the Dingy, an able seaman and three men.

The ship's watch consists of an officer, quartermaster, seven able seamen and one ordinary seaman. The men are four hours on and four off every 24 hours. The officers' watch is as follows—The chief, 4 to 8; the third, 8 to 12; the second, 12 to 4.

The ship's bell is struck every half-hour—eight times at 12, 4, and 8 o'clock.

I have been astonished at the number of books the Navigating Officer keeps. Among others is the Meteorological Log. It contains columns for Latitude, Longitude, and Current; true course and distance by log each four hours; total compass error; direction of the ship's head; direction of wind; force of wind; barometer and thermometer readings; observations on the clouds; reports on the weather; direction from which the sea or swell comes; disturbance of the sea; surface temperature of the sea; specific gravity of the sea: the total number of observations are entered in no less than 26 columns every FOUR hours.

The various clouds are numbered, as the following explanations will show, and the numbers placed in the cloud column. No. 1, Cirrus—This is a very lofty cloud, which looks like hair, thread, or feathers, and is often called "Mare's tails." 2—Cirro-cumulus is a high cloud, but more globular than the cirrus, consisting of small detached masses, like a flock of sheep laying down, or like the markings of a mackerel, hence the name "mackerel sky." 3—Cirro-stratus, sheets or layers of clouds. 4 to 8 are low clouds, and often resemble a piece of lifted fog; they include the rain clouds.

Many observations are made in addition to those recorded in the 26 columns, as the name and bearing of lightning, the direction and speed of falling stars, their number, how long they last, how they disappear, and whether they leave tracks; many facts relating to waves are mentioned, as the periodic times of sets of waves (waves often come in sets, followed by a comparative lull), their direction and their height. The idea of ascertaining the height of a wave seems impossible to a land-lubber, but Mrs Somerville has satisfactorily explained how it is done in the British Association Report of 1841.

Numbers tell the force of the wind. 0 stands for calm, 1 light air, 2 light breeze, 3 a gentle breeze, 4 moderate breeze, 5 fresh breeze, 6 strong breeze, 7 moderate gale, 8 fresh gale, 9 strong gale, 10 whole gale, 11 storm, 12 hurricane.

There are 17 sorts of weather noted by the initials of the following. Blue sky, clouds (detached), drizzling rain, foggy, gloomy, hail, lightning, misty, overcast, passing showers, squally rain, snow, thunder, ugly (threatening appearance of weather), visibility (objects at a distance unusually visible), dew.

The state of the sea is thus described—0 calm, 1 very smooth, 2 smooth, 3 slight, 4 moderate, 5 rather rough, 6 rough, 7 high, 8 very high, 9 tremendous.

From the above copious details, readers will understand me if one a certain day I record such abbreviations at—Lat. 22.25 S., Long. 7.00 E., run 243 miles, to the Cape 931 miles, wind 2, thermometer 63, clouds 10, weather 0, direction sea S.E., disturbance of sea 4. You have in these few words and figures every possible particular about us—more, indeed, than the columns of descriptions can convey. I need not explain each item. The latitude and longitude, of course, will show our position, the run tells the miles traversed in 24 hours, to the Cape, on the day in question, 31 August, we had 931 miles to run, wind 2 is a light breeze, clouds 10 are low dark clouds, weather 0 overcast, disturbance of the sea 4 moderate.

I give now a specimen of the deck log book. It has nine columns which are ruled for 24 hours, and each hour the following particulars have to be inserted—The number of knots and furlongs the ship is going, the course steered by the compass, the whole error of compass, the wind's direction and force, the state of the weather, barometer reading, and leeway. By the side of these columns a large space is left for remarks, and these remarks are very much like each other every day. Let us take the 31st August from midnight to midnight. "Rounds visited, stella observations unobtainable, 4 a.m. light unsteady breeze and overcast, 5.30 set foresail, 6 sun obscured, 8 light breeze and cloudy, watch employed cleaning ship, 10 in fore try-sail, morning service performed in saloon, 11 ship inspected by Commander, noon light airs and fine, variation by dimuth 81 degrees W., 4 light breeze and overcast, 6 sun obscured, 8 light head wind and fine, evening service performed in the saloon, stars obscured."

Then follow columns for sick report, hours set sail, hours steaming, fuel consumed, fuel remaining, number of fires, and summary of miles run. The density or specific gravity of the sea is taken. A cubic foot of fresh water weighs 1000 ounces but the same quantity of sea water weighs 1026 ounces. The density varies with the amount of salts present, being densest where the amount is greatest; the water we have passed through, viz., the Atlantic Ocean, is salter and denser than the Pacific.

Now I am writing about the sea I dare not forget to allude to its luminosity;—it is to us a subject of wonder and reflection. This light, when excited by the ship's rushing through the water, assumes the form of brilliant stars, or round masses of greenish hue, frequently, I understand, 18 inches in diameter. They float by the vessel in every part of the water which her bottom has touched, as deep as the very lowest part of the keel, and form behind her a long and fiery train. At other times when the breeze is strong and the billows break and foam, this light appears like fields of flashing fire. It is something very grand to see the vessel plunging her way over billows of liquid fire, especially when the night is dark and lowering, then the brilliance of the water forms a grand but awful contrast with the black concave above us. This luminous appearance is said to arise from the presence of several kinds of animated beings having the power of emitting a phosphorescent light; when taken out of the sea they still appear lucid and active.

Letter Five

A landsman's idea of the sea is that it is full of large fish; but we have traversed thousands of miles and only seen some flying fishes. I am told that it is only near land that fishes "most do congregate." Still we have a few who take up residence in the ocean. They are whales, sharks, sucking fish, porpoises, dolphin and flying fish. We have seen shoals of the latter rise out of the water with fins extended but motionless, sometimes flying 60 or 80 yards.

The other day we saw an albatross. It certainly was magnificent enough for sailors to dub it the "Sea Swan." Since then we have had several Cape Pigeons following us. It does seem odd when one sees that it is not possible for them to alight for rest. Rest indeed! why, they are often seen 2,000 miles from land.

I wish I could give an adequate idea of the glories of a tropical sea—of the gorgeous sun risings and sun settings—of the wondrous moon with its subtle links of sympathy with moral moods—of the orbs of heaven, which, in spite of their bewildering numbers, seem each to have its friendly message of cheer and hope, and its promise of good comradeship henceforth in the new and beautiful land to which we are bound. I remember once standing at the Falls of Lodore, and as I watched the leaping of the water, an American clergyman recited aloud Southey's poem, "How does the water come down at Lodore?"

Nothing more delicious could be imagined; so here, gazing into the celestial concave, the words of Shelley form an admirable accompaniment to thought.

“Seemed it, that the [chariot’s] way
Lay through the midst of an immense concave,
Radiant with million constellations, tinged
With shades of infinite colour.
There, far as the remote line
That binds imagination’s flight,
Countless and unending orbs,
In many motion intermingled
Yet still fulfilled immutably
Eternal Nature’s law.
Above, below, around,
The circling systems formed
A wilderness of harmony.
Each with undeviating aim,
In Eloquent silence through the depths of space
Pursued its wond’rous way.”

I must for a time leave the sublime for the duller regions of fact. I find that I have not done sufficient justice to the steward’s department, so I again vary my patchwork account of this voyage, and furnish further particulars. At 4 in the morning the Quartermaster of the watch calls the scullery man, who lights fires and prepares for the day’s work. The stewards are also called at 4 o’clock, and set to work scrubbing out the saloon, which is finished by 5.30. Then “boots” commences his special functions. At 6 a.m. we hear the stewards going round with tea, coffee, and biscuits. They are backed up by the bathman, who announces to each passenger in turn that the bath is ready.

On deck at 5 a.m. the watch commence to scrub down decks, the butcher feeds cattle and poultry and milks the cow, the baker prepares hot rolls for breakfast, and the cooks tea and coffee for 6 a.m. Without going further into their business it may suffice to say that a stiff day’s work concludes with the sometimes unpleasant request, “Lights out, please Sir.”

I have mentioned how we, of the saloon, are daily fed, but there are others on board who, like ourselves, live by eating. There are second-class passengers and their dinner is as follows: Roast beef, corned pork, potatoes, cabbage, and pastry. The third-class dinner is corned pork, roast beef, suet

pudding, and potatoes. I need not point out the immense difference between our fare and the fare of the other passengers.

Separate dinners are served to the engineers, warrant officers, and the servants. The dinner given to the crew consists of corned beef, biscuits, and one vegetable.

The first class children have to be fed. Their breakfast consists of porridge, mutton chops, sausages, hashed mutton, eggs and bacon, and potatoes. Their dinner—soup, roast beef, chicken and ham, potatoes, cabbage, and pastry. Perhaps I had better not say much of what the little cherubs get from us who are old enough to know better in the way of nuts, fruits and cakes. As we go on deck from our dinner the little faces wear an anxious look, and little fingers fumble in coat pockets for stolen niceynices. I had forgotten to mention that in addition to our breakfast at 8.30 a.m., lunch at 12.30, we have a cup of tea and cake before 6 o'clock dinner, and the following day as late as 6 p.m. we start with coffee and biscuit.

When we left Southampton we had on board 11 doz. chickens, 9 doz. ducks and 24 geese, 40 sheep, and 6 pigs. On going through the stewards' storerooms I saw huge bins of sugar, casks of nuts, rows of hams, a room full of bottled beer in racks, long rows of English and Dutch cheese, casks of apples, pears, eggs, potatoes, bloaters, &c.

I think the following statistics of the stock of provisions kept on board will prove interesting to most readers. It will show them what a "land of Goschen" we live in, and what varieties a vessel can be made to contain. On the 8th of August we had—

cabin biscuits 312 lbs.,

wine biscuits 14 tins,

flour 502 tons,

gingerbread nuts 11 tins,

bags of flour 12,

almonds 264 lbs.,

arrowroot 21 lbs.,

Barcelona nuts 2 bushels,

candied lemon and orange 21 lbs.,

raw coffee 392 lbs.,

roasted coffee 416 lbs.,

chocolate 14 lbs.,

currants 309 lbs.,

dates 56 lbs.,

French plums 31 lbs.,
Normandy pippins 50 lbs.,
pepper 54 lbs.,
raisins Muscatel 222 lbs.,
raisins Valencias 400 lbs.,
rice 492 lbs.,
sago 10 lbs.,
tapioca 13 lbs.,
walnuts 13 lbs.,
sugar 3,000 lbs.,
tea 460 lbs.,
caravances 248 lbs.,
anchovies (essence) 25 pints,
anchovy paste 25 pots,
blacking 51 tins,
bottled fruits 242 quarts,
candles 264 lbs.,
chutney 55 bottles,
curry powder 42 lbs.,
dried herbs 18 bottles,
dried celery seeds 6 bottles,
emery powder 15 lbs.,
gelatine 16 lbs.,
Yarmouth herrings 25 tins,
herring paste 24 pots,
hops 12 lbs.,
jam 488 lbs.,
jellies 34 lbs.,
malt 2 bushels,

marmalade 220 lbs.,
macaroni 23 lbs.,
vermicelli 25 lbs.,
mustard 60 lbs.,
oil salad 33 pints,
lamp oil 80 gallons,
sperm oil 30 gallons,
volatile salts 2 lbs.,
olives 28 pints,
pearly barley 16 lbs.,
pickles 40 gallons,
capers 23 pints,
pickled mushrooms 55 pints,
salt 1000 lbs.,
salmon paste 24 pots,
sardines 202 tins,
sauces 40 pints,
tomato sauce 16 bottles,
mushroom catsup 11 bottles,
soap 580 lbs.,
soda 500 lbs.,
tripe 3 kegs,
whiting 7 lbs.,
Worcester sauce 89 pints,
Bath bricks 21,
plate powder 7 boxes,
preserved ginger 13 jars,
bacon 332 pieces,
butter fresh and Irish 11 firkins,

English cheese 37,
Dutch cheese 62,
eggs 8000,
English hams 40,
pickled tongues 24,
Bologne sausages 16,
essence of beef 22 pints,
mutton broth 45 lbs.,
calves' head 28 lbs.,
jugged hare 12 lbs.,
pints of milk 286,
giblet soup 2 lbs.,
muligatawney 12 lbs.,
oxtail 28 lbs.,
salmon 94 lbs.,
oysters 54 lbs.,
haddocks 24 lbs.,
fresh herrings 20 lbs.,
green peas 100 lbs.,
French beans 93 lbs.,
parsnips 16 lbs.,
lobsters 60 lbs.,
preserved meat 37 tins.
Ship's stores—
Beef 2438 lbs.,
pork 2580 lbs.,
suet 222 lbs.,
split peas 94 gallons,
oatmeal 444 lbs.,

vinegar 79 gallons,
lemon juice 20 gallons,
tea 298 lbs.,
bags of bread 33,
rum 56 gallons.

The following dead stock was taken on board at Southampton—

Beef 1078 lbs.,
mutton 309 lbs.,
veal 152 lbs.,
pork 107 lbs.,
ox tails 6,
sausages 50,
corned beef 248 lbs.,
corned pork 246 lbs.,
1 doz. fowls,
1 doz. ducks,
6 geese
fresh butter 150 lbs.

In the way of sundries we have tobacco 830 lbs., caps 37, Guernseys 24, hat ribbons 65, neckerchiefs 32, hay 10 bales, barley 6 sacks, peas 2 sacks, bran 19 sacks.

Wines and spirits—

sherry 350 quarts,
port 54 quarts,
Madeira 20 quarts,
claret 580 quarts 300 pints,
Sauterne 76 pints and quarts,
Champagne 140 quarts 110 pints,

Hock 33 quarts 64 pints,
Mosella 102 quarts 80 pints,
brandy 422 quarts,
Hollands 359 bottles,
rum 249 quarts,
gin 354 bottles,
brandy 57 bottles,
champagne lime juice 24 bottles,
whiskey 568 bottles,
ale 1741 quarts 2141 pints,
porter 825 quarts 1440 pints,
soda water 1962 bottles,
seltzer water 205 bottles,
gingeraide 240 bottles,
tonic 267 bottles,
ginger ale 240 bottles,
Noyeau 17 bottles,
Maraschino 20 bottles,
syrops 8 bottles,
raspberry vinegar 25 bottles,
bitters 16 bottles,
cigars 400 and playing cards 24 packs.

I leave the variety and figures to speak for themselves; they clearly reveal the fact that there is plenty of corn in the land.

One of the great sources of amusement on board is the Library. It consists of 120 volumes of instructive and entertaining literature, and includes the works of Dickens, Scott, Trollope, George Elliot, Bronte, Collins, Disraeli, Grant, Brandon, Thackeray, Lever, Gouldbourne, and Thompson. Helen's Babies, of course, are in it, and more than one people have declared to me that they want to "shee the wheels go wound."

I think it would surprise most of my readers if they knew how absolutely lazy a long sea voyage makes one. The brain must rest, for it quite refuses to work. There are no newspapers, or letters, or telegrams to disturb one. You are not continually pulled up as when travelling by Rail at stations whose walls are covered with glaring advertisements which so fix themselves on the mind that they become a regular nightmare. Many do nothing all day, and are quite content to do nothing. They find sufficient amusement in their fellow passengers—and really one does meet with queer characters on board.

Letter Six

Now I think it is time to return to my diary, the evening of

SUNDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER—It was, I have said, a squally one—Waves 100 feet in length and from 30 to 40 feet high at us broadside—not little choppy waves, but one unbroken mass of water, exerting a pressure of perhaps nearly one ton per square foot of surface. The fiddles were on the dinner table but were almost useless. As a rule we are most orderly at the meal of the day. Eight stewards as silent as oysters and as sharp as cheap jacks stand behind us on the *qui vive*. The Chief Steward sounds his gong and off come fifteen dish covers with military precision; the five circular gas lamps and as many pots of flowers, “all a blowing and a growing,” maintain a dignified rigidity. Between the courses there is much chatting and smiling, and the only loud sounds come from the children who are on deck, playing. But this evening the scene is greatly changed. The awkwardness of Pantaloon at Pantomime is nothing to be compared with the perversity and contrariness of what is usually called inanimate matter. The soup objected to be “cribbed, cabined, and confined” by its plate, so it rushed into my fair neighbour’s lap; a bottle of Bass’s adopts the recumbent and runs parallel with the ox-tail. Fish supposed to have had its last plunge darts sideways as you go to seize it with a fork. The bottles in the cruets-stand continuously bow and scrape to each other; a little regiment of forks, spoons, and knives make frequent sallies; the preserved ginger chases the biscuits round a circle; tongues never meant to wag again shake in gleesome manner. A pretty claret glass seized with violent affection for me dropped from the circular stand above into my plate and was no more. Then waltzes, reels and jigs were extemporised by a series of salt cellars and other small fry, while the nuts being more agile than their compeers played a game of leapfrog. A few at table sitting on chairs, slide to and fro in a grotesque manner, and a loud laugh proclaims that one chair was emptied of its occupant by an extra roll of the vessel.

At dinner we had the comedy, but after lights were out came the tragedy. I have watched a tempest on the stage—the blue fire, the salt that did duty for hail, the gong within that sounded to represent thunder. I have seen the Vokes family in “Fun in the Fog” at old Drury roll and slide in every direction through pitching of an imaginary vessel—but all sinks before the terrible realities of the present gale. I tried to sleep, and being so privileged as to have a cabin all to myself, ought to have done so, but both beds failed to place me in the arms of Morpheus. One of them lay fore and after—then I slid up and down. The other lay athwart-ships, and my movements were of a circular nature.

Equal to the occasion I donned my overcoat and strolled all over the vessel to see life. Smashing of crockery ware was carried on in the most liberal manner. The saloon was a babel of sounds. Added to the usual thumping of the screw were creaks, whines, croaks and groans that seemed to come from every spar and plank overhead. Heavy bodies broke loose, and I fancied the cannon were falling in every direction, with now and then an anchor and mast. This was succeeded by the officer’s whistle, rush of feet, and loud interchange of opinions.

Within, a pile of plates got loose and united in a grand crash; an odd iron box or two unceremoniously shifted from starboard to port; the chairs frequently altered their positions. Strolling between the cabins I heard many an article wrecked, and could tell that portmanteaus and boots were having a quiet walk round. The amount of broken glass and ware under foot made me put back to my cabin for a pair of shoes. Lucky for me that I was inside, for at that moment came a grand crash in which dishes were joined by our only flower-pots. "Steward—steward! Is there any danger?", "Steward, give me a light," were the cries that issued from several cabins; and more than one lady, I am told, dressed and prepared for the worst. Our saloon was immediately lighted, and stewards did their best to remove the debris and pacify the timorous.

On deck at 2 a.m. the scene was grand. Black clouds rolled in masses, the waves were simply stupendous, and our vessel appeared to offer no more resistance to them than a cork would. Standing by the bowsprit and looking back, she appeared to resemble nothing so much as an abandoned vessel. Look at the masts swaying from side to side, see how near the deck is to the water, and think how awkward it would be if our vessel, heeling far over on one side, should forget to come back again! The night is very dark, the stars and moon that look their loveliest are obscured; the air is chilly.

I cannot from one of my favourite positions see a soul on board; yet here we are, drifting ahead, and how am I to know that we are sailing clear of rocky ledges? The carpenter has told me that close here he was wrecked in the Kafir five months ago. He and the captain were only just saved. I think next of the boatswain's horrible tales. I remember that the chief officer and the Stewardess were both wrecked, names like Eurydice, Schiller, and London, come trooping up to join my thoughts, but all are put aside by Dibdin's line—

"There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,

To keep watch o'er the life of poor Jack."

MONDAY, 2nd SEPTEMBER—Heavy swell still on. Passed the schooner Excellence of Cardigan. Thermometer 63.

TUESDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER—In the evening we had an entertainment, which succeeded in bringing out fresh talent—programme below:

Trio (Piano, "Madame Angot" Miss Drury, Miss King,
Violin, Flute) Captain Drape, and Dr. Bonnar

Song "The Bailiff's daughter Miss Bamber
of Islington"

Duet "The wind and the Harp" Mrs Green and Miss Dowling

Reading "Nothing to Wear" Bishop of Maritzburg

Song "The Scottish Emigrant" Dr. Bonnar

Pianoforte Solo "Kathleen Arson" Miss Bousfield

Song "To-morrow" Miss Chapman

Glee "Come where my love Bishop of Maritzburg,
lies dreaming" Rev. C.M. Spratt and Dr. Bonnar

Reading Miss Lamb

Song "The Seal is broken" Mrs Green

Duet (Piano Irish Aire Mrs Green and Dr. Bonnar
and Flute)

Song "Stranger yet"

Reading "Giles trip to London" Rev. C.M. Spratt

Song "The Fisherman's Home" Miss Dowling

Song "A still tongue" Dr. Bonnar

Song "Hearts of Oak" Rev. C.M. Spratt

NATIONAL ANTHEM

WEDNESDAY 4th SEPTEMBER—Sighted Africa at 4.30 a.m., at 8 we were passing Lion Rock, having a full view of the celebrated Table Mountain. Here at last was the country we left England for, with its green valleys and fields, its quiet country lanes with the briar and honeysuckle, its meadows rich in the tints of green and gold, its wandering inland rivers with overhanging willows on their banks. Yes, here is the land of our choice, and what do we think of the first glimpse? Well, they are very favourable. Picture a broad calm expanse of blue water, edged with a white and curving shore, surmounted by bold rocky mountain ranges, which stand out with a sharply defined outline in the morning air. The light here is rich and brilliant; the atmosphere remarkably bright and clear, enabling us to see small boulders, patches of bush at the head of the kloofs. At an elevation of two or three thousand feet, indeed, we can clearly discern every bold wrinkle on the face and slope of these mountains. Few strips of territory can rival in historic interest that of the Cape Peninsula. The Phoenicians, according to Herodotus, circumnavigated the continent of Africa more than 600 years before Christ. It was really discovered in 1486 by the Portuguese.

Lion's Head is the name of one of the three principal culminating points of Table Mountain, and so called from its resemblance to a Lion couchant. It is formed of horizontal layers of Cape old red sandstone, its height is about 2,200 feet.

Table Mountain is a magnificent piece of nature, and appears towering about Cape Town, which today is hid from our view by an enormous strip of fog. There is a gradual and easy rise of about 500 feet from the Town to the base of the mountain, from whence it rises abruptly like the side of a wall, to the height 3,532 feet above the level of the sea. The summit is formed by a broad fillet surface 1½ miles long. It

appears to defy all the scaling ladders of the world, but I hear there is an ascent formed by means of a cleft in it.

The mountain is composed of a sandstone of many colours, and rests on a granite base. When the wind is in the S.E. a dense mass of vapour rests upon the mount, and rushes over its precipitous sides like a cataract of foam and vapour. This peculiar appearance is called the "table cloth". The form of the land between Lion's Head and the Cape Point is altogether variegated and irregular. First we pass Three Anchor Bay, next a promontory called Chapman's Head, near which is a remarkable projection of rocks, then two clusters of rocks called the Lion's Paw, a snug little cove known as Hout Bay, with a high and rugged coast each side.

Close here I thought I saw a whale spouting (we have actually had three this morning), but it turned out to be a very dangerous rock two miles from shore. Now we are at the Cape of Good Hope, a precipitous cliff with a peak, the summit 800 feet in height is crowned by a lighthouse. Everything here is very pretty; waves are dashing against rock, Cape pigeons in every direction, the sun is shining brilliantly, the objectionable swell of the sea has subsided, we are running up flags which serve as a signal to those on watch in the lighthouse (our signal letters are W.H.R.D.) who reply by hoisting a flag.

I fancy that I am but going round the Isle of Wight, in the fast and favourable steamship "Southampton." We pass the entrance to False and Simon Bay, seeing at a distance of 20 leagues, Table Mountain once more. Simon Bay and Town is Her Majesty's only naval station in South Africa.

At the rate of ten miles per hour we glide onwards by Sandown Bay, with its adjacent coast of abrupt and high rocks, Walkers Bay with its sandy beach, and then we come to the southernmost point of the African continent, Cape Agulhas, 28 leagues from the Cape of Good Hope, with a lighthouse showing a steady white light, the coast around is slow and sandy. A short distance from the beach there is a line of sand hills, varying from 50 to 150 feet in height, some covered with a dark coloured bush.

The second bell has gone for dinner, so we go below seeing the last of the shore for to-day.

Letter Seven

THURSDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER—At 4 a.m. we are 40 miles from land, at 1 p.m. about 20 miles, at such a distance but little is seen to interest us. We have, however, something else to occupy our attention: a great quantity of the feathered tribe chasing our ship—Soland geese, fat Cape hens, and tiny petrels. They come after us in straight lines, then swoop in graceful circles, yet rarely with the slightest motion of their wings. The colour of the sea here changes from brown to light, then dark green.

This evening we had our fifth entertainment. The programme, whilst including two pieces before given, was noted for the following pleasant novelties:—

Duet (Piano and Violin) "Meditation" Mrs Milner

and Captain Draper

Recitation "Mary Queen of Scots" Mrs Chapman

Song (In character) "On board of the Kangaroo" Mrs Dowling

Duologue From "School for Scandal" Miss Mackay and

Dr. Bonnar

Reading "Tim Turpin" Mr Harry Bousfield

I had just announced the 13th item on the programme, when sounds from above told us we were just going to cast anchor, a grand rush was made for the fore part of the vessel, and a pleasant scene awaited us. It was a lovely moonlight light, so light that we could see a great deal of Port Elizabeth, and the occupants of Algoa Bay. We were going "slow ahead," the chief officer stood on the bowsprit superintending the arrangements for casting the anchor. The whole crew seemed on the qui vive. The order had been given "stand by to cast anchor," and men were only waiting for the word to do it, the Danube quietly creeping towards the shore. We are in 14 fathoms of water, the next sounding says 12 1/2, the next 11, then 9, still no order. Not a soul on deck speaks, abaft the engines the second officer is watching, on the for'ard bridge stands the third officer, the fourth is at the telegraph, the carpenter is by the windlass, the boatswain by the trigger, and able seaman on each side of the massive chain. "Seven fathoms sir," a cry rings through the ship, the Captain has shouted "Let go," the third officer has passed the shout on, the first has repeated it, and 230 feet of massive chain has darted like magic from the ship into the sea.

FRIDAY 6th SEPTEMBER—Everyone is about betimes, prayers are said half-an-hour earlier, and on deck, about 10 o'clock a boat is alongside and many of us step in to go ashore. A tremendous swell is on and we are rolling from side to side in a most hopeless manner, more than one is half drenched from getting into the boat, and quite by chance one was saved from falling into the sea. We are a jolly crew, and you can tell we are bent upon enjoying ourselves. We give many rounds of cheering for anyone and anything, till we lose sight of the Danube by an envious swell which drags us into a watery valley. We feel that we must be on a country Fair "Roundabouts."

The Bay we are in was discovered by Bartholomew Diaz, on September 14th, 1486. It is bounded by Cape Recife to the West and Point Padron to the East. There is a lighthouse at Cape Recife standing 80 feet high, and having a light which revolves once in every minute, it is visible 17 miles away. Breakers extend 11/3 miles into the sea.

Many vessels have been wrecked near here. I saw no less than 12 wrecks after I had landed.

Port Elizabeth was founded in 1820 by the late Sir Rufane Donkin, who so named it in memory of his deceased lady. Its population then was 35 souls. In 1854 it had increased to 3,000; at the present time it is 15,000, mostly English.

During my two days stay I collected a few facts about the town, which will show that it is not quite uncivilized. They have a Town Council, Harbour Board, finest markets in South Africa, and publish five papers—one of which is supplied to every house in the town free of charge. Their imports in 1875 were £2,681,333; exports, £2,802,523. They export wool, skins, hides, Angora hair, Ivory and Feathers. Amongst the societies are—Church of England Temperance Society, British Women's Temperance Association, Union Cricket Club, Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, Mechanics Institute, two Lodges of Freemasons, Lodges of Foresters, Oddfellows, Shepherds and Good Templars—the latter

Society has no less than 80 lodges in South Africa and publishes a South African Temperance paper. There is a Philharmonic Society, Athenæum, and a Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

There is a Skating Rink, Theatre, Town Hall capable of holding 1,000 persons, a public park, a Hospital founded in 1856 and free to all, a splendid educational department called "The Grey Institute," also founded in 1856 and managed by a board of 42 gentlemen, and having 10 masters, each holding degrees from Oxford or Cambridge. The Church of England has five establishments here. The following are also well represented: the Roman Catholics, Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, Jews, and the Mohammedans, not to be outdone, furnish two Mosques. A "Farmers' Association" is in course of formation, and the Volunteers muster five companies. A splendid pile of buildings, superior it is said to any in the Colony, is the Town Hall. It contains a famous Library and a good Museum. From the 30th annual report of the Library I find that it numbers 415 subscribers, who pay from 25s. to 45s. per annum. The receipts for the year 1877-8 were £1350, of which the Government gave £100. The library contains 10,000 volumes, the issue of books for the year was 24,661; of that number 113 were religious, and 20,254 novels. The reading rooms are very lofty, spacious, and fitted up very like the Guildhall Reading Rooms in London. They are supplied with 30 papers and 40 monthly periodicals. I am much indebted to Mr. Leroy and Mr. Oetle, the Librarian and Sub-Librarian, for the great attention they gave me. I am rather a Yankee bore in extracting information from officials. As a rule I have my leading questions jotted down on paper before entering a strange place, hence my recognition of the above-mentioned courtesy.

There are two Railways here: the Midland with 113 miles of rail, and the Great Eastern with 72 miles. I went by the former to North End. I promise you there was nothing of the Underground Railway about it, the smart slamming of doors, the shouts of "third class forward," "all tickets here," "this way out," "now then if you are going on," at the same time it is something to have a railway; and the "Niggers" of the "upper ten" reclining in first class carriages seemed to think so. Unlike the Midland Railway of England here there are three classes. After a good dinner at North End we took the bus to town.

Our next visit was paid to St. George's Park, which comprises an area of three or four acres. The walks are broad, the trees very pretty, but not large. There were palms and willows, and hedges of willow and prickly pears. The beds had pinks, double stocks, pansies, and double daisies. The central sheet of water had very pretty water lilies floating on the surface. Seats were placed in every direction. The Conservatory contained beautiful ferns, geraniums, roses, and cinerarias.

We dropped into the Cemetery only to find that three fourths of its dead were of the Canny Scotch race. The Cemetery, Park, and Rink, lie on the top of a ridge of hills. Here the elite live in houses of one story, every house small or great has a Verandah. Passing there we came to the Lighthouse and Pyramid. The latter has been erected in memory of the lady who gave the name to the town below. From this eminence we get a splendid view of the Bay, and to-day it looks very pretty, the craft riding at anchor number 50, and include 11 barques, and 4 steam ships, in addition the dear old "Danube."

Descending the hill we look into the Roman Catholic Church and have a treat in the way of music, the choir happening to be rehearsing a mass. This is by far the finest place of worship in the town. It has three altars; over the centre one is a very fine reredos with 16 figures in niches. The pulpit is handsome, the organ good, and the windows of the nave are of stained glass.

St. Mary's Church next received our attention, it is a very good one.

Passing the Police Station we saw a sale of chairs. They were very second rate but realised 8s. apiece.

The next day it rained “just a little,” as Yankees say, which made us affect cigars on the jolly Verandahs of our Hotel—the Victoria. Later on visits were paid to several houses of business. The shops are first class, in many cases nearly equal to London ones. If you want a photo of Ada Cavendish or Lord Beaconsfield come to Port Elizabeth, come here for every luxury in the way of stationery and ironmongery. You will allow me to escape from giving details when I say that over one shop is printed “West of England Clothing Establishment,” over another “Established to supply the public with pure wines, malt, and spirits.” The Standard Bank of British South Africa has its head office here, and a splendid structure it is. They employ about 30 clerks. The Oriental Bank has 25 clerks, the Post Office 11, the Union Steamship Company five.

Here in South Africa you see 2-horse cabs dashing about, people flying into the Telegraph Offices with twenty words for Cape Town, and 5s. omnibuses running every ten minutes. Boys stuff the “Eastern Province Herald” into your hand, and before night circulate 700 of them in town, while the train hurries off with 1,600 for the provinces. Come with me and see a land sale, up goes a lot having 75 feet of frontage in the chief street, and running back 240 feet; it is knocked down for £10,000—note the figures.

There are very many good hotels here. I have been to several and seen men spend money like water on champagne and strange mixtures. The Bars, the Jetty, the streets, the Library, Theatre, Rink, Park, are all wonderfully lively, with as smart a set of people as I have yet met with.

SUNDAY 8th—Went on board the Danube at 7 o'clock and found very few of the passengers there. The Bishops and Dean preached at the Town Churches. Our services were conducted and the sermons preached by the Rev. A. Roberts.

MONDAY 9th found us very actively employed discharging about 400 tons of cargo. During Friday and Saturday last the swell was so great that the boatsmen refused to come off in lighters. To-day we have four alongside, and discharged from two holds. I went down one of them and worked with six Malays and six of the crew. By the light of oil lamps trucks were loaded with casks, bales, cases, covered packages of all shapes and sizes, cases black with private and ship marks,—one alone weighed two tons. We had a little infirmary for those that were broken, but few however were relegated to it.

After dinner we dissipated. Lately we have gone in greatly for jollity [and] tonight's gaiety consists of a moonlight row. “Give way there,” shouts the second officer, and off we go for a ramble round the Bay. We have a skittish set in the boat, and mean merriment! We went up to the “Conway Castle” steamship, and invited the passengers to “See our Oars with feather'd spray”. Then we advanced to the “Stettin” and assured those on its deck that “Britains never shall be slaves,” others heard that “The Sailor's wife his star shall be,” rounds of cheering, rings of laughter, left our boat continuously, and it really was a wonder we got back in safety at last.

TUESDAY 10th SEPTEMBER—Tremendous sea on—greatest joke to watch passengers old and new come aboard, some were actually dry and without bruises! the utter helplessness of the boats alongside, the

flapping of ropes and sails, their lurching, tossing, rolling and smashing demeanour kept us all at the bulwarks half the day. The mails are on board, steam is up, and so is the anchor. Eight passengers from Port Elizabeth are added to our number and the second class receive ten more.

Letter Eight

WEDNESDAY 11th SEPTEMBER—At 10.30 cast anchor off East London. The heavy swell of the sea prevents the tug Agnes from coming alongside, so one of our boats receives from her several loads of luggage and passengers, and both are conveyed on board by means of a huge basket. East London lies south-west of the River Buffalo, and from a distance of three miles appears to be a pretty place. There is a jetty and lighthouse, the surf to-day often climbs the latter. Behind a sandy beach are hills prettily clad with bush, lying in the outer anchorage are 11 vessels. The other side of the town some oxen are outspanned and the travellers have pitched tents close by. The houses of the town present a colonial appearance, being nearly all of one storey. East London is a famous place for wrecks; anchors and cables are toys in the hands of these irresistible waves and some on board have seen wrecks made in a very few minutes, a large iron vessel reduced to the size of a match box in a couple of hours. Vessels often wait here 12 days trying to discharge cargo, but no lighter can dare to put out for it.

Before I treat of the last day of our five weeks' voyage I have some more particulars to give of the business on board—our lights, signals, and how we "heave the log."

At the foremast head we carry a bright white light, visible on a dark night with a clear atmosphere at a distance of five miles. On the starboard side a green light, on the port side, a red light, the latter two visible at a distance of two miles. If you want the rule of the road at sea, here it is in verse—

1. Two steamships meeting.

"When both side lights you see ahead,
Port your helm and show your red."

2. Two steamships passing—

"Green to green or red to red,
Perfect safety—go ahead!"

3. Two steamships crossing—This is the position of greatest danger. There is nothing for it but a good look-out, caution, and judgement.

4. All ships must keep a good look-out, and steam ships must stop and go astern, if necessary.

"Both in safety and in doubt,
Always keep a good look out,
In danger, with no room to turn,
Ease her!—Stop her!—Go astern!"

When at anchor we only exhibit a white light—not at the foremast head, but slung on a rope about 18 feet above the hull. Amongst other precautions are life buoys attached to lights, which are inextinguishable in water. These are always in readiness at sunset.

While we were lying in Algoa Bay, at a distance of about two miles from shore, I was quite charmed by the signals that were continuously being made between vessels and their agents on shore; and after reference to the International Code of Signals my admiration greatly increased. This code for all nations was prepared in 1857. It is very simple, and consists of 18 flags, viz., 1 Burgee, 4 Pennants, and 13 square flags. These flags represent the consonants of the alphabet, and it is by a combination of 2, 3, or 4 of them in a hoist that arbitrary signs are made which represent words and sentences of the same signification in all languages. By means of these 18 flags no less 78,642 signals can be made. Signals of two flags are attention, compass and distress signals. Signals of three flags relate to general subjects of inquiry or communication, and those of four flags refer to geographical and vocabulary signals, and names of ships. When we passed the Cape of Good Hope we chatted to the lighthouse in this way: we hoisted four flags to shew them our name; then another four told them we came from Southampton, whilst a third four led them to understand we were going to anchor at Port Elizabeth. The signal flags I have alluded to can only be depended upon when the colours are distinctly visible, therefore a code of Distance Signals has been arranged by means of combining balls with flags. Twenty-two very important inquiries and communications can be made by placing the balls uppermost, separating them, or putting them lowermost in the hoist.

When we are “under weigh” another item of ship’s business interests us, that is, “heaving the log.” The log is a canvas bag of conical form, leaded with sufficient lead to cause it to float in the sea, and it is attached to a line 120 fathoms long. When the Quartermaster gives the word the bag is thrown into water, and the line runs off a reel. The fine sand at the same time commences running through the log glass, and during 14 seconds the line is going rapidly into the water. All this time the log bag is stationary, and the ship has been leaving it behind. At the expiration of the 14 seconds the line is pulled in, and it is seen what distance the ship has run in that time. From that, calculations can be made to show how many miles the ship is travelling per hour. To save, however, this calculation, knots have been made in the line. The log is heaved every hour.

The other day I descended to the engine-rooms, having first armed myself with bundles of tow, so that I might the better retain a hold of hot and greasy handrails. What a coaly and cindery promenade it is! The temperature, too, is novel. The stoke hole is 110 degrees Fahrenheit and the furnace room 135.

The engines are Reynolds’ Patent Self-acting Compound, which took the prize medal at the 1851 Exhibition. They are worked by patent hydraulic cranes. I will not trust myself to give any further description of what certainly appears to me to be a machinery of a complicated character. Entering a dark and narrow tunnel in which the roller which turns the screw is revolving, we pierce the very bottom of the vessel for 100 feet, amid darkness that might have been felt. Here, as in every other part of the engine department, water is continually dropping to counteract the heat produced by friction. Then we dived into bunkers of coal, peeped at the store-room with its reserve of lamps, oil, tallow, grease, tow, and yarn. Went in front of the eight roaring fires, coming out with our feet chalked! The Chief Engineer has 18 men under him. The watch consists of an engineer, two firemen, two trimmers, and one greaser. The latter engineer has to oil the engines every twenty minutes. Unlike the deck watch these men are four hours on and eight hours off duty.

THURSDAY, 12th SEPTEMBER.—It is with a very heavy heart that I see our journey is coming to an end. I have passed so many pleasant hours during the voyage and made so many pleasant friends that I dread the good-byes. It will be six hours, however, before we shall drop anchor and I mean to well use the time. I look for a long time upon white-crested waves, water-hills and valleys, and sluggish billows, as if I were just commencing a voyage. The undulating downs of the coast, the ravines filled with miscellaneous greenery, a bold cliff, a tumbled pile of red sandstone—all is gazed upon and greedily devoured. But there is really fine scenery to follow—a pass called the “Gates of St. John,” where the river Umzemoubu rushes through granite cliffs into the sea.

I was really charmed with the Natal scenery, behind sloping green downs higher downs rise, and beyond are blue and purple hills; the country opens out and improves in beauty every mile. We passed the mouths of seventeen rivers running from this one colony alone into the sea. Now we sighted the Bluff, its lighthouse and green hills.

At 2:30 our anchor chains are rattling, and the voyage, which has lasted just five weeks to-day, is at an end. The Danube has settled down to a thorough roll, from one side to the other, backwards she sways with the swaying rollers, whilst everyone is staggering in their cabins, collecting and packing up the thousand and one stray articles lying loose. The deck is a study. There are those who are wistfully casting glances shorewards in the hope of a landing being effected soon; but nothing is in sight, and we are in the cruel outer anchorage of Port Durban. In sympathy with at least one of our party I apostrophised a lively bird soaring overhead thusly,

“O! white winged seagull wheeling in the sunset

Fly swiftly southwards o’er the harbour bar;

Skim the bright waves, nor stay thy glittering

pinions—

Take me a message to my love afar.”

At last a tug is seen approaching us, and everyone seems frantic; each passenger appears loaded with gingham, rugs, and bags. Stewards are on the qui vive—you can guess what for! The deck is half-covered with boxes, baskets, chairs, guns, and every description of package. A filthy looking boat is alongside, and in it those who wish to land must be stowed; and marvellously quick are they tumbled and bundled unceremoniously into it. For instance: a lady of goodly proportions and two children are hastily packed into a basket carried up into the air by the winch, and bumped upon the deck of the walnut shell steamer below, whilst the rest of us line the bulwarks.

One tug is full and making for the bar; a lighter takes its place, and alongside of that a tug lies. The lighter is heaving most piteously. Three times she has tried to stave in our vessel, but her skipper acknowledges that £40 will not repair the damage his boat has received. Things are growing serious, and the passengers naturally feel timid. Instead of being tumbled they have to be pitched from the lighter into the tug; but thanks to the smartness of the officers no accident has occurred, and off goes Tug No.

2, leaving behind the Bishop of Pretoria's party, who wisely remain on board while their leader secures something comfortable in the way of lodgings for them. Thursday afternoon and the whole of Friday we were left to ourselves. No vessel dare put out to us until Saturday morning.

