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Sir John Fraser.

EPISODES IN MY LIFE

BY

JOHN GEORGE FRASER, Kt., LL.D.

"Therefore, though few may praise, or help, or heed us,
Let us work on with head, or heart, or hand,
For that we know the future ages need us,
And we must help our time to take its stand."

R. A. Vaughan.

Bloemfontein, 1922.



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DEDICATION.

To my dear Wife, faithful partner of my life, and participator in all its vicissitudes for fifty-six years, and to my Children, I dedicate this Autobiography with loving regards and grateful memories.

THE AUTHOR.

Bloemfontein, 1922.

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PROLOGUE.

TO MY CHILDREN.

ACQUITTING myself of a long-standing undertaking I am now publishing this autobiographical account of episodes in my life, and, in accordance with your wishes, a statement of your descent, commencing from your great-grandparents, on both sides, is given herewith.

DESCENT.

MY PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS (SCOTCH).

ALEXANDER Fraser, related to the Frasers of Abersky, a branch of the Frasers of Erchitt, in Stratherrick, Inverness-shire, Scotland, married Lilian MacDonald, who is said to have been a descendant of Glencoe. He became factor to Sir Colin MacKenzie of Kilcoy, and to Sir James MacKenzie of Rosehaugh, in Ross-shire, and resided first at Tour, in that county, for a time, and at Killernan, where my father, Colin Fraser, was born on the 28th November, 1796. My grandparents afterwards resided at Redcastle, till their death, and are buried there.

MY MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS (GERMAN).

Johan George Sieberhagen, married Anna Juliana Schreyber.

My grandparents hailed from Reichen Saxen, Hesse Cassel, and they came out to South Africa in 1811. They resided first at Swellendam, Cape, and thereafter they settled at Tafelberg, in the Beaufort West District.

My mother, Maria Elizabeth Sieberhagen, was born at Swellendam on the 20th July, 1812.

MY FATHER.

My father, the Reverend Colin Fraser, graduated M.A. at "King's" College, in Aberdeen, and thereafter took his course of Divinity in "King's" and "Marischal" Colleges. He was licensed as a minister of the Gospel by the Presbytery of Chanonry in Ross-shire, Scotland, on the 10th day of May, 1824, and was thereafter ordained. At the instance of Earl Bathurst, Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs, my father was appointed to the Ecclesiastical establishment of the Cape of Good Hope, and he thereupon went to Holland to acquire the Dutch language. He pursued this study at Utrecht in 1823-1824.

The documents and certificates verifying all the foregoing facts are comprised in a special album in my possession.

My father, the Reverend Colin Fraser, left Inverness-shire on the 18th June, 1824, and London on the 18th October, 1824. He arrived in Table Bay on the 18th December, 1824—and having received his appointment as minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Beaufort West, he arrived there on the 18th January, 1825, and was inducted as minister of that parish on the 19th January, 1825, by the Reverend Andrew Murray, of Graaff-Reinet.

On the 27th February, 1828, my father was first married to Anna Amalia Muller, of Graaff-Reinet, who bore him seven children—four



My Father,
Rev. Colin Fraser, V.D.M., Minister of D.R. Church,
Beaufort West, 1824-1870



My Mother,
Maria Elizabeth Fraser (nee Sieberhagen).

daughters and three sons—of whom none are surviving. His said wife, Anna Amalia Muller, died on the 22nd September, 1838.

MY MOTHER.

On the 20th February, 1840, my father entered into second wedlock with my mother, Maria Elizabeth Sieberhagen, at Beaufort West, who bore him nine children, all sons, of whom I am the eldest and only surviving son.

I was born at Beaufort West on the 17th December, 1840.

My mother died in 1862, and my father died in 1870, and both are buried at Beaufort West.

To complete this table of descent, I must now refer to your maternal grandparents.

YOUR MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS.

Your mother's father was Adolf Albert Ortlepp. He was the son of Christian Gottrau Ortlepp, who married Dorothea Gottliebe Lunzohn. He was born at Bernstad, in Prussia, on the 20th October, 1813. He came to Bethanie, a mission station north of the Orange River, as a member of the Berlin Missionary Society, but he left that Society in 1836, and was granted permission to remain in the Cape Colony, on the 7th February, 1836—according to papers which are in my possession—whereupon he settled at Colesberg. He married Dorothea Florence Wilhelmina Waldek,

a daughter of Johannes Frederick Waldek, and Johanna Wilhelmina Croeser, and begat five daughters and five sons—your mother, Dorothea Ortlepp, being the second daughter of the said marriage, and she was born on the 27th October, 1845. They both died in Colesberg, and are buried there.

It only remains now to say that in the ways of Providence I was brought to reside at Philippolis in the Orange Free State, and there it was my great good fortune to meet your mother, to whom I was married on the 18th April, 1866—who bore me eleven children, namely six daughters and five sons—of whom two sons died in infancy, as you will see in the Family Bible Register, where all have been duly entered by me.

You will note that both your grandfathers came out to South Africa in the interests of the religious welfare of the people of this country, and both were married to God-fearing partners.



My father-in-law.
Adolf Albert Ortlepp, of Colesberg, Cape Colony.



My mother-in-law,
Dora Florence Wilhelmina Ortlepp (born Waldek),
of Colesberg, Cape Colony.

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INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE frequently been importuned to write the experiences of my life, but for various reasons have hesitated to do so, the chief of which lay in the fact that such a narrative would of necessity be autobiography and bring my own person so prominently into play that I should lay myself open to the imputation of an egotistical desire for prominence, and I have therefore delayed undertaking the task. There was also the fact that when life has been passed amid stirring circumstances, and political crises in which feeling has been running high, and motives have been misrepresented or misconstrued, the mind may have become biassed, and therefore it seemed wiser to await the calmer judgment which the lapse of time usually brings, with the power of riper conviction as to the correctness of any course followed, or decision taken, in regard to any or all of the events which have had to be dealt with.

In addition to the foregoing, I may add that up to the end of 1920, I was continually engaged in public service, and there was therefore difficulty in

finding the necessary time and leisure for the work involved.

I have now, however, resolved to comply with continued appeals, and will endeavour to record experiences which may be of general interest.

The first episode will cover my childhood and boyhood for the period 1840-1852.

EPISODE I.

Childhood and Boyhood.

I WAS born at Beaufort West on the 17th December, 1840, and I was baptised on the 10th January, 1841—in the Dutch Reformed Church there, of which my father was the minister.

I have a very clear recollection of some of the occurrences of my early life. One of these happened in the course of a journey to Cape Town to visit my sisters, the daughters of my father's first marriage, who were there at school, under the care of a Mrs. Harris. A terrific thunderstorm broke upon the ox-wagon in which my mother and I were journeying, and we were stopped on the banks of a river—between the mimosa trees. The lightning and thunder being very severe, the oxen were dangerously restive, and the farmer who was in charge had great difficulty in controlling them, while my mother was earnestly praying for God's protection and for our safe deliverance.

In order to give some idea of the mode of travelling in the very early days of the country, and the paraphernalia necessary to secure this being comfortably carried out, I here record a description of the procedure that was universally adopted.

In the days of my youth travelling by ox-wagon had just succeeded travelling on horseback, and the footpaths began to make way for the wagon road. The country was sparsely populated and houses of accommodation for travellers were undreamt of. Most of the Boer population dwelt in tents, and even where houses were built, they were small, and with the best desire to extend hospitality, there was not always facility to do so. In these circumstances recourse was generally had to ox-wagon travelling, which may have been slow, but was certainly the most comfortable way of going through what was then still very wild country. The ox-wagon was not only the roomy conveyance of persons, but was so sturdily built as to be able to stand the jolting of the very roughest roads, to be a cover from the wind, rain, and dust storms, and a reliable protection from dangers which frequently had to be encountered on the way. For the benefit of readers unfamiliar with the earlier conditions of travelling in South Africa let me describe a comfortable ox-wagon and its equipment.

The body of the wagon was usually from 12 to 14 feet in length, and about 5 feet in breadth, varying of course in different makes, but all on the plan above indicated.

The bed plank, literally, belly-plank, stoutly put together, rested on the under-structure of two strong axles carried by four stout wheels, all fixed

together on what was termed the long-wagon, and was drawn by means of the "disselboom" or pole, to which the "trekgoed" or drawing gear was attached. The sides of the wagon, up to a certain height of from 18 to 24 inches, were strongly made of wood, with boughs of wood bent round, and attached to each upper edge of these sides, and firmly connected together—forming a structure which was first covered with painted canvas to make it waterproof, and then with strong canvas over all, buttoned down both sides, with long flaps to cover down to the wagon in front and rear. On the front of the wagon, between the sides, was the front box (the "voorkist"), and at the back the "achterkist," or hind box—into which boxes all sorts of requisites for the journey could be packed—while to each side of the wagon, resting on two projecting supports of about 12 inches long was attached a small box of about 2 feet in length, in which riems, strops, and other gear required in connection with the yokes and fastening of the oxen were kept. The bed plank usually projected about 18 inches or more beyond the sides, both in front and behind—in front to serve as foot-rest for the driver and leader, and behind for convenience in mounting into the wagon. Expert travellers and drivers can, even while the wagon is in motion, get on in front by jumping for footing on the pole, but this is very dangerous, and many have lost

their lives by slipping from the pole and falling under the wheels, and, therefore, an arrangement was afterwards made to provide a step from the wheel to the front of the wagon. On the side of the wagon, above the side boxes, arrangement was made to bind the poles and canvas of the tent, which could be erected at any "Outspan" (stopping place) to serve as a room to sit in by day and for the male travellers to sleep in at night—while inside the wagon, a "katel" or, as some called it, a "kartel," a strong square of wood, interlaced with strong leather thongs, was fitted into the wagon-sides, about midway of its length, on which mattresses and other bedding could be placed for the female travellers, and the children, for these too generally slept in the wagon. Under the bed plank, between the fore and after wheels, hooks were attached to the long wagon to carry the "rem-ketting" and "remschoen" (chain and brake) with which to control the speed of the wagon going down a declivity, and a "teerputs," or tar-pot and brush, from which to grease the axles from time to time. Under the wagon the "water-vaatje" or water-cask would also be slung. Under the bed plank, behind and between the after-wheels, a "trap" or step was slung from the axle, being fastened, also, to the points of the bed plank, but projecting beyond it, a sort of swinging tray, which served not only as a step to mount into the wagon from behind or to descend from it safely even when

the wagon was in motion, but also as a place upon which cooking utensils and the leader's bag could be fastened. Inside the wagon, on either side, there would be tied one or more "jager-zakken" (bags) made of canvas, intended to hold anything which might be required on the way, and the fire-arms, with powder horn and bullet pouch, which were always required either for defence against wild animals, or to provide venison on the way. Nor was this latter difficult, for in those days myriads of game roamed about the country, and one could fill a wagon with buck of all kinds without going very far from it.

Well!—now you have a description of the wagon in which you are to journey. Let us now see to the necessaries. Having arranged for your driver and leader, and a good span of oxen, and settled upon the date of departure for your journey, a considerable quantity of bread, biscuits and cakes must be prepared, with meat for "carbo-naatjes" (chops) and sausages, coffee must be burnt and ground, clothes put in order for the journey, and, when all is ready, an early start decided upon. At the appointed time the oxen are duly inspanned, the goodbyes said, and away you go. You arrive at your first outspan between 9 and 10 o'clock—when all hands have to set about to gather wood for the fire, gridirons, kettles and pots are produced, and breakfast is prepared and partaken of with the keen appetite which the fresh morning air of our

veldt always ensures. It matters a great deal whether the journey takes place in the summer months, when it is very hot, or in the winter months, when the cold is intense. In the former months, the time is arranged so that the cattle can rest in the heat of the day, and the journey is continued again towards sunset—going on for the greater part of the night. Care had always to be taken, summer or winter, for the proper provision of good feeding and watering places for the cattle, and regard had to the weather, fullness or otherwise of the rivers to be crossed, with other conditions which are now no longer known, but which in those primitive days were matters requiring minute consideration. Often, especially in the case of children, if the trek was long and limbs got cramped, one could get down from the wagon and walk along behind it, until one wearied, and felt it would be good to ride again. Gradually, however, the ox-wagon was superseded for quicker journeys by the horse-wagon or cart, both of which were afterwards mounted on springs, but for the conveyance of heavy loads of merchandise and produce of all kinds from the ports to inland cities, and from the farms to distant towns, the ox-wagon, somewhat modified, was mainly used, having the loads covered by great tarpaulins and drawn by 16 or 18 full-grown oxen.

It would be difficult now to over-estimate the degree of development which resulted from the

ox-wagon transport of South Africa in early days, the railways of a later time following, in most cases, the route laid down by the early trekkers.

Another occurrence which I clearly remember was when I was laid up for a period of several weeks with an attack of typhoid fever, under treatment of a Doctor Kretschma, and how during my convalescence my brother Harry caught the infection, and succumbed to its virulence, his death proving my first real grief, for I was very much attached to him.

After the return of my sisters from Cape Town, the eldest opened an infant school, in a separate building in the Parsonage grounds. I was entered as one of her first pupils, and under her tuition I was taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, to sing and recite, and I was fairly proficient in "Carpenter's Spelling" and the multiplication table. I also learnt by heart many portions of scripture, together with psalms and hymns.

About this time my father began to take me out with him on his morning walks, and I have happy recollections of his instructive talk, and of accounts of experiences which he related to me. Our walk usually took the direction from the back of the Parsonage property, through the Gamka River, which ran down just behind it, and either up or down its banks through the mimosas which covered them, or straight out across the veldt towards a little kopje, about two miles out, where he usually

rested a little while before returning. As I look upon the spot now when passing through Beaufort West in the train, all covered by station and other buildings, the exact route of our morning walks seems difficult to trace, but I think that I could still do so. On those occasions I often asked for information as to how the place looked when he first came to live there, and he told me that it was a very small place—originally meant to be a station for the interception of runaway slaves and absconding criminals who took that way to get over the Orange River. There were then only a few residents, and no church, and providing for the religious interests of the people was a veritable labour of love, involving great personal sacrifice. There was no village between Tulbagh and Graaff-Reinet, and my father's parish was practically from Zoutkloof to the Orange River. There were no roads in existence, merely footpaths, or wagon-tracks to follow in getting from one place to another. No settled farms existed then. The farmers mostly squatted along the rivers, where more or less permanent pools of water could be found, with grazing for the stock, which consisted of cattle, Afrikander sheep and horses. Little was done in agriculture. The necessaries of life were mainly exchanged or bought from the "smous," or travelling pedlar, who usually bartered his commodities for stock, which was then driven to the Cape and realised, in order to obtain fresh supplies

of marketable goods for his Boer clients. Religious services were held at a poplar tree near where the present dam wall is ; the church, a tent of wagon sails, in which the first minister, the Reverend Taylor, officiated. It was only in the year 1820 that the Kerkeraad got permission to hold the services in the house of a certain Mr. de Klerck there. Mr. Taylor left in 1825, and my father, succeeding him, at once started work for a church, which was only finished in 1830. There was, therefore, no regular congregation in the town at first. Erven were only sold in 1822. Meantime, my father had a very strenuous life which chiefly consisted of repeated journeys to various centres in the outlying districts to look up, gather together, instruct, baptise, confirm, and register his members, and these journeys could only be done on horse-back, and there were neither roads nor vehicles suitable for the purpose. He told me that usually he and one of his elders went out together, mounted, with an "achter-ryder" or groom, leading a "hand-horse" on which there was a pack-saddle to carry their bedding, changes of clothing, gowns, and Communion Plate, also articles of food for the road. The parish had been marked off in districts, which were visited in turn, and at the most populous or rather occupied parts, services would be held, baptisms administered, catechumens instructed and examined or admitted into membership, marriages performed,

and the outlying families visited. Many anecdotes used to be told of the stratagems which had to be used in order to get hold of the people. Many of them had, of course, lived years, perhaps the whole of their life, without ever seeing a "Predikant," and having heard how strict they were in prohibiting all incitements to sin and evil, and in the prevention of all habits and recreations tending to an immoral and irreligious life, they had imbibed a lively fear of the "Predikant." It not infrequently happened, therefore, that when my father reached a farm there would be no one at home, the news of his coming having preceded him, and so they had frequently to be taken by stratagem to be made acquainted with the Great Redemption. Some of these journeyings, when taken into more distant parts of the parish, had to be performed more elaborately, and then it would happen that my father would be away on congregational visitations for months at a time, and we might only hear of his movements by some letter brought in by a "smous" or other opportune person.

I remember once seeing a whole family, consisting of grandfather, grandmother, father, mother and several children of various sizes, before the pulpit in the church, being baptised, the older members kneeling, and the children standing, and it was such an unusual administration of the rite that it was deeply impressed on my memory. If I remember correctly they were Krugers, whom

my father recovered from near Prieska, whither the old progenitor had moved from the Western Province many years before. They had been practically out of reach of civilisation all the time, and by the assistance of my father and his elder they were brought to Beaufort and restored to Christendom.

As one compares the life my father and the other ministers of that time had to lead in those early years of the ministry, and the measure of personal sacrifice it involved, with the comparatively regular existence which the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church are now able to enjoy, one is in a position to gauge the value of their labours towards the redemption of the people to the Christian life, and their recovery for the Church. Nor from their many difficulties was the element of personal danger lacking. The country was wild, sparsely inhabited, over-run with beasts of prey of all kinds, lions, tigers, leopards, wolves, etc., not to mention poisonous snakes, and I could recount many and varied authentic experiences my father had on his journeys, which I heard from him and from his elders. For instance, on one of his journeys in Nieuw Veldt he and his elder were sleeping together under their "Velkombaars" (sheepskin blankets) when he was very early awakened by hearing his elder calling him in a muffled tone of voice and saying: "Mr. Fraser, Mr. Fraser, don't move, listen—a big snake has crept under our blanket

and lies across my body. Slip out quietly and call the boy—get the snake sharply by the tail and jerk him off me, and then we can kill it.” They succeeded in doing this, but it had been jerked so far that they could not find it to kill. Just think of the agony endured meantime! Nor could this be taken as an incident merely unique; sleeping on the veldt as they so often had to, they were continually in danger of its recurrence.