You may think that "blues" set in, but it was not so. I had much more of our vessel to go over, so the boatswain took me in charge and led me into horrible dark corners underneath the waves. Lanterns were lit to discern other lanterns, and then the ship's stores were revealed to me: stores of ropes, twine, kolystone, beeswax, cables, paint, oil, deck brushes, wire roping, and two sets of sails. Then the butcher showed me his stores, corn, and provisions for the cattle under his charge. The carpenter led me into his reserve of nails, hawsers, and lamps, and the Quartermaster conducted me through the Forecastle—the marine residence of the sailors—and very jolly the inmates were—some in hammocks, some playing cards, some eating "salt horse" and biscuits and all knowing for a certainty that the skipper had gone ashore. The Stewards, I found, were aware of the fact also, and singing and joking were largely indulged in by all. Of course the scene of jollity is in the forecastle, about 7 in the evening, when Jack has his pipe, cuts his joke, spins a yarn, and sings a long-winded song about the deep blue sea.

Then we had a glorious sunset. The bank of clouds, behind which old Sol fades from our sight, is beautifully crimson, toning down to a pale golden colour towards the edge, as is only to be witnessed in these latitudes, and which can in no sense be literally conveyed to canvas.

Perhaps there was, though, a tinge of melancholy about us towards evening when we remembered that 15 instead of 50 would sit down to dinner, and that afterwards there would be no one to pace the deck with. Perhaps one did say—

"O, soft west wind, in blowing from the ocean,

O leaping waves, up dancing in the light,

O, fresh white foam, heaving in restless motion,

Have ye no word for me this summer night?"

I leaned over the bulwarks for a long time that evening nursing myself with reminiscences of the past voyage.

One day on board an ocean steamer is said to be an exact counterpart of that which preceded, and we passengers are supposed to literally "pursue the even tenor of our way." But this has not been quite our experience, as my journal will have shown. One by one events come trooping up. I am leaving Southampton; then come the first advances of friendship—the knitting together of four kindred spirits at the dinner-table—the concerts, dance, Negroe entertainment, moonlight row—the merry groups formed during the long moonlight nights after an excellent dinner—the sprightly converse—solitary meditation—astronomical study—surely these have not made a stereotyped record! Has not the sea treated us to a variety of its moods—now so still and quiet that I have exclaimed—

"O, wonderful sea! calm, silent, and free,

As still as a lake,

And slumbering as though it never would wake.

So placidly bright in a dream of delight,
Unruffled for miles,
Or rippled with soft, ineffable smiles.
Can it be—can it be, O, wonderful sea!
Quiescent and smooth,
With a whisper of love to charm and to soothe—
Can it be that the storm in terrible form
Is asleep on thy breast?
Can hurricanes follow such slumber and rest?"

The Danube has ceased to "walk the waters like a thing of life," but memory insists on painting the past. Truly does Lady Barker say—"A ship is a very forcing house of friendship; and no one who has not taken a voyage can realize how rapidly an acquaintance grows and ripens into a friend under the lovely influences of sea and sky."

I am not going to conclude without expressing my admiration for the admirable way in which Captain Draper and his officers managed everything on board, and promoted the enjoyment of the passengers, nor shall I omit a word in commendation of the Chief Steward (Mr. Mitchell) and his aides who were all attention, whilst the arrangements of the table left nothing to be desired by any reasonable traveller. Both Captain and Chief Steward received addresses from the passengers showing the high esteem in which they were held.

SATURDAY, 14th SEPTEMBER.—At eight o'clock we took our leave of the Danube, and eventually got on board a tug, the billows all the while proving to be sworn foes to boats and passengers. There was a ladder let down from the Danube's side, but considering that one moment half a dozen rungs were buried in the sea, and the next instant ship and ladder and all had rolled right away from the tug, it will be easily seen why we descended in our old friend the basket. We are coming to the dreaded Bar. The Bar, as many doubtless are aware, consists of sand accumulated by the action of current or eddies, and waves, and it would be a permanent unpenetrable barrier but for the action of the waters. These tidal waters represent in a tidal day, a constantly acting power, equal it is said, to about 100,000,000 cubic yards of water, which insists, by well-known laws of nature, on entering and leaving the Bay of Natal. As a gate hangs on a hinge, so the Bar apparently rests on the Bluff as a point d'appui. So resting it has a certain amount of play on its outer end, and it is this end we make for. It is sometimes broader, narrower, with greater or lesser depth; sometimes longer or shorter, but to day it is somewhat miniature, and I regret to say that beyond scraping it two or three times, and being told to "stand by for spray" which never came, nothing of importance occurred. True we held on to handrails with the tightest of clutch, for had we not heard that under the most favourable of circumstances that particular five minutes held a peril in every second?

We are now on terra firma—"it may be for years and it may be for ever."

I purpose continuing to describe our travels until we arrive at Pretoria, and if desired, will give a half-yearly report of the "Transvaal Mission," together with an account of the natural, industrial, and social conditions of the colony, and what other parts of Africa I may visit.

The rough jottings I have already given have been written under trying circumstances—not in peace and quietness at home, but often on my lap, amid the hullabaloo of ship life, or on the piano while stewards have been getting meals ready. These circumstances warrant me, I think, in claiming indulgence from readers for all imperfections.

"'Tis pleasant thro' the loopholes of retreat,
to peep at such a world"—Cowper¹

Letter Nine

I have been living in Africa for 18 days, and during that time have learned much information about the colony we are in. I give it now, purposing to supplement it with my diary.

Natal, or rather that portion of it bearing that name, was discovered on Christmas Day, A.D. 1497 by Vasco di Gama. It is 30 degrees east of Greenwich, and 30 degrees south of the line, and has a seaboard of 150 miles, overlooking the Indian Ocean at a point of the African Continent about 800 miles north-east of the Cape.

The summer, or rainy season lasts from October to March. In February the thermometer rises to 100 degrees in the shade. The average mean temperature of the six hot months for 6 years has been computed at 69.1, and of the 6 cold months for the same period at 60.7. The area of Natal is about 15,000 square miles or about 10 million acres. Fully two million acres are taken up by Native Locations, by which I understand land granted to the native tribes by Government, the only charge made being a yearly tax of 14s (formerly 7s) for every hut erected.

In 1872 there were 37 native mission stations belonging to the American Board of Missions, the Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Hanoverian, and Norwegian Churches. In the Midland counties cereal crops are largely grown—maize and oats more particularly. Cotton is also grown in these districts. Sheep farming succeeds moderately well in the middle and upper districts. Cattle breeding from the earliest ages has been pursued here. Considering that Natal is not bigger than Scotland it is wonderfully self contained. Sugar, coffee, flour, meal, cheese, milk and butter; beef, mutton, pork and poultry; fruit of all kinds, from the familiar apple to the tropic mango, vegetables in equally wide variety; rum, beer and cordials; preserves, pickles, and condiments of every kind are the common products of the soil.

The great obstacle to the population being large is the absence of efficient means of transport. It has neither navigable rivers nor railways, its roads are not macadamised, and its only means of conveyance for merchandise is transport in the cumbrous and slow paced ox wagon drawn by teams of 14 or 20 oxen at the rate of about 15 miles a day. Beyond a certain distance it makes transport of all but certain kinds of produce a bar to extended production.

After the discovery of Natal little was heard of it for three centuries. In 1721 an abortive attempt was made by certain Dutch adventurers to establish a trading settlement. A century later Lieutenant Farewell, with a few others, formed a colony on the shores of the Bay of Natal. Although the British Government declined to aid this private enterprise it secured a footing in the country, and enlisted the sympathy of a large body of natives. Refugee natives gathered round this little party, and thus began that inflowing movement which has now filled Natal with a population of 300,000 Kafirs. In 1835 the English settlers had increased in number, and the township of Durban was in due course laid out. Then in 1835–8 the immigration of Dutch Farmers, self expatriated from the Cape Colony, took place. Of the treacherous massacres, bloody reprisals, and bitter struggles which marked the early history of this exodus a volume might be written. In 1842 they came in conflict with the British Government which refused to recognize their independence or to acknowledge the Republic they sought to create, and the hostilities lasted until 1843, when the insurgent Boers formally agreed to the proclamation of British rule. From that time peace has been maintained in Natal. In 1845 Mr Martin West assumed the reins as Lieutenant Governor. In 1856 Her Majesty conferred a charter upon the colony, establishing a Legislative Council of 16 members, 12 of whom are elected by the colonists.

The population of Natal in 1878 was 20,490 whites, 9,147 Indians, 263,049 natives and 2,041 natives of St Helena, Hottentots, and Chinese. In 1874 when the population was 18,664, of that number 9,990 were males and 8,656 females. In the same year there were 952 marriages, 3,748 births, and 1,226 deaths amongst the whites.

Labour is supplied from several sources; of the 300,000 natives living in Natal, but a small portion enter service. Their herds are so numerous, the burdens they have to bear so light, that the dominance over them of civilized Government has only had the effect of securing the freer and larger enjoyment of their modes of life. Their women till the fields, their children tend the cattle, the men are free to spend their lives in beer drinkings, dances and hunts which represent their heathen ideal of enjoyment. Only when the time comes for paying the tax, or when corn has run short, or food is scarce, do the Kafirs of Natal seek work amongst their white neighbours.

As labourers for the docks, railways, stores, and for domestic purposes must be obtained, servants are important, but you must not think that they come from England. Domestic servants, ladies tell me, do leave England for this place, but very soon after landing they marry. Some have had their passage paid on condition that they will enter service for three years, but employers have found to their cost that engagements entered into in England are not binding here.

Natives from distant tribes come in, Coolies from India are largely important. I think I am right in saying that the Natal Government have imported between ten and fifteen thousand; that the work and climate suit this people is proved by the fact that they land here lean, destitute, and miserable, and leave at the end of their ten years term fat, rich, and comfortable. I noticed that all the stalls of the Durban market are kept by these Indians. They pay yearly for this privilege about £400.

Indian immigration is managed by a board of directors. Upon the arrival of a vessel of coolies they are examined by medical officers, and sorted into parties of relatives who wish to be assigned together. They are then put into barracks, awaiting employment. Planters chiefly use them; the first step they take is to apply to the Protector of Immigrants. A bond is then made between the parties by which the employer must pay £4 per male adult, in advance, to the Protector, and give male adults employed the first year 10s per month, 1s increased per month each year, and rations as follows—Rice 1½ lbs per day

or 2 lbs maize; dholl, 2 lbs per month; salt fish 2 lbs per month; oil 1 lb per month; salt 1 lb per month. Government has also decided that they shall work nine hours every day except Sundays, Good Friday, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Indians are engaged to their employers for the term of five years, after which time they are free to engage themselves in any occupation they choose, and at the end of ten years from their first coming to the Colony they can claim to be returned to their country by the Government, or to have an equivalent in land to the amount of the passage money. The laws affecting Indian labourers in this colony are very many, but the abridgement, I think, will serve the purpose I have in view, viz., of making known to readers interested in my travels just enough of the social conditions of the several districts I pass through to edify and not weary.

The contractors of the Government Railways have brought over from the Mauritius 1,500 Creoles and Coolies at their own expense, exclusive of women and children.

Some 25 years ago the district I am now in was a region of wild and tractless bushland, of unbridged rivers, and unscarped hills, of forests thronged by wild beasts, and of grasslands dotted over with Kafir Kraals. Bearing this in our minds let us proceed to view the realities of the present by the light of my diary.

SATURDAY, 14th SEPTEMBER—We find ourselves at the Point, Durban, and proceed to the Customs Department to give up our guns and revolvers whilst they mark them. We find it is needful to obtain a magistrates' permit before we can call them our own. The Magistrates' office is two miles away. The duty is 20s per gun barrel, and 5s per pistol barrel.

Durban is at present the port for Pretoria, but Delagoa Bay must in time command the usual advantage of nearness. The port occupies about the centre of the coast line of Natal, and stands on the Northern shore of an almost landlocked bay, within which vessels of moderate tonnage find secure anchorage. At the south side of the entrance is the notorious Bluff, at an elevation of 292 feet above the water. A lighthouse was erected upon it in 1867. It is an iron building, 81 feet high, and exhibits a revolving white light of great brilliancy, seen at sea at a distance of 24 miles.

The docks present a scene of great activity—some twelve sailing vessels are unloading. Here are 500 Kafirs and Coolies at work, pushing tracks of packages, running into sheds with great burdens upon their heads, and generally I noticed that the noise they made was not commensurate with the work done. If 15 men attempt to move a burden, eight at least content themselves with shouting. White men in white hats keep tally, taking care to do no more, and many would follow their example, seeing that the thermometer stands at 138 in the sun.

Whilst waiting here we have time to scan the grotesque appearance of Kafirs, Hottentots, Creoles, and Indians in every picturesque variety of costume and absence of costume. A Kafir, for instance, has a costume which, if not elegant, is at any rate light, airy, and inexpensive, consisting simply of an "Eureka" shirt formed out of an old gunny bag, with apertures through which the head and arms are thrust. There are graceful, timid looking Indian females, looking wonderfully thoroughbred beside the pure African. Some blacks appear in dingy brown and dirty white; others are clothed in blue, scarlet, gold, and vermilion. Some have wooden clogs held by a button between the toes. Some sport jewellery—

bracelets, anklets, nose rings, nostril studs, earrings, and one man had a ring of three shanks on each finger. Most of the women encircle their dusky smiling faces with a gay cotton handkerchief, and throw another of a still brighter hue over their shoulders; add to this a full, flowing, stiffly starched cotton gown of a third bright colour, and you can perhaps form an idea of how they enliven the streets.

Outside the town I have noticed that the men only wear a few dangling strips of fur suspended from the waist. The younger women merely have a fringe belt made of the flares of a root, although nearer town a short skin petticoat reaching nearly to the bend of the knee is the usual costume.

When a male has arrived at the age of maturity his head is shaved with the exception of sufficient hair to attach the *issigoko* or ring. This ring has greatly aroused my curiosity, and at last I know how it is made, but I believe that no one can tell why they wear it. The method of putting it on is thus described:—A piece of rush cut, and smoothed to the proper size and length, is closely twisted round with sinew, and formed into circle by uniting the ends; with sinew it is then sewn to the roots of the hair, which in every other part, even within the circle is entirely removed, and the ring thus closely fitted on the scalp and blackened over with the black wax of a honeycomb, is completed.

In the groups before me I notice a great difference of complexion—some are nearly as light as a copper-colour, although a dark chocolate is the prevailing shade. The generality of the men are of the middle six, light, active, and well proportioned. They are said to be excellent walkers. A lady told me that one of her Kafirs lived 50 miles from his Kraal, but he very easily did that distance in a day. On the road to Maritzburg I met a native in war dress, and was told that he was going to search for a wife, and that his costume was proper “court dress.” It consisted of a thick full kilt, composed of cats’ tails descending nearly to the knee; the shoulders and upper part of his body were decorated with the long hair of ox tails; and the head was protected by a skin cap. He carried a shield and a bundle of assegais. The tails often worn by Kafirs I have met outside towns are said to be made out of strings of wild cat and monkey skin, and worn with the fur outside. When the women arrive at the age of maturity their heads are shaven close, with the exception of a small tuft called “*embeete*,” on the crown, which is often coloured with red ochre. Sometimes the heads of male and female Kafirs are decorated with feathers. Rows of beads of various hues are worn round the neck of females.

The Kafirs have woolly hair, and very generally the broad flat nose, and thick protuberant lip of the negroe organisation; they have also very much light-heartedness, grotesque humour, ready docility, and easy indolence. I must candidly say that at present I am deeply in love with them and feel inclined to say much more about them, but with another reference I must leave them for the present. This very interesting group received us well, but years ago the natives had a peculiar way of welcoming a stranger, that is, with knives, spears, bows and arrows, after the playful manner of the inhabitants of the ‘Black Country’ chronicled by Punch “‘eave a brick at his ’ead.”

It is 11 a.m, and considering that we have not yet had breakfast, we are glad enough to seek our hotel, and I guess we shall be ready for it, for I learn that it is in the town of Durban, two miles away, so off we trudge between tangled bush growing out of loose sand, and by the time we arrived we had experienced what “Afric’s burning sands” were like; the heat too was very palpable—my linen shirt collar soon having a tendency to assume the consistency of pulp!

We take up our quarters at the "Belgrade Hotel" for five days. After lunch a great number of the elite called upon the Bishop; and really it was all one could do to sit and chat; greater activity the heat would not allow. The last carriage and pair had hardly driven away before it was time to get ready for dinner. The courses served after soup are fish, fowls, and meat to which succeed pudding, tart, and cheese; on the whole a satisfactory meal. The attendants include two little Coolie boys, who were a source of constant amusement to us. Two or three calls upon my Durban friends brought the day to a close.

SUNDAY, 15th SEPTEMBER—The Bishop of Pretoria administered the Holy Communion at St. Cyprians Church at 7.30 a.m. At the evening service he preached to a very large congregation from St. Mark xiii chap. 18th verse—"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." St. Cyprians is a small and temporary church. The Rev. H. F. Whittington is Incumbent. The choir are in surplices and cassocks. All seats free. Choral Service.

During the day I visited every place of worship in Durban while Divine Service was being held including two of Dr. Colenso's churches, Wesleyan, Baptist, two Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Methodists, and Congregational Chapels, Roman Catholic Church, and two Kafir services. One of the latter was conducted by the Wesleyans and the other by the St. Cyprian staff. It was a touching sight, I thought, to see the Kafirs uncover their woolly heads and kneel to pray on entering, and hear them praising, in their own language, their Creator. I heard a native preach, he appeared to be eloquently earnest, and was able to keep every eye riveted upon himself.

Visited the Coolie Barracks, some 350 were there, having recently come from Madras and Bombay, they were waiting to be appropriated to masters. Many are washing clothes at a stream, beating them against rocks to get them clean. Some are arranging each other's hair, and washing one another; for, as with the Kafirs, Sunday is their great day for ablution. Women have rings through their noses, ears, and toes, and several on their fingers, bracelets on their arms, and strings of beads round their necks. All wear turbans, of rainbow colours; but the dress varied greatly from old sacks to very bright plaid. At one time I was surrounded by about 150 of them, they were endeavouring to explain to me their rations. It was a novel position to find oneself in, especially as there was not a single European in sight.

Letter Ten

In the afternoon I sat at my bedroom window, which, like all bedroom windows here, is on the ground floor, opening on a verandah, and watched the Durbanites (white and black) pass by. The Englishmen here, as in Port Elizabeth and Maritzburg, are very far above the average of Englishmen at home, even including Londoners. It is with me a matter of continual surprise that it is the case, nothing fills me with such wonder. Kafirs, tropical vegetation, burning sands, all sink into insignificance beside the towering superiority of the Englishman here over those at home, in dress, general appearance, smartness and refinement. The English ladies I can't say much for; they look like a wretched washed-out lot, with very clumsy gait, and I have seen the best of them in the theatres, rinks, and parks.

The Blacks, Kafirs, and Coolies that pass are indeed a study, every individual appears to have his own little weakness. Some wear cast off soldiers' uniforms (blue and scarlet), others policemen's. The "upper ten" dress in white calico with border of pink. The clothes of some are wonderful specimens of patchwork; but all, I think, agree to carry a long stick, and walk in Indian file.

Omnibusses drawn by three horses dash past every quarter of an hour; knifeboards announcing that "The Star Restaurant is the place to dine at," "The Play's the thing," see "Black-eye'd Susan" at the Theatre Royal.

MONDAY, 16th.—At half-past six I was bathing in the far famed bay of Durban. A long swim was a great treat, but when added to a view of such exquisite scenery, it proves almost overpowering, and we perceive that the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and say, with Toddie and Budge "we are having good times." Opposite to a box used by the Judge at Regattas is a bold range of hills, 200 feet high which terminates abruptly in a magnificent sea-bluff, further inland there is a corresponding range of hills, and from my position I can look down the throat of an open valley between these ranges of hills. The Bluff is covered with dense vegetation, and a path is seen winding between beautiful bushes, bearing strange and lovely flowers. There are fine islands in this basin, and reaching far into the shallow parts are mangrove trees growing naturally. Quite a fleet of sailing vessels are riding at anchor, fishermen in smaller craft pursue their avocation, while one or two early risers are paddling canoes. Right and left of me, and amidst a wealth of foliage, pretty villas rise with yacht and boat houses nearer the shore. The sun is shining, small fish in thousands are leaping out of the water and a dozen of us, heedless of sharks, delight in cutting antics in the briny.

The rest of the day was occupied in attending morning service, shopping, visiting, receiving visits, reading the daily papers at the Durban Club, and Town Library and Reading Rooms. The Club is a famous institution, consisting of three large blocks of buildings, fitted up with Reading, Dining, Bed, and Bath Rooms, capital Lavatories, Billiard and Card Rooms, Stables, and a spacious yard where the members leave their horses and carriages, in the hands of Kafir servants. The Mayor of the Town, amongst other kindnesses, introduced me to the Club for the time of my sojourn. In signing the visitors' books I noticed the signatures of General Thesiger, Sir John Coote, Anthony Trollope, and many men of eminence. On the table of the Reading Room I noticed that Natal boasted of seven newspapers, one magazine, and that the adjacent colonies were represented by eight different papers.

The Town Library and Reading Room is at present on a smaller scale, the subscription is 4s. per quarter. A removal will soon take place to a larger building in course of erection.

Before evening had fairly arrived I had walked over this pretty town and gathered much information, for had I not been closeted with the Editors of two papers for over two hours? The Borough is arranged in long parallel streets, cut up into regular quadrangles by intersecting thoroughfares, the two principal ones are West and Smith streets. In the centre of the town is a square, laid out as a public garden. On one side of it the Court House and Public offices stand. Here on Saturday we watched the Volunteers drill, and listened to their band play "Nancy Lee," a tune I think known in the Fatherland.

This evening I take care to be at the lower end of Smith Street to see the citizens leave town for their suburban Richmond—the Berea. The horsemen are mounted on splendid cattle, and the pairs that rattle by with the spider carriages are of high mettle. I should much like the people at home who talk such absurdities about "wild Africa" to stand by my side and see these equipages dash out of town and watch this four-in-hand which is just starting, or later on in the evening sit in the crowded Theatre, and note how well "The ticket of leave man" is put on the boards.

TUESDAY 17th SEPTEMBER—At 6 o'clock, Jim, the Kafir, hands us our cup of coffee. We are startled to see him at our bedside, so silently did he get there. After bathing, Service at St. Cyprians, and breakfast, I turn up at the daily market. The bell has just finished ringing and the Auctioneer commences selling. He is a Corporation official, and has no direct interest on the results of his sales. Note the miscellaneous articles put up, and prices realised.

Bananas 2s.9d. per 100, 2 tins lard 111/2d. per lb., eggs 1s.4d. to 1s.8d. per dozen, 2 bottles of milk 4d. each, tobacco 51 lbs. 9d. per lb., hams 81/2d. per lb., cabbages 3d. each (the largest went for 10d.), lettuce 3d. per dozen, carrots 1d. per bunch, gingerbeer 1s.3d. per dozen, lemonade 2s. per dozen, winter onions 6d. per lb., tomatoes 4d. per lb., green peas 4d. per lb., parsley 3d. per bunch, beetroot, turnip, and radishes, ditto.

Other things are offered, including green ginger, pumpkins, lemons, pine apples, curry powder, and cocoa-nuts. The stalls, 25 in number, are kept by coolies—I give the name of one—K. Mooneesawmy Naidoo.

At 10 a.m. I started for the luxuriantly-clothed slopes of the Berea, visiting the cemeteries on the way, and filling (unwillingly) my shoes with sand, for the road is nothing but a heap of sand for a good distance. By dint of fearful struggles the Botanical Gardens are reached, and here I spend no less than five hours, the Curator giving the whole of that time to me, and introducing me to Mr. Woods, the author of a very complete work on the ferns of Natal. The Gardens are 50 acres in extent, 30 under cultivation, the rest under bush. The ground was given by the Corporation 25 years ago. Government, I think, annually subscribe £350 towards the expenses. Considering that the Curator has a limited staff under him, in the shape of eight Kafirs, the grounds are wonderfully well kept—the long walks and hedges of Bamboo are in apple-pie order. The gardens are principally devoted to shrubs and timber-yielding plants.

We saw the following trees thriving well upon sand and in the open air. Many of them probably could not exist in England, even in conservatories: the Cinnamon, tamarind, silver oak, shea oak (Australia), Mangoe, Allspice, sweet locust or St John's bread, camphor, silk cotton, lemon, soap, nutmeg, castor oil, Australian Chestnut, Indian Rubber, Spanish chestnut, pudding pipe, bullock's heart, Mauritius blackwood, knobthorn, bamboo, sword bean, Vacuos, fig, flame, screw pine, variegated pine, date, palm, bottle brush, and Peruvian Balsam.

I regret that I have not a scientific acquaintance with these beautiful green-things of earth, and that intimate knowledge of a subject which enhance's one's appreciation of its charms as much as bringing a lamp into a darkened picture gallery. But if I lost half their charms I was intensely delighted with the other half. The names I give are those by which the trees and plants are generally known out here.

I noticed camelias, pomegranates, the travellers' tree from Madagascar with the leaves spread out like a fan, rice paper plant, tea plant, vanilla plant, looking glass plant (one side of the leaves being silver, here is natural mirror), a marking ink plant put into practical use by the curator, the air plant, a cactus, 14 feet high. Dragon's blood was squeezed from another plant. There were palms in profusion, including the cocoa nut, rows of mangoe trees, and the candle berry, the seeds of which burn like oil. Many a fig tree

we saw climbing large trees. They take root anywhere, in the fork of a branch I saw one issue from. It had thrown its arms around the massive trunk of the tree, and a struggle was going on between the two which I am informed will end in the fig crushing all life out of its opponent.

The fact of remaining in the gardens so long will shew that I was enraptured with this fairy land—what beauty of pencilled petal and veined leaf, of solid and bulbous stems, of blossoms never seen before; of fruit most tempting and most refreshing, for we were allowed to pluck anything, and still we never seem to get to the end of these wonders, but are led on down avenues, or push trees and plants on one side to see greater novelties. Have I not already said that the products of the trees are of a thoroughly domestic nature? Soap, nutmegs, chestnuts, castor oil, camphor tea, marking ink, looking glass, cotton, allspice, lemons, cinnamon, tamarinds, pomegranates, and are you not led to ask if there was not a plant bearing hearthstones?

The indigenous vegetable productions of Natal are of exceeding variety. I purpose giving a short account of them, drawing my information chiefly from Mr Brooks' admirable work on Natal. At the time of my writing this I have walked through some 50 miles of Natal scenery, and although I am here at the wrong period of the year for the country to be looking its brightest, still I am delighted with it, and have already seen many of the following productions:—Wild bananas and wild date palms give quite a tropical aspect to the scenery of this region. The bananas bear a remarkably brilliant coloured flower, shaped like the gaping bill of a bird, with a projecting tongue. The fruit of the banana, when really ripe, is very delicious. On the rocky sides of glens and ravines the candelabra spurge grows abundantly. The fleshy upturned branches are tufted at the end after the fashion of a candelabra of many sockets. At the edge of swamps the Caput Medusa is found, its "Medusa head" of flowers in the midst of the environments of snake like locks, and its resemblance to a little mat gives it a very grotesque appearance. In many places along the coast there occurs a pretty shrub called the "Natal plum," remarkable on account of its bearing a really valuable fruit. The plant has dark polished leaves which glisten in the sunshine. The blossoms are large, starlike white flowers, something of the jessamine character. Some of the flowering shrubs of Natal are in full blossom in winter time, and some again that are not evergreen put forth their blossoms in gorgeous magnificence before they open out their leaves. The tree known as a "Kafir broom" is a notable instance of this. It is a plant with clusters of large long flowers of the brightest red, looking in its leafless state as if a flock of scarlet birds had settled upon its light brown knotted branches.

There has been an excessive drought this year. Everyone is waiting for rain. When it comes I find that the pastures commence to clothe themselves with flowers. Daisy like flowers break out from the ground, having snowy petals opening up to the sun, with deep velvety purple eyes and with crimson breasts. The leading glory of the pastures after the first rains of the wet season is the "fire lilly". The flame coloured blossoms, not unlike to large red fuschias, hang down in clusters cowslipwise. Another very magnificent plant is the Natal lilly, the flowers are enormously large, white, pink ribbed bells, and hang in vast heavy clusters round the summit of the flower stalk which rises to a height of three or four feet from the ground.

Then there are what the colonists term "flowering grasses," a very graceful family with pink and lavender hued bells suspended from hair like pendulous footstalks, resembling those of the English harebell, which blow about literally as hairs in the breeze. The Natal white arum has vast bunches of flowers, comprising as many as twenty or thirty spatles, with creamy white sheathes and frieze of dark

green leaves. I have met with plants that furnish flowers very like English Calceolarias, foxgloves, and primroses.

The aloe is very abundant everywhere, covering hillsides with its prickly leaves, and sending up large spikelets of flowers. There are “armed” thorn trees, I know to my cost, prickly pear plants, and yellow flowered Cassias. A creeper with a stem 18 inches or upward in diameter climbs the tallest trees and spreads amongst their boughs to a distance of 100 yards, and even more; it hangs down pods three feet long and four inches broad, containing brown beans two inches in diameter.

Mr Keite, the Curator of the Botanical Gardens, shewed me the “wait a bit” thorn, so named because it makes a rule of never parting from a garment it once gets firm hold of. Dr Kirk has thus expressively classified South African thorns as—(1) those which scratch the skin, (2) those which tear the flesh, (3) those which tear the clothes, and (4) those which tear both clothes and flesh. The sickle thorn literally cuts into an animal’s skin like a knife.

Of the timber trees of Natal the “Geel Hout” is the largest. It is the “deal-wood” here, the colour is light yellow, the tree grows with a long bare stem and a tuft of contorted branches above. Clean poles 40 feet long, and five feet in diameter, are frequently cut without a single branch. The “sneeze wood” tree grows to a large size, trunks are cut 80 feet long and 4 feet in diameter, the wood is proof against wet, decay, and white ants, but can only be used for out-of-door work. There is a wood here known as “stink wood,” it resembles walnut, is used for such articles of furniture as are ordinarily made of mahogany, and is durable only for indoor use.

The three kinds of timber I have mentioned are the most largely consumed in the colony.

The other timber trees of Natal are—the black iron wood, the white iron wood, lancewood, white pear tree, white milk wood, South African ash, saffron wood, South African ebony, the wild olive, South African elder, wild chestnut, and wild willow.

The ferns of Natal are very varied and abundant, owing to the warmth and moisture of the climate, and the frequent occurrence of rocky ravines. Mr Wood gave me a list of those he had collected. They exceeded one hundred in number. You may form some idea of the surpassing richness and abundance of the flora of South Africa, and perhaps excuse my dwelling so long on the subject when I mention that the number of species of the vegetable kingdom indigenous to Europe scarcely exceeds 5,000, whilst the number of species in the Cape Colony, including Natal, almost certainly exceeds 14,000. It has been estimated that there are as many distinct species of plants upon the Table Mountain of Cape Town as there are in the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

Letter Eleven

Leaving the Botanical Gardens I ascended to the upper ridge of the Berea, 300 feet above the level of the sea. The Berea is the fashionable suburb of Durban. The air here is beautiful, the view very extensive and lovely. Within the wide-spreading prospect the eye seems to rest upon every charm that a landscape can possess, except snowy mountains. There is the lake-like bay with its islands, the darkly wooded hills beyond the foamy ocean, bluer almost than the skies above it;—the jungly hills in the foreground. Behind, the River Umgeni is seen, winding amidst cane fields, and the hills roll onward in the sun haze to the west until they cease with the precipices of the Inanda.

Land up here is £200 per acre. Houses as a rule have but one storey, the smaller ones are rented at £4 10s per month, and consist of three sitting, three bed, bath and store rooms, a verandah, and a tank underground, capable of holding 8,000 gallons of rain water. Filtered rainwater is what Durbanites drink, water from wells is useless. As a rule sufficient water is sent to the residents from the skies, but the other day water from the River Umgeni was sold in Smith Street, 26 buckets realised 3d. each, and 256 1d. each.

In the evening there was a select Masquerade at the Rink, open to members of the Club and their friends only. I was fortunate enough to be included amongst the latter. A quadrille was being danced upon roller skates as I entered, by little Red Riding Hood, a Harlequin, a Nurse of the Red Cross, a Jockey, a Nun, a Russian Hunter, three members of an Ethiopian troupe, dressed in the usual huge collars, striped coats with blue and pink tails, and carrying tambourine, banjo, and bones. The inevitable Cupid with wings and arrow flitted everywhere, especially when the band was discoursing.

WEDNESDAY, 18th SEPTEMBER.—A quiet day devoted to packing. The evening saw me on the Berea, four-in-hand, en route for dinner at one of the charming suburban residences I have before mentioned. While it was light a stroll was made through plantations of coffee and sugar cane, belonging to Mr. Hartley. At the end of a broad carriage is Overport House, the residence of Mr. Hartley. It is a one storied dwelling house, and methinks that already my readers smile at such a building, but I hope to never live in a house again which will compel me to mount stairs! These one storied dwellings look, in my eyes, far prettier than the square two storied red houses of England. The house before me has an irregular roof broken by many gables, flanked by a castellated tower, and surrounded by a broad terrace. The two reception rooms are lined with polished cedar, panelled and beaded with gold and lighted by tinted glass ceilings. In the centre of the house is a conservatory with a fountain playing, under a glass dome. From this, on one side, opens out a hall fitted up as a billiard room, while at the farther end it terminates in a Gothic Hall, lit by a large and beautifully painted window, which once adorned an ancient manor house in England. Here stands a magnificent harmonium. All round the house stretch broad terraces, adorned with vases of flowering plants, and in front plays a fountain, fed from water tanks in an ornamental tower.

A very excellent dinner, followed by music of no ordinary kind brought a conclusion to the day's events.

THURSDAY 19th SEPTEMBER—Spent the greater part of today at the Point, looking after lost luggage. It is not altogether satisfactory to know that one of my bags, after lying several days at a store on land, was put on board the "Conway Castle," bound for England. Two bags belonging to two of my comrades have shared a similar fate. To add to our misfortunes the Danube has gone on an 800 miles cruise, with 114 tons of cargo, including the majority of the Bishop's luggage. As a matter of course this particular luggage contained the provisions intended for our journey up the country, and the wherewithal to cook and eat it with, and later on you will hear how we managed to survive the catastrophe.

To-day the train is to take us 12 miles inland, but before leaving I will finish my notes on Durban. The population of the town suburbs in 1870 was—whites, 5,312; Kafir, 3,177; Indians, 1,999. The whites included 1,652 men, 1,333 women, 1,207 boys and 1,127 girls.

Revenue of Borough, £14,189; expenditure, £13,174.

Buildings in town and suburbs 1,092, of which 59 were empty.

There were 188 births, 63 marriages, and 102 deaths, of the white population.

The Police of town and suburbs numbered 48 men, viz., 12 Europeans, and 36 natives.

The following was the list of licenses used: Hotels and Public houses, 48; lodging and eating houses, 25; Billiard, 3; butchers, 8; bakers, 8; retail shops, 152 and hawkers, 52.

Convicted for crime from July 1877, to July, 1878—Europeans, 873; Indians, 1,216; and natives, 1,618. The cases were not serious, generally contraventions of bye laws and trespass.

The streets, I have said, are often nothing but heaps of sand, but of late years some have been macadamised. Even those have a large margin of sand at the sides.

During 1877–8, 6,000 feet of streets were hardened, at a cost of 24s. 3d. per yard.

RAINFALL AT DURBAN.

1872—62,214

1873—42,024

1874—55,056

1875—5,478

1876—3,522

1877—3,565

You can easily guess from these figures what the state of the country is, especially when I add that there has scarcely been a shower of rain this year. A common scene in this town is a dozen Kafirs round a pump. Twelve rotary pumps have recently been put up in different streets, and probably 40 pumps are thus surrounded all day.

After 9 o'clock in the evening natives are not allowed in the streets, except with a "pass" from their employer. A bell is rung at the Police station five minutes before that hour to give proper warning.

The institutions of the town include Mechanics Institute, Athenæum Club, Chamber of Commerce, two Masonic lodges, lodges of Foresters and Oddfellows, three Banks, 16 Insurance offices, Rowing, Swimming and Yacht Club, Horticultural Society and Natural History Associations besides those I have previously referred to. Two papers are published here, issued three times and twice a week respectively. The citizens gave £1,600 to the late Indian Famine Fund.

I will now give further statistical notes of the colony.

I have already alluded to the history, area population, thermometer readings, and labour.

The following abstracts are the latest I can get of a trustworthy character. 1875, Imports £1 268 888. Exports, £835,643. Revenue of Colony, £260 271, expenditure, £306,412.

The following immigrants arrived in the colony in 1877:—English, 439, French and Italians, 124, Mauritians, 833, from India, 1639, liberated slaves, 173, total, 3198.

The number of vessels in port has often exceeded 30.

I give a brief table of imports and exports for 1875:—

IMPORTS

Ale and Beer, £23,868. Coffee, £34,118.

Haberdashery and Millinery £134,040. Linen, £12,090.

Apparel and Slops, £109,613. Stationery, £14,058.

Spirits, £26,401. Wines, £16,773.

Beads for natives, £5,720. Iron, £56,439.

EXPORTS

Sugar, £169,815. Wool, £389,257.

Coffee, £1,586. Skins, £47,000.

Hides, £101,000. Gold dust, £28,443.

The bulk of the trade is done with the mother country. The Customs Revenue is derived from duties on ale, coffee, dried fruit, picks and hoes, gin, tea, blankets, cheese, brandy, tobacco, cigars, and wine. 193,417 gallons of beer, and 77,975 gallons of spirits were consumed.

About 50 vessels arrive per year from England.

There are 66 post offices in the Colony. Mails are despatched to Europe twice every month.

Natal boasts of 89 boy's and girl's schools, with 2,973 scholars. Government grant £3079, voluntary contributions, £11,000.

Churches and Chapels 139, thus distributed:—Church of England 30, Church of Province of South Africa 21, Roman Catholic 2, Dutch Reformed 2, Scotch Presbyterian 5, Congregational Independent 11, Wesleyans 27, Lutheran 20, Dutch Presbyterian 4, Free Church of Scotland 2, American Congregational Mission 14, Norwegian Mission Lutheran 1.

I shall furnish the statistical figures relating to Stock, Animal production, and Agriculture.

STOCK, EUROPEAN.

Horses, 13,788. Mules, 597

Horned Cattle, 125,767. Wool bearing sheep, 250,378

Angora Goats, 29,068. Pigs, 8,183

Donkeys, 241. Sheep (not wool bearing), 803

NATIVE.

Horses, 9,665. Horned cattle 375,387

Sheep (not bearing wool), 50,475. Goats, 172,965

Pigs, 3,134

ANIMAL PRODUCTION

Wool, 778,173 lbs. Butter, 261,675 lbs.

Cheese, 17,147 lbs. Bacon, 240,972 lbs.

AGRICULTURE. ACREAGE OF EUROPEAN CROPS

Wheat, 1,878. Indian corn, 14,909. Kafir corn, 841.

Oats, 4,157. Barley, 142. Beans, 159. Buck wheat, 28.

Sugar cane, 7,027. Coffee, 4,174. Arrowroot, 249.

Cotton, 114. Potatoes, 693.

Grand total, 36,372.

ACREAGE OF NATIVE CROPS

Indian corn, 90,669. Kafir corn, 34,277.

Potatoes, 8,238. Sugar cane, 1,116.

Grand total, 140,985.

I am now bound for Pinetown by 17 miles of railway; the distance by road is but 12 miles. The view from the carriage windows is lovely, we often run parallel with the high-road. This road at first ascends the sandy range of the Berea for 300 feet. It is bordered on either side by dense bush, and wherever a cottage appears in a small clearing by the wayside, it is almost overgrown by flowering shrubs and gay flowers, amongst which appear conspicuously roses, bougainvillea, alpineas, pointsetteas, and large ipomseas that sometimes go far towards covering the building with a continuous cloak of blossoms. Farther on we get exquisite peeps of the sea between the breaks of hills. Marvels of sequestered and picturesque beauty are to be seen in sheltered and wooded ravines. Eight miles on the River Palmiet winds through a ravine, bounded on either hand by steep bare walls of rock, shooting up perpendicularly 200 and 300 feet high, embrasured with holes and grey with lichen. Vultures and hawks make their nests in these rocky fastnesses. The tops of the rocky walls are ornamented with blue flowers, and the scarlet spikes of lug aloes more than a foot long. Shady nooks and crevices are draped with ferns and climbing plants, and gay with bright blossoms on the clematis. Miniature waterfalls in every variety are seen.

Pinetown lies in a flat sandy valley between Cowie's and Fields Hills, and has the reputation of having a healthful climate. Families often come here for a week of air. A fellow traveller tells me that whenever

he feels unwell he comes out here for a night, returning by morning train, or from Saturday to Monday, and he is completely restored to good health. The village is about 1,200 ft above the level of the sea. The road is tracked through what seems little else than a sand waste, suggesting at first sight the idea of hopeless barrenness. But the landscape on either side is nevertheless dotted over with houses embowered in gardens, where gracefully drooping bamboos are diversified with broad leaved plantains and bananas, stately gum trees, golden sphered oranges and fragrant syringas. Orange trees and bamboos are in groves, the latter furnish capital whip stocks. Tobacco has been grown abundantly here, also arrowroot. Around are fields of forage and potatoes, sweet and common, and plantations of coffee. A plantation of coffee shrubs, all growing in rows, of the same height, and the same distance apart, divided into sections at regular intervals by lines of some graceful fruit-bearing tree, presents in itself a highly ornamental scene.

Pinetown has a population of 300. The place was laid out in 1850 by Mr. A Murray, and the hotel that bears his name is one of the prettiest and most complete I have yet met with in Africa. The little place boasts of two places of worship, three Hotels, any number of private boarding houses, several stores, a public school, and a Library and Reading Room open to the public. Some day perhaps England may furnish her towns and villages with public libraries and Reading rooms. London and one or two other towns have just followed in Africa's wake, before I quitted Albion. It would be wrong to expect that those the English may eventually organise will equal the Africander institutions. Ours here are very large, lofty and well fitted buildings, open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., and the shelves I noticed are not filled with unreadable books. But fancy an African village beating an English town and perhaps city!