Another miraculous experience that my father had was this. There was a small glade in the otherwise thick mimosa bush along the river, north-west of Beaufort, and my father used to go there sometimes with his Bible, meditating, and preparing his services. A thick mimosa stump afforded a seat. One day, as my father sat there with his Bible open on his knees, lost in deep thought, with his eyes closed, he suddenly felt a weight on the Bible, and opening his eyes he looked straight into the face of a lion, who had placed his huge paw on the Holy Book. He at once thought that he would have to face death, and he prayed God to deliver him, or to receive his soul. He became aware, however, that the animal was suffering from fear, as he was quivering and breathing hard, and just at that moment there was a loud shout, and the lion rushed away into the bush. My father then found himself surrounded by a number of wild bushmen, armed with spears and bows and arrows, who were evidently hunting the animal, which they followed

into the bush, leaving my father to devoutly acknowledge his unexpected deliverance, and to render thanks to God for His gracious care over him. These bushmen knew my father, as they had belonged to a small tribe which was located on the west bank of the Gamka River, opposite the village, when he first came to it, but which had afterwards moved away towards Stolzhoek. My father showed me where this Bushman Location had been, and pointed out the spot on which they had sacrificed their offerings to their deity. This was a place about six feet square, perfectly level, and very hard, burnt quite black, and shining very brightly from the fat of the sacrifices, he thought. He deplored the fact that he had been unable to implant any knowledge of Christianity in these people, but they were deeply distrustful of a white man, and so sunk in depravity that there was no way of reaching them. I could multiply such incidents, but enough has been said to show how completely and at what risk my father devoted himself to his life-work.

I must endeavour to describe one wonderful sight which I was privileged to see, as I do not think that it will ever occur in this part of our country again, and that is an invasion of "trek-bokken." I cannot exactly fix the year in which this happened, but it must have been when I was about eight or nine years old at the time. There had been reports of a great drought having visited

the far-back country, but its effects could not be realised by us, as we had our usual rains, and our country was looking green and well. However, we got the terrible effects of the drought brought home to us in another and most disastrous manner. One day a travelling smous came to Beaufort, and brought the tidings that thousands of trek-bokken were coming in from the north, devouring everything before them, and that there was no means of stopping them. He was hastening on with his stock as rapidly as possible, to try to get clear of them, on his way to the Western Province. Still the residents did not seem to realise the nature of this visitation. Some of the very old pioneers had some recollection of having seen one like it, but that was very long before. We were, however, soon to know. About a week after the smous had left Beaufort we were awakened one morning by a sound as of a strong wind before a thunder-storm, followed by the trampling of thousands of all kinds of game—wildebeest, blesboks, springboks, quaggas, elands, antelopes of all sorts and kinds, which filled the streets and gardens, and as far as one could see covered the whole country, grazing off everything eatable before them, drinking up the waters in the furrows, fountains, and dams, wherever they could get at them, and as the poor creatures were all in a more or less impoverished condition, the people killed them in numbers in their gardens. It took about three days before

the whole of the "trekbokken" had passed, and it left our country looking as if a fire had passed over it. It was indeed a wonderful sight.

My brother, Colin Fraser, also attended the school kept by our sisters, which I have already mentioned. He was nearly four years my senior. Towards the end of 1851 my father decided upon sending us both to Scotland to receive further education there. Accordingly, all the necessary arrangements were made, and we departed from Beaufort West on the 7th April, 1852, on our way to Tulbagh, where we were joined by the son of the minister of the Dutch Reformed Church there, the Reverend R. Shand.

Our parents parted with us near the homestead of "Weltevreden," having accompanied us thus far, and their grief at parting with us for such a number of years was very great. The parting from my mother was the second grief of my life.

From Tulbagh to Cape Town all went well, and we were housed in a boarding-house at the corner of Long Street and Strand Street, which was kept by a Mrs. Turpin. We sojourned there until the beginning of May, 1852.

While we were in Cape Town awaiting the arrival of the boat which was to carry us to London, the departure of the Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir Harry Smith, took place. I was privileged to be present among the spectators on the Old Pier at the foot of Adderley Street, who

had assembled to speed his departure and bid him farewell. I was then just over eleven years of age, and small for my age. Our driver, Hans Lubbe by name, was over six feet in height, and he perched me on his shoulder so that I had a good view of Sir Harry Smith, who stood on the end of the pier giving his farewell oration, before embarking on H.M.S. "Marigold," which was to carry him to Europe.

It will be readily understood how deeply this incident imprinted itself on the mind of a boy of that age, who, living in a country village, had up to that time witnessed only two functions of any importance. These were :—

First.—The ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Government School at Beaufort, and the procession in which we took part.

Second.—The meeting held on the Market Square, Beaufort, and attended by the Beaufort residents and the farmers, in connection with the Anti-Convict agitation, which meeting my father opened in prayer, but which culminated in a riot on account of the refusal of certain residents to illuminate their premises for the occasion. This was later the cause of proceedings at law.

Before my brother Colin and I sailed from Cape Town our portraits were taken by the old daguerrotype process, and I insert a copy of this portrait here.



Left: My brother, Colin Fraser. Right: J. G. Fraser.
(Taken at Cape Town, 1852).

EPISODE II.

Experiences during the voyage to London.

THE second episode of my life commences with my departure for Europe in May, 1852.

The ship which carried us to London was the Royal East Indian Steam Packet Company's boat—by name the "Hellespont," Captain Watt commanding. The vessel was anchored in Table Bay for a couple of days to take on water and other necessaries for the voyage. The passengers had to go out to the ship and get on board by the rope ladder then in vogue, which to my young mind appeared to be a most venturesome proceeding.

My brother Colin, young Shand, and I were under the care of the Reverend W. Fletcher—who was accompanied by his wife and children—and there were a good many other passengers. I still vividly remember a Mr. Nicholson, and his wife and nephew, who had been to Australia, a Mr. de Pass and his wife and daughter, also a Mr. Bensusan, and many others. We were about eleven young folk, much of the same age. The captain was exceedingly kind to young people, and a God-fearing man. He taught us several hymns on Sundays—among which I specially remember, "When Mothers of Salem."

Our voyage was prosperous and pleasant—the visit of “Father Neptune,” the ceremonies accompanying it, and the shaving of all of us who were crossing the equator for the first time were all very interesting and amusing.

The ports of call in those days were Cape St. Vincent, where we coaled, and Sierra Leone, where we took on several coloured passengers, members of the Council there. Two incidents occurred at St. Vincent, where we overtook the “Marigold,” which had Sir Harry Smith on board. A day previous to our arrival one of the marines on board the “Marigold” had died, and the funeral took place while we were there, so that I witnessed the conduct of a funeral at sea, with the procession of boats, and the ceremony of the committal of the coffin, after the service, to the deep. This left a very great impression on all of us young people.

The other incident took place as we were steaming away from the anchorage—when a Portuguese soldier was discovered in our fore-castle. He was evidently trying to escape his service, and it would have been a breach of Portuguese law and friendship to have allowed him to travel with us. Our captain therefore signalled the fact that the soldier was on board, and a boat came off from the shore to fetch him. When it was near enough, the stowaway was thrown overboard, picked up, and taken back to St. Vincent.

Our voyage proceeded prosperously, and in due course we sighted the "Eddystone Light." This being the first lighthouse we had ever seen it attracted a great deal of attention. We called in at Plymouth to leave the mails, and then proceeded up the Channel. The passage up the Thames, with the numberless ships, the forest of masts of the ships lying in the river, and the great busy docks, made a lasting impression on my young mind, and I can even now clearly recall the scene.

After landing we proceeded to London by rail, and another wonder dawned upon our experience, when we found ourselves travelling at such a speed over the tops of innumerable houses, which were below the level of the permanent way. On arrival in London we were taken by the Reverend W. Fletcher to the house of his brother-in-law, a certain Captain Adams, in Burr Street, where we abided pending provision for our further progress to the north of Scotland, to our temporary home at Inverness. While we were in London we were taken to see the Tower, Thames Tunnel, the Queen's Palace, and other places of interest.

EPISODE III.

The voyage from London to Inverness.

THE third episode of my life covers my departure from London in June, 1852, and my arrival in Inverness in July, 1852, after a journey lasting five days, and the period of my education in Scotland until my return to South Africa in December, 1860.

In company with my brother Colin and young John Shand, I left London towards the end of June, 1852, under the charge of Captain Dowling, commanding the steamship "The Duke of Sutherland." We had a rough passage through the North Sea, and the difference in the motion between this vessel, which was a paddle-boat, and the "Hellas," which was a screw steamer, was so great that we all became very seasick, and were very glad indeed when we reached Inverness, the end of our journey, where we received a loving welcome from two widowed sisters of my father, my aunts Alison and Young, and a number of cousins. The knowledge of life and conditions in South Africa was still at a minimum in Scotland, and we were highly amused when my Aunt Margaret Young remarked to my Aunt Jane Alison: "But Jane,

they are WHITE"—the good lady having evidently expected that we would be coloured in complexion!

My brother Colin and I became inmates of my Aunt Margaret Young's household, and John Shand was boarded with a Mr. Thomas McKenzie, who was master of the commercial department of the Free Church Institution of Inverness, in which we were entered as scholars shortly after our arrival.

I could fill volumes of reminiscences of my experiences during our sojourn in the capital of the Highlands, and words would fail me to express adequately my sense of the love and kindness bestowed on us by one and all of our relatives, and the friends of my father.

We were introduced to a number of second cousins of my father's, namely, Donald Fraser, who was a Bailie of Inverness, and to his brother, Thomas Fraser, who had a large ironware business in the High Street, to John Fraser, Solicitor in Inverness, to the Reverend Simon Fraser, minister of Kilmorack, and to Hugh Fraser, Laird of Abersky, cousin of my grandfather, also to the Reverend Simon Fraser, minister of Kiltarlity, and to various other Fraser relatives, who had known and loved my father before he left for South Africa. Then we met our own cousins, the Alisons of Munloch, my cousin James Alison being factor to Sir Evan MacKenzie of Belmaduthy, and my

cousins the Stuarts of Charlestown. Among all these dear friends and relatives we were welcomed as their own blood, and many a happy visit was paid during vacation times. I must also specially mention being taken to see a very old woman, who, I was told, had been nurse to my father, and whose joy at seeing two of her "Colin's" children was very great.

During the vacation in 1854, my father's eldest brother, Uncle John Fraser, arranged that we should visit him in Liverpool where he was in business, and my aunts accompanied us on our journey through the Caledonian Canal, Loch Ness, and Loch Lochy, as far as Fort William, where Uncle John met us, and accompanied us to Glasgow, through the Crinan Canal, and afterwards thence to Liverpool, by the North-Western Railway, where we spent a month, and made acquaintance with his family, of whom there is now only surviving the youngest daughter, Mrs. William Duguid, of Merchiston Park, Edinburgh.

While we were resident in Inverness we received several visits from fellow South African students in Holland, among whom were Thomas Burger and J. F. Ziervogel. The former was afterwards President of the Transvaal, and the latter practised as a doctor, I think, in Graaff-Reinet. The others were the Reverend Luckhoff and Charles Murray, afterwards ministers of the Dutch Reformed

Church at Colesberg and Graaff-Reinet respectively. The most interesting incident during our stay in Inverness was the visit of the Reverend Andrew Murray, and Dr. Alexander John Fraser, also a relation of my father, who were delegated by the burghers of the Orange River Sovereignty to protest against the abandonment of the country. This was my first knowledge of the policy which was being pursued by the British Government in connection with that territory.

Our studies at Inverness were prosecuted till July, 1856—when we were sent to Aberdeen to enter on our college course there. We resided with the Reverend J. C. Brown there, who afterwards became Colonial Botanist in Cape Colony. We first attended private classes under Dr. James Ferguson, in preliminary preparation for the college, and we matriculated and entered "Marischal College" that session. I continued my studies in Arts and Medicine until 1860. In 1858 my brother Colin went to Utrecht, Holland, and entered the Divinity Hall there to qualify as a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, while I remained in Aberdeen pursuing my medical studies. Just about this time, however, some irregularity occurred in connection with my remittances, and I suddenly found myself without means. In order to tide over the period which must elapse before the position could be remedied I applied for, and was

appointed to a surgeoncy on a Peterhead whaler, bound for the northern seas, which, however, came to grief on the Ronhead Rocks, and I lost the voyage. I therefore went to Liverpool to consult my uncle, and to try whether I could get an appointment on one of the Hudson Bay Company's ships. I found, however, that the season was already too far advanced, and that the last ship had sailed. In view of all the circumstances therefore, my uncle advised that I should return to South Africa and obtain the necessary means of support to complete my medical course and obtain my diplomas. I followed his advice and returned to South Africa, acting as surgeon on the ship "Sir George Grey," which arrived in Table Bay from London on the 19th December, 1860, two days after I had celebrated my twentieth birthday.

This now brings me to the fourth episode of my life.

EPISODE IV.

Sojourn at Cape Town and Worcester.

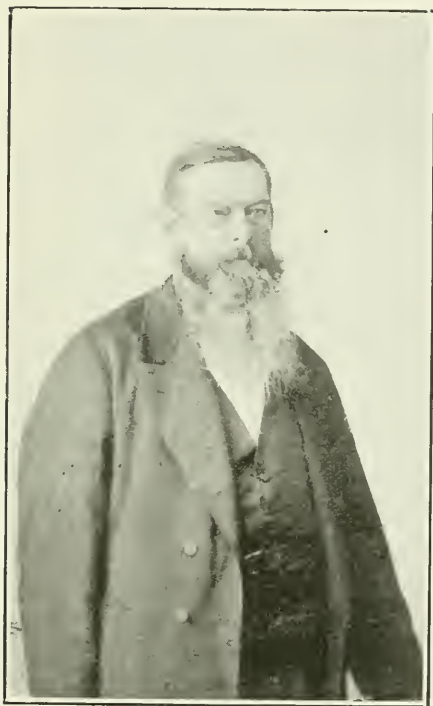
Arrival at Home. Efforts to secure assistance to finish studies futile. Settled at Philippolis. Became a Burgher. Arrival of President Brand. Conference Volunteer Officers. Line Commando. Basuto War.

AFTER spending some days in Cape Town with my brother-in-law, Mr. Thomas Watson, and his family, I received a letter from my father directing me to proceed to Worcester, as it would be more convenient for my eldest brother to meet me there, and I accordingly did so. However, owing to the drought which was then being severely felt, several weeks elapsed before I could be met and continue my journey to Beaufort. Meantime, I was hospitably entertained by the Reverend A. Murray, the Reverend Sutherland, and Mr. Jacobus Meiring. My brother eventually arrived, and I returned to my home and family, where the joy of reunion, after so many years, was very great.

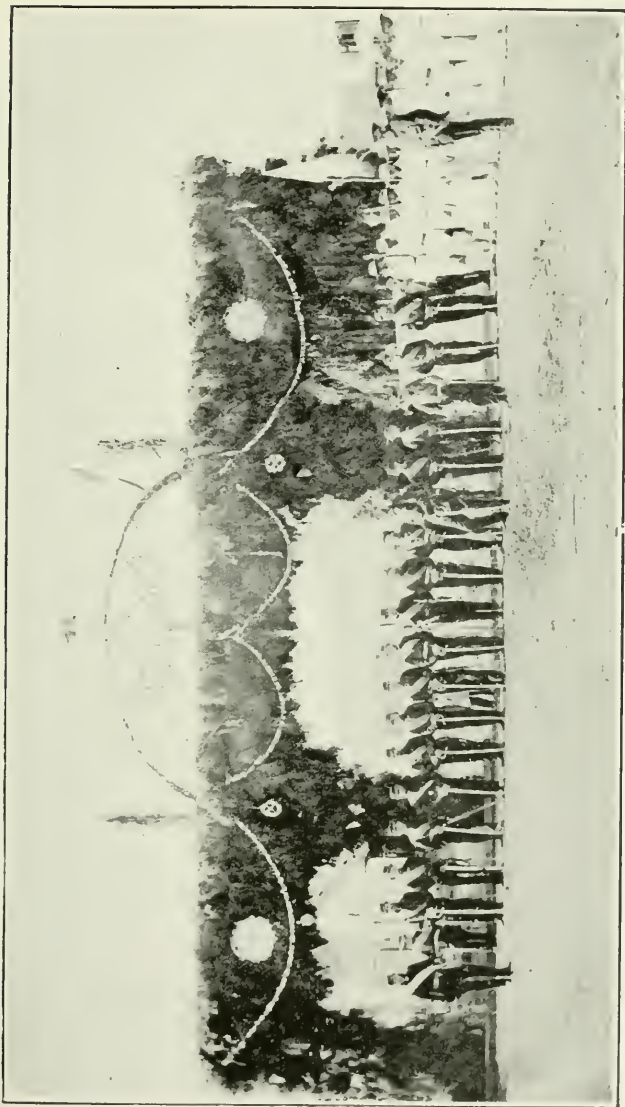
From what I could gather, the drought was a very severe set-back to the country generally, and my father's circumstances were such that I realised that there was very small prospect of his being able to provide the necessary means for

me to return to finish my studies, and that I would therefore have to look to my own efforts to secure my desire. With this object in view, I tried several plans to obtain the necessary means, but without avail. I acted as a locum tenens for a doctor in Richmond for some months, also as acting district surgeon at Fraserburg. I then obtained a cart and horses, and a supply of drugs, and went away into the back-country to earn money amongst the Trek-Boers, but the expenses left no margin. On the severe illness of my mother, I returned to Beaufort, and arranged to stay on my brother's farm and assist him,—pursuing my practice at the same time, as opportunity offered. I did this for a period of some eighteen months, until my mother's death, devoting as much time as I could to attending on her.

My brother Colin Fraser had meantime completed his studies in Holland, qualified as a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and returned to Beaufort, where he received a call from the congregation of Philippolis in the Orange Free State, which call he accepted. Having been intormed, upon enquiry, that I could obtain a licence to practise in medicine in the Orange Free State, and so be able to provide for myself, I decided to accompany my brother Colin, and to strike out there. I may say in passing that I applied to the Volksraad for admission, but found myself barred by law.



J. H. Brand, President,
Orange Free State, 1864—1888.



Arch of Welcome to President Brand, arriving at Philippiopolis, 1864.

I arrived in Philippolis on the 10th July, 1863, and having been provided with the necessary drugs and equipment by a former fellow medical student of mine at "King's College," by name Dr. W. Grimmer, then recently appointed district surgeon at Colesberg, I started practice and was successful.

I have now detailed the circumstances which led to my coming to the Orange Free State, which was destined to become my home for so many years.

I decided to throw in my lot with the State in which I now found myself, and I became a burgher thereof in January, 1864, being qualified thereto by six months' residence, according to the constitution then in force.

The first experience I had in the public life of the village of Philippolis was in watching the course of the election for State President, which resulted in the choice of Johannes Hendricus Brand, a barrister in the Supreme Court of Cape Colony. As he was to be inaugurated early in the following year, 1864, it was decided to form a Volunteer Corps to meet him on the banks of the Orange River, and escort him to the town, and on his way through the district towards Fauresmith. I was elected by my fellow volunteers as Second Officer in Command. We acquitted ourselves creditably in the performance of our duties, and afterwards

resolved to keep up the corps, of which I was chosen captain on the resignation of my superior.

Shortly after the inauguration of President Brand, the troubles, which had been brewing on the Basuto border ever since the undecided issue of the war of 1858, began to assume prominence, and negotiations were commenced and concluded with Moshesh to have the settlement of the matters at issue submitted to the arbitration of Sir Philip Wodehouse, then Governor of the Cape Colony, and High Commissioner of the Cape Colony, who undertook to decide upon the question in October, 1864. In July, 1864, President Brand invited the officers in command of the various volunteer corps to meet in Bloemfontein to enact regulations for these bodies, to arrange for their joint action in case of hostilities breaking out. To that meeting my lieutenant, Mr. P. J. Blignaut, then magistrate's clerk of Philippolis, and I were delegated, and we met in Bloemfontein the officers of corps from various other districts, namely, Captain Von Brandis, of the Winburg Corps, Captain Truter of the Kroonstad Corps, Captain Bertrand of the Boshof Corps, and Captain Heyermans, who attended as honorary representative of the Bloemfontein Corps. We completed our task, and before departure we were photographed. The possession of this photograph fell to me, and I attach hereto a copy of the photograph,

Conference Volunteer Officers, Bloemfontein, 1864.



FROM LEFT: Captains Truter, Kroonstad; Bertram, Boshof; Von Brandis Winburg; Fraser, Philippolis; Heyermans, Bloemfontein; Lt. Blignaut, Philippolis.

in which the delegates appear. Of these officers I am now the sole survivor.

When Governor Wodehouse came up to settle the border line, a considerable force was called up to meet the President and the Governor on the border. The line was ridden from K. B. Beacon up to Gouverneurskop, and from there to Sinkonyellashoek, and so clear a boundary was laid down as, it was hoped, might end all difficulties.

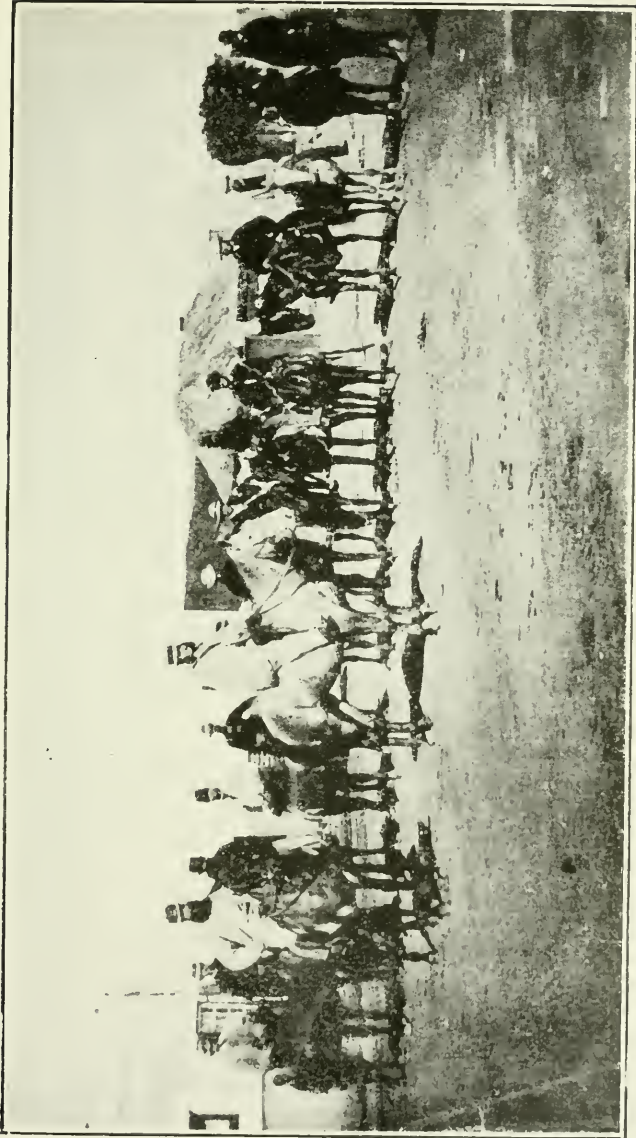
When the commandos were dismissed on the departure of Governor Wodehouse, Veld Kornet Cilliers, with his men from the Kroonstad district, were appointed for the northern part of the line, and I and my men for the southern part, to act as border guards, to see that the Basutos duly removed their belongings from the Free State side of the boundary which they had wrongfully occupied till that date. This task we duly fulfilled, and I received leave to return with my corps, in January, 1865. Unfortunately, however, the settlement of the border question did not put an end to the recurrent troubles between the border residents and the Basutos, and war proved to be inevitable.

The Basuto War of 1865-1866, began with a raid made by the chief Letsoane, a son-in-law of Moshesh, in November, 1864, who with a large body of followers invaded the Bethlehem district. This took place after the settlement

of the boundary between the Orange Free State and Basutoland had been arranged by the High Commissioner, Sir Philip Wodehouse, and although Moshesh undertook to punish Letsoane, nothing was done, and he allowed him and his stock to find refuge in Basutoland. In January, 1865, Sekelo, a son of Moshesh, came to Bloemfontein as delegate from Moshesh, with a letter to the Government. On his return, he stole a large number of horses from several of the Free State burghers, and on remonstrance and a request for restitution, no satisfaction was made.

In April, 1865, two Free State burghers, by name Van Rooyen and Pelsler, were apprehended by armed Basutos, on Free State territory, imprisoned and beaten, and after this another Free State burgher, Michael Muller, was dealt with in the same manner. As no remonstrance had any effect, an ultimatum was sent to Moshesh demanding the release of the burghers, and the surrender of the assailants to the magistrate of Winburg, with fifty head of cattle as compensation, before sundown on the 8th July, failure to comply to be interpreted as a declaration of war. No reply was made, the thefts and deeds of violence on the part of the Basutos continued, and war was declared. Orders were issued that 100 men were to be commandeered and sent up to the Basuto border from the district of Philippolis. I was elected Field Cornet of the township of

Basuto War, 1865.



First quota from Philippolis, O.F. State. In front: F. K. Hohne, Landdrost, and J. G. Fraser, Field-cornet.
Photographed by Chas. Hamilton, 4th May, 1865.

Philippolis, and at a meeting of the district Field Cornets it was agreed that I should furnish, as quota from the town, fifteen men. I accordingly commandeered this number, together with the necessary wagons, horses, provisions, slaughter stock, and ammunition, and started with my contingent on the 5th May, 1865, our orders being to reach the border on the 10th May, where all the contingents from the other districts of the Orange Free State were to assemble. On the way the other quotas from the Philippolis district, under Acting Commandant Fourie, joined up, and we reached Bloemfontein on the 7th May, reported to President Brand, and I got orders to move on to Winburg at once and to escort the guns and ammunition from Bloemfontein to the commando then assembling at Leeuwkop, under the chief command of General J. J. Fick. Martial Law was to be proclaimed on the 9th May, 1865. I reached our destination on the 29th May, 1865, having been delayed on the way by very heavy rains, and rivers in flood, on the banks of which I had to stay for over two days at a time before it was possible to cross. On the 11th June, 1865, we moved on to the Basutoland border, having in the meantime organised and seen to equipment, instituted guards, regulated sentry work, and the like. I had commenced a diary, which, although not narrating other than prominent occurrences, I kept up during the

campaign. I will not, however, burden this narrative with more than a few particulars regarding some of my personal experiences during that very interesting time. Firstly, I will give some account of the battle at Maboleta, the chief town of Paulus Moperi, which we reached on the night of the 13th June, 1865. Our force was contained in four laagers.

For the benefit of those who may chance to read this book, and who may not know how a laager was formed, I must explain that we made the laager by having all the wagons drawn up in circular form, with the poles interlocking, erecting our tents outside of the wagons, but next to them, with a sod wall thrown up for protection around the tents. Each laager had a gateway to admit of the oxen, horses, and slaughter-stock being brought in at night. The native drivers and leaders slept under the wagons, and the men in the wagons and tents. Sentries were placed at intervals all round the camps or laagers. It happened to be my turn to attend to the placing and relief of the sentries that night, and I can still very clearly recollect what a bitterly cold night it was, my fingers feeling frozen to my sword, and the great relief of being able to get back into my tent after each round had been made, and to get sufficiently warmed up for the next. This was the first encampment in the face of the enemy, and as our scouts and spies, sent out while

we were still on the march, had reported that large bodies of Basutos were in the vicinity all round us, the greatest care and vigilance had to be observed. As I had not foreseen the need of an overcoat, I had none with me, and I consequently contracted a severe cold, which later resulted in valvular rheumatism, with which complaint I was troubled for some years afterwards.

On the 14th June, 1865, the War Council decided to move out with a horse commando and two guns, and offer battle. Accordingly, about 11 a.m., a force numbering 800 men, with two guns, was ordered out, and went over a rise near the camp, towards a ravine which gave entrance to the Basuto township of Mabilela. Not finding signs of the enemy there, they wheeled to the right and went through a neck between two hills, and the Basutos at once commenced to fire from a ridge facing that neck. Commandant Bester (to whom I brought General Fick's order, whose aide-de-camp I was for the day), with his commando, at once stormed the ridge and silenced the firing there. We then moved round to the right of that ridge, through another neck, in order to pursue the Basutos who seemed to retire in that direction. We had, however, no sooner got through the neck, than we observed a very dense signal smoke arising from the mountain behind which Mabilela was situated, and from every quarter all round us dense masses of Basuto

warriors stormed towards our force. We thereupon retired towards the first neck, through which we had passed, where our position could be flanked by the hills on each side, and there we encountered the whole Basuto force. We gave them the full benefit of the grape and canister from our guns, and from our ordinary firearms so rapid a volley of rifle fire that they broke and fled, followed by shell fire from our guns, leaving, if I remember rightly, about 200 killed and wounded on the field. We sustained one loss in the person of a burgher by the name of Wessels.

General Fick desired to pursue the fleeing enemy, but President Brand, who had come out from the laagers, thought it better not to do so, and requested me to return with him to camp. This encounter was my baptism of fire, and as the Philippolis division had been told off to guard the laager in case it was attacked during the absence of the force, I only had this experience owing to the fact, as before stated, that I had been appointed to act as aide-de-camp to General Fick for that day.

After I had escorted the President back to camp, I returned to General Fick again, and then the body of Wessels was brought in. All signs of the Basutos had disappeared.

A War Council was held the next day, and the majority of the officers desired to go right into Maboléla with another horse commando,

but President Brand had heard that there was insufficient ammunition and vetoed this, although the majority of us considered that there would be sufficient to carry us through. As matters turned out it was as well that the President had acted as he did, for that evening scouts brought intelligence that instead of preparing to attack us again, the Basuto commandos had split up into several divisions and had moved into the Orange Free State, raiding, plundering, and burning the homesteads. This, of course, necessitated our commandos also being broken up into divisions and moving back along the border to follow up the Basutos and protect our people against the marauders. General Fick, with the commandos of Bloemfontein, Fauresmith, Philippolis, and Winburg, then moved back towards the centre of the Orange Free State border, covering Bloemfontein and Winburg, while another force went northwards, towards Bethlehem and Harrismith, and a further force moved southwards, to cover Smithfield and Bethulie. The wisdom of this apparent retreat was seen afterwards.

On our journey down the line we had several skirmishes. On the 25th June, 1865, a patrol went out and brought in men from Fauresmith and Philippolis, also the Reverend Clulee, and Captain Briggs, with an order from President Brand to move down towards Reddersburg. On

the 27th June, General Fick, with 400 men of the Bloemfontein, Fauresmith, and Philippolis divisions, and one gun, complied with that order, leaving the rest of the men on guard at Leeuwkop, as intelligence had come in of inroad in the Kroonstad district. On the 29th June, at Klipplaat Drift, intelligence reached us that a strong raid had been made into the Bloemfontein district, and Commandant Van Zyl was sent, with 100 men, to try to catch up with the raiders. We then moved on to "Lyons Farm," and we were just forming our laager there when the cry arose "the Kaffirs are coming." My wagons were the last to come in, and we still had our horses in hand, when the General ordered me to ride out and reconnoitre, and stated that he would send some of the others, when ready, to follow me. We started at once, and soon gave chase to what turned out to be the Basuto Brandwacht, or advance guard, of the marauding commandos of Moperi and Masoupa, with sons of Letsea and Molitzane. The advanced guard raced away over the ridge between "Lyons Farm," "Verkeerde Vlei" and "Wildebeestfontein," and we only once got near enough to give them a volley. The Basutos were well mounted, and were armed with the usual type of fire-arms, also with assegais and battle-axes. When we reached the top of the ridge, and came into view of the homestead of "Wildebeest-

fontein," we could only see hundreds of Basutos, hundreds of cattle and horses, and thousands of sheep, and outspanned wagons, all mixed up together. We could not dream of attacking that horde, and we realised moreover that unless the men from the laager joined us very quickly our little party was in jeopardy, should the Basutos come out and attack us. However, shortly afterwards, the burghers under Commandants Roos and Fourie joined us, and I consulted them as to what course they intended to pursue, pointing out that it appeared to me that the Basutos were preparing to move up the right side of the spruit which passed from the homestead to the left of the ridge we were then on, and that unless we engaged them, they might get away past the laager and escape into Basutoland, with all the plunder and loot they had evidently raided in the Bloemfontein district. These two officers decided that they would rather inform the General and await his orders. I told them that I did not agree with them—the sun was sinking, and it would soon be too late to do anything, as darkness would be upon us. I could not, however, move them in their decision. Just at that point, I noticed a small body of horsemen riding very swiftly towards us, from a point on our left, and when they came nearer I recognised the horse that the leader of the party was riding, and knew that it was Com-

mandant Louis Wessels of Bloemfontein, with some of his burghers, who were approaching us. As soon as he reached us he greeted us, and asked what our plans were. He was informed by Commandants Roos and Fourie that they were waiting until the General could come up. Wessels at once stated that if we waited it would be too late to do anything, and turning to me he said: "Field Cornet, what do you say?" I then gave him my opinion to the effect that we should move down and attack. He asked me how many men I had, and I told him 18. He stated that he had 25, adding that if we moved together we would at any rate be able to prevent the Basutos getting past the laager, and so into Basutoland with all their plunder.

Commandant Louis Wessels then called up his men, with his Field Cornet, Abraham du Plooy, and explained the position to them, myself doing the same for my men, and we decided to attack. We accordingly moved along the ridge to get to the spruit on our left, and so between the Basutos and the ravine which would enable them to pass our camp. On the other side of the spruit was a solitary kopje, which Wessels thought we ought to take. I noticed, however, that the Basutos had grasped our plans, and that Masupha's commando of black-plumed warriors was mustering to charge us. I immediately pointed out that there was no

time to reach the kopje, and that I thought that it would be better for us to get through the spruit, and line up on the banks. It formed nearly a half-moon. Wessels agreed, and we had just achieved this, when the Basutos stormed down on us, hundreds of them, evidently with the object of getting between the spruit and ourselves, to surround us. Orders were given that not a shot was to be fired until the word of command to do so was given. I noticed that several of the men we had left on the ridge were riding hard to join us, and they reached us just in time to help us repel the charge. We let the Basutos come on until every shot could tell, and then we let them have it. Nearly all the leaders were shot and fell, and when we gave them a second volley, the Basutos turned and fled headlong. We mounted and followed, every now and again dismounting and firing into them, and so we chased them right clear of the homestead of "Wildebeestfontein." Just as we had succeeded in clearing the homestead, Commandant Van Zyl's commando, which had followed hot on their trail, came up and took them on the left flank, and Commandants Roos and Fourie, and the rest of their men joining in on the right, we drove the Basutos, with the exception of the horses, clear of all the wagons, cattle and sheep, and, as we found later, they never halted until they reached

Basutoland. The horses they managed to take along with them, but all the other looted stock, goods, wagons and captives we retook.

When we returned to the laager, Captain Briggs of the Ninety-Sixth Regiment, who was on furlough, and had come to the camp some days previously, having been a spectator of the whole fight, expressed himself very strongly in admiration of the enterprise and dash displayed by our people in this attack.

A War Council held that evening decided that the laager was to stay over some days, so that the owners of the plundered goods might have an opportunity of recovering possession thereof, and further, to replenish the commissariat and supply of ammunition, and secure any necessaries the men might require for the continuation of the campaign.