For two days we were the guests of the Rev. Canon Crompton. During our stay we visited a lovely ravine for the purpose of bathing. The river, when swelled, must add the last touch of grandeur to the scene. To-day there is not very much water, but the place looks lovely. People who drive over the roads and tracks of Africa cannot know its beauties; they should turn aside, as we have done for fifty miles up country, to scour valleys and pierce bush. By "we" I mean the two theological students of our party, and sometimes the two clergymen.

In the plains it is so intensely hot, here in this bush-swathed valley, almost hidden from the eye of men, the shade of overarching trees is deliciously cool. It is altogether one of those paradisiac scenes so unimprovable by man, that enthusiastic pens are apt to write words that may be deemed extravagant. Around the mossy roots of the trees are graceful fronts of innumerable ferns in thick clusters, the wild bavand waves its fan like leaves above foliage of a darker hue. Here are dwarf palms and Strelitzias, and the glad sound of rippling water. The toucan and hawk fly lazily through the dreamy azure, and lazier still I select a thick belt of shadow to lie down in, murmuring as I deposit my bones on a wrinkled boulder half covered with greenery, "these are good times."

Letter Twelve

SATURDAY, 21st SEPTEMBER—Surely an eventful day, for we at last start a trek of 450 miles (trek means travel). Our six kafirs have yoked our 26 oxen in two waggons, 14 to draw a waggon with half a tilt, and loaded with heavy baggage, and 12 to draw a full tilted waggon in which ladies and children ride. The oxen have light bodies, long legs, and enormous wide horns. At the end of each team, a Kafir stands. These officials are called "foreloopers," they tug a rope fastened to the horns of the leading oxen. A large conversation takes place between the two drivers, "John" and "Govan," their whips are whirled in

the air several times, and strike the haunches of our animals the same time that hideous yells leave the lips of our black "Johns," and at last we are off.

"Away—away from the dwellings of men,
By the Antelope's haunt, and the Buffalo's glen:
By valleys remote, where the Ourebi plays;
Where the Gnoo, the Sa-saby, and Hartebeest graze;
And the Eland and Gemsbok unhunted recline:
By the skirts of grey forest, o'erhung with wild vine,
Where the timorous Zungga's wild whistling neigh,
Is heard by the fountain at fall of day;
And the fleet footed Ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste."

Burchell, during his travels, adopted a very simple but excellent way of ascertaining how many miles he travelled per day. The distance was calculated by a table, computed from the circumference of the largest waggon wheel, multiplied by the number of evolutions performed per minute, the time that the vehicle was in motion was carefully noted, as well as the course by compass. I do not propose taking such pains, but at the same time intend furnishing every fragment of information worthy of perusal.

Leaving the fields near Pinetown Railway Station, we strike into the main road for Maritzburg. The men of our party shoot ahead on tramp, and our forelooper sings as we pass:—

"Ite, cata cata, wa mooka

Wa mooka, bozy,

Wa mooka,

Na injomarne,"

which being translated, means—

"Clatter, clatter, he is going

He goes with them

He is going

He goes with (a horse or) speed."

I cannot say much for the time to set to those lines.

We first climbed an immense hill, known as "Field Hill," wading far over our ankles in red sand, and receiving the scorching rays of the sun. Away to our right were some lovely valleys of no mean depth. The post cart from Maritzburg dashed past, drawn by six horses, and carrying eight passengers. These

carts go at great speed, the driver makes his team rush up hills, where in England the passengers would have to get out and walk. Fifteen Kafir women crossed our path, walking one behind another bearing pails of water and bundles of sticks upon their heads, but stepping out bravely with beautiful erect carriage, shapely bare arms and legs, and some sort of coarse drapery worn about their bodies, covering them from shoulder to knee. These women had been some four miles for the water, and long after we left them we could see going in a straight line across a series of hills, this string of healthy and happy bread-winners, for the men were of course sitting in their Kraals smoking.

Next we passed a Kafir herdsman returning down the sides of the precipitous hills with his herds of oxen.

“Sauntering languidly along;

Nor flute as he, nor merry song,

Nor book, nor tale, nor rustic lay,

To cheer him through his listless day.

His look is dull, his soul is dark;

He feels not hope’s electric spark.

But born the white man’s servile thrall,

Knows that he cannot lower fall.”

At 5.30 we outspanned (i.e., took our oxen out), after a six-mile trek, on ground known as Gilletts Farm. The ladies were at once busy preparing tea, whilst the men pitched four tents, which at night would sleep seven gentlemen and a lady. The latter has her own tent, the Bishop and two sons have the Ecclesiastical tent, (so called because it most resembles a Church, and does duty for such), the two clergymen and two students have a couple of Cape Mounted Policemen’s tents between them and the remainder of [the]19 sleep in the two waggons.

After tea two of us “turn in” from 7.30 to 12, and then take a three-hour watch. The watches are 9 to 12, 12 to 3, and 3 to 6. Six of us take this duty which is not the liveliest sort of work imaginable. Pacing up and down the wet grass in the midst of a heavy dew in an unknown country for three unearthly hours, and conversation of a necessity reduced to a whisper. I never heard such an insect orchestra in all my life before as I do in Africa nightly. The croaking of an unseen army of bull frogs, and creaking of grasshoppers numberless, with a chorus of a thousand other voices of the air, to say nothing of an episcopal snore certainly are novelties, although after a time they pall.

SUNDAY, 22nd SEPTEMBER—Day of rest—no “trek.” At 9 o’clock service is held, the congregation sit on camp stools in the large tent, the Bishop from under a white umbrella preaches from the words “Whoso is wise will ponder these words.” The Holy Communion was administered at its conclusion. A friendly horseman joined us at both services.

After dinner the “Laurels” (that is the tent I live in) favoured the camp with strains from a musical box and concertina. At 3 p.m., evening prayers followed by a sermon from the first four verses of St. Luke, took

place under a tarpaulin stretched between the two waggons. Eight persons drawn from a distant homestead and waggons by the Bishop's invitation joined us. Very heartily did we sing the well known lines:

"Lead us on our journey,
Be thyself the way."

The thermometer shews 86 degrees in the shade, and 138 in the sun. Where can we go? Our camp is on the hill, the prospect from it is a good one, of undulating downs and flats, and distant purple hills, but I would rather descend than climb so I hie me down slopes in search of some shady nook, and as by a fairy's wand an enchanted glen appeared. As I stood there listening to the trickle of water which alone broke a "charmed silence," I asked, could it be a dream? Winding my way down this glen I came to a waterfall dashing over a bed of rocks, and leaping in one case 50 feet. The banks of the rivulet are simply museums of botanical curiosities. Here and there were fallen crimson and yellow leaves rivetting the eye for a moment by their vivid glow, or the young fronds of a rare fern pushing up their curled horns of pale green. Aloes, syringas, the flat crowned tree, and a wonderful minutia of diminutive tendril and flower hang over the abyss.

"Soon I raise the eye to range,
O'er prospects wild, grotesque and strange—
Sterile mountains, rough and steep,
That bound abrupt the valley deep,
Heaving to the clear blue sky.
Their ribs of granite, bare and dry;
And ridges, by the torrents worn,
Thinly streak'd with scraggy thorn.
Which fringes Nature's savage dress,
Yet scarce relieves her nakedness."

Sunset drives me home, and darkness sends me at 6.30 p.m. into my tent to court Morpheus, "where nature's green mantle was spread". To understand the last sentence you must know that we sleep on the ground—my hips will corroborate this statement—wearing our overcoats over a complete suit of clothes, and having a blanket above and beneath our bodies. My pillow consists of a traveling bag.

MONDAY, 23rd SEPTEMBER—Rose at 5.30 a.m. Did I rise high the top of my tent and my smoking cap would come into contact. I avert such a catastrophe by crawling on hands and knees. A wash from a pail half filled with muddy water, a cup of coffee and piece of bread followed by morning prayers, and the walking party start. The Bishop had intended that the oxen should be inspanned at the same time, but John (our head Kafir) could not understand the episcopal wish, and no signs, or "John, put ox in"—"John,

send for oxen” —“Let’s go John!”—would enable him to. I see that stalwart Kafir now calmly watching the gesticulations of the Right Reverend Prelate, and hear his laconical answer of “yah,” unattended by any movement towards starting. At 7 o’clock the wheels of the cumbrous waggons are dragged out of the ruts, and then commences a hideous series of jolts and creaks, varied by cracks of a 20-foot whiplash, and yells and whistles of six natives, to say nothing of the youngest of our party, aged one, who starts a tune “all her own.”

A walk of 3½ miles brought me to Padley’s Hotel. I liked the word “hotel,” seeing that it consisted of a dining room and general store. The latter contained something of everything, like all stores on our road: brooms, bread, boots, tin’d lobsters, sardines, jams, biscuits (2s per lb), trousers, and “all other hardware save treacle.” It is half past eight, and we have had no breakfast, still we have to push on. The heat is fast increasing as we toil up another immense hill which gives us extensive views of hills and valleys, but not once do we see a plain, hedgerow, homestead hut, or smallest piece of cultivation. Red sand is very plentiful under foot and in my shoes. Luckily there is no wind or we should be smothered.

The toilets of the men are not elaborate. Mine consists of brown Holland trousers and coat, flannel shirt, shoes and Wimbledon white hat. Waistcoat, collar, tie, we all deem superfluous. A long stick is all I carry, but others prefer white umbrellas. Amongst the many wild ideas entertained of Africa is one which credits its white people with being clothed in light costume. This is not the case in South Africa where broadcloth is worn as much as in England. Bishop Gray always wore a black suit during a 14-year travel in all parts South of the Equator. Men wearing puggarees, light suits, or using white umbrellas are fewer in proportion than those in England.

Whether we mount or descend we always keep company with the line of railway now making between Durban and Maritzburg, and which will eventually be carried to Newcastle at the Northern extremity of this colony. The country through which the survey has had to be carried is a difficult one, being everything sculptured with ridges and valleys. In a survey of 347 miles it was ascertained that there would have to be 589 viaducts, bridges and masonry culverts. The gradient is sometimes one in thirty in steepness, and the curb as sharp as a circular arc of 300 feet radius.

This railway is our daily wonder, now it is coming over a hill, now by a hill’s side, and now emerging from a valley. Sometimes we lose it for a mile, only to see it in some novel position.

This line attains a height of 2,373 feet at 36 miles from Durban, falls 294 feet, and afterwards crosses the highest level at a height of 3,037 feet, it next falls 1000 feet into Maritzburg, ascends 1,700 feet in four miles, descends 1,500 feet to cross the Bushman’s river, and finally reaches the Drakenburg after traversing 280 miles. The contract for the construction of a single line of railway, of three feet six inch gauge, from Durban to Maritzburg, a length of 78 miles, and of a line to Verulam and Isipingo, twenty seven miles, is £899,000.

I should much like to see the first trial trip on this line when it is completed. To a non-professional eye it seems impossible that an ordinary size train could creep up those thousand and one spurs.

During our walk we see our first “buck,” but not for long, it has soon fled out of sight. We pass three dead oxen; two of them are prey to Vultures, black and white birds of gigantic size, with huge fringed flapping wings, and with enormous powers of flight. Speaking of birds I find that those of Natal number

700 species, and include large eagles which carry off small antelopes. The "Secretary bird" standing like a crane, on legs 2½ feet long, he is a serpent eater. Falcons and hawks are numerous, so is the crow family, and cone-billed finches. A member of the latter family constructs a sociable nest of grass, sometimes extending 10 feet across, and containing several hundred birds. There are emerald cuckoos, supreme for the splendour of their shining plumage of mingled emerald and gold. The "honey guide" is said to conduct travelers to the nest of the bee, with its cry of "cheir, chier," and sometimes to introduce them to a leopard. The slender billed birds are most beautifully represented by honey birds or sun birds, they are exquisite little birds, not so large as some of the biggest insects, with long slender bills and brilliant plumage, and live upon the juices of flowers. Natal has partridges, pheasants, quails, and pigeons, but the bird I have most frequently seen is the wild turkey, measuring sometimes 7 feet between the tips of expanded wings, and standing 5 feet high. Ostriches, cranes, storks, and pelicans are of tolerable abundance.

Leaving the main road we follow the railway track, and chattered to the ganger of a splendid Kafir team, who were excavating for the rail. I have seldom seen men so magnificently made, but I am told it is an exceptional team. What a study is a group of woolly headed black skinned people. They stand about five feet ten inches to six feet three inches high, some as robust as the lethargic Dutchmen, but the majority of slender build, compact and wiry. The lips and the nose are too broad to be beautiful, yet they accord with strength. Not unfrequently the head is well developed, displayed considerable mental power, an intelligence and expressiveness far removed from the low savage. They appear to treat the burning rays of the sun and the raw cold of the night with alike defiance.

Scarcely any cases of deformity, it is said, are met with. No contracted chests, no hooked shoulders, no weakened spines, but the fine human frame erect as the God of nature made it; chests expanded, and limbs supple, the whole capable of enduring excessive labour. They have two rows of beautiful white pearly teeth in the mouth, strongly contrasting with their black or copper-coloured skins.

I have said that Kafirs are intelligent. Hear what a high authority says of them—"Some would-be-wise Englishmen have endeavoured to parody the black man by representing him shaking hands with a baboon, and thus establishing brotherhood with the monkey tribe. I should like to pin down such a gentleman to a three days' Kafir discussion, and I will engage that it would take either the folly of the fun out of him, and show which approached nearest that quadruped. They have deceived and outwitted our ablest governors, our most astute diplomats, and our very acute officers and magistrates. They are equal to any English lawyers in discussing questions which relate to their own laws and customs."

"They are most suspicious, not quickly impulsive, as a rule display a stolid indifference when reproved. With the Kafir deception is a practiced art from early childhood, the biggest liar is loudly applauded. Credulity forms no part of their mental character, hasty credence is never given, every part of a subject must be long and carefully investigated, and then only is wary assent obtained." Hence, says the same writer, they are not material on which the missionary can produce an effect quickly. When a truth is expounded they will listen attentively and patiently, but not answer. If they speak at all it is simply to say "We hear the word," or "We thank for the word," or "We will think about the word." When they receive divine truth after long and careful examination, and embrace the Gospel of Christ, they usually remain true to their profession, and abide in the faith and hope of the Gospel.

After a long chat with this ganger we set out over a mile and half of granite hills. Huge grey blocks of bare rock, many hundreds of tons in weight hung immediately over our heads with threatening aspect,

in some cases looking as if they crash down from their apparently insecure holdings at any instant. This granite formation looks like a vast sea of petrified billows. At the "Half Way House" we were overtaken by our waggons, and just beyond we outspanned, time 12.15 almost time you will say for breakfast, considering we were up at 5.30 a.m. and since then walked some ten miles. At 12.45 behold us drawing up to a table, each man produces his pocket knife and cups belonging to his drinking flask, for knives, forks, plate, dishes, cups, glasses, and cruets are not included in our luxuries. The lid of a biscuit tin does duty for a dish, salt and pepper are handed round wrapped up in paper, mustard is held by a tin once used for preserved lobster. The meal commenced and finished with a piece of salt beef and bread, the latter, oh so spongy, and the former more like layers of salt than anything else, just shan't we be thirsty, and yet be unable to appease thirst, for we do not carry water or cold tea, and every stream is dried out by the long and severe drought. Eugh! I shudder as I remember the bill of fare. Breakfast, salt beef and bread. Dinner, bread and salt beef. Tea, salt beef and bread. And this after the groaning table of the "Danube," vide back papers. "True 'tis pity; pity 'tis, 'tis true."

Imagine yourself, dear reader, after having toiled for hours up the sunny-side of African hills, amongst stone and sand, holes and ant heaps, with the sun beating on your back until it almost calcifies your vertebra, and fries your spinal marrow. Not a breath of wind to cool the super-heated air. Imagine yourself, I say, seated before such a table in the wilderness saying, prior to digging your pocket knife into the salt beef, "For these mercies make us truly thankful." Had you seen us surround a pail of water you would have suggested that a policeman should stand by to keep order, "after you with the cup" soon emptied the pail, and sent us to lie down on the burning ground to reflect on the state of affairs. Thoughts of home and dear friends would irresistibly steal upon me, and

"In a moment I seemed to be there.

But alas! recollection at hand,

Soon hurried me back to despair."

However my natural temperament refuses to be sad for any length of time, and I murmur,

"Auspicious hope, in thy sweet garden glow.

Wreath for each toil, a charm for every woe."

In-spanned 2.30 p.m. On account of intense heat rode a short distance in the waggon. Can you picture this "ship of the desert" coming sailing over ground full of stones and holes? It is a machine on four wheels, about fourteen feet long, loosely, yet strongly put together, the joints and bolts working all ways so that one wheel may be buried in a hole and the front or hind part of the waggon sunk with it, and yet the other wheel will be perfectly straight and upright. It is covered with canvas, and at each end a sail-cloth curtain may be let down. So far it is comfortable; but oh! the incomprehensible twists and wriggles, and the frightful although safe jolts. I soon left the interior of one waggon and seated myself on the box of the other out of danger of falling bags or sliding boxes, and found myself traveling then very fair.

Letter 13

The scenery is getting grander as I resume walking, for soon we are to go through the most beautiful stretch of country in Natal—the Pass of Inchanja. We are not yet there, but already the view is amphitheatric. Hills fall down woody and winding precipices many hundreds of feet. The scenery is fast increasing in grandeur. We are passing along a saddle back buttress with deep gorges on either hand. Rocky billows of granite protuberances lie in successive ridges under the eye for mile upon mile until they are lost in the grey horizon of the far distance. Talk of granite boulders, here is a cyclopean slab 140 feet long, 95 feet broad, and 30 feet thick, resting obliquely on the hillside upon pieces of rock that seem insufficient to sustain this enormous mass. But once on the top of this Inchanja Pass, and what a panorama opened up to view! “Fairy Land” is not the name for it. There were hills towering one above another in all the magnificence of picturesque form, and presenting such a combination of objects—cliffs, terraces, and rocky crags—that the variety almost perplexed us. These hills stand out in bold relief against the loveliest sky blazing with coming sunset splendours, distant slopes catch some slanting sun-rays on their scanty covering of queer reddish grass, and glow like banks of amethyst and topaz, and behind them lie transparent deep blue shadows of which no pigment ever spread on mortal palette could give the exquisite delicacy and depth. We had to ascend a hill of no ordinary altitude, however, to reach the summit. On one side we had the terror of a precipice of at least 300 feet perpendicular height, so that at times I was wont to exclaim

“Come on, Sir, here’s the place; stand still,

How fearful and dizzy ’tis to cast one’s eyes below.”

Lady Barker says of this Pass—“I made up my mind that that was the most beautiful stretch of country my eye had ever beheld. It is too grand to describe, too complete to break up into fragments by words. Far down among the sylvan slopes of the park like foreground, the Umgeni winds with the sunshine glinting here and there on its waters; beyond are bold level mountains with rich deep indigo shadows and lofty crests, cut off level against the dappled sky, according to the South African formation.”

It was quite dark before the first of our two waggons had climbed the hill. The other could not yet be dragged up until the two span had been yoked together. I shall not easily forget the scene—24 oxen tugging at the waggon and failing to move it. The whips and yells of John and Govan were both put into play, but with no result. And who could wonder when the hill was almost as steep as the Andover “Bere Hill,” and the waggon piled with extremely heavy boxes. Five of us pushed behind, and pulled the spokes of the wheels, but all efforts seemed useless, and I felt positive that the waggon must be a fixture for the night. John, however, was a General of no mean order, and with wonderful dexterity he mastered the situation. The oxen unable to make any progress, sidled sideways. That movement was met by whips lashing them from each side. A grand onslaught was made, accompanied by hideous yells and the usual command of “Hamber”. In addition to this each oxen was yelled at, “ah noo Zimon—ah noo Hadum—ah noo Boaswan,” and at last Zimon, Hadum, Boaswan, Mine, Janroop and their colleagues went grandly up. Tents would have been pitched at once but the Kafirs had gone off with the oxen to the near hillsides and taken pails to explore for water, forgetting that they had the key of the tool box. Perhaps you think this incident nothing, but at the end of a heavy day’s trek find yourself on a strange hill enveloped in darkness, without a place to sit down in, and then you like ourselves would consider life just then to be a bore, and agree with us when after summing up the events of the day we solemnly said—

“When sorrows come they come not single spies,

But in battalions.”

The “grass fires” to night are very grand. You must know that the farmers secure a constant succession of tender young grass for pasturing their live stock by continually burning the grass in large patches as soon as it gets dry and unduly coarse. From this hill top we see on the lower ground what looks not unlike a large city brilliantly lit up by gas. The lines of fire quite simulate the appearance of regularly constructed streets. On distant hill sides mimic volcanoes are represented by the line of flame sweeping down from the hill-top along the flank of the protuberant ground. I am told that when the wind blows strongly during a grass fire the line of fire advances over the pasture at such a rapid rate that horsemen are overtaken by it. During the daytime the fires are characterized by soft clouds of smoke rising here and there over the landscapes. Great numbers of birds circle round and round, hovering over the borders of the smoke, on the watch for grasshoppers, beasts, mice, and other unfortunate refugees driven out abruptly from the usual haunts in the flames. Mr. Brooks says: “Immediately after a fire the ground is black with charred remnants of the dry vegetation. After a few hours the black becomes russet—the sable tint is exchanged for a reddish rusty brown. The russet then waxes soft and velvety, with the dawn of the new verdure, and as the little green points of grass shoot up through the charred ashes. The velvet dyes itself with a rich deep olive, and the olive then brightens day by day, until it assumes the brilliancy of the emerald. At the same time that this transformation is being brought about gay flowers begin to present their bright hues in the midst of the pile of the olive and emerald carpet. The first to appear are small jonquil-like blossoms scattered as spangles in the rising verdure, then noisy like flowers open their eyes, and the flame-lily comes as a floral echo of the recent conflagration. Within a few weeks the dreary black expanse is changed to a close-shaven tidy lawn, with a few scattered groups of well-ordered shrubs, where either an environment of rock or a superabundance of moisture has afforded protection from the fire, and with circular tufts of sweet scented lupins, or of rich metallic blue cyclomenas, or of pink and crimson wild indigo, or of yet more varied and graceful blooms, enlivening the deepening award.”

I have taken the trouble to quote at length in order that readers may have a minute description of very many of the beauties we shall meet with in the 1,400 mile trek that lies before us.

TUESDAY, 24th SEPTEMBER—Rose at 5.49, usual wash in half a pail of water, washed clothes and hung them out to dry, writing up my “log,” breakfast at 8 a.m., prayers, struck tents, and six of us commenced walking at 9 a.m., passed the “Inchanga Hotel,” and after doing ten miles arrived at the Royal Hotel, Camperdown.

The country we have just passed was noted only for plains of burnt and brown grass, and roads of heavy red sand. In the distance were a few ridges of bare hills. The pedestrians made a famous mistake. We had overshot the outspanning ground by several miles. A horseman rode up later on with the message “Mr Pretoria wished his party to have what was necessary at the Hotel.” So the six of us sat down to a hot dinner of chicken and ham—yes! and vegetables and cheese, and Bass. The situation after our recent fare proved to be such an awkward one that I could not refrain from “May I trouble you for another leg, breast and wing of chicken.” Another luxury was the day’s paper, then followed “ye weed nicotine” in the verandah at the same time that a lady favoured us with “silver threads among the gold,”

“Ring the bell Watchman,” and some lively dance music. Mixing with a knot of Natalians I took a humble part in a conversation about Sir Bartle Frere’s probable policy—the chances of a Zulu war—the doings of Sir Theophilus Shepstone—the war at present going on against Sekukuni—Coolie versus Kafir labour.

At six o’clock our waggons came up and outspanned opposite the hotel. Sixteen of us sat down to a tea of ham, bread, biscuits and tea at the hotel, for 2s. 6d. per head.

Water here is very scarce. Notwithstanding that we had spent £3 with the landlord, he refused to give us a pail of water.

Letter 14

WEDNESDAY, 25th SEPTEMBER—5.30 a.m. saw us all up, and 9 a.m. watched us trek off. At 11.30 a.m. we were met at the Thornville Hotel by the Bishop of Maritzburg in his “Spider” and pair, and Canon Jenkinson on horseback. The former carried off some of our ladies, and after leaving them at his place returned to find us four miles from the city, and again he lessened our numbers. Just beyond the Thorneville Hotel we outspanned till 3.30 p.m. in a long valley profusely adorned with green trees. After all the dying vegetation we have seen here, at last are trees really, and truly green. The secret was a river or stream that ran through the valley, in which three of our number bathed in as many feet of water. I said the water ran; that was not an accurate statement. Rivers or streams (I cannot say which they are) during the present extreme drought when not dried up are merely stagnant pools.

A nine miles walk and we came to the capital of the Natal Colony—Pieter Maritzburg, after ascending an immense hill, and revelling in views of little forests of trees right and left of us. The city is very pleasantly situated in a basin, broad swelling and undulating slopes pass off towards Durban to the South, and a lofty wall of bold hills just verging into mountains enclose it on the north. A ridge on the west is crowned by the Military Station of Fort Napier, which is dominated by yet higher ground towards the north-west. The city consists of eight parallel thoroughfares about 180 yards as under, and a mile and a half long; and these are crossed at convenient intervals by transverse streets of similar character something more than a mile in length.

I am most favourably impressed with the City. From a distance the view is most charming; the marked features of the landscape are red-tiled roofs and the tall forms of gum trees. From the heights above, the city wears very much the aspect of a large garden besprinkled with residences, and just crystalising into compact brick and mortar nuclei here and there. From the summit of the town hill some 1,200 feet above the city, there is a bird’s eye view of this character that is, says Mr Brooks, of exceeding magnificence and beauty.

We awaited the arrival of our waggons at the “London Bakery,” an original Dutch house with regular rows of tall windows, lofty rooms, thick walls and ceilings of polished plank wood. Here 14 buns for a shilling, some Kafir ginger beer, a famous wash, and a long chat about local and political affairs with the baker (once a sailor and a resident of New Zealand) beguiled away the time until 8 o’clock when our waggons came up and outspanned on a little piece of waste land between Burger and Loop Streets.

Here we are still, having spent three weeks waiting for rain to give grass to our dying oxen. At present we see no hope of moving on for weeks to come.

THURSDAY, 26th SEPTEMBER—We all go in for a complete wash, and afterwards appear in somewhat decent suits of clothes, much to the astonishment of our Kafirs, who scarcely recognise us.

A boy passes through our Camp with “Morning papers”—heah ye are, Sir—Pigeon Match at Kettlefontein drag from the Crown at 10, most of the cracks compete—1000 sheep lost by Barus and McFie, up country, by severe drought—oxen dying off by hundreds—military lost, 50 out of 120—proposed temperance hotel—first meeting of revived Debating Society—programme of Pinetown Races—collision between a post cart and a train—grand cricket match next Saturday at the Oval, County v. Garrison—100 carpenters and joiners at Durban on strike—rifle competition, soldiers v. civilians—notes of the first Spring Race Meeting—eight snakes killed at “Faugh-a-Ballagh”—elopement of Miss Sharpley with a Kafir.

“Surely,” said I, as I handed the youth a “ticky” (a threepenny-piece is only known by all classes here as a “ticky”), and took a copy, “This is the wild Africa I heard so much about during my stay in England.”

Running my eye down the advertisements I caught sight of some “Advice to Mothers—Are you broken in your rest by a sick child suffering with the pain of cutting teeth? Go at once and get Winslow’s Soothing Syrup.” I thought I had seen similar advice in English papers, but nothing like the following:—“‘The light of other days has faded.’ So wrote the poet; but whether he was referring to the absence of paraffin or gas, has never yet been ascertained, but no matter a time will come, in fact it has now arrived for George Knox has determined to throw a light on the subject by selling a famous paraffin oil at 2s. per gallon.”

The advertisements are prefaced by an editorial note—“Advertising is to business what steam is to machinery—the great propelling power.”

After reading our “Daily” we made for Saint Saviour’s Cathedral to see a marriage in high life. Innumerable carriages with fair occupants seemed to be dashing in every direction; flags flew their best; the cathedral was crowded; a bishop, dean, and a great many more ecclesiastics of lessor degree were in patient waiting to tie the nuptial knot. “Never was such a sight I ween read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams.” All eyes are upon the west door, the bride has arrived dressed, as a lady friend informed me, in white silk embroidered with satin, and covered with bunches of orange blossoms; a veil, with the customary orange wreath, was said to have made up a pretty toilette. The cathedral has a pleasing appearance and consists of nave, transepts, and deep chancel. Greatest care seems to be taken with the altar, super-altar and reredos. The chancel is divided from the nave by pretty brass and iron gates, and a rather handsome litany desk stands in the nave. The bishop’s throne and pulpit are made of two colonial woods, the breeze and stink woods—the one light, the other as dark as walnut; and thus worked together affords a good contrast. The dean was unable to inform me how many people his building would contain. I thought that there was some justice in accusing the clergy of not being men of business.

Refreshment of a light kind was obtained at Scones restaurant. The barmaid at the time of our visit was executing a valse on the piano in good style. They sell here “Sensation drinks” of the true American sort. At night billiards is largely indulged in. The said piano is in great request, and a good supper is to be had by way of finale.

The Court House next received attention. It is rather an imposing building, in the centre of the city, and shelters under its roof the chief post-office of the Colony, the Government Offices, and Legislative Hall. There is a sight worth seeing every evening at half-past seven at the Post Office: a crowd of Europeans, Kafirs, Coolies and Hottentots (some 200) waiting for letters, for each resident here must apply for letters. It is not true of Maritzburg that "every morning as true as the clock somebody hears the postman's knock." Business is smartly done here, notices direct Europeans the way in and out, and the natives are similarly directed to another part of the building.

We visited the Legislative Hall but it was silent, its corridors were vacant. The galleries at eventide I hear are no longer crowded with the votaries of curiosity or emblems of beauty, for a fortnight ago the rostrum was closed, so I was unable to hear the polished utterances and impetuous diction of Brown, the solemn metrical periods of Jones, the ranting jokes of Robinson, or the effervescent remonstrances of Smith.

The Hall is large, lofty, and draped with scarlet. It does duty for the Supreme Court, but when Parliament is sitting chairs of the value of £25 each support the dignity of the M.L.C. (i.e. Member of the Legislative Council).

Passing St. Saviour's again we attended a funeral service. The history of the deceased was a sad one: A daughter of a well-known citizen was to be married one day this week, but before the event her mother became so seriously ill that the doctors gave up all hopes of her recovery. Desiring to see the marriage celebrated, the poor lady expressed a wish that the ceremony be performed. This took place while she was on her death-bed, and shortly after it was completed she expired. The coffin was preceded by the choristers in their surplices, an acolyte leading the way, holding a large brass cross aloft, to the cemetery which is about a quarter of a mile from the cathedral.

At 4 o'clock the city was in a great bustle preparing to receive Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor of Cape Town and High Commissioner of South Africa. Sixty men of the Carrington Horse rode out two miles to meet His Excellency, and at the Town Bridge 40 of the Natal Carbineers, Commissary General Strickland, Major Crealock (the military Secretary), the Mayor, and a large number of citizens of horse and foot, awaited the arrival. Amid a storm of dust Sir Bartle drove up attended by General Thesiger, the Commander of the South African Forces; Major Mitchell the Colonial Secretary; Colonel Walker, the Hon. A. Lyttleton and other notabilities. At Government House a large crowd assembled, inside the grounds the 24th Regiment were drawn up as a guard of honour. Of course there was great cheering, and hats were doffed by the hundred. Sir Henry Bulwer, the Lieut. Governor of Natal, gave a grand dinner in the evening.

In the evening I had a stroll through the city. Although only eight o'clock there was scarcely a person in the streets, and perhaps it is not to be wondered at, for a few oil lamps that just succeed in making the darkness visible is not a great attraction. Shops here open at 9 a.m. and close at 5 p.m.; after that time only the Canteens and the Cigar Divans are "open to orders." Merry voices come from the verandahs and lawn of the Crown Hotel. The click of billiard balls, the efforts of vocalists, the rolling of skates, and tread of the light fantastic toe were among some of the sounds I heard as I paced the various thoroughfares.

At nine the band of the Fort plays the tattoo, and at bedtime the cocks of the neighbourhood commence a crowing competition. They first take their time from the right and crow in succession;

suburban candidates compete, I find, by straining my ears. Then comes a volley of crows, and by the time I am accustomed to these sounds and get oblivious, an insect darts in zig-zag fashion down my back, and in my efforts to annihilate the agile creature my pillow has slipped from under my head, my feet are outside the tent, and my blankets is on temporary leave of absence—French leave, then my poor hips and mother earth do not agree, even though they rest on an evacuated anthill. The evenings here are mild, and I adopt the recumbent with as few clothes as possible, but towards four in the morning it becomes bitterly cold, and garment after garment is donned, and rugs and blankets resorted to.

FRIDAY, 27th SEPTEMBER—At six o'clock the cocks are still crowing, but I am in a position now to speak lightly of their persistency. A party of us dive from the bathing stage into the Little Bushman's River, and enjoy a long swim round a bay formed by a gracious curve of land.

Matins and calls occupied the morning. In the afternoon I visited the prison—a large red-bricked square building with small windows well barred, and doors studded with the usual massive locks and bolts. The prisoners within the walls numbered 169. I have visited the London prisons and seen as many as 2,000 of the condemned, but they were all white civilians. Here the number comprised 91 male and one female Kafirs, six Coolies, eight male and two female Hottentots, 24 Amatongas and natives not of Natal Colony; 25 military prisoners (12 convicted of insubordination) and 11 civilians.

The Governor most kindly conducted me over the building. I saw the cells for European prisoners. Some hold two, and some hold four; a mattress, two blankets, and two sheets are allowed to each person and after six months they are privileged to enjoy the light of an oil lamp for an hour and a half, and find companions in books lent them by the prison authorities.

The cells for natives are made to hold ten and as the coloured races are naturally simple in their wants neither pillow nor mattress are provided for them. In one cell I saw a strange number of blacks, some nine in number, awaiting their day of trial.

Fifty nine of the prisoners were employed in making bricks, 23 at shot drill, and 17 on the treadmill. The 17 are climbing from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., two thirds of them on the wheel and one third off. I reckoned that they made 58 steps a minute. Some are engaged in the kitchens, work rooms and wash houses, and a prisoner who could speak six languages fluently assisted in keeping the accounts of the Prison.

The Europeans have three classes of diet. The third class are those sentenced to two month confinement. Their breakfast consists of 12 ounces mealie meal and 1 ounce sugar, dinner 4 ounces bread, 1 lb. potatoes, 8 ounces meat, 2 ounces vegetables, 1 ounce oatmeal for soup; supper, 8 ounces bread, and 1 pint of gruel. The dinner for four days in the week, I should have said, is 1 lb. potatoes and 6 ozs. of bread. The other three days are you will see "gala" days with them. Prisoners for over two and under six months have 2 ounces bread for dinner, more than those of two months; their breakfast and supper are like those of juniors. The diet after six months is much better, the chief difference being 8 to 12 ounces of meat and 2 lbs. sweet potatoes light up their dusky faces with a smile.

A bath five feet deep is enjoyed by Europeans three times a week, and by Natives once. The former boast of two clean suits and the latter one every week.

The birch, cat of nine tails, stocks, office, lavatories, workshops were reviewed. It is needless to say that everything was in apple pie order and the discipline of the best. I saw the prisoners break off work, 169 having only 4 Europeans and 14 Native guards, and yet they behaved as well as a congregation in Church. Before leaving I peeped at a pretty little garden containing some real English flowers; side by side with African beauties grew pansies, primroses, fuschias, stocks, boy love and a little daisy.

Fort Napier next received my attention. In addition to three rows of barracks, are about 90 huts or Kraals, each holding six men. A little distance off, a hill and valley are prettily dotted with the tents of two or three battalions of infantry. The fort is surrounded by a moat. Inside are store rooms, gunpowder magazine, church, canteen, and three of four guns, one of which is discharged at 8 a.m., and every time a man is landed at the Port or received in the City. The Military Hospital and Officers building are near. The former carried "The flag that's braved a thousand years."

The troops in garrison number about 1,500, and almost daily during my three weeks stay in the city fresh ones, and drafts for the present regiments, kept arriving. At the present time there is war going on between the English and Sekukini, on the borders of the Transvaal, and war with the Zulus under Cetchwayo, is expected to be declared every hour. It is the Cetchwayo difficulty that brings Sir Bartle Frere and his staff here.

In the evening the first of very many pleasant hours were spent at the Natal Society, another of those African Societies which provide public Reading Rooms on a large scale. I gather from their twenty-seventh report that the present building and fittings cost £2,420, and the land £343. Perhaps you are curious to know how the money was obtained. Well, a single bazaar realised two thousand guineas, and the Corporation voted £200.

The Library contains 4,136 volumes. History is represented by 420, Biography 274, Theology 122 and Fiction 1,547. The issue of last year included 9,961 of Fiction, 46 of Theology, and 6,694 of bound Magazines. Books may be read in the rooms by the general public, but only subscribers can walk off with them. There were five life members, 87 who paid a guinea, 163 at half a guinea, 47 half-yearly, 79 quarterly, and 68 of the casual type. The income was £357, expenditure £347. Six free lectures were given, and a Dramatic Entertainment that increased the funds by £12.

The Reading room is large and lofty, the ceiling boasts of polished boards. Three hundred people are easily seated in this Hall, and the average attendance of readers last year was 116 a day. The tables are well supplied with colonial and English papers and Magazines, and the comfort of visitors is further increased by a filter. The latter item can only be appreciated by those half-baked by a dry heat, such as we feel in camp. Wonderful to relate this room is always cool, and free from flies, hence I spent much time here. Rooms are provided for subscribers, Draughts and Chess, and Ladies. The fairer sex, however, more frequently use the large room. The Librarian, Mr. Beale, is the right man in the right place, full of zeal and activity. From him I received great attention and information.

Letter 15

SATURDAY, 28th SEPTEMBER—This is the great market day. As many as 60 waggons, some hailing from farms 40 miles away, are drawn up in rows in the large market square, a square lined with trees and having on each side large stores and Hotels. At nine sharp the market master commences selling. The

speed with which he sold the waggonloads was something marvelous. He had little more than mounted his rostrum than he was off to the next waggon. He was not the man for little jokes, only knew “fifteen nine—fifteen nine—fifteen nine—gone for fifteen nine.” Hay, mealies, forage, corn, wood, and when in the Market House, celery, radishes, lemons, turnips, onions, thyme, poultry, parsley, pigs—all same alike to him.

In the Supreme Court, the Lord Chief Justice, the Attorney General, and several learned members of the Bar were trying to make head or tail of some dry civil case. Under these conditions the place did not hold me long.

The correct thing on Saturday afternoons is to drive or ride in the Park. This being the case I made a point of being there. At 1.30 p.m. a cricket match commenced, the Country Club v. the Garrison. By 5.30 the former had lost eight wickets for 206 runs. Of this number a friend of mine made 66 not out. On account of the absence of good grass, the turf had to be taken up, and a piece of coconut matting, secured the ground by iron pipes, laid between the wickets. The Band of the 24th Regiment played a choice selection of music, according to a programme which is published in every Friday’s paper.

All the world and his wife are here, but neither the world nor his wife are poor people: pauperism is an Institution unknown in South Africa. Some hundred ladies, gentlemen, and boys on horses and over 50 carriages are drawn up close to the Band. Amongst those present are Baronets, Honourables, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, Judges, Generals, Majors, Colonels, Captains, members of the Legislative Council, and their wives and daughters. A group close by is made up by Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Henry Bulwer, General Thesiger, the Roman Catholic Bishop, and the once Bishop of Natal, Dr. Colenso.

The park seats have a hundred occupants, and the refreshments shed a goodly share of devotees. The Band has a strong contingent of black admirers. Judging by their opened mouths and intent gaze, “music has charms to soothe the savage breast.” There are negresses, dressed in Velveteen with ermine trimmings, and bonnets of approved fashion, who effect indifference to the instrumentalists, play they ever so well.

The Park is a beautifully situated and tastefully laid out tract of 300 acres, with very flue carriage drives, much used by the citizens. The Little Bushman’s River almost encircles it, and here in summer a gay scene is presented by the annual swimming matches. The scenery around is very pretty, from hills well clad with foliage, red tiled houses occasionally peep, sitting on rocks on the hillside and in verandahs are spectators who view the match from a distance. Pretty white suspension bridges half lost to view by graceful willows span the river. The sun is shining on the rows of soldier tents, and a kind breeze unfurls the old Union Jack, as the Band strikes up “There’s a land that bears a well-known name, though ’tis but a little spot.”

SUNDAY, 29th SEPTEMBER—Our Bishop preached at St. Saviour’s Cathedral, both morning and evening, to very large congregations, from the words most suitable to the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation”. The Revs. C.M. Spratt and A. Roberts acted as chaplains to the Bishop and read the lessons, the Bishop of Maritzburg was Celebrant, and the Dean read prayers. The Rev. Cecil Deedes, M.A. was admitted as a

Canon of the Cathedral before the sermon. Amongst those present morning and evening were Sir Bartle Frere, General Thesiger, and Sir Henry Bulwer.

In the evening I visited each place of worship. The first Presbyterian Chapel is a very fine building, with an imposing square tower, and the only public clock in the city. The congregation numbered 150, including 50 soldiers. Pew rents are 4s. per quarter. The second Presbyterian Chapel is small, but pretty, congregation 100.

The Congregational Chapel had 80 worshippers. The Wesleyans, a miniature Spurgeon's Tabernacle, 250. The Roman Catholics, 100, of which 50 were soldiers.

Dr. Colenso's building, St. Peter's Cathedral, had 73, of which 25 were soldiers. A service conducted by the Military Church of England Chaplain had 200. The Kafir Church held 50 natives, but the Dutch Reformed Church having only a morning service, was closed. I arrived at St. Saviour's Cathedral in time for the sermon, preached to a congregation numbering perhaps 450.

MONDAY, 30th SEPTEMBER—Public Holiday, one of the many. The public holidays in Natal are eight in number, viz: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whit Monday, Queen's Birthday, Michaelmas Day, All Saint's Day, and Christmas Day. Those of England number four. Amusements were numerous, especially picnics.