Proper border guards having now been arranged, and the re-equipment of our commando effected, we moved into Basutoland again on the track of the defeated raiding commando, which was marked all the way to the Moperi Spruit by carcasses of horses and discarded articles of loot, and our course brought us to the vicinity of the French Mission Station, Mequatling. We had been informed that a commando under Commandant de Villiers, of Harrismith, had also moved in from the north, and ought to be in our vicinity, but we failed to get into touch

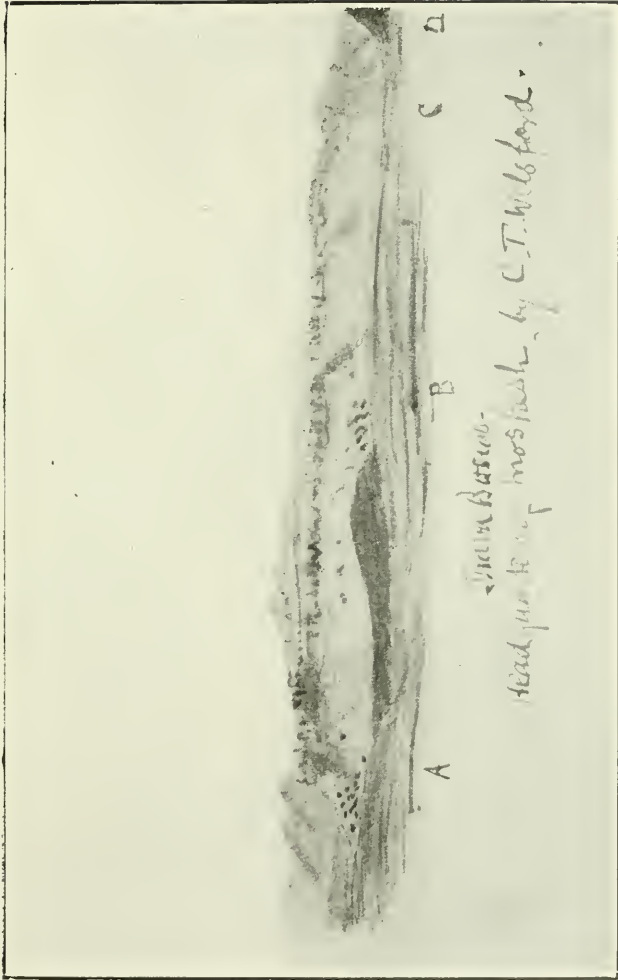
with it. While our scouts were seeking information as to the whereabouts of this force, intelligence was brought into camp that two of Molitzane's people, one alleged to be his son, who were concerned in the murder of a Free State burgher on the border, had been seen at the Mission Station at Mequatling. General Fick at once organised a horse patrol to visit the station, and to search for these murderers. It can readily be understood that this expedition caused considerable excitement among our burghers, as some of the relatives of the murdered man were with us, and considerable feeling had been caused by the alleged action of the missionary, the Reverend Dumas, and his family, in affording asylum to these men. I formed part of this expedition with my contingent, and as we approached the station I received orders from General Fick to place my men all round the principal buildings in order not only to protect the inmates, but also to prevent the escape of any native therefrom. Accordingly, I took possession of the premises, and placed my men all around it so as to control every exit. As there were a considerable number of outbuildings, apart from the main station, I requested the General to order some men from another commando to take charge there. When I had finished my dispositions I went to the Mission House and introduced myself to the

inmates, who asked me if it was true that they were to be submitted to the indignity of having their premises searched, asserting that there was absolutely no cause for suspecting them of harbouring the alleged murderers, and that they would not submit to such degrading orders. The lady members of the mission were very much excited, and threatened all sorts of measures against anyone who presumed to carry out the search. One result obtained from the indignant utterances of one of the ladies was the knowledge I received of the position of Commandant de Villiers' commando, which led to our union with it later. Knowing the condition of the minds of the burghers, both in regard to missionaries generally, at that time, and their determination to have the premises thoroughly searched, I warned Mr. Dumas and the ladies to be exceedingly careful in their conduct and utterances at that time, because any opposition to the search would rouse a storm of bad feeling, and might produce a catastrophe, and that although I was ordered to guard and protect the inmates and the premises, I was only a subordinate officer, and could be over-ruled. I stated that I could not see how, under the circumstances, the execution of the search could degrade them, and that I would do my best to get the General to appoint reliable officers in the search party, and that nothing

would be done to hurt their "amour propre." I besought them to be calm, and to make the best of the position. Just at this moment some commotion occurred outside, and on going out I found several burghers inside my sentries, evidently wishing to come up to the house. I at once ordered them away, doubled my men round the house, and told them that my orders were to admit no one until the Council of War had settled matters. This incident served to emphasize what I had told the inmates as to the feelings existing, and they asked me to inform the General that they would no longer object to the search being made. This I did, and if I remember correctly the search was entrusted to Commandant Louis Wessels, Captain Hanger, and the Reverend Clulee, and they at once proceeded to carry it out. I guarded the front door myself. After the lapse of about an hour the search party returned and reported that they had found no natives hidden in the Mission Station. The commando was then ordered to camp, to be followed by me after I had seen the premises clear of the burghers. This afforded about half-an-hour for interchange of conversation. The mission people came around me and thanked me for the advice I had given them, and for the protection of my men. I pointed out to them that I had really done nothing more than indicate the most reasonable

and common-sense course for them to pursue. They assured me that they were, however, in great danger, as the chief, Molitzane, would resent their having allowed their premises to be searched for his son, and he might avenge it upon them. They asked me to promise that if they sent word to camp I would try to get leave from the General to go to their help. This I did. I remember thinking that two things were rather strange in connection with this matter, and these were, firstly, the inexplicable relief which they all showed when the search was over, and, secondly, their apprehensions as to anger on the part of the chief if they knew that there were no murderers harboured there. Many years afterwards, on meeting Madame Dumas and a daughter at Bloemfontein, I was informed in reply to my enquiry on these points that there had been only too great cause for relief and for fear on that occasion.

I would just like to extend this episode to cover the attempt to attack Moshesh's stronghold. I insert here a photograph which I have had taken from a water-colour sketch which was made and presented to me by a friend and companion in my troop, a Mr. Charles Thomas Welsford, who went through the campaign with me. I have placed the letter "A" in line under the chief approach to Moshesh's residence, "B" under the corner of Thaba Bosigo, directly



→ Drain Basin -
Head part of Moskoke by C.T. Wilford.

above "Job's house," "C" under the corner of Thaba Bosigo, "D" opposite the Coegoolo, to enable you to follow to better advantage the account of the attacks.

On the 3rd of August, 1865, the first attack took place. It was arranged that Commandants Wepener and Louis Wessels, with 1,100 men, should make the real attack at point "C," launching from the Coegoolo point "D," while General Fick with 900 men and three guns was to feint an attack on point "B," above "Job's house."

On the sketch you will find a dark hillock, dark because the grass had been burnt off it. Behind this hillock, between it and Thaba Bosigo, is a valley through which a spruit runs, and between the hillock and the green rise before it is a slight dip. On the day of the attack I was told off with my men to join in the attack on "Job's house," and we mustered at the appointed time on the green rise, where a considerable body of burghers was drawn up. From this spot we were watching the progress of the attack on the corner "C," and as soon as we saw the force there reaching the foot of Thaba Bosigo, the adjutant, Mr. Jan Lange, rode up and asked if I was ready, and on my asking where my support was he indicated a body of burghers. Calling on my men, he and I moved towards the spruit which we had to pass before moving up to "Job's house" below

the corner "B." Up to that moment we noticed no life on the mountain at corner "B." The Basuto force seemed to be concentrating on corner "C," but no sooner were we through the spruit, and moving towards "Job's house," than a large body of Basutos appeared on corner "B" and commenced firing at us. I then ordered "Charge, full gallop" towards "Job's house" and we raced up under a veritable hail of bullets. I afterwards heard that the corner was defended by Sophonia Moshesh, with two hundred riflemen who were all trained for their work, and I will bear witness that they gave us some very hot hours during that day. When I got to "Job's house" I found it was closed, and I at once got the back windows opened, and ordered the men as they got in to break out a beam, and knock some apertures through the walls facing the mountain, so that they could return the fire from the mountain with greater safety, as they soon did very effectively. The horses we had pulled together, close in behind the house, so that no bullet could reach them. Then I sent out four men to a little kraal to my right so as to guard against attack from that side, and did the same on the left side of the house, and our fire speedily reduced that from the mountain. The adjutant, Mr. Lange, was furious to find that not a single man of the commando which he expected to support me had moved. A few men from the Fauresmith town

contingent came up a deep slit on the right of my position and joined us, but we had to hold our ground as best we could, without any aid. The adjutant afterwards rode out again to endeavour to get help for us, but did not succeed, for none came, and he told me afterwards that he could not get a man to move. Meantime, I had to move about, keeping my eyes everywhere, because our position was most perilous, and I have often wondered since why the Basutos did not rush our position and kill the lot of us, as they could so easily have done. Fortunately I could watch the progress of the attack on the right, and felt sure as long as it was pressed there our position would be pretty safe, as the enemy seemed to concentrate all their efforts on corner "C," and if it succeeded there I might be able to get up on corner "B." Well,—we had held "Job's house" for about four hours, when I began to notice men retiring from the corner "C" attack, by threes and fours, towards the Coegoolo point, and I concluded that the main attack was failing. The retreat of the whole body soon followed, and I therefore began to make preparations to retire from our hot-bed as well. I called in the men from my right and left, which was the signal for hotter fire from the mountain. Then I got all the men from the house, made each secure his horse, and arranged that when the word was given they should rush out by fours, the rest meanwhile firing a

volley to cover their retreat. First I let the Fauresmith men, who had no horses, rush out, and then the mounted men. I saw one man hit, and topple off his horse, and I sent out my sergeant at once to his assistance. Fortunately the bullet had just grazed his forehead, and knocked him silly, but he soon righted, and with Turner's help got his horse and reached safety. Of the third batch one man, by name Poulton, got a bullet in his thigh, but managed to keep his seat, and got out. Meantime, the fire was getting hotter on those of us who were still sheltering behind "Job's house," and I started another batch of four. I had meant it to be six, remaining to the last myself, but two of the men had allowed their horses to get out of hand, and these strayed away to the back of the large hut on my left. I therefore found myself left with these two men, more or less panic-stricken, behind the house. There was no time to play, and I gave them to understand that I had no intention of staying there to be killed by the Basutos, and, further, that I did not mean to let them be killed either, and so I forced them to rush to the hut and secure their horses, and they too got clear. I then pulled my brave horse "Nassau" in behind the house, and fired a couple of shots towards the mountain, and was just about to mount when I noticed a Basuto drop down behind a little wall about 40 yards off. I felt sure that as soon as I moved off

he would shoot me, and so I waited in readiness, and just when he thought I would be moving he lifted himself to fire. I was before him, however, and whether I got him or not, he dropped, and mounting my horse I just flew out from behind "Job's house," and though I could feel the bullets licking my clothes all the way to the spruit, none actually struck me. As I lay down to drink and quench my thirst, one Basuto marksman seemed to follow me with his rifle, because first one bullet struck the rock on one side, and then another on the other side, so that I mounted and rode out of the spruit, feeling sure that if I stayed his third bullet would hit me. Well, it was with a deeply grateful heart I acknowledged that through God's good hand over me I had escaped a hundred deaths that day, for I felt that every moment might be my last. I was still more grateful that I had been able to see all my men safely out of the danger in which we had been placed. To crown all, we were told that it was all a mistake our being called upon to take "Job's house" as nothing more was meant than to make a show of force on that side of Thaba Bosigo, and prevent the Basutos from concentrating their whole force on corner "C." This was a matter between the Commander-in-Chief and the adjutant, but I took good care to have my further orders verified.

The second attack on Thaba Bosigo took

place on the 15th August, 1865. Warnings to all officers to prepare for an early expedition had been issued the previous evening and accordingly a very large force moved out from the camp to the rise opposite Thaba Bosigo. Apparently, however, the point of attack had not been decided upon, for a Council of War of all the commandants had been called and a long deliberation ensued. Although we left the camp shortly after daybreak it was nearly ten o'clock when we were all marched along the rise to the left until we arrived opposite point "A," facing the ordinary approach to Moshesh's residence. Orders were then issued by General Fick that the mountain should be scaled at that place, and the burghers of Smithfield, Bethulie, and Philippolis, under the chief command of General Louw Wepener, should lead the attack. Accordingly we moved down to and crossed the spruit, covered by two guns which had shelled the mountain, and then we moved up to attack the "schanses" (stone wall defences). Barend Vorster, commandant of Philippolis district, led in the centre, and my contingent was with him. All went well while we climbed up the mountain. Although the Basutos opened fire upon us, we reached the actual rock fissure, which gave access to the top of the mountain in the immediate vicinity of Moshesh's house, unharmed, but then sharp, close fighting with fire-arms, assegais, and rock fragments set in, and the

Basutos made a strong defence, and had us at a great disadvantage. Across the top of the fissure, which was about six feet wide, a strong stone barricade had been drawn, and from behind this the Basutos fought. Well, we succeeded in getting right up to this barricade, and had silenced firing from it, shooting several of the enemy as soon as they lifted themselves either to fire down on us, or to hurl their spears. It was to try to overcome that defence that General Wepener found his way up to the left of the fissure on a level with the barricade, and with his revolver endeavoured to clear the enemy out of the schans on that side, an extraordinarily brave attempt, which unfortunately cost him his life, as it left him uncovered to the fire of the enemy, and he was shot dead, close to the schans. In the centre we made several strong rushes, to try to get out, but without avail. The Basutos seemed to have provided themselves with rough boulders of sandstone rock, and as soon as we made a rush these were hurled promiscuously over the top, coming down upon us with considerable force, and hardly to be avoided, wedged as we were between the walls of the fissure. In this manner many of us sustained severe contusions, and one man was fatally hurt. Unfortunately a large boulder struck me too, breaking the stock of my rifle clean through, and hitting my thigh with such force that I was thrown down. However, I

was soon up again, but suffering great pain in my thigh, which commenced swelling very much. By this time the afternoon was waning, and Commandant Vorster noticing my maimed condition said to me, "You cannot be of any help here now. Get down the mountain to General Fick, and tell him what the condition is here. Wepener is killed, and several others, many are wounded, and I see no chance of taking the schanses with the remaining burghers. The sun is setting, and unless he can bring up a fresh lot of men who can go out with a rush and take the schanses, I will have to abandon this attempt." I therefore put Turner in charge of my men, and with considerable discomfort, owing to the stiffness and soreness of my limb, I managed to get down, meeting the General at the foot of the mountain, with about thirty of Sinkonyella's men, who, he said, were all he could get to respond to his appeal for a relieving and sustaining force. All further effort became unnecessary, however, for while I was still speaking to the General we heard a terrible noise like a thunderbolt, and shouting from the mountain, and had to realise that the burghers had forsaken the point and were coming down the mountain like an avalanche, a truly heart-breaking sight, and I could not help thanking God that I had been sent down in advance. That was the second defeat sustained by our forces at the hands of the Basutos in the attempt to

take Moshesh's stronghold, and other measures were resorted to, which eventually led him to sue for peace.

It was fully three weeks before my thigh became sufficiently better to enable me to mount my horse again for active work.

These few incidents will, I think, serve to give some impression of what commando life was like.

Various other engagements and incidents took place, the narration of which, up to the cessation of hostilities, would fill a considerable volume. I will merely mention the fact that my own time in the laager was fully occupied, even when there were no opportunities of meeting the enemy, or for other commando activities, in the following manner. From time to time cattle and horses were captured from the Basutos and brought to the camp, and I noticed that considerable numbers of these were claimed by burghers on the plea that they had been stolen from them by the Basutos. In many cases I felt sure that no legal claim existed. As the Government was at great cost to keep the commandos in the field, I brought this matter to the notice of the War Council, and a Court of Enquiry was appointed, consisting of three officers and a secretary, who were authorised to take charge of all captured stock and horses when these were brought into camp, and to

make an inventory of them. Thereafter a day was appointed by notice given in the camp, when these officers would hold a Court of Enquiry, claimants of stock and horses were given the opportunity of making their claim, and having their witnesses heard under oath, after which the camp commandant produced the bullock, cow, or horse that was claimed, and the correctness of the affidavits was decided by the Court.

A proper record was kept of all proceedings and judgments, and afterwards handed to the Government. If these could still be found it would be seen how many of these claims altogether failed to be proved, and the animals were therefore awarded to the Government. Those animals which were fit for slaughter were, according to need, used for food, and the rest, when a sufficient number had accumulated, were sent out under escort to the Government, to be sold to cover the war costs. I was chairman of this Court of Enquiry in our camp for many months, and claims for captured animals speedily became very few and far between. Where the claim was proved, the ownership was at once recognised. By this means not only was I kept actively employed, but I was able to save the public treasury from considerable loss. I append hereto a photograph of the first quota of men I took to the front from





My Wife,
Dorothea Fraser (born Ortlepp).

Philippolis. It was taken just as we were about to start on our journey, after we had taken farewell of the Landdrost, Mr. Höhne.

The hostilities continued with considerable success to the Free State forces, until peace was made on the 26th March, 1866. I was, on several occasions, happily able to render services, personally, and with my contingent, for which I had special mention in the Government Gazette.

At the close of the war, finding that I had contracted rheumatism of the heart, I took up my residence on the farm "Klipkraal," about eight miles south-east of Philippolis, and there I commenced farming. I had been advised by Doctor Grimmer and others to give up the night work of medical practice, with the idea that a more quiet life might rid me of my trouble.

About this time I decided to make profession of my faith in Christ and adhesion to the Christian Church, and I became a member of the Dutch Reformed Church at Philippolis. And there, too, on the 18th April, 1866, I was married to Miss Dorothea Ortlepp, to whom I had become engaged some twelve months previously. My brother, the Reverend Colin Fraser, performed the ceremony, in the presence of my bride's parents and other relatives, together with my brother's family.

During the period between the date of peace and the month of March, 1867, many incidents

occurred on the Basuto border which showed that the Basutos were not satisfied with the terms made, and that they were slowly preparing to renew the struggle. In view of these incidents, and taking into consideration the losses and sufferings undergone, and the efforts made by the Free State people during the previous hostilities, with the likelihood of further and still greater burdens and sacrifices having to be incurred by the State, which was without adequate resources in men, money and supplies, a number of prominent residents of Bloemfontein met, and considered it advisable to bring the critical condition of affairs to the notice of the High Commissioner of the Cape Colony. They urged the expediency of establishing Federal Union between the Orange Free State and the British Colonies, and by that means putting an end to the continual outbreaks of hostilities, which could only result in the ruin of the State. A memorial to that effect was drafted, and signed by about 160 residents of Bloemfontein, and a duplicate thereof was also sent to Philippolis with the object of obtaining further signatures. One day, on going into Philippolis from my farm to procure certain wool-bags and other necessaries for the shearers who were then engaged in shearing my sheep, this memorial was handed to me with the request that I should affix my signature. As I was in haste

to return to my farm I did not delay to notice to whom the document was addressed, and as I agreed with the opinion which was expressed on the condition of the country, and recollected that not so many years previously petitions from all parts of the State had been sent in to the Volksraad in favour of annexation to the Cape Colony, I thought it right to sign, and I did so. Of this action, in after years, as will appear herein, certain parties, either feeling themselves aggrieved in some way, or through sheer malice, tried to make capital against me, impugning my good feeling towards the Government of the State and my loyalty as a burgher, without, however, achieving any abiding injury to my character. The reason why I was thus singled out amongst all the signatories to the petition became plain to me afterwards.