In the afternoon I watched the Rifle Competition of the Maritzburg Volunteers, and afterwards paid some calls in the Zwartkof Valley. The Valley is the prettiest spot near Maritzburg. The Botanical Gardens are situated in it and occupy about 100 acres. As they were only commenced three years ago the timber bearing plants are few in number, but this deficiency is well made up by large circular beds, plentifully supplied by the best flowers the soil can produce, and they are legion.

The Zwartkof Mountain with its overlaying masses of greenstone and its trap dykes overhangs the town rising above it 3,000 feet. At a distance of 15 miles the Table Mountain is seen, the glasses revealing its ledges of bare sandstone and green buttresses of foliage, backed further away by other mountains. The houses in the valley are positively charming by reason of their surroundings. The first I called at boasted of orchards containing peaches, apricots, plums, mulberries, apples, pears, loquots, cherries, oranges, melons, shaddocks, bananas, plantains, figs, raspberries, strawberries, papaws, timor guavas, citrons, limes, Cape gooseberries, mangoes and mangosteens. The next house was with difficulty found as it lay almost hidden from sight by waving bamboos and groves of blue gum trees. I may not say how many happy hours I spent in the verandah, looking out upon the valley and distant city and mountains, or in the delightful shrubberies, gardens, woods and little glens that were to be found within the grounds. I remember the garden seats placed close to where

"The garrulous brook,

Untiring, to the patient pebbles told

Its history. Up came the singing breeze,

And the broad leaves of the acacia spake

Responsive, every one. Even busy life,

Woke in that dell. The dexterous spider threw,
From spray to spray, her silver-tissued snare.
The wary ant, whose carving pinchers pierced
The treasured grain, toiled toward her citadel.
And from the wind-rocked nest the mother bird
Sang to her nursling.”

I remember too what the first ramble revealed: peach and pear blossoms, long borders of verbenas, hedges of roses, interminable ranks of pine apples, honeysuckle, variegated geraniums and the vista of avenues rendered romantic by approaching Coolie women, arrayed in gay turbans and scarlet draperies. The owner of this pretty retreat is paying great attention to the Australian Blue Gum tree, a tree which grows with incredible rapidity and facility and when 12 years old often attains to 120 feet in height. At a distance in the still air they look like cypresses, but in a brisk breeze they sway gracefully before the wind like dark green feathers.

As I tramp over dusty roads I often think of a cup of tea on that verandah, and the prospect it afforded of the paths of red bright earth winding down the valley or threading the grass of the hills. The somber foliage of adjacent plantations together make the delicate aerial perspective of distant hills more piquant, and as I watched the sunsets I was wont to exclaim “Oh, for an adjective wherewith to condense my admiration into one word.” Not even the most beautiful tints in flowers, in jewels, or in gold and silver, could bear comparison with their gorgeous hues—the brilliant dyes of the reds and purples, here was a subject for a charming picture.

Then too I liked to watch the pretty game of hide and seek which the clouds and sunshine played, the sun making the clouds cast pall-like shadows, the top of one mountain perhaps all aglow whilst its vis a vis was wrapped in gloom.

I am stooping over some maiden-hair ferns, which are in great luxuriance in one of the little ravines, when I am told to “mind the snakes.” Thus, you see, there is “no rose without a thorn.” My companion laughingly hands me the skin of one of these reptiles. I say, “It is all very well to laugh, but what about the eight snakes you killed here last week, and what does the Natal Times say on the subject, ‘snakes are likely to be plentiful this season’?” The reply I get is that jimmies (i.e. young emigrants) are always talking about the subject but old colonists and their little ones never worry their heads about it, they take snakes as they come.

I confess to pumping every one on the subject, and this is the result. Of the different species that bask under Natal skies, there’s one known as the Natal python, measuring from 16 to 25 feet in length, a true boa constrictor, destitute of poison fangs, but with a weakness for swallowing its prey whole after the mangling is done. This specimen is harmless to many. The Imamba shews a preference for the coast and bush; there are two sorts of this species, one green, the other of a darker hue and slender. They have large heads and are hooded, their poison is very powerful and deadly and they have been known to follow horsemen with erect head and fierce hisses and at a speed that only a good horse can outstrip. They advance to give battle with head and front of the body erect, neck expanded, and with hissing and fierce gestures. Let this however be said for their love of fair play, free fight and no favour: they issue a

warning note in the shape of forced expiration. The Puff Adder is very common, slow, and of phlegmatic temperament, not meddlesome, but at the same time brave and tenacious if attacked. They are short, thick, and vicious looking, with broad head and narrow neck, and possess a venom of considerable power. There are night adders and house adders; the latter has a partiality for making himself comfortable in boxes and beds. Do you wonder then at my finding an excuse to look for something when I turn in my tent to sleep? Water snakes, grass snakes, and tree snakes of very lithe and slender form, and only dangerous if actually trodden, upon complete, I think, the category. Some of these reptiles are disabled by a sharp blow from a stick across the neck or back and by a singular coincidence I have lately cultivated the modern eccentricity of carrying a stick.

Four of our party have seen two snakes but my introduction is apparently to be of later date. From all sides I am told few people die from bites and colonists of 25 years standing have only killed on average six a year.

The amusements of the Public Holidays concluded with a representation of F.C. Burnaud's Romantic Drama "The Deal Boatmen" given in the Theatre by members of the mounted police. This building is large, and presents a very smart and pleasing appearance. The Band of the 24th Regiment played during intervals in their well-known superb style. The acting was bad. Several songs and a hornpipe were introduced to the evident delight of the "shillings". The stalls were well filled with officers and civilians in evening dress.

Letter 16

TUESDAY, 1st OCTOBER—Visited Grey's Hospital, a capacious building, and one of the prettiest for situation, boasting of grounds well-laid out and stocked with evergreens. Monday, Wednesdays, and Fridays are the visiting days, but I was privileged to make my observations.

Perhaps I had better not describe the operation that was being made upon a patient, for my descriptions of "Operation day" at the London Hospitals were not liked I remember. The rooms generally contained eight to ten patients who, considering their complaints, looked pleasant, and the attendants were as neatly dressed and smiled as sweetly as any at St. Thomas.

In the afternoon Sir Bartle Frere held a Levee, at which a large number of distinguished personages were present. A detachment of the 3rd Buffs with their band was drawn up in line at the entrance.

I have alluded to the probability of a Temperance Hotel being established in the city. To-day's Times says a gentleman has offered to build one for £2,000 if a permanent tenant can be secured. If they gave the necessary guarantee they estimate the cost of furniture and fittings to be £1,000 to £1,500. If they build a place £4,000 must be forthcoming. A Joint Stock Company is being formed, and shares are taken up at present very quickly. This institution will partake of the character of a boarding house. The sale of intoxicating liquors will be strictly prohibited; and games, such as billiards, fives, and skittles, will be provided in addition, I think, to a Library and Reading Room. From my knowledge of the promoter I believe it will be soon un fait accompli.

Apropos of the subject, I hear there are 400 to 500 Good Templars in this city, and judging from the singing and recitations given nightly in their Hall they must have several lodges. Temperance Guilds and a Band of Hope have long been active working in connection with St. Saviour's Cathedral.

And surely enough there is need for these associations. The Surveyor General, a very old colonialist, assures me that he has seen over a hundred young men ruined in this town alone by drink. I have seen a great deal of the evil since landing in Africa. At Port Elizabeth a knot of young men in the Hotel I was staying at were tossing champagne past the small hours of the morning. At other Hotels in that town, in Durban, and by the wayside, I have met with many instances too sad to relate. Shall I tell you how it happens? Young men finding that they are unsuccessful in England, come out here in search of fortune, and attempt to propitiate the fickle Goddess, in other scenes where society is young and success is believed to be certain. Their only adaptability to colonial life is high spirits, hopefulness, and a readiness to "rough it," but they are without capital, knowledge of agriculture, or handicraft of any kind. The result is they are reduced to serious straits, and yet, strange to say, spend their money on drink to the last moment.

One day I dined with a man who was drinking very hard. The next day, having spent all his money, he tramped 50 miles and joined the mounted police. A youth who had "rubbed his back against the college wall" and belonged to a distinguished country family, found great satisfaction two days ago in being the successful candidate for the situation of barman at a hotel. "To what base uses we may return, Horatio." The first person that met us on entering Maritzburg was a drunken man; the first night's rest in that city was disturbed by a drunkard falling over the ropes of our tent. There are clergymen who are the last to rise from their wine, and clergymen who are asked by their congregation to leave their parishes through drink. In fact, drink is not only (as a Bishop told me) the curse of the clergy in South Africa, but of every grade of society. A proprietor of a school informed me he could not get good masters because clever men were drunkards. One more instance and I drop, for the time, the curtain on such a sad subject. The organ and the singing nearly broke down at my first attendance at the cathedral. Why?—The organist came to his instrument drunk.

THURSDAY, 3rd OCTOBER—Attended the first meeting of a revived Debating Society. The subject under consideration was: "Ought the natives of South Africa to be represented in the Union Parliament?" The discussion was very good and necessarily traveled over much ground. It is the old native question I have heard and read so much about—"What is our duty to the Kafir and Zulu." Unlike Australia, New Zealand and the Canadas, where we have caused the entire population of entire continents to perish, here in South Africa it is different. The tribes which were, before our coming, wont to destroy themselves in civil wars have doubled their population since we have turned their assegais into ploughshares. Tens of thousands of them are working for wages. In one town of 18,000 inhabitants 10,000 of them are now receiving 10s per week per man in addition to diet. In South Africa there are 340,000 white people and our direct influence extends over 3,000,000 natives; hence comes the question—What is our duty to them? According to Anthony Trollope one believes that we have done the important thing when we taught him to sing hymns; another would give him back a tenth part of his land and then leave him; a third thinks that everything hangs upon a "rod of iron," which means that the "black" shall work—the amount of wages to be settled by the judgment of the master. A fourth would give him the franchise and let him vote for Members of Parliament which, of course, includes the privilege of becoming an M.P. and Prime Minister if he can get enough of his own class to back him. I think I have here given brief though good insight into the great "native question."

Trollope goes on to say —“The hymns, as I speak of them, includes all religious teaching, have as yet gone but a very little way. Something has to be done—that something having shown itself rather in a little book learning than the amelioration of conduct, as the rest of comprehended Christianity. In its way it is good, though the good thing is so little commensurate with the missionary labour given, and the missionary money given. Giving up locations to natives teaches them to think they can live for ever idle on their own land. The ‘iron rod’ is abominable; and as for the franchise, he who would first give the coloured races the vote is to be found in London rather than in South Africa.”

Speakers in the debate argued that he should first be qualified. Others said he was a fixed resident and earned 10s per week and diet and here was qualification; but they asked if he was fit to assume political ascendancy over the white man, for the vote would give them a majority. Seeing that thousands of them fulfil the first conditions, would the white man remain in Africa to be ruled by the natives? A division proved that those in favour of giving them the franchise equalled those who would deny that privilege. “Equality of law, equality of treatment, and good honest work,” says Trollope, “will render them fit, and has already gone a long way to do it. Throughout the length and breadth of South Africa the coloured man has been benefitted by our coming. He has a better hut, better food, better clothing, better education, more liberty, less to fear, and more to get than he had when we came to him among three quarters of a century ago, above that he would have enjoyed had we not come.”

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6th—A day not soon to be forgotten. In the morning a hot wind sprung up, which increased in severity as the day advanced. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the breeze was hot to a degree eminently suggestive of a region we are told is “paved with good intentions.” The streets of the city were desolate and every door and window was closed as if people were endeavouring to shut out some more deadly pestilence. About mid-day the thermometer registered 109 degrees in the shade. I have by no means been a stranger to hot winds since landing, but this was without precedent. So said colonists of 20 and 25 years standing and the papers re-echoed the statement.

The day after our arrival the whole of our party, with the exception of the two students and two servants, became the guests of citizens, and ceased having connection with the camp. Now it happened that the quartette alluded to felt the eccentricity of the wind more than any of the fixed and moveable population of the city, by reason of living under canvass. We felt not only the heat but the excessive violence of the wind. The contents of “the Laurels” became sport for Boreas, and had me a fine chase to recover a pair of gauntlets and gold links. The perversity of inanimate nature was very great; whilst seizing one article a second eloped. Dinner had been laid on a table between our two wagons but the plates, dishes, and cups were ruthlessly swept off by gust after gust of scorching wind, so we took refuge in a wagon and had dinner in a more gipsyified manner than usual.

To increase our miseries the flies were more numerous than ever. I hardly trust “Pax?” to get upon the fly enormities. They are my greatest worry, come heat, come wind, come dust, come thirst—come one and all in preference to flies. No wonder a song has been written with a refrain of “Shoo fly, don’t bother me, shoo.” The trying part of it is that they are so good natured, that a well-organised one will allow himself to be brushed off my nose lightly seven times, and not show any temper. There are flies, long and short, little and large, some with dull liveries, and some beautifully variegated. Some come at you with a loud buzz, others, none the less irritating, pitch silently on your face, glance up your nostrils after endeavouring to break the law of “no throughfare,” and proceed to thread the intricate paths of

the ear. The feeling of revenge are never satisfied. I have "gone for them" in an abrupt manner, I have approached them with the artfulness of a serpent, but all to no purpose. The only thing I have not tried is shooting them with a blunderbuss.

While I am on the grumble let me allude to similar peculiarities. I have a strong party of admirers in the shape of "Ticks," a kind of mite which holds pertinaciously to the skin when it has once plunged in. They seem to lie in wait upon grass and leaves and low herbage, and transfer themselves to bipeds and quadrupeds as they brush past. Some are so small that they are scarcely seen by the unaided eye. This again is trying, they are consequently very difficult to remove. A distressing irritation brought the subject under my notice, but only the bathing stage revealed the devastation they had committed.

Householders tell me of fish moths which are all too fond of muslin fabrics, paper, cotton, wool and green baize. As for white ants I am told that nothing but metal is proof against them. With long faces people have told me that on removing a box, the bottom falls out; that the flooring, skirtings and doors and a host of other fittings succumb before white ants. A friend offered to read me extracts from Colenso's "Pentateuch" provided the ants had not anticipated him. And a clergyman was never certain that after announcing "Here beginneth the, &c.," he could conscientiously conclude with "Here endeth the first lesson".

The insect department of wild animal life is just becoming a powerful force. This is supposed to be our spring, but we jumped from winter to summer without a spring! As these insects, at present, are not annoying me, I can calmly remark that they furnish objects of exceeding interest. Long-legged locusts in brilliant costumes of scarlet, gold, and green begin to leap boldly in the air when disturbed in their voracious feeding, and then expand their wings and prolong their leap into a short flight of a few yards, which is marked by the flashing of the bright colours in sunshine and by the whirring sound of the wings.

The large green mantis is very common, powerful in leg and wing. I generally see this oddity in a contemplative brown study and expectant repose, his lips vibrating slightly, and his goggle-eyes staring very rudely. In this state he is as artful as a wagon-load of monkeys, and his prey consider he is doing "forty winks" and are astounded at being suddenly devoured. His favourite amusement is snipping large holes in muslin curtains.

A strange phenomena is presented in phasmids, or vegetable feeders: they assume the appearance of sticks and twigs by somehow extending their legs in a straight line. Walking though grass one day I thought I had never seen facetious sticks before, but discovered that they were animate matter. Query: is it from these insects that the title of "queer stick" is obtained?

Burly stag beetles we have, and use has become second nature in the matter of cockchafers which plunge through the air like shots from guns of heavy caliber. I only wish they would give intimation of their darts into my face, or else keep their side of the road.

Bathing late one evening I was surprised to see a lantern carried rapidly along the bulrushes on the opposite bank; could a fleet-footed Kafir be engaged in a nocturnal errand, or was some dark deed to be performed? As Private Constable X332 says "I had my suspicions," but lo! it turned out to be a member of the beetle family, called the Natal Fire Fly: a small dark insect of dull aspect when its lantern was out, but at night on the wing a metamorphosis takes place. Occasionally its dancing can only be distinguished from radiant stars by their unceasing movements. The streams of Maritzburg abound with them. Their

light shines through the last two or three rings of their abdomen. Seen at a great distance a single fly gives light enough to make the figures and hands of a watch distinctly visible.

After the hot winds, the storm, came a delicious calm and a lovely moonlight night. I can hardly realise that two hours ago the woodwork and every item exterior of waggons and tents when touched by the hand would scorch, that every drop of water or portion of food was boiling with heat, that I was suffering from severe lassitude and burning thirst, that the wind shook us, howled at us, upheaved us and did everything to carry us up to the clouds. I can hardly believe that these cumbersome waggons jolted, creaked and threatened to turn somersault, and that the sailcloth had to be manacled down like a mad-man, simply through mere gusts of wind. The contortions, twistings, wriggings, jerkings, tuggings, and flappings of ropes and canvas are at an end, the mill is shut down, we breathe cool air again, and I only wanted to hear the Rev. Mr. Ritchie, the best preacher of the city, announce as his text "And there was a great calm," instead of "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Letter 17

MONDAY, 7th OCTOBER—Attended the Literary meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association, 35 young men present. The sub-editor of the "Times" read a very excellent paper on amusements, and took the sensible line of advocating the Drama, the Dance, Billiards and Cards as well as a host of minor ones. Those I have mentioned have at times bad surroundings, as evening service at church too often has, but the things in themselves are good. The subject was handled in as able a manner as any I have ever heard. The Rev. Canons Bowditch and Deedes were among the many who made valuable contributions. The former said we could not go far wrong if we lived out the motto "Dilige et quod vis fac"—love and do what you like. In other words, love God and your neighbour as the Church Catechism directs us, and none need scruple about Amusements.

I could not refrain from remarking that it was impossible for a Society to trap worldly young men into joining, by means of the prosaic names of Draughts and Chess, soiled newspapers and weekly prayer meetings. The largest christian work is done in England amongst young men where a smoking room, billiards, fives and a large gymnasium are provided. I have met the most sickly and repulsive christians among societies where the young men nightly competed in prayers and preaching.

From the last report of the Young Men's Christian Association I find that it has been in existence three years, the membership steadily increasing to 53. Average attendance from April to September, 16, and from September to March, 19. There were 20 literary and 22 Biblical meetings, eight open meetings and six evangelistic services. The members contributed £17 17s. 0d towards the Indian Famine Fund. Receipts for the year, £70; expenditure, £68; receipts towards purchase of land and erection of a building of their own, £160. A library is in the course of formation. The tract committee circulated 500 tracts monthly. A monthly magazine, above the average, is conducted by members. A bazaar and three public lectures were held during the year; the admission to the latter was free. The ordinary meetings are held in the Masonic. The annual subscription is 5s. A Saturday evening bible class is conducted by one of the churchwardens of St. Saviour's Cathedral. The Rev. J.F. Eastwood, one of Dr. Colenso's clergy, has given a Literary evening; and the president is the Presbyterian minister. This will show that their platform is a broad one. Religious services for the soldiers are conducted from time to time.

Before leaving Maritzburg I addressed a meeting, held in their rooms, on the subject of Young Men's Societies and Institutes for Boys and Youths. To my great satisfaction I find from the daily papers that they are already making efforts to start an Institute for Boys.

THURSDAY, 10th OCTOBER—Travelled 25 miles towards Durban by omnibus to relieve the Bishop who was escorting his carriage and cart laden with luggage. For a whole week he has been down at the Docks looking out for the residue of his 76 packages and selecting those required for our journey. The remainder will follow no one knows when, certainly not until the drought is broken up by copious rains, which will give the oxen the grass necessary for transport. We expect to be at least three months without the bulk of our goods and chattels. As it is, the little we have has cost, in some cases, three and four pounds a portmanteau and box for a 50 miles transport.

Some of our fellow-passengers will never forget this serious delay of luggage. A few have simply lived at the Docks for over a fortnight, overhauling and separating it, and trying in vain to get carriers to forward it on. We have left the Danube over a month, and yet a lady I called upon yesterday has only one dress to her back. Readers of "Nothing to Wear" should apply this case as a moral.

The drive in the omnibus was smart, but the shaking we all had was too perfect to be pleasant. As a spectator of this means of locomotion over roads abundantly supplied with ruts I have often laughed, but as an actor in the drama I objected to people abruptly perching themselves upon my knees. I met the Bishop near Half Way House, and he returned by the up 'bus to a Soiree given in honour of himself and party at the Dramatic Hall. From what I heard it was a great success in point of numbers but the place was too full for locomotion and people were impolite enough to talk whilst ladies and gentlemen were singing. The band of the 24th Regiment was in attendance, speeches were made, and tea and coffee were duly consumed.

Meanwhile I was tramping over the dusty roads with four kafirs, 14 oxen, a cart and carriage, unable to exchange ideas with my dusky friends and getting wearied by the pad pad of the oxen. However, a glorious evening was in store for me at the Royal Hotel, Camperdown, where I must needs meet with a Durban friend and several others, including an officer of the army. After a famous tea the event of the evening was music, the Durbanite proving to be a most accommodating, as well as a finished pianist.

FRIDAY, 11th OCTOBER—Rose 4.45 a.m. and commenced trekking at 5.15, outspanned at Thornville Hotel 7.15 for a breakfast equal to those provided by good English Hotels, left 11 a.m and arrived in Maritzburg at 1.30, having walked 17 miles during the day in a hot sun. After a bathe and rest I was glad enough to accept an invitation to meet people who could speak some language more nearly akin to my own than Kafir.

MONDAY, 14th OCTOBER—The Bishop and Mrs. Bousfield return to live at the camp, their host being unable to entertain them any longer. Waggons are being repacked and provisions bought so you will soon read of an onward movement. Lady Barker has written a book entitled "A year's Housekeeping in Africa." She commences every chapter with a three-paged grumble about the weather. All of us confess to thinking that she was given to exaggeration on that subject but now we accept and believe her statement word for word. I only wish I had the book before me in order that I might show you the

serious as well the ludicrous effects of violent extremes in weather from a lady's point of view. At one time it is bitterly cold, at another winds scorch us, violence of winds make equanimity of temper almost impossible, and from 7.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. very often the sun is raging so fiercely that we have hardly energy enough in our bodies to articulate a brief want. Today we have dust storms with a vengeance. Clouds so thick that it would seem that the solid earth had risen diluted into the air; the very thickness would rival a November fog in London. They were said to cut the London fog with knives into blocks and use them for Kerbstones, and so great is their solidity that if an umbrella is opened in one the chances are it could not be shut again. In the case of the Metropolitan fogs "active fancy travels beyond sense, and pictures things unseen." But with us the fog is a fog of dust, which leaves tangible deposits between the fingers, in the ears, nose, in brushes, towels, hats, pockets, bodies, filling in a half-emptied box of tooth powder, burying quantities in hair, whiskers, and beard; and as for meals, who shall say how many packs of dust we eat? Pepper never lay on my plate in such heaps as sand has done, never did spice coat hot beef so profusely as did sand the water we drank. You feared to remove this dust from anything lest you aggravated the evil. Speaking generally of the dust I may say it is necessary to be sandy here as it is to be smoke-begrimed in London. In London there is soap, and here we have brushes, but to be clean in either place one must always be using his soap or brushes.

THURSDAY, 17th OCTOBER—Busy making farewell calls to friends. Maritzburg must long ago have arrived at the ponderous glory of full statistics, but I was unable to get all I wanted. I give a few. It has a Mayor and ten Councillors and sends two representatives to the Legislative Council. The police number 28, viz., 10 Europeans, and 18 Natives.

The last census taken shews the population to be 7,039, viz., whites, 4,290, Indians, 250, and Natives 2,499. Of the whites 2,240 are male, and 2,050 females. Of the Natives 2,282 are males and 217 females. In the latter case the ladies, you will perceive, are in a sad minority. In the Borough there are 35 Canteens, Hotels, and Wine and Spirit stores, 11 Boarding Houses, 138 Retail Shops and stores, 3 Banks, 5 Billiard Tables, 4 Mills, 5 Brick-yards, 1 Tan-yard, 1 Foundry, 9 Churches and Chapels for whites, 6 ditto for natives, 5 Butcher Shops, 6 Baker Shops, 2 Schools for whites (males), 2 ditto for (females), and 8 for males and females. Five native Schools (males), and one ditto (females).

The "Josephine School" advertised as follows: 12 years of age and upwards, 13s.6d per month, and juniors, 10s.6d. per month. Extras, instrumental music, 10s.; vocal, 7s.6d.; Dutch, 7s.6d.; German. 7s.6d. per month. Fees payable in advance. Holidays, 3 weeks at Christmas, 1 at Easter, and 3 at the end of the June quarter.

Lest any should weary of the details I have given, I would point out that they are fraught with great interest, not so much because they are on another continent, and 7,440 miles from the mother land, but because the Colony is very young, only commencing its career in 1843, and civilization at such a distance from a great centre is full of difficulties. When I mentioned that the road from Point to Durban was macadamized, it meant that two miles of road had to be hardened, and only in the centre, at a cost of 2s.9d per yard, and if I said of the same of the road between Durban and Maritzburg, it would mean that it cost £60,000 to accomplish that which even little hamlets in England possess.

Of the many dancing assemblies and balls held during the last three weeks, the ball given this night in honour of Sir Bartle Frere takes precedence. It took place in the Theatre, which was prettily decorated

with rich and tasteful arches, and festoons of flowers and leaves, with happy dispositions of bayonet stars, coats of arms, bannerets, chinese lanterns, and a variety of floral devices. About 250 people were present. The band of the 3rd Buffs provided music for 23 dances, namely, 14 waltzes, 3 gallops, 3 lancers, 2 polkas, and the opening quadrille, in which Sir Bartle Frere led off with the Mayoress. The great absence of square dancing prevented many gentlemen from enjoying the evening, as much as a ticket costing £1 11s.6d warranted.

“’Tis pleasant thro’ the loopholes of retreat,
to peep at such a world”—Cowper

Letter Eighteen

FRIDAY, 18th OCTOBER—Rose at 3.30 a.m., not p.m., biscuit, coffee, wash, struck tents, watched the “grey eyed morn begin to peep,” the peeping effectually driving away moonlight and obscuring the stars. Then came the sun, the glorious sun in all its grandeur, diffusing his influence over the landscape, and at 6 o’clock we were once more on trek. Three hours and a quarter it took us to pull up the Town Hill. That statement makes it unnecessary to say that it was steep. After heavy rains it often takes waggons a fortnight to ascend it.

At 9.45 a.m. we outspanned for breakfast, leaving at 3 p.m. and arrived at Howick, a village 16 miles from Maritzburg. And here we are, waiting for rain. Nineteen days have passed away, bringing us only one night’s rain. The country is much the better for it but at present there is not sufficient grass to warrant our pushing on.

Howick is a pretty little village with, I imagine, about 80 inhabitants. It is the resort of Maritzburg Picnicians. Our days are spent here in the following manner: rise at 5 a.m. walk half-a-mile to a shallow river to wash, matins at 6, breakfast at 8, studies 9 to 1, dinner at 1 p.m.. The afternoon, less one hour’s study, we have to ourselves. Evensong 4.45 p.m., bathe in river Umgeni, which admits of a long swim, tea at 6 p.m., family prayers at its conclusion, and in tents or wagons for bed about 7.30 for it is dark about 6.30 and paraffin means money.

We are encamped on hilly ground belonging to the Incumbent of the Parish, about half-a-mile from the village. Two waggons and three tents are close to the Personage, but the “Laurels” are to be found 400 yards away, out of sight from waggons and on the slope of the hill in the middle of a plantation of blue gum trees, which are surrounded by a moat five feet deep. Here are two of us as happy as the day is long, for never was our earthly abode pitched in a lovelier or more romantic spot. I stagger as I think I shall be expected to account for this increased happiness and describe this romantic scenery. Have I not already described majestic mountains, secluded glens, winding rivers, flowering grasses, garrulous brooks, variegated insects, bold precipices, glorious sun risings and settings, gaily dressed birds, and all the natural phenomenon that has struck me as beautiful? First, then, the “Laurels” are decidedly, neater than when you last saw them, for the Danube has been made to yield up our waterproof sheets and two African blankets for us. The blankets you will say make the tent prettier, your eye will then pass in review a goodly sized portmanteau, acting as a sideboard, enamel water bottle covered with felt, flask, tin of Osborne biscuits, tin of finest Richmond shag, traveling chess, concertina, books from the Primer to Disraeli’s Coningsby, railway rug and dressing case. Bachelor-like everything is trim and taut, a canvass sheet is laid down in front of the tent to allow of a lounge in the open air, and camp stools placed near the trunks of trees, give us at once high back’d chairs.

Whilst lying in the tent what a charming view is ours. The little village of Howick we see three quarters of a mile away, nestling in groves of trees revealing itself here and there by red tiles or by the pretty little church. A really handsome bridge attired in white spans the river and contrasts with green undulations that terminate in a long stretch of hills or mountains. Oh! these hills with their blues, purples, and indigos that look just delicious enough to eat when sunset splendours light them up. No-one can convey an adequate description of them. More immediately opposite the tents are wrinkled declivities and frightful chasms that mark the course of the river Umgeni, plantations of trees, and grassy slopes, and a long carriage track circles round on the opposite bank to the Lion of the place, "The Upper Umgeni Falls." The river here makes a bold plunge of 323 feet over a precipice and is within one foot of being twice the height of Niagara falls. It is a magnificent object but of course of very inferior bulk to Niagara, yet you may be sure that an ordinary river leaping 323 feet makes a very impressive display.

It forcibly reminds me of Byron's poetical description:

"It mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns [in] an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground.
Making it all one emerald; how profound
The gulf! and how the gentle [giant] element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent
To the broad column, which rolls on and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea,
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings through the vale—Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity
As if to sweep down all things in its track
Charming the eye with dread—a mighty [matchless] cataract."

This then is the view to be had from our bank and I think by this time we are the subjects of your envy. As a contrast to the waggons and other tents, we are much cooler, the trees around bury us in the

shade, flies are scarcer, and privacy, so dear to me ever since I lived in the Hermitage at Andover, is complete. To lounge by the seaside throwing pebbles in the water is counted the height of pleasure to the overworked citizen, but I find equal delight lying at full length looking up into fair skies, such as Africa can only produce, of tracing the stems of gum trees for a hundred feet into the air. It is a treat after London life to be again face to face with nature, at evening to miss the bells of tram cars and tread of many feet, and hear only the wind howling or whistling, or screeching, or groaning, or shouting, or else drops its voice to weird like whispers, or during a lull heave and sob like a naughty child.

As the summer approaches insect life becomes very numerous. The immense variety and great beauty of many greatly surprises and interests us. The butterflies are very lovely; there is the deep red butterfly, large red brown with a hue like dead leaves, large white, white and yellow, bright yellow tipped with red, snow-white with glittering violet and black wing tips, black with blueish-green stripes, blue with blood-red streak, many spotted and long-tailed. Twilight moths are very highly coloured and decorated. There are brown and orange, green and purple barred with bright orange, but as they are seen only at twilight I am unable to accurately describe more. There are dragon flies of glistening brilliancy of sheen and clashing vigour of flight. Bees and wasps, ants—black, brown, red and white in number, numberless.

I often wish that I was a naturalist as the country presents such numerous specimens of the insect tribes, brilliant and handsome, with which I am wholly unacquainted. With some I could willingly have remained so far, for I have lively reminiscences of the mosquitos who made themselves as much at home as if I had been on the most intimate terms with them all my life. In some cases the swelling and inflammation produced by their poison is so great as to have acquired a distinct name. The pain or blister does not become less when you are told they are only *Culices pipientes*, or common gnats fostered by the heat of the climate.

Speaking of ants, the other day a bullock died near Howick. Happening to pass it on my way for a swim I saw dense lines of ants traveling up to the dead beast from all sides. Next day all the flesh was eaten off and carried (quite large pieces) by these industrious little insects to their heaps.

Locusts are fast increasing in number, but I cannot say that at present we have had one of Natal's great visitations such as the following: "A rushing sound was heard, and in two minutes the sky was darkened by locusts. Untold myriads of them forming a living belt nearly half a mile in length, rushed along at a short distance from the ground. They were so dense that while the flight was passing we were in twilight and gloom. At night they settle and veil the ground in a mantle of russet-brown. When they move on with the dawn not a blade, or leaf, or twig marks their resting place."

A few days ago I saw a very fine collection of birds killed and stuffed in Howick, blue-winged kingfishers, emerald cuckoos, purple-breasted loeries, and a host of others; but what most delighted me was the nest of a canary. These canaries, which were originally imported there from the West coasts of Africa, select the luxurious willow trees for building their nests, which they make of an oval shape, and ingeniously hang at the extreme end of the branches at a very short distance from the water, in order to protect themselves and their young from the jaws of snakes and lizards. The nests are entered from the bottom, but the passage being nearly circular birds and eggs find safe resting place at the extreme end.

Turning now to matters domestic the food we are eating is not altogether of a familiar character and unfortunately this part of Africa has a most meager variety to offer the immigrant. We commence breakfast with mealie porridge, a dish made from ground Indian maize or corn. The meal when boiled and mixed with milk and sugar is, I think, equal to Scotch oatmeal. The Kafirs live entirely upon it. Formerly they had but two meals a day—breakfast and tea; but the English have taught them to have three. It is amusing to see our four Kafirs over this porridge; first of all the youngest carefully cleans out the three-legged pot, puts in the meal and water and plenty of salt, stands it over the fire place—two bars of iron driven in the ground, and a small excavation below—and vigorously stirs till it is ready to travel the road Nature and the cook intended it to go.

Picture now our two waggons and four tents drawn up on a plain surrounded by hills, with not a house to humanise the scene. We are “somewhere in the wilds,” but can’t say where. The time is about seven in the evening, we have done a heavy day’s trek and all of us have drawn up for the last meal of the day. An immense jabbering directs our attention to the fire where, squatting all around a three-legged pot, are our Kafirs. The glow from the fire lights up their dusky faces, which beam with pleasure as they ladle out porridge with large wooden spoons into their mouths, and talk scandal. I understand that they thoroughly pick us to pieces, our appearance, general demeanour, and our actions. Doubtless they have nick-named us all. They name whites after their peculiarities, thus a man who had a deep bass voice was called “Buttah” which signifies “a man who speaks from the bottom of his stomach.” A friend of mine they call “a man with a beard,” another “a man whose coat-tails flap when he rides.”

The Mealies or Indian corn to which I have referred is the staple grain crop of every settler’s home, and of the Kafirs. It grows everywhere, from the mountain tops to the sea. The productiveness is very great—a single grain produces a cob with from 700 to 1,000 grains. The plant requires only the rudest cultivation. The average yield of this cereal is from 24 to 36 bushels per acre, and the ordinary value on the market is from 2s.6d to 6s per bushel.

After partaking of porridge, bread and pork appear. We have no oven to bake our bread, but a round pot on three legs, and with a flat lid enough to hold a fire, answers the purpose. The bread is made partly from maize meal and being moist, sweet and crumby is liked better than flour bread. For the pork a pig is bought of a neighbouring farmer at a cost of 5d per lb. For dinner, perhaps mutton graces the table—did I say “perhaps”? I should have said the chances are ten to one that the fare is mutton. Every house I visited the fare was the same. There is no variety here: fish, venison, hare, rabbits. Delicacies such as jams and a hundred other things are never dreamt of. Well, mutton is accompanied by pumpkin, or a wretched dry bean peculiar to Africa, or sweet potatoe or rice. I cannot say a word in favour of the accompaniments. The sweet potatoe is a tuber that grows everywhere with the utmost readiness, and with the most marvellous luxuriance. It is very largely employed as food. It is much larger than the ordinary potatoe, and is sweet when boiled. It is much more hardy and easy to manage than the ordinary potatoe and sells at half the price.

Amongst other provisions is a bag of sugar, grown in this Colony. This is saying a great deal for the country, for early sugar planting was a great failure. Now many of the mills are of large power and of most perfect construction and finish. There have been exceptional instances when four tons of sugar have been made from an acre of cane, and there was a time when Natal sugar sold for £40 per ton. The average yield of plantations at the present time is said to be one and a half tons per acre, with a price varying from £17 to £19 per ton. The percentage of juice procured from the cane is from 50 to 70, the

quantity of dry sugar yielded from each gallon of juice is from one ounce to one ounce and four-fifths. Plantations near the sea have considerably less dense juice than those which are situated further inland. In one case 2,800 gallons of juice are required to make each ton of sugar, and in the other, 1,700 are enough. Sugar land near the coast is 30s. per acre, a few miles from Durban £5 per acre, and recently land was sold a few miles from Durban from £13 to £22 per acre. Distance from the port affects greatly the price. A mill may manufacture from 3½ to 12 tons of sugar per day.

Coffee is our morning and evening beverage but much cannot be said for its growth in Natal. The last return was, acres planted 4,800, in 1873; the crops gathered upon these was 754,000 lbs. In 1870 the export value was £7,500. Of late years there has been a check upon coffee growing but soon the growers hope matters will improve.

I think that with a word upon our water supply I may leave the table in the wilderness. As a rule the water we drink is too repulsive. Houses do not appear to possess better, for they cannot dig wells, but like ourselves send buckets to the nearest "drift," i.e., ford, or "spruit," i.e. stream. Filters really seem useless and boiled water is not particularly pleasant. Hitherto, at times, we were lucky enough to be able to make a sort of lemonade.

Letter Nineteen

During our six weeks sojourn at Howick I was enabled to see much of the surrounding country by riding under charge of an excellent guide. A visit to the Karloof Falls is worthy of record. With three companions we rode about twenty miles over the usual hill and dale scenery, man was nowhere, but the dancing breeze filled ones veins with vitality and made the mute universe seem companionable. About 100,000 acres of grass had been recently burnt by a grass fire not kept within its proper limits. It had done very much damage to the houses and trees, yet a few days after the immense tract was covered with a carpet of mosses and the most beautiful flowers. Here I saw a beautiful plant called the coralodendrum, or Kafir broom, which struck me very much. It bore a flower of deep red hue, in shape and colour similar to a cactus. Speaking of the cactus it has a very luxuriant growth here, and is very common. I have seen one as high as an English Oak.

We passed a large Kafir Kraal, now as they exist all over Africa and we are frequently seeing them in the far distance when we trek. You will doubtless want to know what they are like and what are their uses. When a Kafir starts in life he takes a wife. If poor, he can only afford one hut, as his riches increases, he is able to increase to the number of his huts, and marry more wives. It is the custom for the Kafir when he marries to give the father of the girl twenty or more cows for his daughter. In fact he buys her. Some Chief's Kraals contain as many as forty or fifty huts, with a wife in each.

The huts are of a circular form, built upon the side of a hill, where shelter is to be obtained from the wind. These habitations are easy of construction, being without difficulty made in a day. They are calculated to stand any amount of weather. The men go into the forests and cut boughs of young trees, strip off the leaves, fix these along long sticks firmly in the ground, and arch these over, always adhering to the circle; these are supported by strong props or poles, upon which they rest, their framework is then covered with plaited grass or rushes, worked so tightly together that not even rain could penetrate it. They more resemble gigantic bee-hives than anything I can think of, but merely have an opening on

one side, which represents a door, only large enough to enable a man to crawl out on his hands and knees.

At night when they sleep a kind of wooden hurdle serves to fill up this place, to keep out snakes. The floor is the bare earth, covered over with cow-dung, which is beaten down until it becomes as hard as stone. Cow-dung, I may mention, is called by us African coal as we use it in dry weather in place of wood and ordinary coal. For a bed the Kafirs merely lie upon a thin mat, made of grass, and lay their heads upon a log of wood as a pillow.

We frequently met Kafirs with the whole of their furniture on their backs, viz: mat, African blanket, log of wood, and huge walking stick. Here we see the full force of the line "Man wants but little here below."

Round each hut a trench is dug to keep it as dry as possible. The size of the hut depends on the rank or favour the woman is in with the chief, he of course occupying the best and most immediate one himself. His cattle are his greatest pride and happiness. All his wealth is numbered in his cows and goats. The latter share the huts at night with the wives; the cows occupy a kraal to themselves, a high palisading encloses the whole. Strangely enough the natives bury their corn in pits under the inner or cattle Kraal. Directly we approached this Kraal out ran a lot of the inmates and several Kafir dogs. The latter are active, wire-haired, long-nosed hounds, much resembling the lurcher. Some Kraals possess as many as fifty of them. Each dog has to provide his own food.

On we rode, passing through a country of grassy undulations. At times the bridle-path sank into deep dells of greenery, shut in by Bluffs, with cold streams brawling at the bottom over mossy stones, and under the shade of trees, round whose feet ferns nestled.

After calling at three or four houses we came to the Karloof Falls. The height of Niagara Falls is 164 feet, of these African Falls 400 feet, the former excel the latter in the following figures: depth of water before fall, 25 feet; width 900 feet; fifteen hundred billion cubic feet of water is precipitated every minute, producing a sound that is undecipherable, being, they say, an alternation of clear and muffled sound, like the hoarse voice of ocean surges heavily lashing on the shore. The Karloof Falls have a depth of water before fall of, perhaps, five feet only, and a width of twelve feet, yet they were very lovely. Above the 4,000 feet sheer drop and at a little distance is a pretty cascade. When we've finished admiring that we look at the great leap, measuring more, I imagine, than the spire of Salisbury Cathedral. Here it is for ever dancing and rushing, and sparkling, and scintillating, "an everlasting incense of water."

Here it is freezy as the snow flake deepening into brightest emerald, there dark and leaden as the angriest November sky; what ideas it excites in all its moods of grandeur, beauty, terror, power, and sublimity!

The spray waves roll up in crested curls, like gossamer floating into mid-air. What glowing and prismatic hues, what harmony of form and foam, what a mystic curtain! These ideas literally absorbed me and made me, for the nonce, an Eastern Fakir looking volumes. Looking down at this deep and steep gorge, and you see stag-horn moss in every hollow, the trumpet-shaped arum whitening the waving marsh grass, ferns clinging everywhere, mimosa and other trees in rich profusion clothe the opposite banks and the River Karkloof, like a silver serpent besets the long valley or "Krantz," not running in a

straight course, but in luxuriant windings, as though it loved to tarry in the midst of that bright scene. The Krantz I have just referred to is a wonderful chasm or series of chasms, from 300 to 700 feet in depth, walled in on both sides by rugged impassible precipices. Vast masses of shapeless rock lie along the beds of these great cliffs, stunted trees grow among the rocks or cling from the seams of the cliffs, and the river is ever there far below quietly trending its way westward.