In August, 1867, in consequence of the murder by Basutos of two Free State burghers within the territory of the State, and various acts of aggression and theft, war was again declared against Moshesh. As I was still an invalid under the heart affection from which I was suffering, and had resigned my position as Field Cornet, I was relieved of the obligation of personal service in this campaign, and continued to remain in residence on my farm until the owner, owing to adverse circumstances, had to dispose of it. As I could neither purchase it, nor secure any other farm near it, and further,

as I could not expose my wife or myself to the vicissitudes of trekking, I decided to realise my stock, to take up my residence in Philippolis, and to apply for a place in the civil service of the State. In this I was successful, and was appointed clerk to the Landdrost of Philippolis, at that time Mr. Pieter Jeremias Blignaut, who during his lifetime served in several magistracies, and eventually became Government Secretary, a position which he held until the later political change. Mr. Blignaut was also frequently appointed Acting President during the absences of the head of the State, and he was deeply respected and loved by all who knew him.

My entry into and course of service on the civil staff of the Government forms the period of the fifth episode in my life.

EPISODE V.

Experiences in Civil Service. Abolition of office at Philippolis. Re-appointment at Boshof, 1869. Trouble about Diamond Fields.

DURING my stay in Philippolis, and in the course of my official contact with prominent burghers in the district, I found that a systematic propaganda was being carried on by a certain clique which had succeeded in other districts in securing adherents to a certain secret association, which, though distinctively benevolent in origin and object, was being used to acquire political influence with a view to the control of the elections. Having found what ignorance existed as to the motives of this propaganda, and how necessary it was to put some of my fellow citizens on their guard as to its real object, I took action which effectually stopped this scheme. I gained for myself, however, the enmity of the promoters, which was soon manifested in repeated attacks upon me on the ground of my having signed the Federal Memorial I have already mentioned, alleging treason to the Government, and unworthiness to hold a position in the Civil Service, the evident object being to get my

appointment thereto cancelled. The Volksraad, however, found no reason to take action against me by refusing confirmation of my appointment, as there was no allegation of any unfitness for the office, or failure of confidence on the part of the public, or breach of any law which proscribed signature to such a memorial. Further, my service as an officer in the field, as well as in the post I then held, was proof of my honest intention and performance of duty, and so the hostile agitation only succeeded in so far as it secured abolition of the office, but no censure on me personally. Moreover, I was immediately appointed Public Prosecutor and Agent of the Government at Philippolis. Thereafter I appealed to the President, giving him full particulars of the whole matter—stating that I was not in office of any kind when I signed the petition, that there was no law in the Orange Free State which prohibited such signature, that there was therefore no reason to consider my action penal, and that I considered that it reflected on the fairness of the Volksraad to lend its ear to insinuations or allegations against an official, without any enquiry as to their truth or falsity. The result was that I was shortly thereafter appointed Landdrost's clerk at Boshof, confirmation of which appointment by the Volksraad on the 5th May, 1871, made the opinion of that body quite clear concerning me. I occupied this position till July, 1871, and during my term had to

reorganise entirely the management and discipline of the office, which had fallen into a state of chaos. I had also to go to Jacobsdal as Acting Landdrost, in the absence during several weeks of the Landdrost, as member of the Combined Court of Landdrosts meeting at Fauresmith, and on my return I found that I then had to perform all the duties of the Landdrost of Boshof, who was prevented by serious illness from attendance upon his work.

For a considerable time previous to the date of my appointment, the ownership of the territory formerly belonging to Cornelis Kok, and purchased by the Government of the Orange Free State from Adam Kok, to which claim was made by one Waterboer, was matter of question between the Government of the Cape Colony, which was acting in Waterboer's interests, and the Orange Free State. Voluminous correspondence regarding it had been carried on between the two Governments without result. In consequence of the discovery of diamonds, the large influx of diggers, and a threat to take forcible possession of the territory on behalf of the claimant, Waterboer, an armed commando was called up to guard against any breach of the possession of that region, pending negotiations regarding the rights thereto. The commando, about 1,500 strong, arrived at Boshof towards the beginning of March, 1871, and it fell to my duty, as magazine master in charge of Government ammu-

nition, to serve out to the officers in command, against their receipt, such quantity of ammunition as they stated to be requisite. As the whole matter was afterwards submitted to arbitration, however, the commando was withdrawn, and the whole history of the dispute regarding this territory, and the final settlement of the matter, was afterwards, under a special authorisation of the Volksraad, written up by Captain Augustus Lindley, in his book entitled "Adamantia."

In July, 1871, I was ordered to Bloemfontein, and appointed private secretary to President Brand, a position which readily enabled me to become intimately acquainted with his character, traits of thought, political convictions, and the far-sighted trend of the policy which he deemed essential and necessary to be pursued by the Orange Free State Government. The facts upon which that policy was based were these :—

1. The central position of the Orange Free State amidst the various colonies and States of South Africa.

2. The possession of the whole seaboard by Great Britain, under Convention with which power, dated the 23rd day of February, 1854, we held complete independence.

3. The intimate relationship of the Free State people with the colonists of the Cape and Natal, on the one hand, and the burghers of the Transvaal Republic, on the other.

4. The numberless matters which emphasised the interdependence of the various peoples and the necessity for amicable co-operation to secure the best interests of all.

Upon these facts President Brand based his unvarying contention that the utmost care was incumbent to observe, in our relations with our neighbours, the greatest deference and to maintain the most cordial understanding, so that, as the realisation of common interest developed mutual confidence and ever-growing intimacy, the various portions of South Africa might eventually find themselves prepared to become UNITED SOUTH AFRICA.

It was my privilege to continue in close connection with my great chief during the following five years, in which I held the appointments of Secretary to the Volksraad, Registrar of the High Court, and Master of the Orphan and Insolvent Chambers. During this period I was frequently called upon by President Brand for assistance in his official correspondence and in other matters. For instance, when the Volksraad decided to be represented in the Industrial Exhibition at Philadelphia, America, I drew up, at his request, a brochure descriptive of the Orange Free State for the information of visitors to the Orange Free State section, and this being the first memorandum of its kind, I attach hereto a copy. (See Addendum No. 1.)

Finding my emoluments insufficient for the adequate support of my growing family, and having seen the possibility of better and more independent means of living and maintenance, I had gradually taken up, during my service as Registrar of the Courts, a study of the law. Having passed the necessary examinations, and qualified as practitioner before the High Court of the Orange Free State, I resigned my official position, and commenced legal practice in Bloemfontein on the 1st July, 1877. Herewith the Civil Service episode of my life came to an end, and the sixth episode commenced, which covers the whole period of my career as a member and as Chairman of the Volksraad. This, for clearness sake, I have dealt with, as far as possible, according to subject.

EPISODE VI.

Career as Member and Chairman of the Volksraad of the Orange Free State.

I MADE a successful start in my legal practice, and found myself fully justified in having made the change. In the following year, namely, 1878, I was requested to become a member of the Volksraad, and was elected as such for the ward Knapzak River, in the district of Philippolis. I took my seat on the 3rd May, 1880, which I held till the following year, when I became member for Bloemfontein.

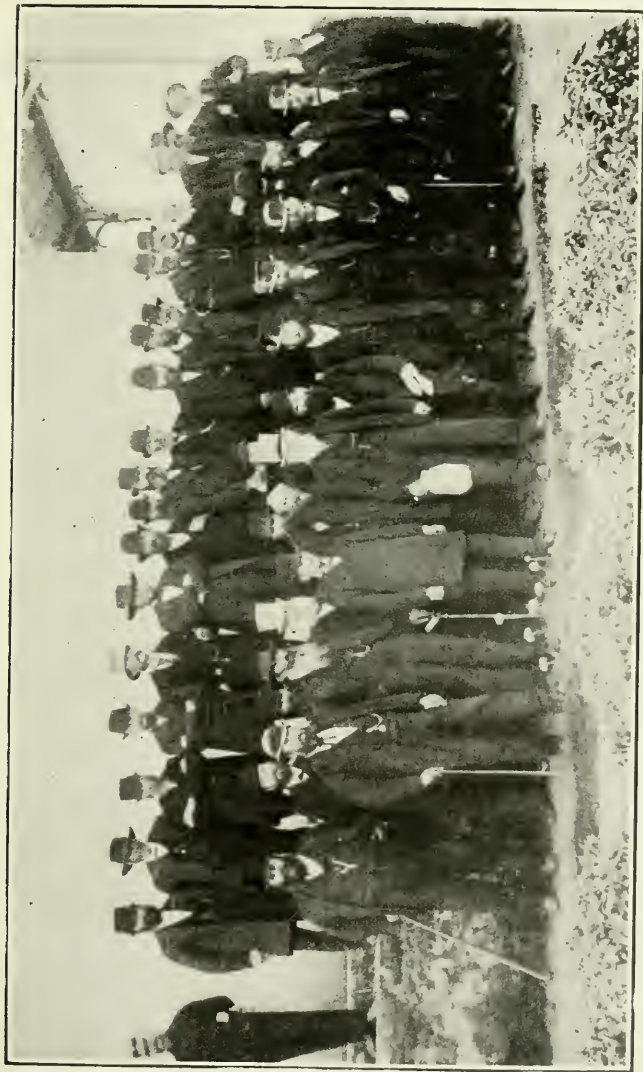
I found that I could still carry on my business, and was speedily encouraged to take a special interest in the legislative work of the country. It would be superfluous to specify all the various matters of legislative and administrative reform in which I took a responsible part. The records of the Volksraad show that my life was devoted to the affairs of the country, from the time that I served as secretary of that body in 1872, under the chairmanship of Mr. Gerrit Petrus Visser, of "Lockshoek," in the district of Fauresmith, who had held the position for many years, was highly

respected by all who knew him, and had the confidence of the members.

Our personal co-operation in regulating the work of the Volksraad was of the most kindly and intimate character. Mr. Visser retired from the Chair, on account of ill-health, on the 23rd June, 1879, and died shortly afterwards. He was succeeded by Mr. Tobias de Villiers, who continued in the office until I was chosen to succeed him on the 5th May, 1884. A photograph of the Volksraad taken at that time is inserted here. In each of the succeeding twelve years I was re-elected to the chairmanship. The first public function in which I had to take part was the laying of the foundation stone of the Presidency by President Brand on 23rd May, 1885.

Shortly after I became a member of the Volksraad it appeared to me that the rules upon which the business of the Volksraad had been regulated for years back, and on which it was working, however suitable they might have been to a more primitive condition of affairs, had become antiquated to such a degree that revision was essential. With the creation of new districts the number of Volksraad members had been largely increased. Discussion, which hitherto had been practically unlimited, had now to be regulated with a view to the proper despatch of business. Above all, to prevent hasty legislation, enactment was necessary to provide the usual three stages for consideration.

The Volksraad, Orange Free State, 1885.



FRONT Row : J. Wessels, Van Hoitema (Secretary), T. de Villiers, J. Naude, A. Burger, F. van Reenen, P. M. Botha, J. Olivier, I. Siebert, A. J. Roux, P. van der Merwe, J. G. Fraser (Chairman), C. C. Mathey, D. van Niekerk, C. G. Radloff, C. J. Wessels, I. J. van Niekerk, I. G. Kruger.

BACK Row : Lt. Holtshausen, M. Prinsloo, P. Swanepoel, J. G. Louw, J. Snyman, J. M. Theunissen, S. Fouche, J. Botha, J. Wessels, J. Pistorius, C. Klopper, H. Steyn, J. de Waal, M. Heyns, M. Bornman, R. Macfarlane, A. Bester, G. du Toit, Cornelis de Villiers.

1875

1875

A commission was therefore appointed, and the provisions recommended in its report were passed with good results.

LIQUOR LEGISLATION, 1880.

Another matter which engaged my special attention soon after I became a member of the Volksraad was the position of the liquor legislation of the Orange Free State, and the apparent want of control of the sale of intoxicating liquors in the country generally.

On enquiry into the law on the subject, I found it was regulated under the provisions of Ordinance No. 10/1856, which had been enacted under the initiation of President Boshof, and was mainly a copy of the Cape Colonial Ordinance on the same subject. As commonly happens, the law was good enough : its application unsatisfactory. The chief opening to abuse lay in the fact that no limit as to the issue of liquor licences was provided. These had been and were being issued wherever they were applied for, and canteens for the sale of liquor of all sorts abounded to the extent of one licence to every thirty males of the able-bodied population. They were to be found all over the country, on pretty well every road travelled by the public—far removed from all police supervision or other control, with the result that drunkenness, violence and theft multiplied alarmingly ; in fact the material and moral well-being of the people was being undermined.

On the 20th May, 1880, the Government Secretary stated that in the previous year the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church had petitioned the Volksraad to revise the Ordinance, and the Executive Council had been instructed to appoint a commission, composed of the State Attorney and himself, to bring in a revised draft. The revised draft was dealt with, and several alterations of the existing law introduced. Licensing commissions were appointed, while the issue of licences was limited to settled townships or to farms along the high roads (not within 12 miles of such township or of native borders) where proper accommodation for travellers and their animals could be provided by the applicants. Suitable penalties for breach of the law were also laid down, and this draft became Ordinance No. 5/1880.

In the following year, 1881, a determined attempt was made to alter some of the provisions of the liquor law, but failed. In 1883 certain amendment of the Ordinance of 1880 being proposed, over 80 petitions containing above 4,000 names were presented on behalf of the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church and other bodies, all demanding the abolition of outside canteens. It was pointed out that the canteen-keepers were enriching themselves at the cost of the majority: that they were the cause that many became drunkards and loafers:

that the youth of the country was being misled, and, generally, that they were productive of poverty, misery, and crime. A commission of five members, of whom I was one, was appointed to revise Ordinance No. 5/1880, and bring in a revised law in terms of the said petitions. This law was passed in the same year (Ordinance No. 10/1883); its chief provision being that licences could only be granted in cities, towns, and mines under Government control.

In 1884, and again in 1885, it was sought to overturn this legislation, but the attempt failed. The last attempt was made in 1886, but Ordinance No. 12 of that year still further secured the prosperity of our State and people against such a threat. The beneficial results flowing from the abolition of outside canteens was then already apparent, and it is a satisfaction to me, as I look back over those years, to feel that I was able to support the efforts made to that end.

The year 1884 saw three special sessions of the Volksraad, and many important subjects were submitted to be dealt with, and a chief place had to be given to the affairs of Moroka.

On the 25th February, 1884, a defensive alliance which President Brand had concluded with Sepinare Moroka, who had succeeded to the chiefship of the Baralongs shortly before, was brought up for ratification, and, after some discussion, was confirmed. I do not think,

however, that at that moment any member of the House anticipated that that Treaty would be ended by the treacherous murder of Sepinare Moroka on the 10th July, 1884, and that, in order to put an end to the hostilities and troubles in Moroka's territory, and the dangers accruing therefrom to the Orange Free State, its annexation as proclaimed by President Brand on the 12th July, 1884, would have to be decreed, and a number of legislative measures would have to be enacted, regulating the control and administration of that territory.

In this session also the question of the claims of the Orange Free State to the Customs Duty levied by the maritime colonies on all goods imported for consumption in the Orange Free State assumed prominence, and a commission, of which Messrs. MacFarlane, Klynveld, and I were members, was appointed to consider and report upon the matter. This commission's Report is comprised in the minutes of the Volksraad of 27th June, 1884, page 729, and was adopted on the same date. It is mentioned here specially, as the annual discussions on this question culminated in the appointment of delegates to the CUSTOMS UNION CONFERENCE, of which I had the privilege of being one, in which Conference the claims of the Orange Free State were admitted, and a Convention arrived at, guaranteeing the payment of our share of the Customs,

less a commission for its collection at the coast. Generally, however, now that the most troublesome boundary questions had been settled, the Government was able to devote more attention to matters of internal development, such as the establishment of an Education Department. Its first superintendent was Dr. John Brebner, who undertook the direction of education in the Free State in 1874, having previously been professor at Gill College, Somerset, C.P. I had learned to know him in my student days at Aberdeen, for he had been classical master in the Grammar School there and had, on occasion, taken charge of the Greek classes at Marischal College when our professor, Dr. Brown, was called to the General Assembly of the Free Church in Edinburgh. Under the excellent and practical methods of Dr. Brebner, the educational interests of the Orange Free State were firmly established and successfully promoted.

The whole system of legal procedure too was altered and brought into more effectual judicature in the country's interests by the establishment of a new High Court and Circuit Courts, while the jurisdiction and procedure, both in criminal and civil law, was modified in accordance with modern usage, and assimilated to the procedure in vogue in the Cape Colony. In every respect therefore President Brand brought forward to the consideration of the Volksraad the legis-

lation he deemed requisite to promote the best interests of the people. This is, however, not a history of the Free State, or a life of its greatest President, to do justice to which would necessitate a concentrated study of the records of the Volksraad, and of the circumstances and conditions which called for and controlled President Brand's measures. More than all, there needs a study and knowledge of the mentality of the people over whom President Brand presided, and whom he was endeavouring to educate up to the demands, economic and political, of the modern state. Frequently the President was not immediately successful in securing adhesion to measures which were new or not previously applied in their experience, but with marvellous patience and tact he always succeeded ultimately in attaining his object.

While matters affecting the political development of the State were claiming more and more attention, I should like to say that it must not be thought that I took no interest in other matters generally affecting our social conditions. Immediately on becoming resident in Bloemfontein I had registered my membership of the Dutch Reformed Church, and I was called upon to bear my share of work. The Sunday School was resuscitated and the superintendentship was laid on me, a post in which I served for thirty-four years. The duties of the diaconate and, for

many years, of the eldership, together with the financial matters of the Church, devolved upon me. With Dr. Brebner and Mr. G. F. Faustmann, and their successors, Dr. Brill and Mr. P. F. R. de Villiers, I co-operated on the Financial Commission in the successful establishment and administration of the Sustentation Fund and the Ministers' Pension Funds until the year 1918. Moreover, I felt it my duty to secure healthy organisation and associations for young men, and made repeated efforts by way of a Mutual Improvement Society, and Young Men's Christian Association, but with varied success, a result which I ascribe to the lack of mutual effort on the part of the various religious denominations, for only by such mutual and determined support could these agencies in the interest of youth be maintained. Education, too, was a matter that demanded attention, and I gladly served as Trustee to Grey College on behalf of the Synod, acting as Secretary of the Board for twenty-five years, and as a member thereof till the reconstruction in 1904. I am proud, too, to recall the share I had in the establishment of the Infant School, and the Girls' High School "Eunice," the secretaryship of both of which I discharged till after the change of Government in 1900.