The coming on of sunset advised us to make tracks for home. The yellow orb was hastening to kiss the green summit of hills that barred the western horizon, beautiful rose tints deepened into red and purple. The western sky was filled with masses of coloured clouds, in which gold and purple and cerulean blue mingled together in gorgeous magnificence, and in which the eyes of the beholder could not fail to note the outlines of strange form, and fancy them bright and glorious beings of another world.

On Monday, 4th November, the Thermometer registered 105 degrees in the shade, the next day it dropped to 46. The sudden violent change produced in me an illness which has lasted a month, and compelled me to take up residence with Howick's Doctor.

WEDNESDAY, 6th NOVEMBER was observed in this Diocese as a day of humiliation and intercession for rain and the Great God, who said "If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," has given us rain every day since for a month, breaking up a drought which has existed for two years, and raised every commodity to famine prices. The fare from Durban to Pretoria is generally £15, for a very long time past it has been £60. Transport between Durban and Maritzburg, once 3s.6d. per cwt, rose to 14s.6d. Indeed, transport had literally ceased, and all inland places were living on previously purchased stock. If a transport driver undertook to convey provisions he lost perhaps 20 out of 60 oxen. Poor Pretoria 450 miles away from the nearest Port, was said to be only able to hold out for another month. Butter there was 8s.6d. per lb.; oxen once bought at £3 10s., now find ready purchasers at £15 10s.; a two pound loaf has risen in value from 6d. to 1s.6d. and so I might go on, but space forbids, I merely ask my reader how he would like to pay 6d. for a penny stamp?

A Natal summer proper boasts of a thunder-storm every afternoon from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. We have had this storm with great regularity, and very many more. Now the fury of an African storm is so appalling as to alarm the boldest and to defy all description. Suddenly do the black clouds gather themselves together in dense masses, rolling slowly up from different quarters, and lowering overhead. What light remains is of a lurid, sulphurous colour. The air before the thunder is so exceedingly vivid as to become almost blinding, it plays about and rests in the atmosphere for some seconds, while the thunder is incessant. Nor does it come in broken claps, as we are accustomed to have it come in England, even in the worst storms; but in one tumultuous roar which is taken up in a hundred echoes, and continues to roll round the hills in fearsome grandeur. Heavy rain accompanies the tempest, at first in massive drops, afterwards in a perfect deluge, when the severity of the storm has passed away. Torrents pour down the hill sides into the plains unchecked by obstacles, carrying with them the soil of the valleys, forming large swollen rivers, where there had been no signs of such a thing before. The other day a neighbouring farmer discovered 200 of his sheep, in a usually dry valley, struggling in a mighty river just formed by a deluge of rain. With assistance he was able to save 60.

I well remember a storm that happened the other evening. As usual there was a lowering darkness in the leaden sky, an unnatural stillness in the atmosphere. The elements were taking breath, for the struggle lying silently in wait against the breaking of their fury. Nature from a perfect calm was thrown into a tremendous uproar, tempest rolled on tempest, the clouds in black sheets were flying to either pole, waves of fire rolled across the sky, peals of thunder succeeded one another in fearful rapidity, earth trembled, the heavens resembled a sea in a storm, billow rolling on billow, broken here and there by fragments of fire. At one time the firmament was all a flame, then it appeared to open and shut with fire. A few slow splashing drops had fallen from the leaden dome of cloud, then followed an overwhelming avalanche of rain and hail. The rain fell literally in a sheet. The hail was simply jagged clumps of ice, big enough, many of them, to fill an egg-cup. When the windows of Heaven are opened in this country, one's faith comprehends the deluge very easily. The lightning at times was a sheet of dancing foam, as it seemed, like a sudden Niagara.

TUESDAY, 3rd DECEMBER—At 4 a.m. we are all preparing for trekking onwards, after eleven weeks patiently waiting we are really off at last. John and Govan, our drivers, are practicing their lungs in shrieking out harsh guttural names at the oxen, the shambuck, i.e. whip, is in full play, that dreaded instrument which none but those who commence early in life to practice, can wield. Our full tilted wagon, which carries the Bishop's family and not much luggage, has 12 oxen yoked in by the Trektouw, or chain, to the pole, called by us disselboom. Eighteen oxen draw the half-tilted waggon, which carries the provisions and bulk of cases. No less than 11 of our oxen have died, and their places are filled up by others bought two days ago. To-day the beasts look up to their work. When we turned them out to feed six weeks ago they were thin and scraggly, their flanks heaved painfully, their eyes looked sunken and wan, their tongues hung out, but now they smartly bend to the yoke, yet why that effort to drag the waggon? The roads are knee deep in mud! Knee deep in England means ankle deep, but with us it is a fact that the forelopers sunk to their knees in mud.

We outspanned at 7.30 a.m, and breakfast was served at 10.45. We had only reached the Howick Hill, not two miles from the village. Some 19 waggons were on the road with spans of oxen numbering 30 and 34. A span generally numbers 16, yet even with these teams the waggons stuck and more than once I saw 60 oxen struggling to drag one waggon up the hill. Our heavy waggon stuck and it was long before it could be got out of the ruts. We generally proceeded in this manner: for four days the whole of our oxen pulled one waggon a distance, then came back for another, so it was no matter of surprise to find that we only accomplished five miles a day. The weather for the first two or three days was very dull, but afterwards Sol made his appearance, and dried up the roads, so that on Saturday, starting at 10 a.m., we did eight miles by 12.25, outspanned at a little village called Weston, on the Mooi, ie, beautiful river, and enjoyed a Saturday half holiday.

SUNDAY, 8th DECEMBER—The Bishop preached at a charming little church in the next field to our encampment. This building is a thoroughly ecclesiastical structure, made of red bricks, and actually having lancet windows and a bell in a steeple. The entrance is approached by a large churchyard walled in, and well laid out with trees. The interior can boast of arched roof, modern seats, stone font, reading desk and lectern, sermons have invariably been preached from the latter, as pulpits are non est in Natal. A handsome reredos has been erected over the altar, the latter has a cross and vases of flowers, and a

green curtain covers the remainder of the wall. The clergyman lives twelve miles away, at Estcourt, and having to divide his time between the two places divine service can only be held twice a fortnight. The congregation but little resembles an English one. Many of the ladies are in riding habits and the gentleman show by their spurs and gaiters how they locomoted to church. Some come distances of some seven and ten miles.

Although this was not the proper Sunday for Church, 60 persons assembled, 19 remaining to Holy Communion. Behind me sat three Kafir girls, of about twenty-three years of age. They joined very heartily in the service; the last few evenings they have outspanned close to our waggons, and delighted us by the way they have sung many hymns in harmony. I understand they have been trained at a German Mission Station. As I pass through this country and think of its early state, and remember that only as far back as 1848 Bishop Gray, then on his first visit to the Cape Colony and Natal, records in his diary "traveled 900 miles before I came to the English Church," and again "in many parts of my diocese English settlers complain that the nearest church to them is 500 miles away," and as I think of these things I contrast them with what I have seen. Schools and Churches for Kafirs, Churches often only 30 and 50 miles apart, and I see the truth of the following lines:

"Oh what a conquest hath the cross obtained!

There, where of old a hill of darkness reigned

And crime and havoc, fiend begotten pair,

In mortal blossoms made their savage lair,

And issued thence, to riot, rage and kill,

Like incarnations of a demon's will;

The peace that passeth understanding grows,

And Earth seems born again without her woes;

So wonderously the spell divine descends,

And man with nature in communion bends.

The isles have seen him! and the deserts raise

Anthems that thrill the halls of Heaven with praise.

Crouching and tame the tiger passions lie.

Hushed by the gaze of an Almighty eye;

Ecstatic thought! the zenith of our dreams!

Error has died in Truths victorious beams."

Sunday is a great day with the Kafirs who go on trek, and have rarely had the opportunity of christian instruction, for mending their clothes and dressing each other's hair. Their clothes are nothing less than

the cast off uniforms of the British Army and English railway employes. In passing down a street in Maritzburg you may see natives wearing the uniforms of the Infantry, Hussars, Lancers, London and North Western Railway and many others, shockingly dirty, and full of scarlet, blue and green patches, for the Kafirs are very fond of a variety of gay colours. They get their cotton from dead oxen in some ingenious manner, carry their own needles, but borrow scissors, perhaps from the "missus."

An old man used to sit on Victoria Bridge, at the entrance of Maritzburg, and earn a respectable livelihood by letting, not selling, old trousers and other garments to the Kafirs at a moderate charge. The Natal law, then, as now, prohibits the natives from appearing in town in puris naturalibus. But as a Kafir's decency on one side of the bridge centred in real innocency of mind, and on the other in breeches and a cocked hat, it was not unwise to make as much money out of his forced delicacy as possible. At any rate the laws of Natal were obtained on each side of the bridge, for as he came out of town he usually left his clothes behind him. The clothes are a poor make-shift. The appearance of a man six feet high, fitted with the very loose and ragged trousers of a Dutch Boer, of four feet six inches, is somewhat ludicrous. House Kafirs are often dressed in new suits of calico, trimmed with pink, and look quite an "upper ten."

The Kafirs' modus operandi of head dressing is an amusing sight to witness. The operator places his friend's head between his knees, holding him tightly, as in a vice. With a porcupine's quill, or as they term it, a "upape Iwenungu," he works his hair up into a most elaborate mat, using the quill, which has a small hook at the end, similar to a lady's crochet-hook, much in the same way as we should do in the art of crocheting. I have watched this operation for a quarter of an hour, but it takes weeks before it is completed, as neither is able to devote an hour a day to it. Kafirs on trek cannot dress the hair in this fashion, but I have seen many in town so titivated and think the appearance is worth the trouble expended. Most elaborate hair dressing takes place when the young man is thinking of making love in order to render his person more attractive in the eyes of his dusky inamorata.

Another Sunday occupation, although with some it is daily, is preparing a grease which is made from the berry of the castor oil plant. With this they rub themselves over, making their bodies shine like bright bronze. So you see that even in their cases the preacher was right when he said "Verily man is altogether vanity." If you want extreme vanity go to the Kafir at the age of 18. Frequently have I seen the young Kafir, as he walks, turn around and look admiringly at himself from head to foot.

Letter Twenty

MONDAY, 9th DECEMBER—4.30 a.m. was deemed a convenient time to strike tents, at 6.15 Matins was said in the Church, and breakfast before 7, nothing like the good old maxim of "early to bed and early to rise." In this matter our Bishop sets an excellent example. He is unlike the mistress of whom the housemaid complained,

"She rings us up at seven, till ten she lies,

More bent to raise the wretched than to rise."

In this you may detect a snatch of Goldsmith.

As I have a few minutes to spare while the oxen are being driven from grazing to be inspanned, I will narrate a few facts concerning Kafirs. I believe them to be facts for this reason: I never give particulars about this country unless the books I have read, and the experience of many colonists, of thirty years standing, which they have recounted to me, agree, or I am lucky enough to see for myself.

Kafirs are particularly partial to snuff, a characteristic of the highest refinement. They have a box which is carried in the ear, by cutting a hole in it sufficiently large to admit box or horn, as it happens to be. Their ears are always limp and mutilated, owing to the custom of making them a receptacle for odds and ends. There is a peculiar ceremony in snuffing. I have never seen them take it while standing, or even alone. Kafirs, being of a sociable character, prefer company. They sit, or rather squat upon the ground, and push the snuff up their noses by means of an ivory spoon.

Our Kafirs keep their spoons in their hair, and John, instead of having a box for his snuff, has an old glove suspended round his neck, in the way we carry camphor bags in time of cholera.

Smoking is another of their sociable amusements. I have already described their evening meal to you, well, when this is over, they snuff leisurely. That done, the pipe is prepared. It is a bullock's horn, which they partly fill with water. The tobacco is put in an inkstand, through which a hole has been perforated, and fixed above the water. The "boys" then apply their mouths to the broad end of the horn and draw the smoke through the water. This always seems to be a very trying undertaking and inevitably causes them to cough nearly akin to a yell. Where the pleasure lies I fail to see. The pipe is duly handed round, and one day in a Kraal, I noticed that the Kafirs expectorated the water in the shape of bubbles. With these bubbles a game of war was played, sides were chosen, and the side whose bubbles remained intact the longest, won.

Another of their amusements is singing. Creep into a hut and watch them and you will see it is a strange sight. All squat on their haunches or knees around a fire, and twist their arms and bodies about in every direction. The song will be nothing but a refrain, like one I have already quoted, "Ite cata," rising and falling like the cadence of the sea. Your entrance will make them sing harder, although most likely their naked skins are streaming with perspiration. The tunes are such that X 332 at home would run them in for, they are a sort of prelude in six fits, a happy blending of "Up in Balloon," and "The dead march in Saul". I have heard very much about the Kafirs being born musicians, having melodious voices, and certain other advantages, so that well-nigh barefooted I advanced one night to a hut, where some were said to be singing, uttering this invocation:

"Come forth ye spirit of the world of sound!

Leave, leave awhile your aye—sweet task above,

And rear your starry heads with music crowned,

And once more weave an eternal song of love!

Weave it around the gentle heart—

Handel, Haydn, great Beethoven,

And thou sweet, sweet-souled Mozart."

Judge then my horror when I heard a dismal drone worse, many times worse, than the tune an English quadruped once died of, shades of German organ grinders and Scotch bagpipes may defend me in the future! But perhaps I ought not to be dissatisfied when I think of what Moshesh, the great chief of the Basutos, once said about civilization: he defined it as “the art of never being contented.”

Yet another specimen of their sociability. These gentlemen of colour issue invitations to their friends to “outchualla,” or a great “beer drinking” which generally turns out to be a “drunken bout.” Govan, our second Kafir, was recently a guest at one of these parties. The beer is not that bottled by Bass, sold in England at 1s. per quart bottle, and at Howick at 3s., but a decoction made from some wild plant, sufficiently strong to intoxicate. There is generally at these parties some gay young wit who has at his finger’s end all the latest “on dits,” respecting the numerous alliances that are likely to take place between the different Kraals. The greatest part of this sort of news is invented, as in England, the listeners keep their eyes fixed on the speaker, occasionally giving vent to their feelings by saying “ya, ya,” whilst he puts himself into all kinds of attitudes. They are wonderful mimics, and delight in the opportunity of imitating the voice and manners of the people they are speaking about.

Charlie, our junior Kafir, is a capital one. The other evening one of the children received their usual good night. Charlie heard it and often says to us, in season and out of season, with great pathos, “Good night, my dear.” He has also mastered another sentence which is much more serviceable to him: “Mind your toes,” and you would greatly laugh to hear him say a few lines I taught him. His mimicry of emphasis is too ridiculous.

“Whene’er I take my walks abroad,

How many poor I see,

I never says a word to them

’Cause they never says a word to me.”

The barbarous canticles they chant, when feeling the effects of the beer, would not satisfy the fastidious taste of Sir Michael Costa, and their choruses are not given exactly with that expression which delights the admiring critic of the Huguenots, or the Israel in Egypt.

Dancing is an occasional pastime of the Kafirs. “For an hour before the appointed time of meeting the surrounding country appears to be dotted all over,” says a writer, “with Kafirs coming in every direction, ambling and brandishing their assegais, knob-kerries and shields, all wearing their richest ostrich plumes, with their bodies as highly polished as any piece of mahogany.” This ointment gives them a very refreshing appearance, but it detracts from the pleasure of close proximity, as I found when once in a hut peopled by eight of these anointed gentry. The assegai is a kind of spear, made of light wood, at the end of which a rude iron blade is fixed. It is so curved as to inflict a deadly wound, and is used by the natives with great dexterity and sometimes with fatal effects. The knob-kerrie is a sort of bludgeon made from the middle of the iron-wood tree, and is so hard that one blow of it on a man’s head would prove fatal. About five hundred girls and an equal number of men participate in these festivities. They perhaps commence at 4 p.m. and conclude at 4 a.m. As the “breaking up” draws near all become more vigorous and excited, so that at the conclusion the company presents the appearance of having been dragged, or having just walked through water besmeared with grease. Sometimes as many as 2,000 Kafirs may be seen dancing together—a scene which can scarcely be imagined by an English person.

Letter Twenty-One

I leave their amusements and turn to other particulars. The meaning of the word "Kafir," "Kaffir" or as the Times of London always prints "Caffre" is "unbeliever." These men have no written laws, nor prescribed forms of religion. They are governed by long established practice and usage; and have a general belief in the Supreme Being. Their villages are each under the control of one petty chieftain. These again are subject to the sole authority of the "umkumkani" or great chief, who holds the same position, with regard to the inferior chiefs, as our Norman sovereigns held with reference to the great barons; and who is looked up to as the holder of the land. There is a sort of feudality about the system which would greatly recommend itself to the antiquary. Hamilton in his "Sketches of Life and Sport in South Africa," thus describes the extraordinary antipathy which exists between the Kafir and the Coolie, an antipathy the stranger notices a few minutes after landing: "Perhaps," he says, "no two human beings exist, so much unlike each other. The Kafir—tall, muscular, of a fine presence, with an independent mind and carriage, averse to fawning, quick, irascible, slowly proud, easy to be led, difficult to be driven; the Coolie—lissome, small, cringing, without mind or will of his own, humble, self-abased, crafty, untruthful, submissive to others' will, but little of his own. What wonder they should never assimilate nor associate together! The Kafir will come to work when he likes and go when he likes, and do much or little as seemeth him good. The Coolie is an outcast in religion and class, and will labour when it is his interest to do so, and no present means of over-reaching his employer present themselves. Kafirs and Coolies neither eat, drink, sleep, or work together: the very presence of the inferior 'animal' is resented as an insult by the superior. Frequently have the Kafirs caught a Coolie, and with their usual ingenuity in wickedness, knocked his eye out, in order, they say, that he might see the better out of the other—a grim species of humour certainly."

You perceive that the Kafirs have the vices of savages; but from every source I learn that their virtues far exceed our own in some of the most essential points.

In the conduct towards their wives, as a rule, they are most impartial, never appearing to be fonder of one than another. When a woman, therefore, creates a disturbance or quarrel with the other wives—which is of rare occurrence—the husband sends for his next brother to come and punish her in the following manner: The other women being ordered out of the kraal, and the husband himself having left it, the offender is tied to a stake, and receives a dozen lashes. She remains thus ignominiously bound until her husband returns. Upon his re-appearance she is released, and falling on her knees thanks him for the punishment she has received, admits her wrong and promises never to offend in like manner again. Unlike ourselves, the subject is never afterwards referred to. The mode of the punishment smacks of the savage, but what a lesson they teach us English, who in a fit of temper chastise wives or rush to Courts of Justice, and let the world know our domestic differences. Here the Kafir declines temptation, and lest he should be induced to allow the interference of temper with the dictates of justice, he transfers the execution to the nearest of kin.

Their hospitality is not the hospitality of pride or wealth. The personal kindness is genuine good breeding; their abstinence, unless under great excitability, would put to blush a Lord Mayor's feast, and I am trying to work out the question as to who is the most barbarous, a London drayman, a railway navvy, a Cornish miner, or a Kafir.

At the ceremony of burying their dead their virtues are seen in the way of patience and self-restraint, and above all hospitality. It is thought right to provide for the possible necessities of the dead. Electra was not more solicitous for her father's tomb. In the grave with the body they place three huge calabashes, which are filled with "outchualla" and "mealies" intended for the entertainment of himself and his God, and as it is thought probable that such luxuries may tempt some companion to visit him, in the form of a spirit, a sufficiency is set aside for at least three of them.

In the division of his property after death the ordinary form is that the brother succeeds to the wives who form a great addition to his wealth, each girl being worth 15 cows at least.

When a man loses a number of cows (and this is the greatest loss he can sustain), or has been subject at any injury, he never broods over his troubles. He looks the picture of misery and despair for a short time and the subject of grief is never referred to again. This is the true "sapiens est rex" of the poet. He sees no use in making his life gloomy, or dwelling upon unhappy subjects. If you are ill, the Kafir makes a kind nurse and waits upon you day and night. His sympathy is quite amusing, for should you be in pain and wince, he immediately puts himself into a similar position. It is his mode of expressing that he feels with you as well as for you. Does he think you know the civilized maxim "the sincerest flattery consists in the closest imitation." Kafirs live to a great age, and a respect is shown towards their old men and women, Spartan-like in its tenderness and punctuality. They are generally accompanied by two boys, who lead them about with much care, and give them their daily baths. Girls never go out alone, they always walk about in a manner which is said to assimilate to that of the English school girl, in couples, with their arms round each other's necks. Maidenly reserve denies them the opportunity of exhibiting their charms in the country, and the only time they are seen in public is at the dances.

Another of the characteristics of these young women is peculiar to the West and South. They marry young; as at an earlier age, when most European ladies are supposed to be in their prime, these black creatures become old. They grow old from hard labour, which they, however, look upon as a duty, and perform in the service of their husbands or children, like exemplary woman without a murmur. Before marriage the girls have but little to do, they idle about giving some slight assistance to their mothers in household work. When they are married they fetch water, chop wood, attend to the crop of mealies, in fact do all the work while the husband snuffs, smokes, and gossips with his companions. I think, however, there is this exception: the men attend to the cattle, but my notes, copious as they are, fail to say if that is really the case.

Hamilton gives a long description of the marriage of a Kafir chief, I abridge the account and give it below. About three o'clock in the day the bride was seen to approach, accompanied by parents and friends, the Kraal of the future bridegroom. On the part of the gentleman no anxiety was displayed, but upon observing her in the distance he sent twenty cows, driven by his herdsman—a sign of contract—to meet her. These were given to the father as a dowry from the bridegroom. While these passed she squatted, keeping her eyes fixed on them, with a laudable estimation of her own value, evidently counting the number. I have been told that they laugh at English girls, being so worthless that they are actually given away in marriage, and think themselves vastly superior to the pale faces for has not the bridegroom to toil till he gets money enough to buy twenty oxen before he can secure his prize?

The oxen past the girl then arose with considerable dignity and walked towards the Kraal with the grass mat rolled up and hung on her back, which was to be her future bed. When a few yards from the Kraal, the chief's favourite wife came out to meet her, and offered the trousseau, not immediately for

acceptance, but inspection. This was a bullock's-hide robe, which, after inspecting she returned to the lady, who must be congratulated on the utter absence, or control, of jealousy. The two young wives brought out a band of white beads, emblems of innocence, with which they encircled her waist. She next proceeded to the entrance of the Kraal, where she was met by the chief himself—a moment, I may say, of intense anxiety to a young lady unused to Belgravia and its self-possession. Here she fell upon her knees to receive a necklace from the hands of her future husband, a symbol one supposes of the gentle yoke of marriage, which he placed around her neck. At this she appeared much gratified, and then for the first time entered into a conversation, doubtless of a romantic character. It lasted only for a short time, and the bride—expectant, having concluded the prefatory acts of her part of the duty arose from her knees and was led into a hut.

Here she remained by herself, till the sun went down, to decide whether she would have him or not. She really scarcely has it in her power to refuse, but it is custom. The chief then came to the door of his hut where all her doubts and fears, and maidenly blushes had been deposited, and led her through a long line of his people, the men standing in front, the women behind, numbering nearly two thousand, a vast attendance, far beyond the statistics of St. George's, Hanover Square. This was a signal for them all to strike up some favourite song, with a chorus of "Yebo, Inkosi!" a chorus before which Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides pale their fires, and which signifies "Yes, O Chief," and to the new bride they say "Hamba guschly ikaya," meaning "Welcome to your new home in peace." The ceremony was concluded by a dance. The marriage of an ordinary Kafir is not so elaborate, but somewhat similar.

The Kafirs are as cruel as many of our English murderers. He never appears satisfied with getting rid of an enemy in the shortest way, if that can be done with safety, he would disembowel him first, then put his eyes out.

These people have great faith in witchcraft. There is no limit to their conviction of a wizards' power and evil intent. They fear lest even a scowl from his face would work them some harm, bring death or confiscation to their cattle, and indeed it is often followed by their death in some atrociously cruel manner. There are witch finders who are supposed to smell out the culprit who is subjected to a murderous death.

Persons ahead of the age in which they live admit that an English doctor can relieve sufferings without any compact with the devil, and by the aid of his medicines. Indeed they go so far as to take our physics, with the exception of oils—a form of pharmacy which they cannot understand. Black draughts being the most nauseous, are their especial favourites. Over these they smack their lips with the relish of a true connoisseur, between whiles exclaiming "mooshly, mooshly," which is weakly translated by "very good, very good indeed."

Kafir doctors are held in great respect and awe. Their dress is distinguishable, if not distingue in our sense of the word. He may have suspended from the back of his neck a small skull, and emblem of wisdom and of peculiar skill in his profession. Several other magical charms are hung about different parts of his person, such as the claws of eagles and other birds, the dried feet of lions, and upon the point of his assegai he carries a small bunch of herbs. As this strange looking man travels about from Kraal to Kraal he sings songs of an imaginative and poetical character, but altogether devoid of music. Whatever remedy these men chance to give their patients they always conclude by spitting down their throat. In the case of a snake bite one might suppose it would counteract the venom of the serpent, on the homoeopathic principles of "similia similibus curantur."

The Kafir is a good neighbor. When a friend is ill, he is generally to be seen sitting round the sick man's hut with his wives, and should a doctor be required he will travel one or two hundred miles to procure one. He is considerate in all the duties of hospitality; but when it come to a matter of business, he will try and cheat you, and it will not be his fault if he does not succeed in doing so. As I write one is standing before me asking a shilling for a pint and a half of milk: the proper price is threepence. A few days ago a couple of fowls were offered for three shillings: in that case the legitimate demand was exceeded by two shillings. It is amusing to watch a small chief or subject at a Kafir store, haggling over the price of an article. For half-an-hour he will chaffer over a few beads, a present for his wife, before purchasing them. The mode of buying a blanket is likewise droll, but as thoroughly practical as any old housewife in Witney. He holds it up to the light and carefully examines it, looking first longways and then crossways, and then runs his eye systematically all over it. Should he chance in his inspection to discover the smallest hole, nay, the slightest flaw, he walks out of the store with as much coolness as if he had discovered a pre-arranged plan to get the better of him.

Letter Twenty-Two

For the present I leave my dark friends and resume my diary. You may remember that I have got as far as Monday 9th December and that I was merely writing till the oxen left grazing to be outspanned. Now, if you think that they have not yet bent their galled necks to the yoke and left Escourt you are mistaken, for this time they are 50 miles away.

Four sheets of foreign note are not easily filled whist one is on trek. All day, save the outspan, you are on the move. At night exhaustion from days walking, or jolting, or baking in the sun, prevents scribbling, and if that doesn't a small candle does. The mid-day outspan with the thermometer at 140 and not a belt of shade anywhere provides an insurmountable obstacle. The only time is what may be got before we start in the morning. And then violence of winds may curl up your paper too much for pen locomotion, a few superannuated ants crawl up your legs and arms, the flies are always true and love to roam over your face if you are busy, and the dust on writing paper is certainly "matter out of place." The position for writing does not conduce to speed. I am fortunate if I get a camp stool and write on my knees; at many other times I kneel and write or else lie down to it but perseverance and patience enables one to do a little each day. I have been taught

"The world is nothing but a mass of means,

We have but what we make—that every good

Is locked by Nature in a granite hand;

Sheer labour must unclinch."

TUESDAY, 10th DECEMBER—Rose 4.45 a.m., breakfast 6.45; off at 9; outspanned at Estcourt at 12 p.m., taking shelter at the parsonage. After a bathe, or stroll round the garden, eleven of us took luncheon at the house of the resident magistrate. Estcourt is a very pretty but straggling village, lying in a valley. It boasts of three stores, two hotels, police-station, fort with 50 mounted police, and a very pretty river. It is the largest magistracy in the Colony. Two thousand native levies are being formed soon to proceed to the front, ready in case war breaks out with the Zulus.

We have now got 114 miles up the country and begin to feel that it is now probable we may see Pretoria. Our speed has increased to 13 miles a day.

The Rev. C.M. Spratt, who has been staying at Estcourt with a friend since the 30th September, joined our party at 5.15 p.m., when we proceeded on our journey, outspanning at 6.40 p.m., taking tea at 8 p.m., and closing the tent doors at 9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, 11th DECEMBER—Rose 4.50. Mr. Spratt is recalled to Estcourt to take duty there for the clergyman who proceeds to the front as chaplain to the forces. Breakfast at 6.40 a.m., and a start made at 8.20. Our route lay through the thorn country; instead of bare hills, we have now hills clothed with stumpy trees about four feet high. To-day we receive an addition to our party—a lady joins our mission circle, and we want but one more to make up 19. All cry out about excessive heat for the first time since Howick faded from our sight. The mid-day outspan from 11.20 a.m. to 5 p.m. found us revolving round a tree courting a very slender shade. When the sun is powerful and vertical our condition is helpless. Dust in large and continuous clouds assails us; this, again, is a visitor we have not had since our first trek—three months ago.

It is 8.30 p.m. as we anchor at Colenso, a small village, and tents are pitched amid difficulties; the mallet, perhaps, strikes your hand instead of a peg, and the canvass is found to be loose. Letters here from England soon restore smiles, for affection loves “the silent language uttered to the eye, which envious distance would in vain deny.” Is it not astonishing to find how much the passions are thrilled by a drop of ink?

THURSDAY, 12th DECEMBER—The wheels of our wagons began to rotate at 8 a.m., and stopped at 12 p.m. at Onder Broek Spruit. Our first lesson in crossing rivers in waggons without the aid of bridges was taught us by the river Tugela, two and a-half feet deep, but very wide. Inspanning took place at 4.15 p.m., but before that time two of us set out to walk, and took the wrong road, I suppose it was because we thought it quite a luxury to have a choice of roads; hitherto we have never been perplexed by intricate interlacing of tracks. An hour and a half’s walk in the direction of the Diamond Fields, and yet no wagons in sight caused us to halt and consider matters: in neither direction had anything passed us. Now, lately, we have seen plenty of traffic, having passed over 500 oxen, including one herd of 140, bound for Maritzburg for sale, and hundreds of waggons. Last week between Durban and Maritzburg, there were 600 waggons on the road. We retraced our steps, discovered we were on the wrong road, and made for the Pretoria trekkers. Things did not look pleasant, day was putting on his jacket and threatened to button it without stars; nature was fast stowing away her loveliness, and we felt the braid of night’s descending robe. Rain began to fall as we lay down to rest awhile for the fifth time, for new boots and hard roads were never known to agree. We feared the advents of mists; and African mists cause old colonists to lose their way, and sleep out all night when only a few hundred yards from their homes; but soon lights were seen in the distance, and with unerring and topographical instinct we got aboard at 7.30 p.m., and after tea lay peacefully at anchor.

FRIDAY, 13th DECEMBER—Life with us has its vicissitudes. The morning sees us rise at 2.45 a.m. in a shower of rain, bent on having an early morning trek. We move off at 3.15 a.m.; the ladies are supposed to be asleep in the waggons, whilst the gentlemen walk. We arrive at Ladysmith at 5.30, breakfast at 7.30 and by that time we had a capital sauce to accompany the solids and suctions. Here we crossed the Klip river, without the friendly aid of a bridge; today it is a respectable river, a fortnight ago it was an empty bed. The population of this little town is 250 whites and about 200 blacks. Transport from Durban

to this place is thirty shillings per cwt. A tradesman informed me that salt sold in Durban for 10s. per 2 cwt bag, but the carriage he had paid for it was £8. Recently a £500 order cost him £350 for transport, hence the high price of things. A carpenter earns 30s. per day, board and lodging in one instance was 30s. per week. We left this pretty little town at 10.35 a.m., and after a seven miles trek, which took us through a forest of trees four feet high, outspanned at 12, moving on again at 3.35 p.m. and laying to at 6.30 p.m.

The Rev. A. Roberts joined us at dusk. He has been absent from the circle since 30th of September, staying with an Estcourt friend, and during the last five weeks taking the duty at Ladysmith Church, filling up for the time a vacancy.

SATURDAY, 14th DECEMBER—Our early morning trek extracted us from the tents at 2.55 a.m., and set us walking at 3.42 a.m., till the outspan at Sunday's River at 6.55 a.m. Off again at 9 a.m., all went merrily as marriage bells till a most formidable hill stood before us as if protesting our right to reach Pretoria. It is the last spur of the Biggersberg range of mountains, and proves a "stickler." It took us one hour to climb and descend that protuberance of earth.

Before I proceed, I must mention that from Howick we have been under the guide of a transport driver, of twenty-eight years' experience, and, all being well, he will conduct us up to Pretoria. A kind Providence ordered that we should meet with a man who is kindness itself and who is traveling two hundred miles beyond the Transvaal capital. He has ten waggons under his charge, including his own, and at difficult passes like this it is most interesting to watch his skillful management. He gallops to and fro giving orders like a General on the field of battle.

In the morning, if the roads are bad and rivers are likely to be swollen, he rides ahead for several miles to examine their exact condition and returns before inspanning time; this he does at all difficult passes. One capital piece of management on his part is riding many hours ahead, even a day when the roads are good, and buying up meat, bread and wood for himself and us.

The hill difficulty having been overcome, another and more formidable one presented itself in the shape of a spruit: a horrible sea of boulders, and muddy billows, encircled by mountains, and more nearly bounded by deep and fierce gullies. Politeness demands that we should call this piercing a road, but a careful student could only detect here and there a square foot of level ground, jagged rocks and holes that were very pits were awaiting us, and I think that more hearts than one quaked as our heavy waggon entered the list against its adversaries. It rises in the air but as promptly returns to earth again, now it refuses to budge an inch, though oxen struggle never so arduously, or drivers ply the shambuck never so vigorously, one wheel has sunk over two feet in a rut, and tug as they may, eighteen oxen are set a task they cannot accomplish. Our second team joins them but the thirty cannot pull together well so they are taken out. General Hodgson orders up one of his own team of well-salted oxen and the wheel is dug out, boulders are piled up, a lever is applied, three drivers are flourishing their whips, and with lashes and yells of "umbagi yok," the wagon with a dizzying lurch and a loud clanking of pots and pans rises over the billow and resumes its pitching and tossing after an hour's exertions have been spent to extricate it.

Through my illness I have had to ride in wagons, and so can speak feelingly of the tossing referred to. If I may borrow a few words from Southey I would thus faithfully describe the manner in which these ships o' the wilderness pursue their journey up hills and mountains, through rills, gullies, and ruts, and for the last sixty miles over boulders. You may see them creeping and plunging, and striking as if a war were

raging, rising and writhing, twining and twisting with endless rebound, smiting and fighting, dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound, rocking and darting, hitting and splitting, shaking and quaking, battling, tossing, stunning, roaming, dinning and spinning, dropping and hopping, jerking, struggling, with heaving and moaning, and groaning, quivering and shivering, thundering, floundering, sprawling, rumbling and tumbling, clattering, battering, shattering, toiling, thumping and plumbing, bumping and jumping, splashing and clashing.

And this is how many of our party travel daily.

We had probably trekked a mile when a halt was made for dinner, at 1 p.m., shewing that it is possible to do a mile in four hours. Our second start we made at 3.40 p.m., and the day's work finished at 6.50 p.m., tea and prayers bringing us to 9 o'clock.

SUNDAY, 15th DECEMBER—Instead of five hours sleep we have had seven, but the usual rest of the Sabbath will not be ours as circumstances compel us to trek from 9.40 a.m. to 12.50 p.m., and 3.10 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. Quite an African scene was presented by twenty Kafirs, old and young, of both sexes, cutting up an oxen, which had died by the road. Farther on two other dead oxen were subjected to similar treatment. We passed a man who had lost eight oxen since yesterday and another who had lost half his span and had completely come to a standstill. Redwater released them from the lashes of cruel drivers. The cause of redwater is not certainly known by veterinary surgeons. If gifted with speech and ability to read Burns, the deceased might well exclaim—

“Oh Death! the oxen's dearest friend, the kindest and the best!

Welcome the hour my aged limbs are laid with thee at rest!

The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow, from pomp and pleasure torn!

But, oh! a bless'd relief to those that, weary-laden mourn.”

MONDAY, 16th DECEMBER—Again we are late risers, not stirring before 4.25 a.m. Trekking to-day is done between 8 a.m. and 10.10 a.m., and 2 p.m. and 5.20 p.m. One of our oxen is turned off to die, and later on two are left with a Kafir to nurse. If they die the man will not receive any payment, if well, when Mr. Hodgson returns on the down journey, he will receive £2.

Ammunition wagons flying the red flag, and commissariat wagons are in large numbers on the road, all bound for the front. The difficulty with the King of the Zulus has, I believe, arisen through disputed boundaries of his kingdom, and through his expelling, contrary to treaty, all white men from his domain. I hear that Sir Bartle Frere has drawn up a new treaty or statement of demands of the English, and given him a month to consider them. Everyone is anxious to know the outcome of the negotiations.

It is said that the Colonists lack patriotism, they look forward to war—volunteers and tradesmen—because they expect to make money by it. The latter, with stock; farmers charged Government ruinous prices for what they know must be purchased for war purposes. An agent has been known to say “I want a hundred oxen and seven wagons at once, and don't care what price I pay for them.” Volunteers are attracted by advertisements like the following, which I have taken from a Transvaal paper, issued three months ago during our war with Sekukuni: “Volunteers wanted for the front—and grand attack on Sekukuni's town! loot and booty!! better prospect than the gold diggings or the diamond fields!!! same rations as a General!!!!”

The sun has played great havoc with our faces lately, and until we could “see ourselves as other see us,” personal jokes on the subject were indulged in. “That orbed maiden with white fire laden, whom mortals call the moon” we welcome, and the stars, “The sweet forget-me-nots of Angels,” we like in spite of their peeping and peering, but the sun is another matter when the pavilion of heaven is bare, or when the bright clouds, those motionless pillars of the brazen heaven—their bases on the mountains, their white tops shining in the far ether—fire the air with a reflected radiance. It is only when some sunbeam-proof cloud issues from its cavern and hangs like a roof over our head that we can keep up walking with our wagons, which merely cover two and a half miles an hour, or on plains, three miles.

The heat makes us shockingly thirsty and instead of watching the floating mountains of silver clouds, we cast our eyes everywhere in search of water, descend into spruits to find them dry, or bring our filters to bear on little pools of rainwater. The water we have had for meals lately is about the colour of mud, and if I were asked to describe it by a Shakespearian quotation, should take the words of “The taming of the Shrew,” and say that it comes from “a fountain troubled,” and consequently was “muddy, ill seeming, thick, bereft of beauty.”

The country we have recently passed through has been chiefly noted for hills hid under gray boulders, plains disguised in boulders, or miles of grassy lands dotted over with thousands of ant hills. These hills are generally about three feet high and twelve feet in circumference at the base; sometimes they rise to six feet in height. Our road has far too often been crossed by spruits of water, now of narrow dimensions, but like the deep gullies, ever running parallel with us, they bear traces of having been recently savage rivers. We have almost exchanged hills for mountains; occasionally a hill is seen, but I give it in favour of mountains. Flocks of white and dark goats and herds of oxen relieve the verdant green that stretches away lost to sight. In the distance we see the Drakensberg range of mountains in beautiful purple profile. The Biggersberg range which we have recently passed presented some very fine features, and none grew tired looking at the grotesque peaks and crags that stood out in sharply defined outlines against the sky.

We have never yet been without hills, which of course have added considerably to the wildness of the country, a country without hedges, houses, meadows or cultivation, and this for two hundred miles. I understand that the farm houses are never built near the road but behind hills, out of sight of the highway. This will account for our lonely passage. The farmers do this to keep their cattle from catching the murderous diseases which oxen going up and down the country would spread. Take lung disease as a specimen of what infection will do: if one oxen has it you will lose half your span.

“How is it,” I have often asked, “that farmers in Natal very rarely cultivate their land?” The answer many have given me is “they are too wealthy to bother about it.” And I grant that the bother of a hundred miles transport of corn to the nearest market, and the usual trouble before it is in sacks, is too great, when a man can make £1500 and £2000 as a sheep farmer. This is the income of several Howick and Ladysmith farmers. Those of whom I am acquainted have flocks from two to six thousand. From 6000 sheep 50 bales of wool are generally obtained, and realise from £10 to £15 each; here alone is an income of £500 or £750. Lambs cost 10s.; sheep, 20s.; a fleece of sheep averages 2s.6d. in value. Allowing for deaths, old and young, worm in the head, which kills a few, the increase of sheep is said to be from 30 to 50 per cent. Scab destroys the wool, but it is prevented by dipping. Farmers pay their Kafirs about 12s. per month, and find food and hut; to get a regular supply of them natives are induced to settle in large numbers on the farm, rents for huts are put at a low rate on condition that the chief

will supply a certain number of labourers every year, for Kafir labour is very uncertain and a year is a long time to keep a man.

Letter Twenty-Three

Flowers and insects still start up in great variety. Never a day passes without the pedestrian discovering something new to delight. One day a member of the dandelion family is made much of, another a daisy, and positively a forget-me-not, to say nothing of the aroma of wild mint, startling those who were sailing along thinking of nothing at all. Nature's sweet voices, always full of love and joyance, do not seem to me to receive sufficient contribution from birds. I rarely hear them stirring the air with their harmony, provoking each other in songs, musical murmurs, or capricious piping. I never hear the warble of the merry nightingale, which in England's April was wont to crowd and hurry and precipitate his delicious notes as if night would be too short for him to utter forth his love-chant, or the caw of the rook, which I love best to hear in churchyards, "those dreary regions of the dead where all things are forgot." I miss the linnet, woodlark, reed-sparrow, reed-breast, wren, goldfinch and jay.

Now I find myself grumbling, shall I tell you of other things I miss? A little while ago, when recovering from my illness, yet forbidden to read or write, I began thinking of my travels through fifteen English counties, and contrasting their beauties with those which I know South Africa to possess. I thought of the cathedrals of Canterbury, York, Durham, Winchester, Salisbury, Glasgow, Inverness, Ripon, and Saint Paul's; of the Abbeys of Romsey, Christchurch, Westminster, Amesbury, Netley and Fountains; of the Mansions of Knole, Broadlands, Wilton, Highclere, Huratbourne and Stowe; and then I glanced at the buildings of Africa—buildings without any pretensions or any visible connection with either Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, or Elizabethan orders, buildings of brick and mud, best described as "four walls and a roof of zinc," or occasionally of tiles.

I thought of English villages, of thatched cottages whose windows were made small by clustering frames of roses, clematis, jessamine, and myrtle, and the "Sweet Auburn" feeling stole over me; the cultivated farm, never-failing brook, and decent church are just at the antipodes with the African, where farms are not cultivated, brooks fail, and churches behind hand in decency and order.

Your village was soon peopled with little girls in white pinafores, skipping down the road with their curls flying in the wind, and young urchins playing at hop scotch, not to mention the swain whose agricultural pursuits are rewarded with 12s weekly. Believe me we lack sweet Auburns here, and especially the shade afforded by hawthorn bushes. I look in vain for such watering places as Cowes, Ryde Ventnor, Southsea, Brighton, Eastbourne, Bournemouth, Dover, Harrowgate, Aaran, and never a Jersey or Boulogne trip appear to be advertised.

I stroll through Knole Park, in Kent—all these of course are "visions passing across my mental eye"—and see the wood anemones tremble in the spring breezes, the pale primroses showing their mild faces amid sheltering leaves, the violets hiding their purple beauty from the vulgar eye in shady nooks beneath low-spreading boughs of elm and beech, oak and ash, but as I stroll down the shadowy arcades I say "there are no such parks in Africa".

I am with you in spring when the tender green of the earliest leaflets break out in bright patches upon hedgerows, when ash buds are no longer black, and when the primroses and violets make such exquisite tracery in shady nooks. I am with you in summer and revel in the warm gladness of the weather, the

drowsy hum of insects, the rich colouring of the woods, the scent of wild flowers; and looking down long avenues and away through distant loopholes in the wood, revel again in quiet lawns, flowering beds, corn fields, where poppies persist in breathing, and glittering streamlets. I am with you in autumn when his red finger has been laid lightly upon the foliage of Epping Forest, or the New Forest, studying the various tints of venerable oaks or lofty elms; but I decline to be with you in winter. Spring and summer here I have described; autumn is to come, but I shall miss then the encircling woods, lawn-like meadows, trim hedges, smooth winding roads, noble mansions, tiny Gothic edifices, Swiss and rustic lodges, village churches with wreaths of clustering ivy, prim schoolhouses, windmills, and, in short, all that is English here. It would be folly to expect anything like Crystal Palace fireworks, the Handel Festival, the Gregorian Festival at St. Paul's, Ballad Concerts, Monday Popular's, Oratorios, Rose Show at the Sydenham establishment, cricket at the Oval, Aldershot Reviews, Thames Boating Club, House of Commons debates, Wimbledon Camp, or moonlight trips to the Needles, price 1s.

To those who love this sort of amusement, Africa would intend to be tame, no, this lesson must be learnt by emigrants—that “true pleasure consists in clear thoughts, sedate affections, sweet reflections, and a mind even and stayed, true to its God and true to itself.”

To resume “the history of our lives from day to day.” Our last outspan on Monday had hardly commenced, when, with a very little notice, a heavy storm came on, a regular Afrikaner lasting an hour. Suddenly the fields became lakes, and empty gullies violent rivers, and the lightning revealed many a mountain unnoticed. The scene at tea was unique: Twenty-three of us crowded between two wagons, under a tarpaulin, stretched from tilt to tilt. Some sit and some stand around the table, eating and drinking very quickly, as the weather is cold, the grass soaking, and the smoke from the Kafirs' fire blinding. Within an arm's length sit the servants following our example; their table is covered with tins of all shapes and a miscellaneous collection of kitchen utensils. As close to them squat the Kafirs round their fire, ladling porridge out of the inevitable three-legged pot.

Tents were pitched in the dark on this highly liquid grass, and tenanted for the night at 9.20 p.m. To-day we crossed two rivers, not far from each other, and the thought occurred how dangerous it would be to encamp between the two, as rivers rose last week seven feet in one day. It is on account of the number of rivers and spruits that have in this district to be crossed that we are pushing on so persistently. The place we stuck at on Saturday for an hour detained a waggon, last Friday, the whole day.

TUESDAY, 17th DECEMBER—Moving at 4.30 a.m., started at 8.50 a.m., and outspanned in Newcastle, a town with a population of 153 whites, two hotels, several stores; barracks, and Laager. The latter has high walls, built square, and a tower in each corner—both walls towers are pierced with loopholes. The use of the laager is to afford protection to women and children in case the town is attacked; the men fight outside unless they play a losing game. I first met with a Laager at Ladysmith.

The houses of the town are built of bricks with tiles for a roof. Many, however, are mere zinc erections. Trees are scarce. A capital river runs through the very straggling township. Newcastle has recently elated us as we there had a prospect of renewed comfort. Letter-writing, attending to clothes, and general brushing-up (very, very much needed) were our chief occupations. It is difficult to say how highly we prize a rest when trekking as we have lately done, and unable to get to our portmanteaus. Each person has only one small bag allowed on the journey, and can obtain access to his other worldly goods once a

week. But there is real work to be done, a laundress to be found to clean the clothes accumulation of a fortnight; a stock of meat is cooked; a Christmas pudding made, in a storm, for even in Africa we find that "Christmas comes but once a year" so determine that it shall "bring good cheer"; knives and forks are cleaned—this is a luxury, for there is no time to attend to them, or a hundred other domestic details, while we trek—and fresh stores are obtained.

Sir Bartle Frere most kindly instructed all military stores on our route to supply the Bishop with any provisions he might need, and from the military stores here Mealies, Boer's meal, half a sack of flour, beef, tins of pressed beef, tea and other articles were obtained.

At night John returned with only nine oxen, 17 he reported as lost. Our oxen are turned out to graze from the time of our outspan until dusk when they are driven to the wagons and tied to the disselboom. The missing oxen were not found until the following night. The search must have given much trouble, as John, when returning with them, refused to answer any questions civilly. Tom Moore's poems are not translated in Kafir or he would have learnt this lesson—

"Since life's best joys consist of pose and ease

And few can save, or serve, but all may please;

Oh! let th' ungentle spirit learn from hence,

A small unkindness is a great offence."

WEDNESDAY, 18th DECEMBER—Soon after 5.30 a.m. we enjoyed a capital bathe, and who so well could appreciate a thorough wash, a dive, and a good swim, as those who have slept without taking their clothes for a fortnight?

A very hot morning was succeeded by immense rain, hail and thunder, the greater part of the afternoon. Dinner was progressing in a satisfactory manner, when large drops of rain heralded the storm. As we were getting wet through in the dining tent, that meal was soon despatched, and each sought his own resting place. So large were the hail stones and so violent and continuous the rain, that our tent allowed streams to penetrate it, so sheets, blankets, books, hats, and all the contents, for the first time, became more or less drenched.

"Disaster, do the best we can,

Will reach both great and small,

And he is oft the wisest man

Who is not wise at all."

Eventually the sun emerged from his chamber and repaired our damages so that beds were as comfortable as of yore.

Below I give a table showing the progress we have made in travelling.

We left England on the 8th of August, landed at Durban, the port of Natal, 14th September.

Remained there till the 19th, when train was taken to Pinetown, 14 miles.

Trekked from Pinetown 21st, arrived at Maritzburg 25th, distance 40 miles.

Allowing for the Sunday's rest, our rate of travelling was 10 miles a day.

Left Maritzburg 18th October, arrived at Howick the same evening, 14 miles.

Left Howick 3rd December, arrived at Newcastle 17th December, 156 miles, or 224 miles from Durban, more than half-way to Pretoria.

The intermediate distances are: Howick 14, Curry's Hotel 12, Mooi River 14, Estcourt 20, Colenso 22, Ladysmith 18, Sunday's River 20, Curry's Store 12, Ingagne River 22, and Newcastle 16 miles.

We reached Curry's Hotel, 6th December, Mooi River 7th, Estcourt 10th, Colenso 11th, Ladysmith 13th, Sunday's River 14th, Curry's Store, 15th, Ingagne River 16th, and Newcastle 17th December.

The average rate of speed from Howick, 11½ miles; from Curry's Hotel, 14. The rate between Howick and Curry's Store was merely 4 miles a day, owing to very heavy roads. I reckon on the days when three treks were made, the first at 3 a.m., second about 9.30 a.m., and the third about 3.30 p.m., we did 20 miles.

Two hundred and seven miles still lie between us and Pretoria. As a contrast between our voyage and land journey, take the speed of the "Danube," a very slow vessel—the passage made in 25 days was 6,073 miles, or an average of 243 per day, the longest run in one day 273 miles.

Our Christmas will most certainly be in the Transvaal, a very novel Christmas for us, only the pudding and feelings welling up from the heart will remind us of the yule log, holly's clustering berries, not to mention icicles, snow, sharp frosts, and the roast beef of "Old England." Although these lines many not appear in print until February, I would have you know that we wished you a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

THURSDAY, 19th DECEMBER—Rose at 5.30 a.m., capital bathe, commenced trekking at 9.30 a.m. Met with a hill that took an hour and a half to climb, outspanned 12.20 p.m. Dinner in true pic-nic style at 1 p.m., that is, all sat on the grass and were content to overlook things being in the rough. Off again at 5 p.m., and in spite of a most persistent rain and darkness, continued moving until 8 p.m. Then followed a scene not easily to be forgotten by those who were present. Our heavy waggon, after threatening to turn somersault, had to be left in the road; the other had gone some distance ahead. Thus they remained. The grass around lay in clumps of stalks three feet high and each stalk willingly transferred the rain settled upon it to the passer by. Between the clumps, and in the road, mud existed, not soft mud, but moist clumps, which would not part from shoe leather. On this arena, in pitch darkness, we moved about pitching tents by guess work, and attending to a few absolute necessities. Mother earth must have increased my weight considerably; I guess that my ten stone seven was much over eleven stone seven, for boots seemed to carry a plough field. A proper tea was out of the question. A wagoner near kindly gave us hot water and standing at the tail of a wagon, the men of our party devoured bread

and bacon, using pocket knives and converting thumbs into plates. The said water combined with hollands serving as accompaniment and preventive from colds.

FRIDAY, 20th DECEMBER—Reveille at 6 a.m, waiting for the sun to issue forth and dry the roads. Started 10.45 a.m., and soon sighted a hill that promised to be a “teaser.” Ten wagons are waiting to ascend. In each case double teams and a prodigal supply of lashes and yells are employed. The hill was nearly as steep as the side of a house and when a wagon was half-way up it made one dizzy to think what the consequence might be if the brakes gave way. Two hour’s struggle and we gained the summit, outspanning a short distance on at 1.30 p.m. We left a very pretty halting place at 4.40 p.m. and pulled up by the River Ingoko at 6.20 p.m. A delicious bathe, tea and prayers closed the day.

Letter Twenty-Four

SATURDAY, 21st DECEMBER—The shortest day in the year. Bathed in the river, a river which even in this short time has been to me an apt companion. Our tent was pitched close to it, and last night I lay a long time listening to its never ceasing ripple and roar as it passed over rocks. It seemed to speak of past, present, and to come, carried my thoughts far into the future—far as the river itself rushes to the sea. Here it is to-day hurling everywhere, its glittering waters, and though restless in themselves, making a lulling murmur. How one instinctively repeats or sings Longfellow’s “The Brook,” when looking at a modest stream, and really this is but little more than a stream, for the bathing alluded to consisted in lying down in a rapid current, three feet deep.

Two of our party were sent three miles ahead to order a supply of bread and a third and myself set out for a farm, accompanied by a Kafir, to procure wood. The place seemed to be but a mile away, but so clear and rarefied is this African air that distance appears but half of what it really is. So clearly are the outlines of buildings defined, the farm house we made for proved to be at the other end of three miles. As my companion happened to be a lady, a walk through wet grass, often six feet high, was not altogether desirable, and a spruit crossing our path proved so tantalising that the Kafir had to carry someone over on his back. Passing through an orchard of peaches and a well-wooded enclosure in which peach trees and prickly pears were prominent, we arrived at a ragged building, only to find it peopled by Kafirs. Here a difficulty arose, the interchange of ideas was a slow process. One of the deputation seized a prop of wood, another held out the money, by dint of “heaven-born Kafir” and our trusty follower’s interpretation, as much wood as the latter could carry was obtained for sixpence; the original demand was a shilling. Nearly a pail full of apples was next purchased for three-pence, and stowed away in our pockets. Returning home by another path we went through a Kafir Kraal, much to the delight of John, who seemed to like the society of the dusky ladies so much that with difficulty could he be got to resume his business.

The grass revealed a goodly cabinet of curiosities, many an insect with its “busy hum, or gilded wing, its subtle web-work, or its venomed sting.” Some ants have reared a structure exactly the shape of an egg-cup, two beetles had made a ball of manure and were rolling it to their abode, one pushing and the other pulling, and as for variety of flowers they were legion.

Dinner was again interrupted by a thunder storm and as before, one wet tent was left for another. Fancy the humiliation of the inmates of the “Laurels” as they saw little streams suddenly break out and rush at

them. Other tents might let in rain, but never the "Laurels," this is what they had proudly said on more than one occasion. Still the rain continued incessantly, descending in cataracts, came rushing along as if the Heavens were opened, accompanied by frantic flashes of lightning, more terrible than the scimitars. The thunder roared as if the vaults of Heaven were shaken to pieces and tumbled in. But the rain proved more appalling than thunder, the ground floods made one think that the foundations of the great deep were breaking up. In the gullies the water, troubled and raging, came hurling and sweeping with inconceivable fury everything that stood in its scope. No one who has not seen the like can easily credit the description.

A mizzling rain took the place of the dreaded sheets of waves. The storm was gone and the deluge assuaged, the floods around us gradually ebbed away or sank into the ground, and the waters that swelled the gullies had retired from the scene. Before the storm there was a dead silence: not a sound broke the calm of nature, nor motion, I might almost say, of life or living creature. One could believe he heard the leaves and blossoms growing, then came those earth-rejoicing drops, which visited every garment and blanket in our tent, yet ere the dimples of the stream had circled out of sight, lo! from the direction of the west a gleam of amber light breaks forth, and soon everything is as dry as possible.

At 4 o'clock we inspanned, climbed a hill not far short of three miles from Newcastle, near a house called Hotley's Hotel. Any shanty here with a licence to sell a spirituous liquor is called an Hotel, and a place with a population of eighty is dubbed a town.

We were very delighted to read at this hostelry Natal papers a week old, and English news nearly two months of age. From the columns of the "Natal Witness" I gathered that the transport from Durban to Maritzburg had rapidly dropped from 15s. 6d. to 5s. per cwt; preparations for war with the Zulus are made everywhere, Maritzburg and Durban have sent their Volunteers to the front, Howick, Pinetown, and a large number of little places have been holding "defence meetings," and two of her Majesty's men of war have dispatched naval brigades to the possible scene of action. The forces on the border of Cetywayo are said to number 15,000, the King has an army of 40,000. Sir Bartle Frere, whose Kafir name signifies "the dog that bites before it barks," asks, among the conditions he has laid before His Majesty, for an indemnity of 30,000 head of cattle, to help pay for our expenses, and a very large slice of his territory. "Do you think the chiefs under Cetywayo will timely submit to such conditions?" asked an enthusiastic soldier of me. "Not they," he continued, "they like to let loose the dogs of war and cry havoc."

Will you believe we are now only thirty miles from Zululand and easily run our eyes over the disputed territory itself. This unpleasant contiguity has driven all the Dutch farmers from the neighbourhood. A society of ladies is being formed to nurse the wounded soldiers at the front or in the towns, and a concert is in preparation in Maritzburg, the proceeds of which will be devoted to buying "extra comforts for 'Our Boys' who will be at the front on Christmas day."

The Cape Colony war is not dead; a recent engagement ended in the death of 68 whites. The war with Sekukuni, which more nearly affects our diocese, will be resumed in April next, meanwhile his impregnable rock is surrounded by English soldiers and volunteers. All the armies of Europe wouldn't get him out; cutting off his supplies is the only dodge, observed a redcoat. The volunteers have a free kit, which includes horse, saddle, bridle, and clothes. Volunteers here do not wear uniforms, but merely a coloured broad ribbon round their hats. They have their rations and 5s. per day; no wonder that out of £91 a year, and no outings, they make money over the transaction.

The Boy's Institute that I have referred to before, will I see, be inaugurated in January. Two nights every week, and when a Hall is built, four nights, it will be opened for classes for reading, writing, arithmetic, and mechanical drawing. A small fee will be charged. The delay in starting has risen through difficulty in obtaining suitable premises. I know that my London friends, on reading of this work, will see God's blessing upon it.

"Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.
Silence, how dead! and darkness how profound!
Nor eye, nor list'ning ear, an object finds;
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as he gen'ral pulse
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause;
An awful pause! prophetic of her end."

Scarcely had I repeated the lines when a storm arose, a storm the yachtsmen of Southend would call "a snorter," so curtain and sublime thoughts were soon dropt and this time successful arrangements were made to keep a frequent visitor out of our tent.

SUNDAY, 21ST DECEMBER—Even people on trek need this day of rest. Daily we have prayers six times, private, family, and Church of England, morning and evening, but they cannot take the place of the day set apart to the service of God. Dear old George Herbert's death-bed song puts the matter beautifully: "The weeks were dark, but for the light—thy torch doth shew the way. The Sundays of man's life, threaded together on Time's string, make bracelets to adorn the wife of the eternal glorious King. On Sunday Heaven's gate stands ope; blessings are plentiful and rife, more plentiful than hope."

The day commenced with Holy Communion at 7.30 a.m., morning service began at 10.30, six persons of the neighbourhood joined our little party, and all sat under a tarpaulin stretched between the two wagons, the Bishop and the Rev. A. Roberts officiating in a tent opposite. The Bishop preached from 30 Isaiah, 18, and in the course of his sermon told us to wait for the Christ's second coming, wait upon the Lord in the time of trial and troubles, and the strangers were told that though they had not a clergyman or a Church, they should wait upon God every Lords day, wait in family prayer, wait in prayerful reading of God's word, and of their prosperity, they were advised to put by for provision, first for a travelling minister, and then for a Church and pastor of their own, so that a table might be spead out before God in the wilderness, where they might commemorate His dying love.

"The sound of a Church going bell,
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Never sighed at the sound of a knell,

Or smiled when a sabbath appeared.”

Scripture pictures were shown and explained to our Kafirs in the afternoon, followed by a children’s service, and at 5.30 p.m. evensong with sermon. At the latter service we had six soldiers and six residents.

Now come with me to yonder hill, and I promise that if you are an admirer of Nature you cannot fail to be struck with the grandeur and sublimity of her works presented to your notice on every side. On the North is a chaos of mountains that continues on for hundreds of miles. On the South are mountains running in separate sierras, and here and there knotting with each other. On the West mountains again, profiled against the sky, and alternating with broad tables that stretch between their bases. What sensations of pleasure it gives to gaze at lovely valleys trending eastward from the bend of mountains, their surfaces covered with a carpet of bright refreshing green, and enamelled by flowers that gleam like many coloured gems! The mountains are thrown up in ridges, square-topped with masses and ledges of sandstone, and often rise sharply from the plain, away they stretch, at times, without a bush or tree to break their soft outlines of the uniformity of their colour. Others are thrown up in cones fifteen hundred and two thousand feet high.

At last we are on the Drakensberg range of mountains, a range which beginning far to the South in Cape Colony, and skirting Natal, traverses the eastern side of the Transvaal, from south to north. Its length within the Transvaal is 400 miles, while slopes and spurs give it a breadth varying from 40 to 80, and in some parts nearly 100 miles. Not far away is Mount Iketena, rising to the height of 6,500 feet. The range continues to supply peaks of nearly 6,000 feet in height, until reaching Mauchberg, where it roars to 7,177 feet, the loftiest point yet measured within the Transvaal.

I am going to take one more peep at the enchanting scene before me, and I advise you to do so also, for very soon we shall have nothing but vast plains to look upon. Yes! the Transvaal is opposite the place where I am standing, in view, waiting to receive its Bishop. The point where I am standing is our “Nebo,” and like Moses, from it we see the promised land, although, if it be God’s will, should like to say and feel that it should come to pass “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.” We hope to clear away foul jungles and see fair seed-fields rise instead. There are hell-dogs beleaguering the souls of our people, and they have cried “Come over and help us.” We are here! and may God make us instruments in stilling these caitihs of Satan, and sending them shrinkingly off to their caves. We want to burn the poison and turn the sour smoke into bright blessed flames. We want to drain off the festering water and make pestilential swamps fruitful meadows, with clear flowing streams. You say this will be impossible? Is it not Carlyle who says “The possibilities of every noble work lie diffused through immensity, inarticulate, undiscoverable, except to faith.” Like Gideon we spread out our fleeces at the doors of our tents (7 Judges, 36), to see whether, under the wide arch of Heaven, there be any bounteous moisture or none, and we pray that our hearts and life-purposes shall be as miraculous Gideon’s fleece, spread out in silent appeal to Heaven. We shall have to swallow down complaint, unreason, weariness of others and ourselves, but I hear a voice saying “as thy day so shall thy strength be.”

I hope that when you read my half-yearly accounts of our mission, you will find that chaos is being turned into order, unmethodic into methodic, waste into arable, that thistles are being dug up and in

their places blades of useful grass are growing. We ask for your prayers for our work will require “sweat of the brow, sweat of the brain, and sweat of the heart.”

You are waiting still on the hill for me, and instead of pointing out the pretty as well as the noble features of the landscape, I have been chatting the time away—forgive the delay, and look at those fitful lights and shadows that play upon the mountains and the valleys. Shadows! aye, what would be the finest picture be which bright-eyed and ready-handed genius ever flung on canvass without its shadows. When you tire of looking at gorges occasionally clothed with bush, and mountains with fantastically moulded crests and combs, let your eyes drop into that delicious dell carpeted by the softest grass, and holding in its grasp a spring of water, could you, like Rasselas, ever tire of it and sicken for the clamour of the cities? As they say on the stage “we must away” for the wide stretching landscape, yes, even the disputed territory of Cetywayo’s is melting vaguely away under the veil of crimson glory shed upon all things by the sinking sun, the long shadows of the mountains are thrown across the darkening country, rosy yellow lights play about the rugged crests, such glooms fall into the gorges, and such a violet thrill suffuses the western sky that an instinctive love of the beautiful makes one forget all discomforts of trekking.

If you have gone into rhapsodies over the scenery, you who have been standing with me on the hill, don’t let what matter-of-fact people will term your imbecility lead you to spread mustard over your muffins, pour Worcester sauce into your tea, or cream over your devilled cutlets. Imbecility indeed to love the works of Nature! Shall I tell you what I consider imbecility? It is to attend parties where people are invited to pack themselves into the smallest given space consistent with the preservation of life, where people trample upon each other’s lace, flounces, and varnished boots, with smiling equanimity. Let us picture a successful party, one that papers would say went off with considerable elat. Before us is a long window ablaze with light, the crash of the band bursts every now above the perpetual roll of carriage wheels and the shouted reception of visitors names. Through the long vista of half-a-dozen rooms opening into one another, the waters of a fountain sparkle with a hundred hues in the light, and glitters amid the dark floral wealth of a conservatory filled with exotics. Great clusters of tropical plants are grouped in the spacious hall, festoons of flowers hang about the vapoury curtains in the arched doorways. Here the votaries of Torpsichore linger until the rosy Aurora peeps through the windows.

If you will, by the aid of the glancing, dazzling gaslight, watch a party at dinner across a phalanx of glass and silver, and flowers and crystallised fruits and other Fortnum and Mason ware. Listen to the jingling of glasses, popping of corks, and see big powdered footmen charging at the guests with a side dish or sauce tureen. “Let us join the ladies” introduces us to velvet pile, and satin damask, walnut-wood malachite, old china, parian, crystal and ormolu. I fancy I hear a youth, who is labouring under the temporary affliction of being only nineteen years of age, descant upon dark beauties in pink, fair beauties in silk, laces and jewels, beauties whose eyelids—peculiar to young ladies with long lashes—modestly droop; or upon a particular one who sat twisting a £200 diamond bracelet round and round upon her finely modelled wrist, and suddenly changing from a manner so distrahit look at the tablets of ivory, gold and turquoise. Chatter on about revolving to one of Chas. D’Alberts waltzes, pouting lips, stately figures, graceful movements, deep melodious voices, pearly teeth, eyes like the stars of heaven, throats of Cleopatra build, symetrical foreheads, delicate complexions; liken your black-eyed sirens to Cleopatra, Neil Gwynne, Lola Moute, Charlotte Corday, or who you will. But stop before going farther and ask an old habitue of parties, round the corners of whose eyes crow’s feet have gathered—ask Beau

Brummel if all this means happiness. Imbecility to admire and linger over the “glorious works of the Parent of Good!”

What then is wisdom? Do we find it on the Race Course? Contrast the scene with the Drakensburg one, and say which is calculated to give the most lasting and the purest pleasure. Numbers are going up, jockeys are being weighed, book-men are clamouring below the grand stand, the course is crowded; mingle with the throng and hear their highly edifying conversation, “The bay filly will pull it off, she has the blood of old Melbourne in her veins,” “John Day will win it with a rush,” “Lord Zetland has tethered a stayer,” “Chaplin’s lot looks promising”. In the paddock pale-dressed boys are tightening the girths of saddles, in front of the starter stands the line of two years old, another moment and they are off, thousands, a few minutes later on, are craning their necks, what for? Surely the spectator’s destinies are trembling in the balance; they are merely trying to catch sight of a bend in the course and the horse which has the lead. Amber jacket, black belt and blue cap is said to be crawling at the heels of the ruck but agonising yells proclaim he is gaining and amidst deafening cries he wins by half a neck. This proves to be so edifying that caps are thrown up and hussas and long and loud. Ask the Marquis of Hastings if pure joy is found on the turf, he replies “it is not the miles we travel but the pace which kills.”

HENRY ADAMS

In the Transvaal

“’Tis pleasant thro’ the loopholes of retreat,
to peep at such a world”—Cowper

Letter One

[At the suggestion of the writer, we defer publishing the continuation of Mr. Adams’ narrative of the journey up the country, but take it up after the arrival of the Bishop and his party at Pretoria, as at the present moment much interest is centered therein. Ed.]

IT IS ABOUT TIME, I think, that I commenced writing a few notes about Pretoria. We have now been here six weeks, and like the town as much as ever.

On the 9th of January we publicly returned thanks in the parish church (St. Alban’s), for a safe voyage and journey. By courtesy the building may be called a church. It was built about seven years ago at a cost of £450, which sum was raised by subscriptions; I believe that value was not given for the money on account of the bills given to the contractor having often to be renewed. The church is 40 feet long by 20

broad and holds about 100 persons. It is a red-brick affair with thatch roof and a wreck of a wooden bell turret. A second bell, very near cracked, has been placed near, on a separate erection. A miscellaneous collection of seats is to be found in the interior, nine benches with backs, ten forms, a row of household chairs and some dozen stools. A brick floor is covered here and there with pieces of carpet of cocoa-nut matting. The thatch of the roof appears to the naked eye in all its simplicity. At night the little place is lighted by eight oil lamps.

The altar is the most pleasant part of the interior; it is covered with a crimson cloth over a white embroidered frontal. Upon the super altar stands a really handsome brass cross, a pair of brass candlesticks and a pair of vases. A green curtain covers the eastern wall on each side of the reredos.

The four windows that light the place fail to give the building an ecclesiastical aspect. The small vestries adjoin the east and are noted chiefly for mud floors, plaster walls and ragged thatch, the latter proving to be but a slight obstacle to the admission of rain.

For future reference it may be well to state the condition of Church affairs upon our arrival. The choir numbers ten men, four boys and ten ladies; the men and boys in cassocks and surplices sit in the sanctuary, the ladies occupy the first row of seats in the body of the Church. The psalms are chanted and the versicles sung. Two evenings a week are devoted to choir practice.

It is hardly necessary to say the musical instrument is a harmonium. Sermons are delivered from the lectern for Colonial Church furniture seldom includes a pulpit.

Last year fourteen candidates were presented to Bishop Webb for confirmation; the baptisms numbered thirty-three; marriages five; burials ten—three adults and seven children. The offertories amounted to £184, or an average of £3. 11s per Sunday.

The Sunday school has been small on account of lack of teachers. It has been held in the Church on Sabbath afternoons; attendance of children about 25.

Of the twelve hundred persons who are said to form the white population of Pretoria, about 280 belong to the Church of England, viz.: 133 adults, and 147 young people and children. Of the 133 adults 82 are husbands and wives and 38 widowers and bachelors. The communicants number 47, Holy Communion was administered weekly, the number of communicants varying from 9 to 20.

The other services have been three on Sundays, two during the week, and daily in Advent and Lent.

The extent of the parish is 60 miles by 40, really the whole of the country or district of Pretoria. So cut off is this Church from others that when the Rector has been ill, only laymen have been found to read prayers to the congregation. The Bishop has increased the services by three on Sundays, and for the future provides two services daily, three on Holy Days, Wednesdays and Fridays, bringing up the total to twenty-one or twenty-two per week.

They now stand as below:

SUNDAYS.

6.15 a.m., Morning Prayer

9 a.m., Litany and Holy Communion with Sermon

11 a.m., Full Service

5 p.m., Evening Prayer with Catechizing

7.30 p.m., Evensong and Sermon.

HOLY DAYS.

6.15 a.m., Morning Prayer

9.15 a.m., Holy Communion with Sermon

5 p.m., Evensong and Sermon.

DAILY.

6.15 a.m., Matins

5.15 p.m., Evening Prayer.

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS (in addition).

9.15 a.m., Litany.

The Prayers of "The Transvaal Prayer Union" are said on Wednesdays and Fridays after the morning and evening services respectively.

A new Church has been commenced in another part of town, the foundation stone of which was laid in April last. The walls, of red sandstone and shale, are only about eight feet in high at present. £300 has already been spent on it but lately £500 more has been raised by subscriptions, to which the Bishop adds another £500. Notwithstanding the possession of such a sum, building operations will not, I fear, be resumed for a long time, as materials are now from five to twenty times above their normal value, through heavy transport charges, so until war ceases and transport prices become more reasonable no further steps will be taken to complete the building.

On the 11th of February it was resolved at a public meeting of churchmen that the new Church shall serve in the double capacity of Parish Church and Cathedral. One may infer from the resolutions, all of which were carried nem. con., that a Dean and Chapter will follow in good time and then so soon as the parishioners of Pretoria provide an income of £300 per annum for their Rector (now called Curate) he will hold the office and place a Canon in the said Cathedral Church.

A very brilliant Soiree was held by the Pretorians in honour of their Bishop and his party on the 14th of January. It was the most complete and successful gathering of the nature that I have ever attended. The Hall was crowded throughout the evening by the elite of the town and district, including the Military and Civil Government Officials. I will not attempt to describe the scene, which in every way deserved to be called brilliant. I only know that I was completely staggered when I saw the denizens of the so-called "Wild Africa," who are supposed by "stay-at-homes" to be clothed in the skins of wild animals, arrayed in every variety of correct costume; dazzling uniforms, swallow-tails, low bodies, and short sleeves; in fact, the whole assemblage, for all one knew, may just have emerged from the emporiums of Regent and Bond Streets. A military band was in attendance and a capital vocal and instrumental programme

gone through in admirable style. The fruits and confectionery were more than the most fastidious connoisseurs could desire.

The day was famous for another event greatly affecting the happiness of three of the Bishop's party—one of the Clergy and the two candidates for Holy Orders. Since arrival in Pretoria the said individuals have had to luxuriate in a tent pitched in front of "Bishop's Cote," but a new era set in and a separate establishment was this day formed by them on the outskirts of the town, about a mile distant from the Bishop's residence and Church, under the title of "The Clergy House."

House hunting fell to my lot and a very queer experience it gave. "Hardly a house in town to let, sir," everyone told me, but six days' diligent search told otherwise. I will not go through the list of 13 houses that were eventually offered to me but a few instances may serve to shew the value of property in our fast rising town. Rent of £6 a month was asked for a cottage containing only two rooms, £9 for a house with six rooms. 27s 6d a week for a house with one room, a very little larger than a cupboard, seemed to a "Jemmy" the height of the ridiculous. A house with five rooms, earth floors and thatched roof was offered for sale, price £450. Another with six rooms for £750, one third cash required and bills for four and eight months for remainder taken. Private and Boarding Houses charged £2 for a single room and £6 for board per month. Most bachelors here are obliged to put up at these establishments. The rent of one of the best houses in town, having only eight rooms, is £30 per month. The leading hotels charge 35s a week for boarders or £7 per month. The European Hotel advertises "tea, coffee, cocoa, cold meats, always procurable, breakfast 2s; tiffin, 2s 6d; dinner, 3s."

Now let me introduce you to the Clergy House, but first allow me to remark that very little provision will be made for sensuous stimulation in the way of encaustic tiles, rich carpets, deeply tinted dados, light and brilliant wall papers, delicate table covers, chintzes, curtains, cushions, banner screens, or anti-maccassars, although the income of four are clubbed together, and a rent of £72 per annum paid.

Remember what poor Richard says: "Vessels large may venture more, but little boats should keep near shore." Pat's description will apply to our abode "Shure an'av ye wor thar ye might sthan on the groun' an reach yer han' down the chimbly and open the door with it." And yet it was late the residence of a live magistrate and is one of the prettiest little cottages in Pretoria. The roof and verandah are neatly thatched, the walls in and out whitewashed and the picture of cleanliness; a clod wall in front is drooped with a hedge of lovely roses behind which are six graceful Egyptian willows, two gums, two cedar and 15 peach trees. A very large garden at the back not only possesses a wealth of weeds, breast high, but nearly 150 peach trees, three fig trees—the fruit now ripe in their thousands—and one castor oil plant. Under the friendly shade of willows the students may be seen reclining in hammocks, but enough, let us enter the house.

The Pretorian's latch key is the door handle and knuckles do duty everywhere for bells and knockers. The front and back doors open out in South Africa. The floors are of mud, the walls bare; of the six rooms, three ceilings are constructed of calico, the remainders of rafters and thatch. Four bedrooms, sitting-room and kitchen with oven should surely satisfy and as to the busy ants and lively fleas that infest the mud floor, remember "Tempori cedere habetur sapientis."

My own particular room measures 11 feet in length, 6 in width and 8 in height. At present, and for some months to come, our furniture consists of but two tables and three chairs. For a time towels did duty for a table cloth and window curtains. Beds are made on the floor, ablutions take place in the kitchen bucket, and still we are happy. Before we obtained a dusky Satellite, cooking and other pleasing details, which were found to include sweeping, cleaning boots, and that kitchen pastime, known as "washing up," were performed with greater or lesser success, especially the latter, by those of the Theological persuasion. To me fell the honour, and shall I say pleasure? of acting Commissary for the first week, and it would have been no uncommon thing to have heard me quoting from the classics: "Boiled rice—soak in cold water for a few hours, half a pound in three quarters of water, boil gently for twenty minutes or half an hour," adding something on my own account, such as: "Well, I suppose I must go to the river and fetch a pail of water, pumps and wells are unknown in Utopia, how am I to guess half a pound, and what shall it be soaked in?" Reflections of such a portentous nature suggested the having of a few kitchen utensils.

So putting on my bonnet, I went a-shopping and if you want to know Pretoria prices, take my patterns and shawl and come with me to the stores, which for charges, general appearance and coolness of officials differ "just a few," from the Civil Service Establishment in the Haymarket. As a favour, I am permitted by sweldom the other side of the counter to make a few deals, and, for future guidance, obtain the prices of divers articles.

Small basins, plates, cups, saucers, tea spoons, 1s.3d each.

Knives and forks, 2s.6d a pair

Meat dishes, 2s.

Tea kettle and tea pot, 7s.6d each

Saucepan, 16s., frying pan, 5s.6d

Hammer, 4s.6d

Chopper, 5s.

Spade, 10s.6d

Rake, brush, and dustpan, 2s.6d each

Washing bowl, 5s.6d

Bread trencher, 10s. 6d

Scales and weights, ½ oz. to 4 lbs. 27s.6d

Washing bowl, 5s.6d

Garden watering can, 10s.6d

Door mat, 5s.

Scraper, 12s.

Cocoanut matting, 4 feet, 6 inches wide, 4s.6d per yard

Tin candle stick, 2s.6d

And a tray, 4s.

Now for a few groceries for a happy thought has struck me that we can't get on very well without them. Prices per lb as follows: Rice, 2s.; sugar, 1s.; tea, 4s.; coffee, 2s.; butter, 2s.6d; mustard, 3s.; sperm candles, 1s.9d; pepper, 4s.; bacon, 1s.9d; hearth stones, 1s.6d—not a penny a brick, dear reader. Coppers are unknown here and no one sings "Please give me a penny Sir for bread." That reminds me I must order bread, and pay 1s. for a 2 lb. loaf.

The butcher is the most sensible of the lot. I pay him 6d for milk per bottle, I'm not really joking, nay, I seriously expect to get Glenfields starch, a baby's shoe, and an elephant's trunk from the music seller when I ask for them—and the vegetables the butcher will let me have for 3d a pound. Cabbages, 4d and 6d each; potatoes 4s.6d a bucket; wood, 2s.6d per cwt; mutton, 7d and 8d; beef, 6d and 7d; spice meat, 1s.6d; and beef sausages 9d per pound, and I'm told to whistle for any other variety of meat.

So when you dine with us you may be certain of having beef or mutton. As years roll on it will still be beef or mutton—your readers are asked to shed a tear when partaking of omelettes, plaice, soles, sprats, mackerel, baked hams, mulligatawny, turtles, macaroni, pigs fry, jugged hare, venison, tripe, or veal cutlets, for those doomed to develop under beef and mutton.

I must go back now, I find, and order some cheese, 2s.6d; flour, 1s.; and tobacco, 1s. per pound. And while I think of it, a watch glass is wanted, the Horologiographer likes his little joke and charges 2s.6d for one and a cool half sovereign for a mainspring. I would buy some penny buns but the baker's humour consists in charging 6d apiece for them.

The photographer has a knack of charging 30s for a dozen carte de visites. The carpenter expects 1s.6d for a foot of wood, which in England would go for 1d or 2d; he kindly offered to floor my room for £7, "and dirt cheap too, Sir, considering that planks are 11s. each". Eggs are 1s.4d to 2s.1d a dozen; suckling pigs, 7s. to 14s. each; ducks, 2s.9d each; grapes 6d a pound; apples 25 for a shilling; and peaches 15 for 6d, in the market, which is held at 6 o'clock every morning.

"Why then," you ask, "confine yourself to beefsteaks and mutton chops, when ducks and suckling pigs can be bought?" It is all very well for you in England to criticise us, but given a saucepan and a frying pan, will you drop in and roast a duck or fowl for us? The best fire Pretoria can give shall be yours, and that will be a fire of wood made upon level bricks, for grates we do not affect. Can you imagine me preparing a duck for roasting when I inform you the results of my first attempt at cooking? In high spirits I commenced boiling mealie meal porridge. My first little error was putting the meal in cold water. I seemed next to be greatly concerned about getting it to be a right consistency, yes, "consistency" was the word I had heard housewives use. I believe this happy result was mine, but horror! I had not allowed for the evaporation and very soon the consistency was of such a nature that a palace might have been safely built upon it. Cold water is then frequently added, and, to make a long story short, the saucepan contained eventually sufficient porridge to feed a large charity school. One whose name shall be nameless on a day produced steaks of such a character that a sharp axe would have found permeation most difficult.

But the day of cooking disasters is past, cleverness ruled in the cuisine by the time a Kafir was engaged. Our first sable attendant rejoiced in the name of Pompey and after a month's service the youth left to pay a visit to his wives. Pompey was what the vulgar would term "a lively member". Not to mention all his idiosyncrasies, he was found to be partial to lying in our hammocks, and when turned out, made up "forty" every afternoon in his kitchen. Visiting friends he was very great at and it was nothing for him to be absent several half-days in the week without leave. Finally he brought himself under my special notice by abstracting five shillings from my pocket, and to get it back was impossibility.

Jack, our present boy, is very nice in himself but his visitors are too numerous, and stay too long to please us. No less than 14 of what he calls his "brudders" have taken up residence with him for the last five days. The fact will come home better to you if you fancy your housemaid entertaining 14 of her sisters in your kitchen, and think how much cold meat would be missing in such a case. We are told that this is "a way Kafirs have."

The pay of a Kafir servant is five shillings per week and his food is plain mealy meal. They stay, as a rule, just long enough to know how to lay the cloth for meals correctly and learn the names of a few of the kitchen utensils, then they leave for their kraals, turning up again to be re-employed for a month, perhaps, a year later.

Our house looks out on some of the prettiest scenery around Pretoria and privacy is guaranteed by the comparative absence of neighbours. The Harpies [Apies] River is within five minutes' walk, and here we daily deport ourselves, diving in about 12 feet of water. Thanks to the Dutch youths we meet there a wonderful degree of proficiency is being attained in turning somersaults, leaping over horizontal bars into the water, and other tricks, which makes the bath the jolliest event of the day.

Time is pretty well occupied by the inmates of the Clergy House, from 5.30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Studies occupy six hours, sleep seven and-a-half, church services two, in fact, and the moments for letter writing or visiting are so few, that an inroad is often made upon the sleeping allowance. We are beginning to get a little used to the strangeness of life here. Everything is so different to our antecedents.

Letter Two

Adaptability to any circumstance is a fine quality but during first lessons how difficult it is to forget the past! We keep the fox hidden under our cloak, but the teeth of the animal are none the less sharp, the battles are very quiet but they are for ever being fought. If we are not worried by organ grinders and the incessant claims of beggars, from the applicant for bread to the proposed subscription list, for the relief of the man whose pig—his sole support—has just died; if these troubles are left behind others fill up the gap.