For twenty years I represented the capital in the Volksraad to the best of my ability, discharging the duties and serving the interests

which fell to my care. Thereafter, till 1910, in the Legislative Council and in the Parliament of the Orange River Colony, and for ten years, till 1920, in the Senate of the Union Parliament, I had at heart the interests of the Orange Free State. It all represents a long stretch in a long life, but nothing ever, I dare say, gave me greater pleasure or deeper satisfaction than to promote the true interests of the Free State as a whole, and its capital, Bloemfontein. But I would accentuate "the true interests" of the people, so far as I could judge them.

THE TRANSVAAL WAR, 1880-1881.—CLOSER UNION MOVEMENT.—THE AFRIKANDER BOND.

About this time the relations of the Free State with its neighbours called for very careful handling. I refer more particularly to the petitions presented to the Volksraad praying that steps be taken to establish closer union between our State and our neighbour across Vaal River. This was the beginning of an agitation which was doubtless the outcome of the sympathy evoked between the kindred peoples by the annexation of the South African Republic.

On the 12th April, 1877, Sir Theophilus Shepstone entered the South African Republic, with a small detachment of mounted police, took possession of Pretoria, proclaimed the annexation of the South African Republic, and established British Govern-

ment. Later, Major Sir Owen Lanyon was appointed Administrator of the Transvaal territory. This Government continued for about three-and-a-half years, during which time deputations from the Transvaal burghers, who had protested against the action of Sir Theophilus Shepstone and the annexation of the territory, made repeated endeavours to get the annexation revoked, representatives being sent to London for that purpose, but without avail. Eventually, as the result of the tactless attitude of the Administrator, meetings were held under the guidance of Messrs. Paul Kruger, M. W. Pretorius, and P. J. Joubert, and measures were taken for the organisation of the burghers, and the re-establishment of the Republican Government. The necessary proclamations were issued under the appointment and authority of the said three leaders, who were elected as a Triumvirate, to carry out the decisions of the revived Volksraad towards recovery of their independence. Hostilities broke out towards the end of December, 1880, between the Transvaal burghers and detachments of the 94th and 24th Regiments, and other units of British regiments. On the 7th February, 1881, a lengthy detailed official despatch was sent to the President and Volksraad of the Orange Free State, relating the origin and development of the War of Independence, and correspondence then passed between President Brand and the Transvaal, and

the British authorities, in order, if possible, to institute negotiations for peace. On the 17th February, 1881, a special session of the Volksraad was called in which President Brand stated that a Neutrality Proclamation had been issued, and that he was endeavouring to secure the consent of the belligerents to an armistice during the discussion. On the 22nd February, 1881, a telegram was read by President Brand announcing that the belligerents were now in communication with each other regarding terms of peace, and on the 3rd of August a Convention was signed, re-establishing the independence of the South African Republic.

About this time a political association termed "The Afrikaner Bond," which had its origin at the Paarl, in Cape Colony, was founded by the Reverend S. J. du Toit, in the years 1879-1880. It was an expression of the animosity aroused during the British occupation of the Transvaal, and the anti-British feeling which inspired a certain section of the Dutch population. The object of the Bond was to foster the national consciousness which had been awakened by the Transvaal War of Independence, 1880-81. The Bond was to be the preparation for the future confederation of all the States and colonies of South Africa, under their own flag, but it was only upon the retrocession of the Transvaal by Gladstone in 1881 that it took definite shape, and branches were established on a draft constitution

in the Colony and Transvaal. In 1883 an amalgamation took place between the Bond and the Farmers' Protection Association, which was a society started by Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr and Mr. D. P. van den Heever to watch over the general interest of farmers, and to arouse in them an interest in political life and parliamentary elections. By this amalgamation a very much wider scope for the propagation of the Bond principles was obtained, and ostensibly a change was made in the declaration of its policy whereby the open expression of hostility to everything English was eliminated, and its aim represented as the union of the Dutch and English people in South Africa in a common antagonism to Great Britain's power, influence, and presence in the land. Mr. Reitz, at that time Chief Justice of the Orange Free State, and Mr. Carl Borckenhagen, editor of the "Express," a paper published in the Orange Free State, were strong protagonists of the Afrikaner Bond, and tried by every means to establish branches of it in the Orange Free State. On a certain afternoon these gentlemen called at my house in Bloemfontein and invited me to accompany them to a meeting to be held by Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr, in which he was to advocate the establishment of a Free State branch of the association. I, however, refused point-blank to have anything to do with it, pointing out that we had our own Government, flag, language, and

every privilege of a free nation, and I saw nothing but danger to the peace of our State in the proposed establishment of that political association in our midst. It was about that time, too, that the meeting took place at Richmond, in the Cape Colony, at which the amalgamation of the Bond and the Farmers' Congress took place. One morning President Brand sent for me to his office, and handed me a letter, which he had just received from the High Commissioner in Cape Town, in which he asked the question whether it was with the President's knowledge and approval that the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State was attending and taking part in a political meeting at Richmond, in the Cape Colony, the object of which was clearly hostile to the British Government. When I asked whether Mr. Reitz did not mention the object of his journey when he asked for leave, the President said that he had only asked for leave to visit the Cape Colony, and added: "What must you do with such an individual, who does not say a word, but goes and exposes me to such a breach of ordinary etiquette, to the suspicion of being accessory to it and to the humiliation of having to reply to it?"

It was not long after this that President Brand declared his opposition to the existence of the Afrikaner Bond in the Orange Free State at a meeting of the burghers at Smithfield, on the 19th October, 1881, when the following Address was presented to him:—

Member and Chairman, Volksraad, O.F.S. 79

*Address to His Honour the President of the Orange
Free State.*

Smithfield,

October 19th, 1881.

Honourable Sir,

The undersigned members of the youthful union of the Afrikaner Bond for this district humbly request also to be permitted to show homage and respect to Your Honour.

Your aim is also our aim, namely, to take care of the welfare of South Africa, wherein Your Honour's useful and active life affords us so excellent an example, which will be gratefully and lovingly held in remembrance by our descendants.

Great Leader! In the event of our weak endeavours not being unwelcome to you, we shall expect to see, ere long, our imperfections corrected.

To tender homage to Your Honour as an Afrikaner is to us encouraging and enjoyable. We will strive to lighten your heavy task and hope that your life, that is so indispensable for South Africa, may by God's will be spared.

We remain, etc.,

JOHS. SCHNEHAGE,

S. J. M. v. NIEKERK,

W. C. PEETERS,

and about 90 others.

To this Address His Honour, President Brand, made the following reply :—

Smithfield,

October 22nd, 1881.

Gentlemen,

I would wish to repeat in writing what I have said verbally, and to tender my gratitude to you for the hearty welcome with which I was received at such a distance from Smithfield, and make known my objections to the propriety or suitability of the Afrikaner Bond.

It was agreeable to me to meet you once more in health, among whom I have so many old friends and acquaintances, but it was not gratifying to me that in your salutation of welcome you placed the Afrikaner Bond so prominently in the foreground. However, since this has occurred, I may not pass over it in silence, and exercise my duty in warning you against the dangers which I see beforehand in order that the seeds of dissension may not now be sown where unity should exist.

I am a thorough Afrikaner. My career demonstrates that I love the Free State and that I have endeavoured to promote its interests. You are Free Staters and inhabitants of South Africa.

Poets of all nations have sung of patriotism. Rightly, says Vondel, "love for his country is *inborn* in every man." Therefore it is not necessary for you nor for me to be members of the

Afrikander Bond to show our love for our native land. Have not you, have not all the inhabitants of the Orange Free State, proved, during the troublous times of the war in 1865-66, that you were bound together in soul and spirit to fight for and to vindicate our rights?

To foster and promote that harmony, that hearty co-operation and friendly relationship among the inhabitants of the Orange Free State, and the whole of South Africa, must be our closest endeavour. This can only be done by drawing closer the bonds of love between one another, and this we can only accomplish by giving offence to no one and respecting the feelings of each one as we would that others should do unto us: by everyone in his own sphere doing his best to promote the welfare and prosperity of the Orange Free State, and thereby also of the whole of South Africa, and by strengthening and confirming the most amicable relations with the Governments and inhabitants of the neighbouring colonies.

If you consider any amendment in this or that matter necessary in the Free State, use, then, the means which for that purpose are afforded by the constitution. Your representative will support your wishes in the Honourable the Volksraad in the same way as he has done hitherto, and earnestly strive to do what is best for the country or its inhabitants.

But as your friend I must tell you plainly that I entertain grave doubts whether the path which the Afrikaner Bond has adopted is calculated to lead to that unity and fraternisation which is so indispensable for the bright future of South Africa. According to my conception the constitution of the Afrikaner Bond appears desirous of exalting itself above the established Government and forming an *imperium in imperio*.

Wishing, etc., etc.,

I remain,

Your sincere well-wishing friend and servant,

J. H. BRAND.

A Congress was held at Potchefstroom, from whence the petition for closer union with the Orange Free State originated, almost simultaneously with the production of the petition before the Volksraad. A motion was brought forward to enter upon an offensive and defensive alliance with the South African Republic. The Volksraad, however, rejected these petitions, but it was an open secret that this agitation was started and fostered by persons who, it was well known, would persist therein.

On the 28th May, 1886, this matter was brought before the Volksraad again, and after discussion was again rejected under declaration that as

long as the South African Republic was under Suzerainty to the Government of Great Britain the Volksraad could not entertain it. This did not, however, end the matter, because in the following session it was moved in the Volksraad by Mr. Abraham Fischer to ascertain from the Government of the South African Republic whether it would be willing to receive a commission from the Volksraad to discuss matters of mutual interest to both, and a reply being received consenting to receive such a commission, the Volksraad, on the 17th May, 1887, nominated Messrs. Myburgh, Klynveld, and myself as members of the commission to proceed to Pretoria and discuss the matter with the Government there. Mr. Klynveld secured the appointment of Mr. Carl Borckenhagen, the editor of the newspaper, "The Free State Express," as secretary to the commission. To this appointment I felt it my duty to object, as the said gentleman held no official position under our Government at that time, and, moreover, I did not think it advisable that he, as a pressman, should be admitted to the confidential conferences of the commissions. Further, I knew that he was strongly in favour of the union of the two Republics, and might, therefore, only influence the discussions. In any case, I desired to have an absolutely impartial and accurate account of the proceedings. My objection was not

favoured by my co-delegates, who were in the majority, and I could then only point out that as chairman of the commission I would expect the usual work of a secretary and performance of duty from Mr. Carl Borckenhagen.

We departed for Pretoria on the 17th May, 1887, and we reached that place on the 30th May. We then met President Kruger and the Transvaal Commission, and were introduced to the Volksraad, which was then in session, on the 31st May, 1887.

I produce herein a certified copy of the minutes of the proceedings of the first commission in conference, with copies of Report and Resolutions of the Transvaal Volksraad, originals of which were produced to the Volksraad on the 11th June, 1887, on our return to Bloemfontein.

TRANSLATION : (Literal).

Minutes of three meetings held at Pretoria on Tuesday, the 31st May, and Wednesday, the 1st June, 1887, between the Government of the South African Republic, and a commission appointed by the Volksraad of the South African Republic to examine the correspondence with the Orange Free State and report upon it, on the one side, and the Orange Free State Deputation, delegated by the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, by virtue of Resolution dated 17th May, 1887, on the other side.

MEETING IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER (Tuesday,
31st May, at 2 p.m.).

Present : President Kruger, the State Attorney, the State Secretary, and the commission elected to examine the Free State correspondence, and to report thereon,—Messrs. F. Wolmarans, Klopper, Taljaard, Lombard and Spies,—besides the members of the Executive Council, and some members of the Volksraad. The Free State Deputation: Messrs. Fraser, Klynveld, and Myburgh.

President Kruger : I heartily welcome this deputation, seeing a token therein that the two Republics begin to view their interests practically, as it ought to be, because our advantage is your advantage, and your advantage ours. Let us discuss matters between us and show each other where we can help, animated by a fixed resolve to agree. Although the interests of all South Africa bind, it cannot be denied that the two Republics have special interests, which I wish to foster. If I must choose, I would rather work with the Free State and break with outside, because what is to the damage of the Free State we cannot permit. I trust that the deputation, as well as we, will speak out freely, and our interests, will be discussed clearly, and be pointed out, then we can draw up an Agreement later concerning the Treaty* that is held by the Government †

* Treaty of Amity and Commerce, 1860.

† Government of the Orange Free State.

to have lapsed and by us to exist. We differ in form but not in intention, but we will co-operate as we have shown by protection of Free State products. For a Customs Union with the colonies we are not at present prepared: there is danger therein for our side, but with the Free State we can and will work together, and if there are differences let us clear them out of the way, that we can come closer and closer together, as if we were almost one State.

Mr. Fraser (having handed over a credential for the deputation), said: It is a pleasure to have heard the encouraging words uttered by His Honour. We have been instructed to communicate the tidings that the Government and people of the Orange Free State cherish unchanged feelings of interest in the Government and people of the South African Republic, and to state that from our side nothing is more warmly desired than to conserve the good understanding between the two countries, and to find a way to promote the true interests of both countries. We therefore thank the President for the sentiments expressed. It is possible that there may be differences on some points, and we trust to your co-operation and guidance. The deputation has desired me to be their spokesman, reserving the right for my co-delegates that, where I fall short, they may also express their views. In order to reach an understanding sooner it will be advisable to discuss

point for point. The first point in question is railway extension between the Free State and the South African Republic. This question has lately been drawing the attention of the public greatly, and has been judged differently from different sides. The alteration of circumstances in both countries, resulting from the development of the goldfields, demands the construction of rapid means of transport to secure the prosperity which we expect and have reasonable grounds to expect. The Volksraad of the Orange Free State, with a view to the requisite co-operation of both Republics, did not wish, however, to consider and decide this matter without knowledge of your feelings, and to secure your support in order to have such railway extension as is in the interest of both the Republics. Whereas it appeared from the correspondence exchanged between the two Governments that the Kimberley-Pretoria route was disapproved of by you and your people, the Volksraad felt that it was wise to send a deputation to endeavour to obtain from your side the line desired by us, and without competition. This is the first point we desire to place before you. Railway connection between Colesberg, via Bloemfontein, to the Vaal River, with the assurance from your side that your Government will support us herein—that we shall have no competition.

President Kruger : We understand your

position we'll. The Volksraad and the people with the Government are earnestly for your interests in this matter, but not at present. I mean that the advantage of the Free State and this Republic demands that the Delagoa Bay Railway be built, and afterwards that from Colesberg. At present the latter would damage our trade, because where the line is first made, there the trade will vest itself. Your line would not be a Free State line, but only a through line for the Colony, and damage our interest. We have a gate. You have not, but Delagoa Bay ought to become your gate. It would do great damage to our railway if we allow the trade to vest elsewhere. Once vested it will be to our advantage to extend our railway to the Free State and to get into connection with all South Africa. But, if you now build a railway you damage us, and, moreover, I see no great benefit for you in a railway. You have no great export, and the railway is not so very necessary. Perhaps the railway will now do you more harm than good, because railways, as has been shown in the Colony, do not pay, and even if the railway comes only to Vaal River from your side, it damages us by the trade being vested elsewhere. This is the reason why we are against the line from Colesberg.

Mr. Fraser : You will allow me to mention some reasons to show that the position is urgent

for us. First of all our geographical position. If the Free State were situated on one side of the central line there would be no question of connection, but as our country is situated surrounded by all States and colonies, the Government cannot contemplate connection with Delagoa Bay only. The southern portion of our country is, and remains, dependent on the Colonial harbours. The eastern and northern portion of the State is dependent on you. We stand in this position that if we connect only on the one side, we neglect the interests of the other side. We have, however, the welfare and the prosperity of the whole in our heart. Then again, the conventions of 1852-1854 have given us a claim to Customs levied on the coast: these have hitherto not been granted to us. Through the new conditions which have arisen the opportunity exists for ourselves and you to obtain these equitable claims, especially if our Governments co-operate. For our case, it is of great interest that this has occurred, because for a Government with so small a revenue as ours, it is impossible to secure the payment of interest for railway extension, and other useful and necessary public works, without securing the Customs accruing to us. We acknowledge that for the situation of the Transvaal, Delagoa Bay is the natural connection, but would it not be

desirable to ensure two doors for the South African Republic? When one reckons with the eventualities of a European conflict, and its consequences, which perhaps might bring Delagoa Bay into other hands, then that would even appear necessary. The same Resolution that binds you to Portugal binds us also,—but if the troubles referred to by me should arise, and your imports be hindered or stopped, open then your eyes to the dangers which will arise for a people totally dependent on one gate, and how much more favourable if a friendly neighbour held the key of a second door in his hands. Regarding the fear that the trade once vested on our line would injure yours, there exist laws in the lives of peoples and individuals which regulate trade. Where one can trade cheaper, there the trade will go. If your people can obtain their goods cheaper from Delagoa Bay, they will trade nowhere else. No railway connection with the south will stand in the way of railway connection with the east. While this is the case, and while there is no mention at present of railway extension from Pretoria to the border, we cannot share your difficulties. Besides, your railway to Pretoria will be finished before ours to the Vaal River, and the danger you foresee will thereby be prevented. We rejoice over your willingness not to allow any line except to, and through, the Free State, and trust that

you will also meet us further, as our line will not be a hindrance to yours.