Far from the equatorial deserts hot winds come, charged seemingly with the heat of all the tropics, making one long for some clammy dungeon far underground, within whose granite walls some respite could be found. Flies blunder and wheel about and seem the very genii of insanity. Dust storms occasionally visit us and a greater trial is being undergone in acclimatization. One is apt to bemoan the loss of opportunities of visiting the galleries of Dore, the Painters in water colours, Foreign Artists, a spin on the Thames, or a good position from whence to view the Oxford or Cambridge boat race.

We have our advantages, nevertheless. Our climate is the finest in the world. People only appear to die of old age, accident or drink. Here is freedom from pretence and expense, immunity from the inflexible

tyranny of social enactments. Here children have health, lands to inherit, horses to ride, and ample occupation for their hands, if not minds. We have a few advantages over Andover, for Pretoria is the seat of Government, the abode of the Governor, a town with two Bishops, and soon to have two Cathedrals, and a fine military band is represented by four members of Parliament. Houses are not of a dull uniformity in shape, roof and materials. We have not to climb twenty stairs before reaching our bedside and our public holidays are ten to your five. Like you, we have two weekly papers, lodges of Masons and Good Templars, a Church with frequent services, and equal you in civilization in so far as we have daily calls from the butcher, baker, milkman and greengrocer.

It is a great thing not to be crowded out. Old colonists prefer South Africa to England—one told me whilst on a visit to your land he so felt the want of elbow room and the harsh restrictions of English society that he shortened a proposed three month visit to one and only seemed to breathe freely when again on our Continent. The individual I refer to is not an artisan but a man of distinction out here.

Speaking of the future of South Africa, it may be instructive to read words from the wise and sober-minded Bartle Frere. Quite recently he said that we have a great future in store, "It is not easy to make a great fortune here in a few years as in Australia or America; but a bare subsistence is so easily got, and one so comfortable, that the less ambitious are soon content, and cease to work energetically. Hence the danger of a large proportion of the population falling into a state of easy going, lotus eating epicureanism. There are plenty of good public men equal to all the requirements of self government."

The early mornings and the evenings are very lovely here. Nature had done and does more for us in the way of pretty hills, blue skies and tinted clouds than for Andover. As for the evenings, I often think that the following lines aptly describe the coming on of a Pretorian night:

"The jeweled bosom of Mother night
Is bending around the earth,
Her child she lulls, to repose as soft
As the hours of Eden's birth.
And what is night but the wing of Him
Who the beams of the earth hath made,
A wing let down to enfold the earth,
In its silent starry shade.
Neither jar, nor glare, nor stunning din
In this place disturb the breast;
But the forest's primal stillness breathes
Its deep unbroken rest."

Is it not sad to think that this stillness is liable to be soon seriously disturbed? As your daily papers have too many irons in the fire to take very much notice of those so far away, I think that you will excuse me to say something about the present war which is being waged with the Zulus and the threatened invasion of Pretoria by the discontented Dutch Boers.

At the present time we are engaged in a struggle where men of a higher civilization, few in numbers, and swarms of human beings living in the lowest barbarism, are respective combatants. The war is not between the English and the Zulus but between the black and the white races. Add to this civil discord, if not open riot, in which if the Boers act a little of what they threaten, bloodshed and misery must ensue. On the shoulders of Sir Bartle Frere now rests the immense responsibility of steering that crank vessel, South Africa, from an ugly lee shore into less boisterous waters.

Soon after our arrival in Pretoria war broke out with the Zulu. The head quarters of the army are in the Transvaal, at a town called Utrecht. Lord Chelmsford is in command. On the 21st of January the greatest disaster that has ever happened to British arms in South Africa befell number three column. You will have heard the pith of the story long before this reaches Andover and yet I venture to give a slight sketch of it that you may the better understand the state of public feeling in Pretoria and the Transvaal. We penetrated 20 miles into the enemy's country and had to retire. We met the most powerful army in South Africa with the largest British army that has stood on African soil. It has not been ordered to fall back until further reinforcements arrive from Mauritius and other places, and the whole plan of the campaign has been altered, and all this through what is known as "The Isandhlwana Hill disaster". On the 22nd of January the Zulus enticed Lieut-General Chelmsford and the main body of the troops 20 miles out of camp. Very soon after, bodies of the enemy were reported to the left of the camp. At 6 a.m. a company was sent out to reconnoitre. At 9 a.m. an officer returned and reported that the Zulus were in immense force, driving the pickets and scouts before them. By this time Colonel Durnford, R.E., with 300 mounted natives and others, arrived from Rorke's Drift, making up the force in camp to 700 whites, and 600 blacks, viz. 335 of the 1-24th regiment, 90 of the 2-24th, 80 artillerymen, 30 carbineers, 35 mounted police, 35 mounted infantry, 20 Newcastle rifles, and Buffalo Border Guard. The soldiers of the road party were re-called, and mounted men, in three bodies, were sent out about ten o'clock, soon to re-appear on the crest of the hill, followed by the Zulus who swarmed over like bees. A company of the 1-24th advanced in support and immediately came into action. The Zulus threw out wings like horns, the main body leisurely advancing until they saw that the wings had completed the circle, then the end came. The enemy fell in hundreds but still came on in apparently undiminished numbers, rushing forward with assegais. For half-an-hour a dense struggling mass were making for the camp. The mounted men tried to escape to the river but those without horses died where they stood. Escape for the mounted men was almost totally impossible as the country was rugged, broken and covered with boulders and water washes, over which the Zulus could run faster than the horses. Many were drowned and many lost horses and arms in the river, even when they succeeded in crossing in person.

The Zulu General had an army of 24,000 men, and commanders under him who displayed great strategic and tactical ability. Five thousand were ordered to show themselves as much as possible and induce our troops to pursue, avoiding at the same time actual fighting. This was done to perfection. Fifteen thousand men moved forward in small parties during the night of the 21st, and on arriving at the left of the camp, they were ordered to lie down, fires and speaking to be strictly prohibited. Another body of 4,000 men were ordered to cut off all who might escape. In the attack on the camp there was no hurry or excitement on their part, only when they had surrounded it did they give way to their natural

impetuosity and charge with the assegai. Of the English 837 were killed, including 34 commissioned officers. The 1–24th regiment lost 403 men, and the 2–24th 174. The whole camp equipage, including 100 wagons, tents and guns were captured.

Bearing in mind the route taken by the Bishop of Pretoria's party, you will see from the state of Newcastle, Maritzburg and Durban how wonderfully providential it was that the drought did not longer delay our trekking. Had we been delayed but a short time longer, picture from the following description of those towns the danger and great expense the 20 of us would have incurred, and the fearful anxiety the Bishop must have been in for the safety of his wife, children and the nucleus of church workers for the Transvaal. Maritzburg is in a complete state of scare, with barricades and no end of preparations. On the Saturday and Sunday after the great disaster groups of excited citizens were at every corner. The city guard was rapidly augmented. The volunteers turned out for active service. On Sunday energetic preparations were made to resist the enemy should they have advanced. A Laager was marked out, wells were dug, weak places of the city were filled up with sand bags and packing cases full of earth, and strong loop-holed barriers were erected at salient points. Numbers of families came in from the outlying locations for refuge. Durban was completely unhinged, Newcastle almost deserted.

As Pretoria is the depot for valuable war material and supplies it is only natural to suppose that it will be chosen as the first place of attack in the Transvaal, especially as the enemy can easily gain entrance into it on account of the straggling nature of the buildings and the many unprotected approaches. The troops, some 150, are still in garrison, but may not remain long.

I was at the camp on the 15th February and saw the Laager they had just made for the women and children to take shelter in case of an attack. It is said that "Britannia needs no bulwarks, no towers along the steep," and yet she has spent during the last 18 years nearly seven-and-a-half millions of money in fortifications. What a comparison between Pretoria and Portsmouth! Those of the latter have cost three millions. Pretoria has just made a wall of boulders and shingle around her camp and made a moat outside, some five feet by six. Just outside the moat is a circle of broken glass, four feet wide, stuck edgewise in mortar.

Will you credit it that at a time when the defenders of their country were engaged in deadly conflict with a foe who has been the common enemy of all the whites in the land, and of the Boers in particular for the last 40 years, the Boers gather together for the avowed purpose of weakening and destroying the Government which has been the means of establishing an era of prosperity for them and their children? A meeting of discontented Dutch Boers was held the other day not far away at a place called Doornfontein. It was reported that they decided to attack and sack Pretoria and hang some of the officials. The British army at Utrecht heard that the Boers had got into our town and pulled down the British flag. This is only one of the rumours that alarmists lose no opportunity in quickly spreading and which has kept the public excitement at its full. Never a day passes without some dreadful calamity being foretold and so our town is kept in excitement all day long. There has been cause for alarm, but none for unnecessary alarm.

I am one of two of the Bishop's party who have joined the volunteers. The Company now numbers nearly 100. We have been very active at the Butts lately and one night were told to hold ourselves in readiness for a midnight attack by the Boers. Each man was served with ten rounds of ammunition for defence while making for head quarters. A bugler from the Camp has since been stationed every night at our Drill Hall, and soldiers nightly patrol the hills which encircle the town. We have daily been expecting to be put on garrison duty. I have made careful enquiries of those who have the most dealing with the Boers, and as their opinion of the matter agrees with all I have read of Boer character, I place implicit confidence in their assertion, which is that although many Boers are very angry with the English for robbing them of the Transvaal, and have held and are holding public meetings to ventilate their grievances, they have not the pluck to attack us and may have sufficient wisdom to know that under no circumstances will England allow the annexation of the Transvaal to be undone; so our English friends need not worry about our safety. I for one eat and sleep under the present excitement in perfect serenity, feeling positive that no enemy, white or black, will ever disturb Pretoria.

Not long ago a number of Boers left Cape Colony and the Transvaal to an unknown country called "Demaraland". There was no undue pressure put on them. They had, like their neighbours, farms of four and six thousand acres in extent, their homesteads, wagons and cattle. They were undisturbed in the exercise of their religion. They lived under their own Republican form of Government. An almost insane desire to fly to the wilds, to be free from the slightest pressure in matters of Government, manners, or religion, possessed them, and regardless of all remonstrances they went into the wilderness. One hundred and twenty-four white men, women and tender children, have studded the inhospitable veld of the far interior with lonely graves, the cause of their deaths having been fever, famine, and the eating of poisonous wild fruit, while some were murdered by Bushmen. Here is a specimen of Boer stubbornness and the price paid for its gratification.

Finding that trekking farther into the interior means death, the Boers of the Transvaal have lately held several rebellious meetings and finally sent one of their leading men—Piet Joubert, the Apostle of Freedom—to Sir Bartle Frere. On the 4th February [1879] the interview took place. Sir Bartle reminded Joubert that twice had Her Majesty's Colonial Secretary—Earl Carnarvon—told the Dutch representatives that the annexation of the Transvaal could not be undone. Sir Bartle offered an independence as great as the Boers had enjoyed, self-government, and security for their possessions, a constitution in which anyone could rise to the highest position in the State, as their brethren are doing in the Cape Colony. "An hour ago," continued the High Commissioner, "messengers were intercepted on their way from the Zulu king to the Transvaal Boers bearing tidings of a great disaster to British troops, and pointing out that this was a famous opportunity for the Boers to rise against the British Government, and begging them in any case to sit still." The Dutch gave neither help nor sympathy in a war in which Cetwayo is acting champion of all native races against the white races, Dutch as well as English. Joubert replied that the Boers will be satisfied with no concessions and will have only their own and ask nothing from anyone else. He left to submit the result of the interview to another mass meeting of his brethren and this is how the matter stands at the time of my going to post. But again I maintain that the upshot of the whole affair will be a good grumble and things remaining as they have done since the annexation.

The towns of the Transvaal are in a very excited state about the Zulu victories. At Leydenburg the Government has armed every able-bodied man—about 60—and orders have been issued to those having horses to hold themselves in readiness to start out at a moment's notice. Troops in garrisons number 120. The Kafirs of Mapoch's tribe were said to be going to attack them on the 4th February. The signal for the town Guard to meet is a yellow flag hoisted on the Commissariat stores. Many people were coming in from out-districts. The diggers at the Gold Fields resorted to flight, and impies—bodies of Kafirs—were reported to be about in every direction.

The three forts which figured so conspicuously in the late Seccoeni Campaign are left with only 150 men to defend them, and that chief was not beaten when the siege was raised to enable the troops to join the forces engaged against the Zulus. Middelburg has a 100 troops, and is rapidly getting together a mounted corps. At Wakkerstroom a laager has been made and the town folk hope to give the Zulus more than they bargain for if an attack is made. In view of the present attitude of the Boers they have formed an "Anti-rebellion party," which, if trouble arises, will put pressure upon every man there to do his duty. Potchefstroom complains of symptoms of Boer restlessness, gun and powder buying, and cheek, and no produce coming in. This then is the present state of our Diocese. I was to accompany the Bishop on a visitation tour directly after Easter, but if we risk danger and go, are the people in the towns mentioned in a fit state to profit from such a visitation? Decidedly not, and so once more the work of the Bishop is checked, and it appears likely that for some time to come he will be confined to Pretoria. He has come out of long and serious delays through drought, only to have his hands tied and to do little more than the work of a parish priest.

Letter Three

Apropos of the Isandhlwana disaster, Lady Frere has addressed a letter of condolence to the wives of the 1–24th regiment. Subscription lists for the relief of the sufferers have been started by the leading Colonial towns. Pretoria yesterday forwarded £170. Maritzburg has raised £600.

It is believed by our South African Colonists that the native races are now preparing for a grand struggle, in which they hope to drive all the whites into the sea, so instead of Zulu war, or the excitement caused by it being local, the whole of South Africa is deeply concerned in it, and offers of assistance have freely been given from Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, the Diamond Fields and Natal. As a specimen of the deep anxiety evinced by all the whites, it will be sufficient to mention that on the 1st of February 200 Volunteers left Cape Town for the scene of action. Now Cape Town is a thousand miles from this little corner of the Transvaal, and yet enormous crowds watched the departure of the reinforcement. Intense enthusiasm prevailed, which reached its height when the Cape Prime Minister addressed those bound for the front.

Pretoria this week dispatches 50 mounted men who have obtained leave from their employers and a guarantee that in the event of their returning they will occupy their own positions in business. Captain Raaf's Volunteers, also bound for the front, were received in our square a few days ago. People turned out en masse to see it. There was nothing in the sight but nervous excitement impelled all to be there.

The uniforms of volunteers out here are very rough and consist simply of white helmets, yellow corduroys, any jacket or coat they like to wear, and cross-belts lined with cartridges. In our Kafir wars Volunteers are greatly preferred to the army; they are better horsemen, better shots, can rough it more

and possess greater intelligence than the scum of our great English towns of which the British Army chiefly consists.

The remainder of this letter must treat of matters Pretorian, although at present I am not in a position to conclude my account of the pretty little town.

A word of two about "Bishop's Cote," the residence of your late Vicar. Unlike the Roman Catholic Bishop's hut of two tiny rooms, the Cote is one of the best houses in the town, one of the prettiest, but not the most healthy as it lies on low ground. A spruit or water course runs in front of it and nearer a hedge of wild roses, four cedars and nine of the finest gumtrees in Pretoria. The house and verandah are thatched, the walls whitewashed, seven of the eight rooms are boarded and the walls papered. The rooms are lofty and two of them are of good size. The windows are old fashioned enough to possess twelve panes of glass each. In the large yard at the back is an oven, stable, coachhouse, and included in the stable building two rooms. Deduct from ten rooms, a sitting and drawing room, and a kitchen, and you will see how little bedroom accommodation there is for seventeen persons, large and small. A very large garden is well-stocked with apple, quince and peach trees and is fenced in with a monstrous hedge. A well and croquet ground are amongst the luxuries of the Cote.

The Bishop hopes soon to build kitchen offices, a study, an office for Diocesan business, and a lavatory. The sitting room is at present used for St. Etheldrida's College for girls, which opened on the 26th January. The scholastic hours are 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Subjects taught: English, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, French, music, drawing, calisthenics, and science. Terms, £20 per annum, payable in advance.

A high school has just been started in Pretoria by a Scotchman. Instruction is given in such subjects as are taught in the English public schools. Terms—day pupils, 25s. per month; boarders, £65 per annum.

Among the contemplated improvements of the town are a proposed corporation and a steam laundry. For the latter, ground, building and £250 is required. At present all clothes are washed by the natives at the river side, who demand soap, starch, blue, and prices three times higher than those charged in England, and after all one can only say that the clothes are clean; to say they are white would be to go very far off the mark.

The weights and measures of England have lately been made the standard ones of the Transvaal. All laws, proclamations, and government notices are made in the English and Dutch languages and in the Legislative Assembly members use either language, and in Courts of law the same is done at the option of the suitors to a cause.

The Transvaal has 57 post offices and agencies. The general work in Pretoria is worked by the Postmaster General and three clerks. Six mail carts arrive and six are dispatched weekly. The average number of letters, papers and parcels received in July, August and September last [1878] were—1,712 letters, 1,821 papers, and 105 packets by book post, weekly. The mail for England leaves every Tuesday, postage 1s. the ½ oz. The mail from England arrives every Friday, postage, 6d. per ½ oz.; within the province, 8d per ½ oz.; newspapers for England require two penny stamps.

Since my last dispatch Pretoria has been in a great state of scare. On Tuesday, 25th February, a report was brought into the town by five Dutchmen to the effect that an impi of 6,000 Zulus was encamped in the vicinity of Crocodile river, about 30 miles or five hours march from Pretoria, with the intention of attacking. A Field Cornet corroborated this statement, making a deposition that he had seen a Zulu Chief, with a guard of 200 men, who informed him that there was an impi of 6,000 Zulu nearby and they wanted the assistance of the Boers in fighting the English, that in case they refused they had nothing to fear if they sat still. This information was taken to Mr. H. Pretorius, who immediately sent a body of 40 mounted men to reconnoitre. Johannes, the Zulu Chief, gave out that he was a son of the Zulu King, and had come direct from him with warlike intentions. He had at his beck and call three impis. One was to attack Pretoria on the night of February 25th and the other two were to eat up two Kafir Chiefs, friendly to the English.

Johannes requisitioned horses, ordered the Dutch in laager—a fort, often constructed with wagons, sometimes a circle or barricade square—offered to supply the Boers with ammunition if they would fight and ordered them to mould bullets.

These depositions thus formally and solemnly given were acted upon by the Pretorian Authorities. The Vigilance Committee met at 4 o'clock. Preparations were made at the camp and jail for receiving all the women and children. The military were held in readiness, cavalry patrols of regulars and volunteers were sent to scout the country and the town volunteers were marshalled in battle array.

I had just left the church when evensong had been sung, when I was ordered to double home for my accoutrements. Bugle calls sounded from every corner of town, volunteers were bolting down every street towards the Head Quarters. At 5.30 p.m. 80 of us, two only absent, responded to the roll call and were at once marched off to the Dutch Church in the square, taking possession of the sacred edifice as our Head Quarters. Drawn up in line, Major Tyler, the acting commander of the Transvaal, addressed us, declaring that until further notice we were under martial law and hoped that if the enemy came we should give a good account of ourselves. The pickets were in that case to put up a retreating fire or hearing firing in any other direction at once to make for the Church. Our Captain and the Captain of the Pretoria Horse likewise addressed us. Parties were ordered out to the approaches of the town, consisting of sergeant, corporal, and six men, each provided with 30 loose rounds of ammunition. Pickets to be two hours on duty, and two hours off. The Major hoped, all being well, to barricade the square and loophole the houses next day, and then the 1,200 white population could take refuge in it.

Fatigue parties soon cleared a space in the church, brought 15,000 cartridges, a quantity of rifles, coffee, meat, bread, onions, brandy and tables in. At the harmonium and the clerk's desk sat our non-commissioned officers, arranging for guards, sentries and picket. The evening was a most unpropitious one for the inauguration of an impromptu home defence. It rained in a most wholesome way, putting cats and dogs quite out of fashion, the mud being in keeping with the moisture; the heavens were India-ink and the horizons hidden in fog. In the midst of this weather, men on horseback raced hither and thither; armed men trudged through mire and wet to their rendezvous, and those who stayed at home loaded their revolvers—one stay-at-home thus used mine—barricaded their windows with drawing room tables and prepared to make a night of it. It was whispered that some even made their wills.

Those at "Bishop's Cote" packed up all valuables, and made bundles of necessities for living up in the camp, and lying on their beds fully dressed were ready at a moment's notice to fly to the laager. The Bishop and Thurgood with rifles, and some 200 rounds of ammunition, sat up all night in the verandah

on watch. That man is a fool who does not imagine that the Zulus could come upon us quickly. One hundred miles a day they can march easily, having no Commissariat to look after, merely picking up cattle en route; potted meats, paper collars, shirts and hats don't hinder the Zulu when on the war path. At the club men drank and gambled, hundreds of pounds sterling changed hands at "Loo" and sorrow was drowned in "Pool," the members thinking that no black could enter unless introduced in accordance with club rules!

The volunteers did their duty on that drear, dark, sloppy night, all unprepared, no proper uniform, no proper boots, many with light thin coats and shoes. Still no murmur escaped their lips and their regular splash through the mud, in some places knee deep, might have been heard all night.

"Number one Picket, fall in; for inspection port arms, shoulder arms, right turn, quick march," and off we go, your humble servant being one of the first six. Past the "Bishop's Cote" and other houses, where lights are dodging about from room to room, and outside the town, this side of the hills and river, we take up our station, but not before comrades have incessantly capsized over boulders and ant heaps and slipped into spruets and holes, sending their rifles sprawling on the ground, all this in the midst of heavy rain. From 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. we strained our eyes in every direction but impi came not, and luckily for us they did not for Pretoria is considered the most difficult of Colonial towns to defend on account of its stragging nature.

Six thousand cunning Zulus on this foggy night crawl within a short distance of the town, and rush upon it from all parts, and then what side would the Kafirs, who labour in it, have taken? Even they outnumber our white population. In a well constructed laager we should have successfully resisted 20,000 natives, by 500 whites under arms. As an instance in support of this statement let me mention what happened at Rorke's Drift the other day. The Zulus there learnt that a few British troops, not taken unawares, can, behind a breastwork of mealie bags, keep back and drive off 40 times their number of Zulus, elated with recent victory and infuriated with resistance. The Zulu retreated because, as a wit remarks, they unexpectedly got the sack!

At midnight No.1 Picket was again in the Church. During our absence the townspeople, to the number of 300, had crowded the building, and in response to a chorus of cries, the secretary to the government addressed the excited multitude, telling them that he had reason for believing that the report of 6,000 Zulus being near, was unfounded; however, as such an attack in these perilous times was very possible, all should be on the alert. Townsmen not in the volunteer corps then offered to defend the town and the little force of 80 was immediately raised to 400, rifles, belts, and ammunition being at once supplied to our fellow citizens. Hardly had the latter been formed into line before one accidentally let a bullet off. It went through the roof and dropped just in front of the Bishop who was guarding his "Cote" from the verandah.

The people dispersed but few to sleep, lights could be seen burning all night and frequently pickets were asked by the timid whose houses they were passing, the latest news.

My next outing was from 1 a.m. to 3 a.m. It was on returning from this watch that I could see the effects of night work on many of my companions. Some of them pursue their avocations to a late hour every night. For instance, Colonial banks work with short staffs of clerks, and although they are only open to the public from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily, and 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesdays, yet the employees not only handle the quill almost nightly till 1 a.m., but some have actually to work the whole of Sundays.

The church presented a peculiar scene. Bench after bench bore its overcome burden, each weary and wet one had picked out the broadest pew. On the empty cartridge boxes lay an old soldier, dreaming probably of fights once taken part in with Maories. Tables were crowded with crocks and debris of meals, men were discussing coffee, were imbibing brandy, everyone awake was, of course, smoking, all hats were kept on, snatches of songs were sung and whistling and anecdotes indulged in by the groups. Far more than half of the men of Pretoria have been under fire, some in the three great Kafir wars that have taken place during the last 30 years, others in New Zealand, in campaigns with the Maories, and others in the American civil war. It is no idle wish of theirs that to-night they may play at "potting Kafirs," and dip their bayonets in the blood of natives. During one of the Sekukuni wars the men of Pretoria were under arms nightly, for nearly three months.

"Number three relief!" Up they come, dragging wet boots and clothes, mouths full with the last bite, coat sleeves crossing the mouth to remove and clear up the remaining moisture of coffee and night air from their lips, and off they go again for two hours muddy plunge, only to rest awhile in their long wet-grassy watching ground. At day-break the church was swept, all stores returned to the Government Ordinance and after a complementary speech from the Captain, we were dismissed at six o' clock with orders to rally round the standard any time on hearing the signal for assembly, viz: three gun fires from the camp and bugle calls.

The same day the Zulu chief, Johannes, was captured and tried, and in defence he said he had been drunk, and the magistrate added "mad." Notwithstanding that the whole affair was a scare we have been under martial law the whole week; for five evenings guards have been mounted for the night and the remainder have been under long drills. Friday night it fell to my turn to guard, with 11 others, the Government Ordinance stores, and a jolly time we had of it. From 7.30 p.m. to 6 a.m. the next morning occurred the happiest time I have yet spent in Pretoria.

Letter Four

We are still in a state of excitement, and I think with reason too, for we have every reason to believe that tribes everywhere are breaking out in rebellion against whites. It is supposed to be part of a well-arranged plot to drive the whites into the sea. The Basutos of Basutoland are reported to have sent 17,000 mounted men to help the Zulus. For a moment consider the English forces arrayed against 40,000 Zulus and 17,000 Basutos. At the commencement of the war our army was divided into four columns, under Colonel Wood, Colonel Glynn, Colonel Pearson and Major Graves. Wood went to Luneberg, twenty miles in the Zulu country, with the 80th, 90th, 1-13th, regiments, Swanzie regiments, Kaffrarian riflemen and Cape Frontier Light Horse. Colonel Glynn was at Helpmekaar, near Rorke's drift, with the 1st Battalion of the 24th, part of the Butts, a battery of Artillery, Natal Carbineers, Buffalo Border Guard, Newcastle Mounted Rifles, 250 Natal mounted Police, and two regiments of the native contingent, 2,000 in number, giving a total of 3,000 men. Colonel Pearson's column was at Greytown, between the first two, having part of the 2-24th regiment, the Buffs, two batteries of Artillery, Durban mounted rifles, Alexandra mounted rifles, Natal Hussars and two regiments of native levies, in all 3,500 men. Major Graves' column was at the coast with head quarters at Stanger and consisted of the Naval brigade, part of the Buffs, two batteries of Artillery, part of the 2nd Battalion 2-24th, Stanger mounted Rifles, Victoria mounted Rifles, and two regiments of native levies, making over 3,000 men. Our army then consisted of about 15,000 men. But of that number two regiments were Swanzies, said to be a splendid body of men, and deadly antagonistic to the Zulu; and 10,000 native levies lately raised and

commanded by 20 Captains, 40 Lieutenants, and 120 non-commissioned white officers, carefully chosen in the Cape Colony. Deduct the coloured allies and we had hardly 5,000 fighting men to meet an enemy of 40,000.

Twenty per cent of these native allies are armed with guns. Considerable uneasiness is felt by Colonists about this contingent, for they have not forgotten that in one of the previous wars a party of similar levies deliberately killed their officers and then went off in haste to join the enemy. A recent experience in the Afghan war is thought of. The Pathans in one of the native regiments acted treacherously by firing signals to warn their Afghan brethren of the approach of the enemy.

The Naval brigade with Major Graves number 230 men and have with them three Gatling guns. Each gun has ten distinct barrels and can pour forth a rain of shot at the rate of 230 rounds in seven seconds, at a range of 1,800 yards.

At the time of writing our army remains as I have just stated, save only that they have moved to better positions, near at hand, and have been strengthening them. No pitched battle has taken place since the great disaster, mentioned in my last, but skirmishing, with small results, takes place from time to time.

On the 24th February 300 troops and 700 seamen from St Helena arrived at Cape Town, bound for the Zulu frontier, and the 80th regiment have by this time also gone to the front. All the Natal Volunteers are out on active service and the Colony has been divided into seven defensive districts.

This week a meeting was held to see what steps could be taken to construct a railway from Lorenzo Marquez, Delagoa Bay, to Pretoria. The projected line is to pass through the Lydenburg Gold Fields. The ex-president, Mr. Burgers, made most enthusiastic endeavours to promote its construction. As I am uncertain if in previous letters I have mentioned what has been done in the matter, I will briefly summarize past efforts here. The Portuguese government agreed to meet one-half of the cost through its territory, which reaches to the foot of the Lebombo Mountains, a distance of 30 miles. The second section, from the Portuguese territory to the point in the Gold Fields at which the present terminus is to be fixed, is about 100 miles. Burgers tried to raise a loan of £300,000 in Europe. It was divided into debentures of £83 6s.8d. each. In December of every year a portion of the loan was to be placed at redemption by lottery at par. The rate of subscription was 88 per cent, and the interest per debenture £2 1s. 8d. half-yearly. A railway tax of 30s. per annum for every farmer and Burgher was levied and is being paid at the present time. Trollope says that Burgers raised but £90,958 of the proposed loan and expended it on railway materials now lying in Delagoa Bay. Upon his authority I state that Pretoria is 300 miles distant from Lorenzo Marques. It has been estimated that the line will cost six to seven thousand pounds sterling per mile. If that be the case £1,800,000 must be forthcoming. Rumours say that the Portuguese Government have voted £230,000 for that part of the line which will run through their settlement.

This subject is one very near to the heart of Pretorians and the writer. It means that if we are not to have a railway, famine will again visit the Town, or at the best butter and all other things in proportion will go up from 1s.6d per pound to 5s., as it did during the last drought, and then how can our mission work be pushed forward? Or, to look at the matter in a personal light, will my stipend in that case keep the wolf from the Clergy house door?

The past season has shown us to what distress the present system of transit reduces us and as it is one fears to contemplate the straits to which we shall be put during the next six months. The carrying season proper is passing away and stocks in town are far from heavy.

Sir Bartle Frere, the High Commissioner of South Africa, is about to pay a visit to Pretoria, and it was the unanimous wish of the meeting referred to, to point out to him our present position, and to get him to push the matter with the home Government. Another rumour says that England intends buying Delegoa Bay. If that comes true, many of the difficulties in connection with the starting of a railway will have disappeared.

The intelligent, who interest themselves in African explorations, will be glad to hear that Major Pinto, the well known traveller and Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, arrived in Pretoria on Feb 12th. He was commissioned by the Portuguese Government to survey the watershed of the Upper Zambesi and the river system of the country, lying between the 10 degrees and 12 degrees of South latitude. Stanley met him at the mouth of the river Congo. Pinto left St. Paul de Loanda on October 25th, 1877 on his eventful journey inland, accompanied by 400 pagasis or porters, he himself being the only white man of the party. He took a circuitous route to Bilbe, on the borders of the Portuguese possession of Lower Guinea, and occupied himself by exploring the river system of the Zambesi and Congo. At one spot he could drink the waters of four rivers, running in four different directions; and here he claims to have discovered the principal affluence of the Congo. From the Zambesi he passed down the left bank of the river to the Victoria Falls and there through the Matabele country to Pretoria.

He has made a number of valuable sketches and maps of the interesting legion transversed by him, and more valuable meteorological observations, and observations of longitudes.

Some portions of the region have hitherto been terra incognita. Out of the 400 followers who left the western sea coast, only eight have arrived in Pretoria. Sickness, desertion and fighting account for the absence of the others. Many of the native tribes were exceedingly hostile and in some parts the party had to fight its way through in the same way that Stanley did. I need hardly add that the Major has often suffered very severely from fever and had to be carried on the backs of his followers for days together. For two months in a region lying in 12 degrees south latitude, the party had to wade breast high in water. One of the strangest events in his journey was his falling across an Englishman, Dr. Bradshaw, who, without companions or followers and ill-equipped with any of the proper necessaries for travel, was wandering about in the interior, making Zoological collections.

And now I propose I run through the streets of Pretoria, if you will come with me. Never mind your dress, anything goes out here, where people are taken for what they are worth and the flag of freedom flies sun up to sun down.

Ten streets run from East to West and eight from North to South. They are broad and well laid-out, with a magnificent square in the centre. Down all the streets rivulets flow, adding much to the fertility of the gardens and to the feeling of salubrity. Live for days a mile from your water supply and you will know how to appreciate a rivulet just at your doorstep. It is still a city struggling into birth, only two houses have as yet achieved the honours of a second storey. But the buildings are prettily varied, stuccoe,

whitewash, red bricks, roofs of tiles, thatch and zinc, verandahs open and enclosed, the trellis of the latter often by the aid of creepers, look “dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease” as Goldsmith puts it. Most of the houses resemble Swiss cottages but some, with their gables and turrets, are made to imitate castles and here and there a bow window takes the breath out of one.

Our hedges are not of beech, privet, quick, holly, yew, or pyrus japonica, but all roses, gorgeous in the sunlight shining, hedges 12 feet high and 6 to 12 feet through the base. It was reckoned that on one hedge alone there was the other day at least 100,000 blossoms. Add to this weeping willows from Egypt or St. Helena drooping in that exquisite way none other tree can imitate and then, throwing in the rivulets, picturesque spans of oxen, and groups of coloured races from all parts of the world, tell me if you do not think Pretoria pretty and unconventional.

But I have that to describe which will make you dub me inconsistent. Pretoria looks very pretty, in spite of its gardens seldom cultivated, its heaps of rotten bricks, piles of wood, casks, ash heaps, brandy bottles, sardine boxes, paper collars, rags, old boots, tins in which good things have been conveyed, straw receptacles in which wine has been conveyed, all of which meet the eye constantly, for town scavengers are as yet unknown here.

The doors of all houses open at once into the living room, front doors and halls, and in many cases boarded floors and papered walls are all unknown, but you can't erase from the mind's eye those beautiful roses and willows, or for a moment forget that you are far away from all social restraints, so you stamp the ground with enthusiasm and cry “Pretoria is pretty, the Transvaal is the land of the free.”

In the streets a strange and varied mixture of races is to be seen. Stolid Dutch settlers, energetic Englishmen, persevering Germans, speculating Hollanders, enterprising Americans, crafty Jews, clever Malay artisans, fierce-looking Zulus, stalwart Kafirs, dull submissive Negroes, wild wanderers from

“The wilderness vast

Where the white man's foot hath never passed,

And the quivered Koranna or Bechuan

Hath rarely crossed with his roving clan.”

Adventurous Mentatees from the Basutoland Border, profoundly ugly and painfully dirty Hottentots, quiet Basutos, stunted cunning-looking Bushmen, swaggering half-castes from the palest whitey-brown to the very brownest of all browns—all these are to be found jostling together side by side.

You perceive that we have many coloured immigrants who have found their way here from time to time, like the Malay from Java and the Malay Peninsula, who were brought over originally by the Colonists as slaves. In the days when the Cape Colony was a Dutch possession, others like the negroes of the eastern and western coasts, who, having been captured by the British from the slave dhows in which they were being conveyed across the ocean to America, had been set free and apprenticed out to the principal farmers and other settlers in various parts of the country. The greater number of Malays are handicraftmen, some being noted as skilled artisans, and these compete very evenly with the European tradesmen and mechanics. By religion they are Mohammedans and so we add a little of the Church's

Litany every time it is used, viz: "That it may please Thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred, and are deceived, especially the Mohammedans of this land." Ever since the first settlement they have been gradually increasing in numbers and at Cape Town alone they number over 5,000 and possess three or four places of worship. They are an orderly and peace-loving community and appear to be loyal subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty.

The Hottentots are one of the lowest and most degraded races of mankind. Ethnologists certainly not unduly described them when they used these terms. They have but slightly improved since the time when the old Dutch settlers of the seventeenth century gave them the odd, and by no means euphonious name, by which they have ever since been known, and which was suggested, old writers tell us, by the perpetual recurring clicks and "hots" and "tots" of their rude and uncouth language. They have become more acquainted with the vices than the blessings of civilization, their position, physical, mental and moral, have been placed exceedingly low in the scale of nations. Unprepossessing in person, the reverse of cleanly in habits, stunted in intellect, and having but the dimmest moral perceptions—these are undoubtedly their general characteristics.

It happens from time to time that numbers of the natives from the interior migrate south. They are induced to do so partly from motives of curiosity and partly in order to obtain work. At their remote villages and kraals—kraals, a small native village, so named by the Dutch settlers, from the huts being arranged like a coral, or string of beads—they hear from time to time of the wondrous towns and cities which the white man has founded. Traders and travellers tell them of the power and the skill of the European races, and those of their countrymen who have been adventurous enough to make the journey south have, on their return home, related all the marvelous things they have seen and the still more amazing things of which they have heard. Impelled by curiosity, and excited by the hope of earning wages, they sally forth occasionally in great numbers, and proceed southwards, to the El Dorado of their wishes. Their great ambition is to see, to them, the wonderful and mighty cities of the white man, and to return at length to their own country, the happy possessors of the much coveted guns, and driving before them their new heads of cattle in which their savings have been invested. Many of them never return at all, but marry and settle down in the Southern Provinces.

I have elsewhere spoken at length of Pretoria's freedom, found in the white population, and this and the mixture of other races is, I think, to be accounted for in two ways. Pretoria is the capital of England's latest acquisitions, and is the northern-most town of importance in South Africa.

Letter Five

Cliqueism among the coloured races here is very amusing, and yet sad. The variety is as you have seen, a conflicting one. Petty jealousies appear on the surface at every town, and although there is no organized, elaborated, system of caste in existence, as in India, social distinctions between race and race, and even between the various shades and degrees of race, are most carefully drawn and obstinately adhered to. His shade of colour usually determines a man's immediate circle of acquaintances, and this is especially the case with half-castes. It would be considered e.g. decidedly infra dig for a pale-faced half-caste to include among his own personal friends and associates a brother half-caste of a very pronounced type.

The Kafirs of Pretoria dress better than any I have yet seen, indeed, some of the women for style, quality, and fit, dress equally as well as the English ladies who promenaded in the London Botanical

Gardens, on a select Fete day. Perhaps you laugh at me for making such a statement, I know my Natal friends will when they read it, but I have asked my associates here to gauge the testimony of my eyes by using their own, and the result has been that we agree unanimous in my opinion that not only are many dressed better than the Dutch and English here, the English of our villages and small towns in England, but they equal the promenaders of our favourite places of resort—our Brightons and Scarboroughs—in the mother land for taste, neatness and shape. I have seen in front of me a pretty figure, say a lady with a slender waist, easy deportment, attired in what appears to be a costly silk dress, lace mantle, “a duck of a bonnie”—as mademoiselles are fond of dubbing their skull thatchers—accompanied by a girl wheeling a four-wheeled perambulator, containing a little darling in the sweetest thing in hoods and long dresses, trimmed with embroidery—and lo! on passing the cortege, all three of the individuals were Kafirs.

At the same time many Kafirs are as naked as the law will allow but I speak of the majority when I say they are the best dressed Kafirs I have seen in South Africa. I am in a pitiable fix, much should I like to tell your lady readers more on the subject of the dresses of the ladies of colour, but time only may reveal. Now I have to ask, where do the artistic couturieres live who so cleverly show off the darkies’ figures to such advantages, arranging the back of the dresses in pouffs etages or rounded revers, or scarves forming baldaguins? Who makes the corsage of velvet brocade, the added train of velvet cut in deep scallops over a plisse of satin? How much do these elegantes, these grande dames, pay for long painted bodices and puffings of gauze? Do they ever requisition the principal modistes for toilettes de bal? Time, I say, may answer these momentous questions.

As we are still in the streets of Pretoria, let us further use our eyes. The vehicles chiefly used are trek wagons, Cape carts, and American Spiders. The cumbrous wagons are used for the delivery of wood and other heavy and large articles and the Cape carts, clumsy but strong affairs, drawn by two horses, are the “Jog-carts” of the Town. Considering that the elegant and feather-like spiders cost £120 each and the pairs of chestnuts and grey £200, they are only affected by the wealthy.

Wednesdays are half-holidays, when the Military band, 50 strong, plays in the Square. Spiders and Cape carts then dash about to perfection, horsemen in their fifties caper for public approbation, and everyone appears in their “Sunday-go-to meetings.” The rest of the whites throng the verandahs, which line each side of the square, the ladies seated in lounging chairs, holding levee. The band stand is encircled by turbaned Coolies and wooly-headed Kafirs, who, judging from their open mouths, are not at all “fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils.”

Programmes of the music to be played appear in the local papers the same day and are posted about the square for the benefit of the la musicale. They generally include the works of Balfe, Rossini, Verdi, Hertel, Philippe, Offenbache and other well-known composers. An overture will make many look wonderfully knowing, who have made a knack of concealing their ignorance; a gallop, valse, or quadrille set many little feet patting the ground, and a popular selection, sometimes of the Genevieve de Brabant style, is quite enough to rouse up the whistling powers of the youngsters.

I shall be no historian if I do not mention the smoking proclivities of the Pretorians. It is not enough to state that everyone smokes, from the boy of ten or twelve to the man of eighty, the Artizan to the Clergyman, or member of the executive government; and all in the streets and in their houses of

business. The storekeeper, leaning over his counter to lay out his wares to lady purchasers, does so between clouds of smoke; the Postmaster-General never parts with his briar when handing out your letters—all letters must be applied for, postmen are unknown here—the general manager of a bank receives you in his “sweating room”—so dreaded by many—and talks about that “little bill,” while his meerschaum is in full play. Members of Parliament, the elite of elite, parade streets, or lounge in their verandahs, pipe or cigar in mouth, and even the Wesleyan minister trots from house to house doing a whiff of “ye weed nicotine”.