President Kruger : On the first point of Customs owing to you. I agree that the south side of the Free State is near to the Colonial ports. I doubt, however, if you will get goods thence cheaper. For us the great object is not immediate advantages, and even if we now only gave you an assurance of connection with the Colony our cause would suffer. It may be true that trade seeks the shortest way. Notwithstanding, the advantage does not lie in your obtaining immediate railway connection, because you are near enough to Colonial railway lines. As regards Customs, we can also obtain the premium of Customs in a General Customs Union. But we know that policy, so long as it is in their interest they withhold it from us, but if not, they surrender it. I believe readily that they will finally give us the Customs, but when it finally comes down to the actual question, we shall sit referred to ourselves. When we can meet them as contracting parties, well ; but as long as they sit over us as guardians, it is otherwise. I have good hope that you will have need of our trade, but as long as we have not our own port, it will not help us. I grant them all benefits, but as long as we remain dependent, we get only a share. Where are we then ? Quite otherwise if we make ourselves altogether independent. I agree that

European troubles could alter the position on our borders, but free through traffic is assured to us, whatever becomes of Delagoa Bay, because treaties with all great powers assure this for us. The Volksraad has already granted the power to equalise the through traffic from all sides. If I saw an advantage for you in what you ask it would be otherwise, but you have waited so long, and the issue is so near that if by any action you now force us against what we deem our interests we will make our border our port. I hope that the Free State will recognise this, and observe it, and let the railway rest for a little, and not touch a General Customs Union until the question of our own harbour is decided.

Mr. Klynveld : I admit your position, and understand your difficulties, and will not place my views against yours, but, as a Free Stater, I would prejudice the interests of my country if I did not call your attention to our difficult and dangerous position. The Free State is a poor country, and has little to count upon. Through your goodwill, and the circumstances, our position is improved. We have at least attained a position which opens prospects for us. If, however, it is meant that we must stand still until the Delagoa Bay Railway is completed, then the Free State will have lost its chance completely. Now we can obtain what is for us of

vital import. It is the object of the deputation to secure this, if so much sympathy exists on your part that, with renunciation of some advantages, you can extend to us a helping hand, the future is now for us. If Delagoa Bay weighs so heavily that you demand from us that we must assure the position for you, well then, in your turn, you can do much to make our position safe and prosperous. I understand that difficulties exist in certain vagueness in the Delagoa Bay Concession regarding the tariff question. If the concessionaires, however, know that there is a possibility and likelihood of a Free State Railway, will they not be more willing to meet you now and in the future? Understand, Your Honour, if we wait, we get nothing. When the Lebombo—Pretoria Railway is finished, all our southern interests disappear, and surrounded as we are, the only chance remains to help ourselves, and not to make our interests dependent on others. Unfortunately, we have not the means for that at our disposal, and there remains thus only the plea, is there in your Government sufficient goodwill to help us. If "Yes"—do it and help us, if not, the future is dark for us.

President Kruger : On our side there is full willingness to make sacrifices for the Free State,—but not one which will hurt us and you. You allege that when the Lebombo—Pretoria Line is finished the chance for you is past. I cannot

see that. Believe me firmly it will not be long ere the railway will run through all Africa. You will not be disappointed. I will guarantee that we will bring it to the Free State because we regard ourselves as one nation. How can our State exist without the Delagoa Bay Railway? As regards you, the matter is different. You can still do without a railway, and you have now not enough traffic to make it pay. Then there is, secondly, the tariff question,—but there are also means to disappoint them. I mean that if the railway came from you to us, we could still come right, but their plan is to secure your trade. I cannot see that to wait a little will injure the Free State. In a year's time perhaps we can say what can be done for the Free State. I do not wish you to suffer loss, but you have waited so long, you can, on account of these large interests, and without injury to yourselves, still wait somewhat longer.

Mr. F. Wolmarans : I will candidly state my feelings. Our fear lies behind the Free State, and it may perhaps result in an issue that the Free State suffers damage. In like measure as we touch you, we shall lose here. You say that we have goodwill towards you, but if the Free State acts contrary to our interests it shows really no goodwill to us. There is still a chance for us to reach the sea, and we are ready, if you do not work against us, to grant you all advantages,

but if we hurt ourselves we hurt you—if you hurt us, you hurt yourselves also. If you could give us a port we would have no difficulty. Wait a little until we are further, and we will help you.

Mr. Fraser : I wish to say that when the Government of the Transvaal clearly grasps our position, it must come down from its independent position to our dependent position. The railway on our borders at Aliwal, Colesberg, Kimberley, and Ladysmith affords centres from which our trade goes, and is driven out of our country—to conserve this we must have a centre in our country. If we do not accept the opportunity now offered us, it will afterwards not be worth while for a concessionnaire to undertake a railway in the Free State. Therefore, it is necessary and a duty to keep our position in view. To obtain a main line, however, we must be freed from competition.

President Kruger : We see the danger, and the interest, and we will only grant your line and no other. Then we have an assurance that our interests will also be protected by you? The force of the position lies in that the British Government be shown that the Republics will work together. When we have this proof we can depend that regard will also be had for us, and they will also reckon with us.

Mr. Klopper : As I have understood Mr. Fraser, you then ask of us what is already given to you. There exists a fixed resolve that never certainly

in this generation will a railway be built to Kimberley. The assurance asked for by Mr. Fraser we will heartily give you.

Mr. Lombaard : The fear that we will go to Kimberley can never be realised. The difficulty to get the Delagoa Bay line the Free State will recognise. Now again a trap is being laid to cause the Delagoa line to fall. We must prevent it, otherwise the line from the other side can also be a trap. If we do not hold that one line fast to offer opposition to the other line we shall never be independent. A railway from Delagoa Bay through a land full of minerals, capable of agriculture, will also be a profitable line to the Free State. If we leave it, it will also be a loss to the Free State.

President Kruger : The Report of our Commission is ready, and as good as agreed to. We will guarantee you that no other line but yours shall be built if you will wait. We shall do what we can but you must not damage us without helping yourself. I repeat the railway shall be of no advantage to you now. The Republics must come closer and closer until their interest is one.

Mr. Klynveld : Policy is based upon compromise. As I understand you, you give us the assurance that you will not connect except with our line if we wait. How long? We will not become dependent on the south if you decide to give us a connection there also and you ensure us the only

connection to your line. The question remains only whether the time through you is short or long, —a matter of days or years. In the first case we are helped, in the second case we are lost.

President Kruger : I mean not long. We too cannot wait. I speak now for myself. When the line reaches Barberton you can begin. Then our fear is past. But, it is difficult to say how long it will take. We shall, however, not delay.

Mr. Myburgh : That is the point that must be our closing point. If we have to wait *months* it might do, if we have to wait *years* our trade will be done. If still two or three years pass our trade will be finished. If we must wait till the railway reaches Pretoria, then I foresee great difficulties for us, but if a vigorous commencement is made and we can begin, then there is a chance for our country. We are dependent on all around us, and although we earnestly long to do nothing which might endanger each other's interests, so our interests must also be cared for. The time is come that we must have a railway, but I am of opinion, and state it pointedly, that if the Transvaal will force us to wait for years, then you have no longer a sister in us but a dead child.

Mr. Spies : I am gratified by the speeches, and the reasons of the delegates appear to me to be well grounded, but I hope they will also take the Transvaal interests to heart. Chances can and may pass by, but the chance of our help and co-opera-

tion will not pass by. If you will help us, help now. We are prepared to do this, but you must not ask us for help to injure us. It might perhaps be better to discuss the Customs Union and we could see what is meant. I will be glad if the Free State could have no other railway except with the Transvaal.

Mr. Taljaard : We have had trouble enough here in our land with railways, and you need not believe that we shall lose time needlessly. We have waited long. I was always against railways, but am now in favour thereof for both States. I do not see how we can fix the time as asked for. I do not fear the tariff difficulty. No one can prohibit our railway, there are too many causes. If the Company cannot undertake it we do it ourselves.

Mr. Fraser : It pleases me to hear that the railway is soon expected at Pretoria. I am glad to hear the assurance of Mr. Klopper, when this resolution is already formulated we must do what we can to help the Transvaal. Our Government will certainly wait for a reasonable time, provided our wishes and interests are attended to.

(The Conference here adjourned for a quarter of an hour.)

Re-Opening. *Mr. Fraser* : The second point of interest is the Customs question. From the

preceding discussions it will have become clear to you how the situation of the respective Republics colours the policy differently. We are surrounded by different countries, with different interests. Necessarily we must remain on a good footing with all. The question of a Customs Union is a very difficult one. We know that differences exist, but we perceive that a General Customs Union is necessary to reconcile these differences, and with a view to the welfare and progress of all. I refer you to Germany to show how this matter succeeded there. As a deputation we were instructed to ascertain if there were insuperable objections on your side, against such a Customs Union, and if so, of what nature, so that we could consider the same. We do not wish to appear indifferent to your interests, and knowing your interests we desire to attend to them.

President Kruger : I am pleased to know that it is the intention of the Free State to do nothing without our knowledge. On the other hand, with your intentions to enter into a Customs Union we cannot agree. Customs Unions are entered into by equal States with equal rights on one harbour, but where one is lord all round, and the others are dependent, it is no Customs Union. We are labouring to regulate the matter in peaceful manner, and we do not wish to separate ourselves. The Free State can help us, but we will not and

cannot enter into any Customs Union, and if we do not succeed in getting that help, we shall further see what we have to do. As regards the London Convention we can do with the Free State as we wish. In the Portuguese Treaty the right is reserved to enter into a Customs Union with the colonies. Belgium alone has excluded the Free State. With the Colony we try to obtain Free Trade, but we cannot enter into a Customs Union. We try, however, also in regard to the Belgian Treaty in regard to Customs Union to get Free Trade. If they refuse we shall denounce the Treaty within twelve months. This is, however, not our difficulty: should the Free State enter it will not hurt us. The new Convention between us will provide for this. Meantime we must retain the old one.

Mr. Fraser : Our State President announced in his speech that the Customs question should be settled in a Customs Union, and that we were prepared to attend it. I understand that you cannot take part, but that you have no objections to our doing so. You fear that the Customs Union can be broken again. If this is so then the original condition would recur. If that happened the Republics could levy any (export?) Customs they chose. If there were co-operation between Portugal, Natal, Cape Colony, and the Republics, a Customs Union could be created which would give such access to the coast, and

all questions of difference would be speedily solved. We cannot cherish the hope of obtaining a harbour, and we must trust to an understanding with our neighbouring States and colonies. If we get our fair share we can undertake public works, which we otherwise cannot do. But we do not wish to do anything without your advice and consent.

President Kruger : When prosperous times come and we are dependent on a Customs Union then you must understand that as against Portugal whence goods come in here almost for nothing we should be breaking faith. That would be breach of treaty. It might then happen that we had closed Delagoa Bay against ourselves.

Mr. Klynveld : Opinions differ about a Customs Union. Portugal would have to accede, and it would be difficult to overcome this, but if a rebate were offered to us we take it, because we cannot do otherwise. Believe in our friendship, but do not forget our dependence. Our wish to help you and to stand by you is strong, but our duties towards ourselves exist and must be observed.

President Kruger : I cannot deny that, but you must just do what you can, but I see difficulties also in Customs Union for you. I will say nothing against that. If you make a Convention for some years the issue will teach you the consequences. I must say that the friendship of the Colony stands near enough to us, although

in the matter of the Tobacco Tax they subjected our people to confiscation besides. They took their tobacco and sold their oxen besides. Notwithstanding, we shall also help them by mutual Free Trade. There must also be Free Trade between us, but you must check smuggling. The Free State must act strictly and give us security that the produce is actually Free State produce.

Mr. Fraser : The matter last mentioned by you belongs to the third point of our instructions. His Honour, the President, has been authorised to arrange this matter with you by treaty, and will certainly do so. The fourth subject of our instructions is a matter of importance, the closer union of both countries. The Volksraad of the Orange Free State is prepared to appoint a commission to negotiate with a commission to be appointed by you. We bear this matter in our hearts and will readily co-operate towards a salutary issue for both lands.

President Kruger : We will discuss that this evening. The Conference is adjourned till 7 o'clock this evening.

Meeting : At President Kruger's house. Tuesday evening, 7 o'clock.

Present : President Kruger and the commission appointed to report on the Free State correspondence, also some members of the Executive Council, together with the Free State Deputation.

Mr. Wolmarans announces that the Report of

the Commission shall be read for information of the Free State Delegates, and this is done.

Mr. Fraser : As you allow me the liberty I will make some remarks on this Report.

Regarding a Customs Union. The Report reflects what has been said by His Honour the President.

Regarding railway connection, the recommendation of the commission is without any time limit. There ought to be certainty, because if the Report is confirmed, the Volksraad of the Orange Free State would wish to know what time is meant by the South African Republic. As mentioned this afternoon—if your Government wishes to meet us, then do so, but we have no power to bind our Volksraad to wait so long, or so long. If the time is not fixed, I fear misunderstanding may arise out of this.

Mr. Wolmarans : Naturally no time was fixed in our Report, but we say: "When the whole or portion thereof is exploited." There is a concession in that.

Mr. Fraser : We have already said that a question of years is an impossibility. If you spoke of months we could meet you. As the matter is left open we cannot reply to one question thereon when we return.

Mr. Wolmarans : It would be difficult to fix the time.

President Kruger : A portion for instance to

Barberton must be made. You want some fixity, but the trouble is that the tariff question exists, and that one must consider. We have been disappointed by the Portuguese. The tariff question ought to have been finished already, and in the end McMurdo is come up again, and a large English Company has the matter in hand. If the Cape Colony get their railway they have won their cause. Because the goldfields are ours, and the trade is already passing over Delagoa Bay they will not now oppose us, but try to get the line finished sooner; otherwise we have nothing to do with them, and we commence our own railway on the Neck. We are then only one day's journey to Delagoa Bay, while they have three to Barberton, and have no import duty to pay. Therefore we have given our concessionaire six months, because we will not wait longer. The hitch is the point of tariff. We have been deceived in that. That is secret. That is why we speak of Barberton. Our Company understands this and will co-operate. We have enough money to build this bit ourselves. We are already surveying the line, not Machado line, but over Barberton. The Company will, however, I believe, not withdraw. We have already been asked what the maximum tariff is, but we decline and ask what they are going to do. But whether they satisfy us or not, if they do not

begin we do it. You are not forced to wait on us, but it will be good.

Mr. Fraser : The fixing of time will be in our way. There is no danger that we begin and build the railway. The Volksraad must still take up our case. We must regulate the Customs. We must effect a loan,—it will require a long time, so it would be better to make no time limit, because we understand each other. Suppose that something unforeseen happens,—that the Transvaal cannot commence? Would it not be unfair to let us wait? Besides, no misunderstanding can arise. The Transvaal Government, which has the means, can always do what it desires.

President Kruger : If you commence you will injure us. The interests of both Republics require of us to make a sacrifice and to co-operate. If everything remains quiet till we are further, you can meantime negotiate regarding a rebate. I would be speaking childishly to advise you not to take it. It would also not be in the way of closer Union. I wish to keep fairness in view, but I cannot see why it must be done so quickly. The Free State is better off without railways. Railways will be injury for you, not advantage, unless you reckon upon through traffic, which will injure you. I can, however, not prevent it if our Sister State will damage us.

If the Free State goes with us it will also be advantage to the Free State and greater benefit. Let us not injure our future.

Mr. Lombaard : I understand from the deputation that the Free State has still much to do and will not be ready when we are at work already. As matters stand the Company must work within six months, otherwise we begin at once. I love the Free State just as much as the Transvaal and would like to help.

Mr. Klopper : We shall enter into no railway connection whatever, except with you. Of this you are sure. If any railway is built, other than to Delagoa Bay, then we go to the Free State. The Report says that the time is not arrived. This is done to prevent any railway being built before the line to Delagoa Bay, or any portion thereof is in exploitation. When this is finished the line to Bloemfontein commences.

Mr. Klynveld : I understand, I believe that only the commencement is injurious, but we shall have to commence in order to settle the question of rebate, because it stands in connection with the matter of railways. Shall we have to wait for that as well? I do not share the fear of competition. Our line is much longer than that to Delagoa Bay, so we shall never be able to injure you, although the question of health must be kept in view, and Delagoa Bay is an unhealthy district, and will remain so.

We cannot go back to the Volksraad with the conditions stipulated by you, because if accepted, we would be placed in a most dangerous position. A beginning we must make, or is, in your opinion, the mere beginning already a danger?

President Kruger : That is the meaning. It will injure us. You will be convinced yourself. The beginning is already a danger. They are waiting for it. The trade goes now to Delagoa Bay. If this matter becomes known it will at once give opening to the Colony.

Mr. Wolmarans : Let me show the gentleman the political viewpoint of our freedom. We have had much experience with Her Majesty's Government. We will and must get loose and be independent. In this you will agree with us, that is our desire. We are still uneasy. We will to the sea also in view of future complications. Let us first get access to the sea. Let us become independent. Let us wait a couple of years. Why do people think of Delagoa Bay to-day? English influence. They wish still to keep us in bonds and dependence. Against this we strive. Perhaps we can find an opening, a port. You will perhaps be thankful one day also to have a free road. I hear to-day for the first time of rebate in connection with railways.

President Kruger : Let us speak candidly. We do not wish to be released, but we will not be dependent on England. If I can advise you,

accept no rebate, remain without a railway, this is better than to accept their money under conditions. The future will yield more blessing if you work with us. I have never understood that the money all these years is only given under conditions. Let them rather keep their money. Don't allow yourselves to be bound. Wait rather. The Lord reigns, no one else, the issue is near.

Mr. Fraser: There is much truth in your standpoint,—always for Transvaal, and not for the Free State. We have a claim to rebate. What the trade now gets, our Government has not. What we desire is a right, not a fetter,—it will never prevent us from remaining independent. We must have the rebate, and cannot undertake public works without it. Seeing your goodwill,—what does it help us, when you add to it “don't take the rebate.” We are in a crisis, in which if we strive well we shall get our right. If it pass by, our trade is totally lost. The revenues of our country show what the railways have done around us. We shall require a reasonable time before we can commence. I do not share your objection that our railway will injure yours. We have been busy for many years. What injury have you suffered? You have also for many years made efforts. Do not place too great faith in the Portuguese, they have already disappointed you. We also had desire

for a harbour, but it did not mature. Had we got it, we would have had to get seamen, a fleet, forts, etc.,—otherwise one ship could have destroyed it. Think also of that. Even if our line were finished to-day, what injury would it do? Will anyone pay freight for 900 miles when he can use a line of 300 miles? Who would ever do that? I can therefore not admit your difficulty. For us, however, that opinion is a hindrance. If we came with a resolution of that nature what would the world say? The Free State concedes everything,—what does the Transvaal? We know your plans and difficulties,—shall we injure you, or shall we not act so as to work with you? This is the first step towards co-operation, and if difficulties arose, would our line not be a means of safety? Help us, and allow us liberty. You are much further than we, and shall finish before us.