Verily this is a land of freedom, from the restrictions of social enactments. I have nothing to say against smoking—the worse that can be said of it is that the habit is a dirty one—but when I speak of another Pretorian habit—drunkenness—I grow sad. All too often do I see the reel of those who have been “making a night of it,” aye, and morning and afternoon of it. Often and often every day do you see the drunkard with eyes dim and glassy, tongue hot and furred, and uncomfortably large for the parched mouth, hands tremulous, head transformed into a box full of buzzing noises, but they say they have but made “an injudicious admixture of alcoholic and melt liquors.” Hundreds of men with queer past histories, and hundreds whose lives before were “an open book,” sink into hapless ruin in our Colonial Towns through drink. God knows the curse is deep enough in England, but here it is ten thousand times deeper. It is the clergyman speaking: “I have received countless letters from anxious parents in England, asking what is the cause of their son’s silence—gone to the dogs through drink, or died whilst drunk, is all I can reply.” It is the church congregation speaking: “We dismissed our first two clergymen for often trying to preach whilst drunk,” and they tell me of many parishes which have a like sad experience. It is the war correspondent at Utrecht speaking: “Drink is scarce here now, and it is to be hoped it will long continue so. When here it is sold at fabulous prices, and men are always being flogged for drunkenness,” and again on the 15th December, the same voice is heard, “Drunkenness is very prevalent here at present, men are being tried by Court Martial and flogged every day.” Oh, if these wretched slaves could see that drink unmans the man, gives him the throat of a fish, the belly of a swine, the head of an ass; that it is the shame of nature, the extinguisher of reason, the shipwreck of chastity, the murderer of conscience, is hurtful to the body, turns it into a hospital, kills more than cannon, makes its subjects reckless, miserable—for the re-action is more than equivalent in misery to the pleasures which preceded it—repulsive, blasphemous, inveighs promising youth, makes renegades from the Church, makes rogues, beggars, gamblers, causes murders and degradation in a thousand forms.

Soon I hope to write of what is being done to counteract this prevalent evil in Pretoria. I have issued the usual lists of questions to the Good Templars, Jail and Hospital Authorities, Officers of the Army, and Ministers of all denominations, and whilst they will treat of this subject, they also kindly consent to furnish other particulars that may reveal much interesting information. The Masonic Lodges have already answered my queries, and from them I find the Transvaal has four such lodges, two in Pretoria, one in Potchefstroom, and one in Rustenburg. “The Transvaal, no 1747, of Pretoria” is under the constitution of the grand lodge of England, the other three belong to the constitution of the Netherlands. “The Transvaal”—of which I hope soon to be a member—numbers 50 members and was founded in June 1878. They have a capital lodge nearly built, the Hall will then be the largest in the town. Initiation fees are £12, joining members from other lodges £1, quarterly subscriptions, 13s., of which 2s.6d. is devoted to the “Poor Fund,” meetings monthly, and a Ball or Grand Banquet once a year. The other Pretoria Lodge, “The Aurora,” has thirty members, but as their building was lately blown down they are now literally “under a cloud.”

On the 3rd of March, His Excellency, Col. Lanyon, C.B., C.M.G., arrived in Pretoria, to assume the administratorship of the Transvaal during the absence of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, who is about to visit England to confer with Sir M.H. Beech on state affairs. Colonel Lanyon was late Governor of Griqualand West and is well-known for his energy and bravery. Both qualities he will need to govern the Transvaal for on our northern border we are waging war with Sekukuni and throughout our territory the natives are restless and suspicious, a certain proportion of the Boers are as treasonable as they dare to be, we have a mixed population from all quarters of the globe, with many divided interests, a treasury which requires replenishing, and, in general, the country requires alteration, improvement and development. A guard of honour, consisting of the 80th regiment, with band and Queen's colour, and the Volunteers, were drawn up at Government House, the citizens on horseback while we demonstrated our joy by giving the general salute. An official luncheon followed and the next day the swearing in took place, accompanied by a salute of guns from the Fort, musical honours from the band, waving of handkerchiefs by the fair sex in the Court House, and huzzas from the multitude outside. Subsequently His Excellency held a levee.

Letter Six

I cannot better commence this paper than by giving a quotation from a very excellent Lecture on Pretoria given by Dr. Lyle, the Superintendent-General of Education for the Transvaal. Coming from such a reliable source it cannot fail to interest readers.

"The traveler approaching Pretoria for the first time, after a weary and monotonous journey across the treeless plains, which intervene between this town and the frontiers of Natal, cannot but be struck with the beauty of the situation. It is perhaps a bright summer morning, the air is temperate, and a cloudless sky stretches from horizon to horizon. His road had for some time followed the windings of a shallow pass between low rocky mountains, but all at once it opens, and he sees before him the little town spread out on the lower part of a ridge on which he stands, which slope gently downwards to the foot of another low mountain range, topping which he sees a loftier range, the Magaliesberg proper. Yes, he is looking into an upland valley, and there nestles Pretoria, the houses gleaming in the sunshine, and overshadowed by weeping willows, clothed in foliage of the tenderest green, or by the exotic eucalyptus, with its mast-like stem and sombre-tinted leaves. He enters the town, and finds it but skeleton of a place, well laid out, the streets straight and sufficiently broad, and each with a stream of water running along its sides, now coursing over a pebbly bottom like a mountain brook, and anon flowing gently along a level way beneath hedges of roses in bloom, one blaze of colour. He looks into the gardens, and finds them stocked with all the choicest fruit trees of Southern Europe; the orange, the lemon, the fig, the peach, the apricot, the quince, the pomegranate. Here he sees a vineyard, and there is a melon patch, and perhaps, flaunting its broad fronds from out some sheltered thicket, a banana, as if to mark the vicinity of the tropic.

Whilst there is much which is peculiar in the physical and geological situation of Pretoria, its climate also presents features worthy of consideration. That it is on the whole a very pleasant climate we all know, and taken by itself, conducive to health, a climate which is by no means markedly enervating, and in which the European can labour without undue exhaustion, and yet it is very near to the southern tropic; but it possess a corrective in its elevation, which is equal to the loftiest mountain summit of Great Britain, being 4,000 feet. Here we have the true tropical tye in the division of the year, into the wet season and the dry, the former, with its thunder storms and sudden downpours of rain, the latter with its dry air and cloudless skies, month after month, both, however, modified by elevation, so much so, that in the dry season the day is more than warm, it is hot, whilst the sun is above the horizon, but piercingly cold as soon as he has sunk below it; and this is true, also, speaking generally of the climate in the wet season, the days are hot whilst it is day, but the nights are cool. It is true we are subject here to great

and sudden variations of temperature, sometime as much as five degrees in one day, but I do not think this is to any marked extent a cause of disease.

Pretoria is well-watered. There is an abundant and perennial supply of excellent water, taken from the Adpies River, which, short as its course is, affords a strong and full supply. The supply is ample, and the quantity exceptionally good, for the river is not, as many are, the collection of the waters of numerous surface drains, but the outflow of some great spring or springs, fed by a subterranean reservoir."

Dr. Lyle goes on to point out that through carelessness, Pretoria stands a chance of becoming an unhealthy swamp, but proposes to our coming Municipality several measures by which the town may be what Nature intended it: fertile, picturesque, well-watered and in every way salubrious.

I have already written about the general position, boundaries, area, divisions, rivers, mountains, agriculture, minerals, climate and population of the Transvaal, but of the Government, Finance, and administration of Justice, if I remember rightly, said nothing. On this occasion I shall draw upon the "Transvaal Book Almanack for 1879," edited by Mr. Fred. Jeppe, of the Civil Service, the most reliable authority on Transvaal matters.

In the Annexation Proclamation, it is stated that the Transvaal would remain a separate Government with its own laws and legislature, and that it was the wish of Her Majesty that it should enjoy the fullest legislative privileges compatible with the circumstances of the "country, and intelligence of its people."

In Fairfield's "Colonial Office List" for 1878, the legislature of the Transvaal is stated to be that of a "Compound Council," which means a Legislature consisting of a single Legislative Chamber, partly elective and partly nominated by the crown. But up to date the "Constitution" of the country has not been proclaimed. Sir Arthur Cunynghame, in referring to this subject remarked: "Things must develop themselves, war must cease, and other circumstances happen, before such an enlightened institution can be put into their hands, and before we feel sure they can use it for their own benefit, as well as for the benefit of South Africa." In the meantime the Government of the Transvaal is vested in an Administrator, with a staff of officials, among which are some of the old officials who served under the Republican Government.

If I now quote from Mr. Rutherford's Lecture "On Confederation of the South African Colonies," you may be able to get a glimpse of the possible future, not only of the Transvaal, but of the whole of South Africa.

"Save and except the Free State—a Republic—all organised white communities—Colonies—now existing in South Africa, proper, are under the dominion of the British Monarchy. The confederation of these colonies is the distinctly avowed purpose of the English Colonial office, and to the working out of which Sir Bartle Frere is commissioned and is now avowedly committed.

It may be safely asserted that the vast preponderance of the public opinion throughout civilised South Africa is now in favour of an early accommodation of this purpose. It is felt and acknowledged that until there is such a political union and organization, as will render possible the most effective application and direction of the resources of different kinds of the different colonies of the "State" which makes up South Africa, considered as a political rather than a geographical phrase, no general "Native policy" is possible, founded on logical principles, and calculated safely and securely to work out, *pari passu*, security and the advance of civilisation. Its effective development within a few years will be the crucial test of South African politics, and the success of South African Administration for some time to come.

Confederation will very much improve and simplify South African legislation on general, mercantile, material and social interests. As things are, we are constantly feeling and seeing, that in all these respects, with the great "Native policy" difficulty superadded, antagonistic, provincial, and local interests, and traditional "policies"—too often neither unselfish nor unprejudiced—operate most mischievously for general interests and prosperity. As between Cape Colony and Natal, for instance, the divergence and jealousy as to customs, tariffs, and mercantile interest, have for years past been very remarkable. The absolute necessity of assimilation, if there is to be confederation has been lately very forcibly put before Natal merchants by Sir Bartle Frere. And so also has there been much more divergence than was necessitated by differing local circumstances and conditions, in regard both of native policy legislation and of the principles on which, and the way in which, wars with the natives have been carried on and concluded by the different States and Colonies of South Africa.

The resources and military power of Great Britain are being employed with no niggard or hesitating hand in South Africa. For what purpose? Simply to secure the dominance and advance of civilisation in South Africa, by security the safety of South Africa—a land too long 'full of the habitations of the horrid cruelty.' The work which England is now beginning to do in South Africa, will now, it is undertaken, be surely carried out. The work will not be done as quickly as many imagine, but when accomplished, England will certainly and quite reasonably say in effect—"We will certainly assist you in all great needs when great needs occur. But henceforth it is your duty to guard the safety and the predominance which the Mother country has conquered for and presented to you. To do this you must moderate your antagonism, you must act together in all great matters. Your native policy, and your general policy must be founded on fixed principles. It must be logical; and it must go out from and be the consensus of a General Legislature. In a word you must confederate. Confederated you make a long stride towards the accomplishment of the honourable ambition of the working out of, not one, or two, or half-a-dozen weak, vacillating, poor South African States, ever varying or at conflict in their arms and policy, but a South African State, ready and able to claim independence; and which England, in parting with as a Dominion, may hail and glory in as still a child but a child arrived at political maturity, and ranging itself—side by side with the Parent State—itsself a State."

To continue the subject of the interior government of the Transvaal. The country is at present divided into thirteen districts. The chief officer of each is the "landdrost," who acts as magistrate and Civil Commissioner, with the assistance of a Landdrost clerk, who, in the smaller towns, is at the same time public prosecutor, postmaster, and distributor of stamps. Each district is further provided with a sheriff, gaoler, and staff of constables, and is divided into several field cornetries or wards, superintended by a field cornet, elected by each ward. This officer has certain judicial powers.

With regard to the Burgher right and Franchise of the white population, the old Republican law is still in force. This law enacts that persons born in the state who have reached the age of 21, or who have resided in the state for one year, and are in possession of fixed property, obtain the burgher right, which can be purchased on payment of £7 10s on arrival in the country.

The law is at present administered by two courts—the Landdrost court and the High court. The Landdrost court has police, criminal and civil jurisdiction, regulated by law, the latter in all cases, up to £37 10s. From this court there is an appeal to the High court, which was established one month after the annexation, and is presided over by a judge. It takes "cognisance of all the pleas and jurisdiction in all causes, whether civil, criminal, or mixed," within the territory, and has power to "review the proceedings of, and hear appeals from all inferior courts of Justice." All criminal cases before the courts are tried and disposed of by the said judge, and a jury of nine men, whose verdict must be unanimous, but all civil suits or actions are tried and decided by the said judge alone, and without a jury. There is an

appeal against the judgment of this court to Her Majesty or her Privy Council, in all cases above the amount of £500. The establishment of a supreme court, with three judges, is contemplated.

As the Transvaal is considered a Crown Colony for the present, the treasurer and the auditor are accountable to the "Lords Commissioners of the Treasury" in the application of Colonial funds.

The following is abstracted from a statement of the ordinary revenue and expenditure for the last eight years:

	REVENUE	EXPENDITURE
1871 to 1872	£41,000	£34,000
1874 to 1875	£7,000	£69,600
1878	£99,600	£119,000

Besides the ordinary expenditure, an amount of £131,200 was expended for arrear salaries, war expenses, and other debts incurred by the late republican government. And besides the ordinary expenditure of 1878, an amount of £62,000 has been expended chiefly for the expense of the Secocoeini war.

These special payments are covered by the £100,000 voted by the Imperial Parliament, in aid of local revenue, and other loans obtained from the local banks. The liabilities of the Government on the 31st December, 1878, amounted to about £300,000.

The following is abstracted from the estimates for the year 1878:

HEADS OF REVENUE	HEADS OF EXPENDITURE
Import Duties, £10,000	Establishments, £36,000
Land revenue, £22,400	Pensions, £1,700
Transfer duties, £12,000	Administration of Justice, £3,500
Railway tax, £10,000	Education, £5,000
Postage £5,000	Police & gaols £4,200
Sale of government property	£15,200
	Conveyance of Mails £12,400
	Works & building £5,000
	Roads, streets and bridges £6,000
	Native police force £5,000
	Interest, £20,400
	Payment of account of late republic £37,000

The receipts amounted to £105,130, and the expenditure to £152,000. From a list of stamp dues, licenses, government fees &c., I cull a few items: Stamps on the appointment of Surveyor, Doctor, Notary Public, Advocate, Attorney, Conveyancer, £10 to £17 10s; licenses for retail Wine and Spirit, £50; Billiard Table, £20; Retail Shop, £7 10s.; and Bagatelle Table, £5.

Letter Seven

I have given several sketches of the Kafirs of Natal, and propose now to avail myself of a Lecture upon the Transvaal natives, delivered by Mr. A.G. Watermeyer.

The bulk of natives inhabiting the Transvaal may be said to consist, for the most part of Mantatees, though various other tribes, such as the Koranna, Knobnose, Zulu, Basuto, and Vaalpens, are frequently found associated, in less or greater numbers, with them, all of whom constitute what generally goes by the name of Transvaal natives. The great tribe of the Mantatees, or Maketees, is split up into innumerable kraals or clans, each of which is under control of a petty chief, the several kraals again constituting a species of confederacy, yielding greatly to a notorious Secoconi, the present paramount chief of all the Mantatees. The names of the petty chiefs are legion. Were I to give the principal ones with their tribal composition, approximate number of followers, and where settled, I am afraid readers would grow weary.

It may be mentioned, however, that the native population of the Transvaal is not less than 300,000 souls, scattered over an area of quite 13,000,000 English acres. Remembering that the white population said to number 30,000 men, women, and children, the disproportion in numbers between the white and black man is evident at a glance.

Turning now to the social habits, customs, and peculiarities of the natives, a study of much interest is presented to the student of the modern black races of this portion of South Africa. As a rule, they are a good-natured sort of people, though excessively idle and stupid, the bulk of the hard work falling to the lot of the women, who cultivate the lands, build the huts, and attend to all other domestic duties which usually are relegated to their sex, while the men, on the other hand, occupy themselves with their cattle and the preparation of carosses, when not at war, or in the hunting grounds. The men are affectionate towards their wives, and treat them kindly, at times even assisting in their outdoor work. In this respect they compare most favourably with the Zulus, Basutoes and Cape Kafirs, who brutally ill-treat their women, and literally make them their beasts of burden.

Polygamy is indulged in universally, there being no limit to the number of wives a man may have, so long as he can afford to pay for them. Among some of the tribes the wife is paid for in cattle, the price ranging from five to ten or even fifteen cows; among others, again where cattle is scarce, she is bought by the "pick," which is a standard of value equivalent to two fathoms of calico, or a certain number of brass rings, and as many as sixty picks, are sometimes demanded by a father as the price of his daughter. With very rare exceptions the native woman may be looked upon as the pattern of virtue and chastity. Any departure from this rule is severely punished, at times even with death. Notwithstanding polygamy, it is surprising to find that large families of children—are almost unknown, five to six being the general limit. The precarious lives led by the men renders old age rather infrequent. Though not giving one the idea of possessing great physical strength, they are gifted with remarkable powers of endurance, and though by no means of a muscular build; it is surprising what feats many of them perform on the poorest possible nourishment. Organic disease is rare, with the exception of afflictions

of the lungs, from which many suffer; contagious disease is almost unknown, except in a few solitary instances, where civilization has introduced it. They have a peculiar and secret manner of burying their dead. The men are interred in the cattle kraals, in a sitting posture, the woman they bury in their huts, and the children in a convenient spot outside.

Religion, in the civilized acceptation of the term, the native, as a rule, knows not, except in those comparatively few cases in which the labours of the missionary have come to his rescue. Some of the tribes possess no form even of worship, others again have a coloured post, very nearly resembling a barber's pole, planted in their cattle kraals, and which is looked upon with reverence, and awe, without, however, worshipping it, nor is it believed that any supernatural powers are ascribed to its presence. As a rule, the natives have some crude idea of an Omnipresent Being, to whom they allude as the Great Spirit above, of whom they speak reverentially, and who is known by some of the tribes as "Morema," the power in the skies.

Referring to the education of the natives, and particularly to those of the Transvaal, it is satisfactory to know that much is being done by the missionary towards the social and moral improvement of the black man.

The rule of the Berlin Missionary appears to be a most salutary one, which requires the scholar to learn to work as well as to read and write. Mere school teaching is an absolute waste of time. Work must be the regenerator of the savage, for work brings with it a knowledge of right and wrong, and this, once established in the native mind, a basis is presented on which the teacher can proceed with some hope of success. Education, with too many, means immorality, in that education teaches the black man the vices of his white brother too frequently, that is, education is practiced in some parts in the vague principle of cramming a number of intricate matters into the brain of the unprepared native. It is in such instances that the system of work in vogue with the Berlin Society asserts its superiority. The bible and the plough, the missionary and the husbandman should be allies, working hand in hand, towards the common goal of civilized man's highest and noblest aspirations.

And now to treat of matters nearer home. Probably in past letters I have referred to the attitude the Dutch Boers have lately assumed towards the English of the Transvaal. You will remember that the Transvaal was annexed to the British Crown on the 12th April, 1877. Since then the Boers have been stirred up by fortune hunters, by a paper and a book, to rebel and try to restore the old Republic. They hope by continual agitation to weary the Imperial government into bestowing their so-called independence. Hence they have sent two deputations to Europe and America, and more recently have incessantly interviewed Colonial Governors and the High Commissioner. Their last stroke was a bold one: over 2,000 men gathered together and pitched their tents within some 30 miles of Pretoria. For one long anxious month did these men remain under canvas. Daily for a month was Pretoria threatened with an invasion. I cannot describe the state Pretorians were in or convey an adequate idea of the defences hastily arranged for defence. Night and day the 80th Regiment, split up in fatigue parties, worked throwing up earthworks, digging moats, erecting barricades, loopholing private houses and public buildings. The Camp, the Jail, the Ordinance Yard, the Magistrate's Office, the Club House and private houses were barricaded with sand bags and planks of wood. Roofs of houses were lined with sand bags, windows and doors were taken away and sand bags piled up. Many of these places were provisioned for a siege, patrols nightly encircled the town, the volunteers were placed under martial law and mounted

guards every night, and those not on guard slept together at the various houses which had been placed in a state of defence. Men not in the volunteer force formed themselves into two guards called respectively the Civic guard and the European guard. Business was well nigh suspended and rumours as to when we were to be attacked grew numerous until the scepticism of the oldest colonists gave way, and we joined everyone in declaring that bloodshed alone would end such a state of things.

In case of an attack, as senior Sergeant of the 2nd Company of the volunteers, I was ordered to take command in defending the Standard Bank. Nightly, when not in charge of the guard, had I to scour the city on picquet duty, returning to Fort Verdoorn at the small hours of the morning to snatch a little sleep. Sleep, however, was but an occasional visitor, for 50 of us had to turn in on hard boards with two blankets, and perhaps a coat or sandbag as a pillow. The changing of sentries, their challenges, and an occasional "Guard! turn out," proved serious disturbances to slumber. One sentry paced the roof of the house, and as the said roof was constructed of galvanized iron, every tread told its tale to the recumbent ones beneath. Towards dawn a very vigilant watch was kept, for that is the favorite time for Boer attacks.

Colonel Lanyon, our Administrator, went out to the Boer Camp, and when he told the rebels that no armed parties of Boers would be allowed in Pretoria, 1,003 men fired by indignation at the insult, rashly resolved at once to ride armed into town. They went a few miles in the direction, but finally returned to canvass. The post cart and private vehicles were stopped by the malcontents, and in many cases the occupants were grossly insulted. It was reported that these Boers had bound themselves solemnly before Heaven never to rest until liberty is restored to their land, and the pledge was to be bequeathed as a sacred legacy to their children.

One day we hear the Boers do not intend to fight, but will cut off all supplies from entering Pretoria. Another day a rumour is started from respectable authorities that the Boers will not fight themselves but turn upon us hordes of natives who spare, in their wars, neither woman nor child.

And in this way our weary and anxious days passed until Sir Bartle Frere, Her Majesty's High Commissioner for South Africa, arrived. On the 12th of April His Excellency had an interview with the Boers at a place called Erasmus' Spruit. The English deputation numbered nine persons; that of the Dutch 23. The meeting opened with prayer, after which three of the Boers addressed the High Commissioner. They reviewed the history of the late Republic—given by me in back papers—and concluded by asking that the Transvaal should be given them again.

Sir Bartle Frere, in reply, handled the subject in a masterly way. He said: "We come of the same stock, one of the most honoured stocks of all white men. We hold the same religion, and hoped to be guided by the same word of God." He had been told that the Boers were unanimous in this matter of wanting their country back, but since entering the Transvaal not a day had passed but what Dutch people came to him and said they did not want the old Government back again. Evidences of intimidation used to make people join the meeting were numerous. Men threatened to shoot and cut into pieces those who preferred to stay at home. Wives and mothers gave such evidence. Two thousand assembled in camp and called themselves "the people," whereas the people numbered 35,000. Even the 2,000 were not agreed on the matter. The leaders of the movement would be held responsible if anything serious arose from the camp. Later on His Excellency made this offer: "You shall be free to go where you please, do what you please—all within the law—you shall have the power to make your own laws with reference to everything within the Province. This form of government was easy and answered well in Cape Colony

where your brethren and relatives have achieved all these objects during the last 20 years. If you mean by independence the old Republic back again, I have no power to give it; the Queen's old ministers have told your deputations this can never be."

In the discussion which ensued, His Excellency was very smart. One speaker was harking back to a remote period in the History of the Boers and was asked why he didn't go back to the Garden of Eden at once. Another asked, "If your Excellency could give back the old Republic with the president and all the officials, would you do it?" His Excellency answered, "If the moon were in my hand, what should I do with it?" One said the country had been bought with the property and blood of the Boers, and they would sooner be ground and crushed than suffer oppression. His Excellency told the speaker that he had had enough of such tall talk, and hoped they would cease talking such pure nonsense. The interview, which lasted from ten o'clock in the morning until half-past three in the afternoon, concluded by Sir Bartle Frere being asked if he would support a memorial which the Boers would send to her Majesty. His Excellency would send the memorial, but could not support it. His report upon it, however, they could read, and, if wrong, could have it corrected before dispatched.

The Memorial and report have been dispatched and the Boers have dispersed. The barricades of the town have been broken up and business flows in its accustomed channels. The volunteers and their Fort have been photographed; the only engagement they had was, by way of a finale, one of a Terpsichorean and Orphean character. ***

Pretoria has held High Carnival in honour of her distinguished visitor—Sir Bartle Frere. For the reception, of course, every carriage and horse was manned. Guards of honour lined the whole route. An address of welcome, signed by 300, was read and guns were fired. The Pretoria Cadet Corps, which I have been fortunate enough to start and obtain the captainship of, to the number of 50 lined the entrance to the Government House. Sir Bartle Frere kindly expressed to me his admiration of such a company of youthful soldiers. We have had several receptions at Government House; a great banquet, a public political meeting, a grand concert, and a monster festival in honour of His Excellency.

The festival was especially intended for the children of Pretoria, but as the day was declared to be a public holiday, old as well as young Pretorians left the town and held picnic some three miles away, at a lovely spot called "The Fountains". To the editor of the Argus and myself fell the lot of managing the festival. The day before we were busy putting up swings and booths, after selecting the ground. My colleague superintended the two guinea cold luncheon and the entertainment of our guest, leaving me to pack the children in wagons, feed and amuse them from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. "The Pretoria Cadet Corps" says the Argus "spurred to be carried in a wagon, and under their captain marched out such evolutions as marching in a company in line, marching in file, forming fours, from fours to file, and from two ranks to single rank." So no wonder that I did not turn up at the dance at the Masonic Temple, which brought a brilliant festival to an end.

Before Sir Bartle Frere left, we had a great Railway meeting. His Excellency is considering the matter of making a railway from Delagoa Bay to Pretoria. He says the Portuguese are extremely zealous to do their share of it, that during the last four months they have introduced a customs tariff, which is more favourable to trade than in any of our South African Colonies; this trade they wish to extend to the British possessions beyond their border. Every reasonable facility will be given for passing goods in

bond. In conclusion, he wishes to get more information as to the facts respecting trade, and any features of the country which are likely to affect a railway, in order that her Majesty's Government, and our Minister in Portugal may be made aware of the actual position of affairs here.

The meeting elected a Committee to establish a Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture. Through this chamber the procuring of the required data will, it is hoped, be accomplished. I was nominated as a member of the committee, but not being engaged in business could not serve. Speakers, by virtue of their business, revealed to the meeting some astonishing facts. One importer stated, during the course of one month, and that not an extraordinary heavy month either, he had paid for carriage alone the sum of £11,000; the proposed railway would have transported the goods for £2,500! Last year the importers in Pretoria must have paid for the carriage of their goods no less than £150,000. When a small town like Pretoria has paid such a sum for carriage alone within one year, what must the total be throughout the territory, and what will it spend when the resources of the country are increased by a railroad? The Manager of Cobalt Mines says that they could have sent to England ten times the quantity of the mineral they were sending, but that the rate of transport forbade them doing so. At present we are paying in the matter of transport and indirect tax of 100 per cent on all imports, and under such a burden the country languishes.

One section of the data to be obtained will be devoted to the probable development of the rich mineral country through which the railway will pass, where, on the best authority, is known to exist, in enormous and easily procurable quantities, tin, copper, and other minerals, besides coal-measures extending over a wide area. We are now, year after year, sending money out of the country, importing heavily from Europe and America, and having scarce anything to give in return. In garrisoning the Transvaal, not only will troops, if a railway is made, be kept far cheaper than present; but we should need much fewer of them. The Home Government is holding the Transvaal with an enormous number of troops, but given a railway we could quell any disturbance before it reached the size of a rebellion.

When we have attained our object, from our rich coal measures we can supply from Delagoa Bay the P. and O. and other steamers which ply on the East Coast and Indian ocean, with all the coal they want; and, undoubtedly, the time will come when the East Coast route will be the route to Europe, in preference to the present one via the Cape. Mr. M. Farrell, C.E., a gentleman of large experience in England has been appointed by the Government to make an inspection of the Delagoa Bay Route, and to enter into detail sufficient to enable contractors in England to commence the work forthwith, should the route itself appear practicable.

The importance of this matter to all of us, cannot be overestimated. The origin of Britons, before St. Augustine landed, recalls to mind the wild Caledonian and the original circumstances and surroundings of Primitive Man. His pillow a stone, his roof the shadow of a wide-spreading tree or some dark cavern, which also served as refuge against wild beast. Man then was little distinguished from the brute. Louis Figuier, in his chapter on "The Iron Epoch" notes that from the day when iron was first placed at man's disposal, civilisation began to make its longest strides. He ends his admirable book by saying, "Look to it, lest thy pride cause thee to forget thy own origins." The Kafirs are just emerging into the Iron Epoch, and now thrust forcibly under the notice of patrons who have left them behind by the improvements of 4,000 years.

Bye the bye, I have forgotten to give you a snatch of the statistical in reference to the proposed railway. Its length will be 332 miles, and estimated cost of construction per mile £7,000, or a total of £2,324,000.

This sum raised at 6 per cent, will require a payment for interest of £139,440. The traffic is estimated at 180,000,000 lbs. per annum, the charge of carriage per 100 lbs. at 4s. will give £360,000 per annum, or £6,923 per week.

Another item of the commercial type and I return to matters social, "and time you did" perhaps lady readers will exclaim, but the fair sex must know that men of business, who read this account, also expect a little attention, hence my facts and figures.

A line of telegraph is now making its way between Natal and Pretoria, and a submarine one connecting the line at St. Vincent and Cape Town. The Egyptian Telegraph lines now extend as far as the Equator. The Americans call Canada a one-horse country, and hitherto many have dubbed South Africa "a perambulator," but tell me, are we not emerging from the nursery now with rapid strides?

Letter Eight

Musical and other friends will, I know, be glad to hear I have started a Choral Society for Pretoria, the first it has had.

"The press" says in noticing it, "The absence of rational or elevating amusement is the curse of the place, and we are glad to notice any movement which holds out a hope of supplying the woeful vacancy." We led off with a promenade soiree in our new Masonic Temple. Each of the 50 members brought a friend. The musical programme consisted of 13 items, and included the overtures to "Semiramide" and "Zampa," by the splendid band of the 80th regiment, a duet, Zither and Guitar entitled "E hat nicht sollen sein"; pianoforte solos and duet; three glees of the "Banish, Oh Maiden," type; and three vocal solos. The music was of a first class character, and well executed. I expected it would be, when a singist told me he intended singing "Oh? bitt euch liebe Vogelein," and another said "I'll give you 'In diesen heil'gen Hallen'!" Refreshments and conversation helped the hundred of Pretoria to pass a very pleasant evening. For the special edification of the committee of the "Andover Musical Society"—a society I take a great interest in—let me mention what falls to the lot of the Secretary to a Colonial Choral Association. We pay £2 10s. per month for the use of the hall one night a week, and £5 5s. for concert nights.

A few delicate questions arise. Where is our music to come from? England is the answer, South Africa hasn't got 50 duplicates of glees or oratorios. In three months' time then we get our music, meanwhile the band copy duplicates of glees in my possession. Theirs is not a work of love! How are we to manage for a piano? Borrow one from Mrs. _____. How can I get it into the hall? Borrow a handcart, raise four niggers and accompany them, or they will spill it in a spruit. Next morning cart it back again. The hall is without seats, how can I accommodate 300 people? Get a fatigue party from camp, raise some niggers, borrow and carry chairs. Jones will lend you 20, Brown 6, Robinson 13, Smith has a couple of forms, and so on, but stop! Jones can't let you have them till 7.30 p.m. and he must have them back by 8 a.m. tomorrow morning. Jones, allow me to remark, keeps a boarding house; Brown, an hotel, etcetera. Well, but how am I to know whose chairs are whose? That's simple enough, tie a label round each!

Our practices last two hours. We first attempt glees, bye and bye we mean to have a cut at such pieces as Schiller's "Lay of the Bell." Tea and coffee are handed round when the evening is half spent, this luxury for 50 people costs £4 10s. per night. Whilst resting between the glees, friends favour us with vocal and instrumental solos.

Football is a great game here. There are two clubs. Like cricket, it is played in our square, the matches generally come off on Wednesday, when it is half-holiday, and the band indulges in selections to the edification of every white and the great joy of our friends of the dusky persuasion. The Andoverian admirers of the willow would grin to see our great matches played in the middle of the road, with a piece of matting laid between the wickets. The "field" are sent leather hunting into houses that line the Square. I myself smiled when I first made one of a Pretoria Croquet party to find that game played on the bare earth. Grass, you perceive, for sports, is not to be had. The one exception is at the camp, the officers being in a position to see that it is properly attended to. This grass plot is just outside the officers' mess and is used for Tennis and Croquet, and on Fridays Pretoria goes up and dances on it, the band of course, being in attendance.

Still farther to give you a peep, though a loophole of course, into Pretoria social life. Receptions are held at Government House one afternoon in every week. Once having been formally introduced to the Administrator, you stroll in the grounds and chat to all the world and his wife, who are accommodated with seats. The ubiquitous band is here ready to please you. Wine, tea, coffee, and biscuits are handed round to the ladies, the gentlemen take care to help themselves ad lib. Twice a month the reception concludes with a dance. If smoking and drinking are a weakness here, so is dancing; everything concludes with a dance.

Football and Cricket Clubs, Volunteers, Freemasons, Government House societies of all sorts, continually give dances. A public drama is often got up in two hours, by two men. One gets the hall in readiness, while the other jumps up on a horse and rides round to every house, issuing invitations, invitations seldom if ever refused. The men tot up accounts and square the expenses between them, each man is run in to the extent, perhaps, of fifteen shillings, for refreshments are always liberally supplied. A ball proper means £2 2s. for a gentleman, and £1 11s. for a lady, and somehow the money is always forthcoming, from the Head of a Government Department to the Storekeeper's Assistant.

I go out for a musical evening, book under my arms, lo! music is not once thought of, someone said "Let's have a dance instead," and so vocalists are out of it.

Another social item peculiar to Pretoria is a wedding. The church is always crammed with people. Outside, perhaps, are 50 horses and 30 carts and carriages, with an ox wagon here and there. All the men of business and apparently all their assistants are here. "The happy couple are very popular" I, at first, remarked. "No, not necessarily" is the answer, "We always turn up strong at weddings." The ceremony over, the whole crowd go to the bride's house, and there health drinking takes place in champagne, wines of every description, and even bottled beer at 5s. per bottle is there for public delectation. Cake, sandwiches, cigars, and a host of goodies are provided pro bono publico. The house is besieged for three hours, there is never a wedding breakfast but at night dancing commences about 9 p.m. and continues till 4 a.m. the next morning.

Society here is always in a state of paying or receiving visits, everyone visits everyone, and that about once a week. A bachelor is expected to call upon families without waiting for them to call upon him. At first I resisted such a custom, fearing to intrude, but matters were soon put to me in a different light. I have called at a house whose hostess was at the time entertaining 14 visitors, who had casually dropped in. At any and every hour of the day tea and coffee is handed round.

Drop into a house for five minutes only and there is the inevitable cup. Sleep there, and before you dress in the morning comes the cup; tiffin and dinner both conclude with the introduction of a chinee.

Pretoria, being perhaps one of the youngest Colonial towns, is essentially free and easy. People here say they treat everyone alike, each stands upon her merits. University and public school men, doctors, barristers, bishops, curates, storekeepers' assistants—all are on one common level. Your past may be creditable, most honourable or disgraceful, they care not, in Pretoria you start afresh. If here you go wrong, or lack taste, you are snubbed, or at least meet with less success in society than others.

A few tell me that Pretoria is just beginning to toady and break up into cliques. This is certain. It will be the natural result of a large inflow of population.

Maritzburg is said to be cut up into a dozen cliques. There is bad blood between the military and the civilians. The latter are subdued into several factions. There are the "upper ten" of extreme exclusives—the heads of departments who have a lordly disdain of all non-official people. The smaller Jacks-in-office ape the airs and graces of their superiors, and profess high contempt for shopkeepers.

"Shopkeepers," by the way, are unknown here. A store is a place where a gentlemanly individual is condescending enough to let you buy anything you wish, from a baby's shoe to an elephant's trunk. There are no classes in Maritzburg but cliques.

Talking of Maritzburg reminds me that they have what soon, I suppose, we shall possess, a club for hunting. They meet at 4.30 in the morning and announce "Found immediately and got well away, field well up, Colonel Simpson got a nasty spill and broke his collar-bone. Hounds went away for 16 miles, when the buck turned and made for the place where he was started."

Pretoria has had a turf club for the last five years. Its Library has 150 members who pay a subscription of £1 yearly. In addition there are two clubs, with a membership of 80 each, the subscription to one being £5 and to the other £1 1s.0d. per annum. Papers, periodicals, and wines and spirits are supplied at each place; each has a billiard room.

The bachelors of Pretoria, to a man, rent each a small room for which they give £2 per month. They have their meals at hotels or boarding houses for which they pay £7 per month. There are five such restaurants. I recently accepted an invitation to dine at one called "The European." A first-class dinner of five courses was placed on the table for a uniform charge of 3s; some thirty sat down, and, as at the other houses, scandal and on dits were numerous. I noticed that a well filled tobacco jar is placed at the free disposal of all who drop in, and that customers help themselves to wines and spirits. The cheapest glass of liquor costs one shilling, and upon naming the weakness the bottle is handed to the applicant. A white man considers himself grossly insulted if the publican measures his liquor.

A weekly sale is held in the Square on Saturdays at which everyone attends. The variety of things sold is absurd. I name a few—a single pair of braces, a hundred wagons, kippered herrings, twenty farms from three to five thousand acres in extent, second-hand clothing, old and new furniture, toys, provisions. The storekeepers often put large assignments of goods on the sale and private persons who want to raise money or who possess superfluous or worn out articles do the same.

Riding parties are in great vogue here. Nearly everyone keeps a horse, even the boy of eight years scampers about on his pony. The parties are of a weekly occurrence and number generally from 12 to 16

ladies and gentleman. We meet at a certain house at 4 p.m. and having previously chosen partners, ride off into the country to some farm where fruit and the inevitable cup of coffee is indulged in, and Town sees us again about 7 o'clock. A goodly number drive out of town in their "spiders and pairs" about three times a week. The drivers are skilful but reckless; I was almost horrified the first occasion I occupied a seat in a "spider" to see the John making his horses rush through rivers, over boulders and bushes, through deep beds of mire, and mount a steep hill at full gallop. Amongst the pet drives is one to the Wonder-baum tree, a Banyan of such enormous dimensions that the interior of the trunk would accommodate a dinner party of six persons.

And now I must think about bringing this account to a close as, in addition to studies, public work is making a great inroad upon my time. I am forming a second company of cadets, the first already numbers 70 members. That done, I start a Sunday School for boys in a Government building; the cadet corps, you will perceive is a bait for the Sunday School. Experience has taught me that more success is obtained by working indirectly than directly for the church. I have just been appointed Captain of the volunteers, and in exchanging a sergeant's saber for a commissioned officer's sword, find that great responsibility follow in the train. For the volunteers I am getting up a ball, a monthly "sing-song," boxing and fencing, and a competition at the ranges. There are two companies of volunteers, and His Excellency, Colonel Lanyon, the Administrator, has just consented to be the commandant.

Next week I play the part of Captain Vividio "The Siamese Twins," for a Dramatic Society I have helped to revive.

Then I am scheming to get up a club for men, to include educational classes, library, reading room, card room, gymnasium, debating society, lectures, and chess club. The Judge and other leading men are backing me up, but I am almost afraid that I shall be defeated by the local difficulty of house purchase or rent. The house will cost £1,500, fitting £500. If rented we must pay £15 per month. Given a house and fittings and I can work it at a yearly subscription of 36s, estimating the membership at 100. I offer a resident assistant secretary £50 a year and rent free. Tea, coffee, and smoking will be indulged in.

From my descriptions of social life in Pretoria some may run away with the idea that the people are very gay here. I can understand personal friends saying, as they read of my participation in dances, theatricals, and other amusements, that I am going to the bad! Let me here remark that those who have not lived in South Africa cannot understand how totally different society is here, and necessarily so, to what it is in England. At home you have museums, picture galleries, flower shows, Crystal Palaces, Operas, Theatres, Concerts, and a host of other amusements. Here we haven't material for such things and so are obliged to confine ourselves to dancing. Circumstances alter cases, and the clergyman who in earnest is working for Christ, here dances in public, smokes in the streets, and goes out shooting; in England where such customs have totally different surroundings, he would strictly abstain from each. In England I objected on principle to dancing and theatricals and never took part in the one or listened to the other. Here, on principle, I go for both.

Personal observation and the testimony of our rector lead me to say, and say emphatically, that Society in Pretoria is thoroughly pure in morals, that true modesty is practiced, and the relationship between parents and children, brothers and sisters, is of such a refreshing and healthy character that I question if any other town under the face of the sun could compare favourably with it.

I have now finished my task. It has been a work of much time, for such a mass of facts and figures are not gathered easily. The account has not been so succinct, glowing or interesting as though it had been written at ease with every accessory at hand. I have written, day by day, the major part whilst traveling; in wind and storm, and the thermometer often standing at 100, hence many mistakes of diction. In reading the printed account I have often blushed to see gross errors occurring in it, but bad writing on foreign note paper and slips on the compositor's part will, I think, cover a multitude of such sins.

I can only hope that the peeps through the loopholes of retreat have proved pleasant, in which case I am amply repaid for my labour.

HENRY ADAMS

Note.—Mr. Adams has promised to write occasional papers, and hopes to be able to write a history of what the various Churches have done in South Africa. The latter must be a work of some two years, as the managers of every sect will have to be written to, books and reports studied, the whole condensed and made as interesting as possible, care at the same time being taken to arrive at accuracy in the statements. Not only will each Church of England Bishop be communicated with, but the representatives of the following Churches, all of whom are working in South Africa: —1. Church of France. 2. American Board of Missions. 3. Berlin Mission. 4. Church of Canton de Vaud. 5. Norwegian. 6. Hermansberg. 7. Dutch Reformed. 8. Free Church of Scotland. 9. The Rhenish Missionary Society. 10. Roman Catholic. 11. Wesleyan. 12. United Methodist. 13. Presbyterian. 14. London Missionary Society. 15. Church Missionary Society. 16. Universities Mission. 17. S.P.G.