President Kruger : As regards a port. The Portuguese have not a fleet worth mention, and although a harbour is a danger, the Great Powers would not allow, in the case of the Portuguese, the harbour to be taken, as no Great Power takes interest in internal matters. The Portuguese have not treated us well, but have been deceived themselves, and will now have to fight it out. We do not want a fleet, this is certain. Concerning the time, already long, wherein you have worked for railways, that

is the fact, but, if Her Majesty's Government give you a rebate for it, they have an object with it. You say even if the line was finished to our border it would not injure us. I do not believe that. It would be used at once as a means of traffic. I regret that you have a prospect of getting money for railways. I trust, however, that you will not work the matter to our injury.

Mr. F. Wolmarans : I would like to know if the Delagoa Bay Railway were not built, whether the Cape Railway would benefit the Transvaal? If the Delagoa Bay Railway failed, then rather no railway.

Mr. Fraser : Why? Where is the damage and danger?

Mr. F. Wolmarans : Because we should then again be dependent.

Mr. Fraser : Is it not better to have two doors, whereof the key of one is in the hand of a good friend, of a brother?

Mr. Wolmarans : Yes, but the brother is not master of the door.

Mr. Fraser : I heard in your Report mention of an offensive and defensive alliance. Point four of our instructions says that the question of closer Union will come before the Volksraad, and if you appoint a Commission we will do so too. If, however, you lay down the form of conditions, you go in advance of the matter. We desire to know what your mind is, but we

do not wish to prejudice the case. There is not a burgher against the matter, but the manner must remain undefined, until the proposed Commission can go into it.

President Kruger : The proposal of an offensive and defensive alliance in the Report is made because we look upon that as the first step. We have for years declared the wish, but the Volksraad was against it. Now we must at last begin again. This is our meaning about it,—to let this be the commencement of it. How do you then think about doing it ?

Mr. Fraser : I speak of your position herein. Before you can judge of ours you would require to have the petition of our burghers before you upon which we can decide. They asked to do away with the Transvaal, the Free State, and Government and the Constitution, and to create a complete Union,—a total removal of the independent existence of both Republics. Is that possible at this moment unless the people give the Volksraad the liberty to dissolve itself? Notwithstanding, the desire exists to have a UNITED INDEPENDENT SOUTH AFRICA,—with its own flag. When two brothers leave their father's home, marry, procreate children, return and live together, will there not be differences of morals, habits, etc. Is it not better that they abide alone, and get known to each other anew? If this is true of individuals, it is also true of

peoples. Our national characters differ according to differences of history, etc. It is contrary to experience to believe that by virtue of alliances, conventions, laws, railways, etc., a nation shall arise. We cannot do it by resolutions,—but step by step we can do it. Offensive and defensive alliances will not answer. If we have a war with the Basutos will the burghers of Zoutpansberg be willing to go there? If Swaziland causes war, will our burghers be willing to go there? We have heard that you are for us, and we for you,—with wisdom and discretion we shall also be able to assist and support each other further, and we will do so heartily.

President Kruger : I did not expect that when your burghers asked for Union that you would be able to pump the two States into each other. Still you could appoint a Commission to regulate the matter, as in America. This would certainly take years. But if two peoples will not help each other then you must not talk of Union. One State it can never be. We have never thought of that. That was never the meaning of our Government. You have, however, declined that. But our burghers have asked the same, and we have shown them the way. We understand by an offensive and defensive alliance that if an attack is made on you, we must help, but if you wish to attack you must consult us, otherwise it would never work. The alliance must be a fair one. In the

matter of Union, we take America as an example, because it can never be one State. We do not wish danger for you or for us, not such an alliance, but one power, and if then one State suffers innocently, the other must help. This would be the first step. Then other conventions, steps, regulations, etc., come to get closer and closer to each other, until the general laws coincide. One we shall never become.

Mr. Fraser : I did not say that we were against an offensive and defensive alliance,—but it is not a matter for this Commission.

Mr. Lombaard : I am pleased to be able to discuss the matter of Union, because as it is at present, it is a fire at your back. Free State and Transvaal,—blood of one blood, flesh of one flesh. We must come so close to each other that we gladly help each other. We propose an offensive and defensive alliance. If you have anything better you can mention it.

President Kruger : We view an offensive and defensive alliance as first step. Bring it so far, and let the Commission regulate the matter afterwards. Besides there are other matters which we can discuss later. Let the Volksraad deal with the matter, and then we can meet later.

Mr. Spies : If I understood your Honour rightly, then I think something must still be discussed. Can the Free State commence their railway?

President Kruger : If they begin they will injure us. I have, however, full confidence in the Free State that they will help us and wait.

Mr. Fraser : If the Report remains as it is we are not at liberty to begin.

President Kruger : What hinders you? We say we will help you as soon as we have commenced our railway,—but you must keep in view that if you begin too early you will injure us.

Mr. Fraser : If I may remind you, you have said that you will help us, but we must do nothing at all.

President Kruger : We cannot fix the time for connection with the Colony now, but you can do what you will in the meantime in the spirit of our discussions.

Mr. Fraser desired that the Report be read again, and remarked thereon:—This Report states that the Delagoa Bay Railway must be finished before the Bloemfontein—Colesberg line can be built, and that negotiations between us and the Colony are injurious. Therefore the Free State must make no commencement whatever. This we object to. Therefore Mr. Klynveld asked what your meaning was, and showed our position, and I ask you not to press it, that we may not negotiate with the Colony. Upon that you said that you were not against that.

President Kruger : You can negotiate with others, but if you work our damage, we cannot treat with you.

Mr. Fraser : If the Report must be understood that you will not enter into connection with us till the Delagoa Bay Railway is finished, then we can still in the meantime begin our line up to a certain point.

President Kruger : No. I have told you clearly that you must not do so. Negotiate and prepare, but do not build before we have done something.

Mr. Fraser : I am desirous to avoid all misunderstanding between us,—because this is the beginning of co-operation.

Mr. F. Wolmarans : The Report speaks about our rights. What we are negotiating at present goes further. Our Report only is an answer on the correspondence.

President Kruger : If you make that railway before we are finished to a certain point, I will not make the line to you. Do what you can, and prepare to co-operate with us. I will give you, in writing, an expression of the contents of our negotiations on behalf of the Government.

Mr. Fraser : We come here to work together with you,—not to steal a march on you. This you say is a reply to the correspondence,—but the deputation will have another reply to enable us to commence in this matter.

President Kruger : Preparation without beginning is what I mean.

Mr. Fraser : Whatever resolution you take, our Volksraad will have to weigh what is safe for our interests. I would not wish our Volksraad to view the Report of the Commission as read, without protest against certain conditions.

Mr. Klopper : There is a small point which is difficult for you, but it is impossible for us to take it out, because as soon as it is seen that we wish to co-operate to the south, we will injure our Delagoa Bay line. When this is avoided we will help you, and co-operate with you. The deputation must understand we wish to do all we can for the Free State. You must therefore choose, But, if you cannot wait, it will be injury for you and for us.

President Kruger : I can show you letters that we cannot succeed if we allow the railway to the Colony—shipping lines, coal station, everything is at stake, and we should lose all. From my deeds it is clear that I desire all advantages for you, but you must help us and not oppose us.

Mr. Spies : I mentioned the matter of time, because I saw the misunderstanding. The Report will be adopted, and then the deputation would be disappointed. But the deputation will see that our interest demands that our line be finished first, because even now there is fear

that the Delagoa Bay line will be a danger, and they try to oppose us. Also I cannot see what advantage the Free State expects from a railway. We will, however, not hinder you. We mean it well with you, and you must trust us. Time will show we were right.

Mr. Taljaard : I regret it, but we cannot surrender that point.

Mr. Fraser : We are only three members of our Volksraad, and we cannot decide this. If we should injure you through our line, it would be a pity. However, if the Commission could show us a way to go on with the matter it would be well. If this Report be adopted we return without an agreement, and the Volksraad might perhaps proceed, act without you ; that is injury to you, and yet the differences cannot be removed between us and you, and yet a middle way ought to be found to bring the matters to a settlement.

President Kruger .: Suppose that the Delagoa Bay plan breaks down, then you shall have to admit that it is unfair, that on your account so much damage must accrue. I have shown you the facts on which the matter rests. How can we settle in a matter which is a life question for us? Help us and we will help you. Take our case as your own,—if your case is really ours. If I could do it, I would give you a secret guarantee, but as soon as I did this even I damage my case.

I believe certainly if you represent the case as it is, the Volksraad will act for us herein.

Mr. Klopper : Our point of objection is that Colesberg will injure us, and therefore if we do not co-operate we shall have to protect our through traffic by Customs, and instead of co-operation obtain opposition. We are favourable to you, but we must protect ourselves, and keep touch with the feelings and necessities of our people.

President Kruger : If you will not protect us, we will protect ourselves.

Mr. Fraser : Your danger is not clear to me. Your capitalists may have fear,—but even if our line were finished first it could not damage you.

President Kruger : You first cut the throat, and then I cut off the head.

Mr. Fraser : We decrease as a State unless we are helped. We do not cut your throat if we maintain ourselves. I did not expect a threat. When you speak of notice, you demand all from us. You wish to kill,—give nothing. If I were in your position I would allow the Free State to go its way. If you have a big population, and you cannot provide its food supply, then we will help you to feed them. Then our trade will revive, which languishes at present, and reduces our revenue. This is a life question. Think of it,—that we are slowly dying. You laugh,—but it is an earnest matter for us, and we had hoped

that if we came here, and represented it to you, you would help us.

President Kruger : Brother,—hear now. You speak wrong, and what you say is nothing. I mention facts. You wish to push us to extremes. You say you will perish. I place my doors open to your burghers to get markets, but you wish to injure me and destroy my chance. You don't require a railway, and you will give much money for a railway, and get nothing for it. It will not hurt you to wait. We will do all for you. We cannot do otherwise. Connect with the Colony to cut our throats, then we must protect ourselves.

The President then made some confidential communications to the deputation regarding his railway plans.

Mr. Fraser asked for a day so that the deputation could consider the matter.

The meeting adjourned.

MEETING HELD AT THE HOUSE OF PRESIDENT KRUGER, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, AT 7 O'CLOCK.

Present : President Kruger, the Commission appointed to report concerning the Free State correspondence, the State Attorney, and Members of the Volksraad, with the Free State Deputation.

President Kruger : I do not know if in what I say anyone will agree with me, even my own Volksraad, and I shall use the word "I" and express my own feelings.

I am grieved in my heart that our brothers will have nothing to do with us. Still it is impossible to separate us. We have discussed the matter fully. The letter of His Honour, your President, speaks of inner and closer Union, and we see nothing of that. We have agreed to it. Your Volksraad has said NO. We have discussed, and know near enough what we desire,—still the matter of an offensive and defensive alliance is objected to. What remains? The Free State desires to make itself dependent on Her Majesty's Government. I say "NO." Share with us,—bear the sweet and sour with us, work with us, let us stand together. We do not wish to repel the Cape Colony, but we will not cut our throat. Let us have Free Trade between us. If a railway must be built to Cape Colony, ours must first be finished. I stand to that, therefore, although I give you liberty to make preliminary arrangements, so as to secure the means by rebate, then I still advise if a condition is attached to it, let it go. I do not believe that we will still get to work in this year,—if we can't or we have trouble, then I say to you, no railway. Loose behind, and we will help you, also with a contribution if you require it. Loose here, and do what you will. I wish to share with you. If you won't, go then. We will build railways even if it lasts ten years,—but I say "loose behind." That is my feeling. The Lord reigneth whatever happens. If the Free State

cannot work with us, then I will stop you at my borders, and make my borders my port. You do not require a railway for yourselves, only for the Colony, as with a fire engine, you will ride against us. Let us work together reasonably, as I explained yesterday.

Mr. Fraser: When I hear you speak so, then I ask, is all the past forgotten that the Free State did for you? You are President of the South African Republic, and you bear the interests of your land in your heart, but, as delegate of the Orange Free State, I have its interests in my heart, and I must maintain them. You have only one small colonial border, a finger breadth on the chart. We are surrounded by British Colonies, and that makes a heaven-wide difference in our positions. When I have a small farm, I must remain on a good footing with my neighbours,—otherwise they will impound, and make my position unbearable. Regarding the matter of Union, there has been no official notice given, and the resolution on our Petitions was evoked by the circumstances. We have, however, been deputed to tell you that we seek means towards co-operation, although an offensive and defensive alliance shall be the work of another Commission for which we have no power. We hear your opinion and shall convey the same. With regard to the Customs Rebate which we have for thirty years

in vain tried to obtain. Through our weakness we had to use patience and could only press. If we secure our Customs how do we then render ourselves thereby dependent? We do not sell our independence. We secure our rights. This does not deprive us of our freewill and rights,—but weak people, as we were, we could still lend you our hand. The position is not so vitally altered that this could not happen again. If you do not help us you will not be able to prevent that difficulty approaching you, that will also be a danger. You cannot prevent a railway from Kimberley to your border, and this will conflict with your interests as well as ours, and cannot be opposed. Then our line will be in vain. The danger you fear will still occur, and all connection between us shall be in vain. This is one of the reasons I am so certain that powerful efforts shall be made, and nothing will prevent it, unless a commencement is made with a portion of our line. You spoke of a subsidy. We are willing to report to our Volksraad that you favour the payment of a subsidy of £20,000, or £30,000, if we give up a railway now. The Volksraad will possibly consider this, because it gives us an opening.

President Kruger : If you do not see our interest then it is unnecessary to discuss further. The offensive and defensive alliance is objected to by you. Regarding your right to rebate,

that pertains to you, but you have said that you can only get it for a railway under a condition. You say they will build a railway from Kimberley to our border. Let them do that. We shall know how to turn them away. They could not be assisted herein by me. Now they will do it through you. I do not understand you. We wish to help you and work with you. For the sheep the door is open, but the wolf I stop. Delagoa Bay as an unhealthy port furnished difficulties enough. Must I increase these? I have revealed all my troubles. Help me now. The Lord has blessed our land with riches, and the railway will run from Colony to Colony,—but first give us a chance for ours. Wait for us,—and we give the trade centres, markets, etc. I have shown under the old treaty what I am for you. If it had been denounced, then your grain and produce would have been taxed, so I have insisted on its being as still existing. You have helped us out of danger,—why bring us now into it again? I am satisfied to discuss the Union afterwards with a Commission. You say our Government has given you no notice concerning the Union. Have you written to us about it? In conclusion, it is impossible to concede that you begin railways at all. If the Volksraad will do it, I would a hundred times sooner give you a subsidy to ensure you the railway than that you should do us harm.

Mr. Fraser : The offensive and defensive alliance I meant to be the work of a future Commission,—to be appointed by the people of both countries.

Mr. F. Wolmarans : We have taken it up in our Report,—but we did not mean to discuss it here with this deputation.

Mr. Klynveld : I listened yesterday evening, President,—because you made clear to us considerations which were quite unknown to us. I have followed your reasons with attention. You desire that we support your policy. Concerning offensive and defensive alliance;—I have heard your arguments, but it is unnecessary, as the two peoples have shown that they are also one, without alliance, in danger and necessity. Regarding your policy communicated to us privately. I have heard you. I have marvelled at you. You have converted me. You have a definite aim in view, and you will attain it. From my side nothing will be done against your policy,—but I am a Free Stater, and I represent Free State interests. Our people look upon the railway as of vital import. For that purpose we are here. I am not a railway man “per se.” I have fought against railways. But we had to do something now. If we return with empty pockets, we shall also return with an ashamed heart.

President Kruger : You rejoice me. You cannot return so. If the Volksraad agrees with me, we shall do something. We must do something.

Mr. Klynveld : If the Volksraad could send us back with a promise that we, abiding by your policy, relying on the Customs, which we might lose, will be compensated by you, then we have something. The Customs are now paid to our merchants. We demand it for the Government, and will also get it. For us too the railway, as we have a chance of getting it, is a matter of great importance, and we cannot give the matter up lightly.

President Kruger : Do not believe that your plans will be opposed. Your help and sympathy is not to be paid with money. Why should we not do something for it? The Volksraad will realise that, but it must remain secret. My view is that we must benefit you where and as far as we can, and that you must help us.

Mr. Klopper : I am glad. When gold is rubbed hard, it shines. We have spoken freely, and that was good. Our two States are one State, and we must become free in one alliance. I am strong with conviction that we have means in our midst which will preserve us, a treasure in our country which will save us, even if we have no railways. What do we seek in the Colony? But a railway in your country is a connection with the Colony. And what will we get from them? We know.

What they paint as life, is our death. We Republicans are strong enough,—let us go together.

Mr. Fraser : For my part, I have also received further insight,—but the interests of the Free State weigh heavy. If a way can be found, I will cooperate. What you give us, we will present. With an eye to the future I would deprecate a resolution which would lead to separation instead of coming nearer. If it is a fact that products already come here from Kimberley, is it not high time to secure our interests? The treasures given us by God are given us to be exploited for our benefit,—but if our Gold and Coal Fields are to be beneficial to us, we must have means of rapid transport. If it is dangerous to come to Vaal River, we could perhaps construct a part of the railway. We are come now to a close. The four matters entrusted to us have been dealt with by us, and so far finished that our conference concerning them can be closed.

President Kruger : The extension of our existing Treaty of Commerce and Amity will depend on the resolutions of your Volksraad in this, and we shall act accordingly, because we shall first see what your intentions are towards us before we renew the treaty again. Regarding the answer to be given to your Government, we will deliberate.

Mr. Klynveld : Would it not be better if you put your answer in the shape of a Draft Treaty.

Mr. Lombaard : Our view has ever been to let the goldfields lie till we can supply the machinery ourselves. We spoke yesterday about meeting you with a subsidy. What we can, even if it was more than was mentioned, we must do for you. You will come to the crown of the position, and will be helped from both sides.

President Kruger : I could get the railway from Kimberley to Pretoria for nothing,—but I will not have it, and wish only to give you a chance.

Mr. F. Wolmarans : You know our secret plans. We will never give the Colony what we will give you. The Colony will kill us. We cannot compete with them. Time will show what we must do with them. Now we must keep them away.

Mr. Fraser : Immediately the President spoke of a subsidy to compensate us for waiting, I said I would bring that offer to the Volksraad, and that our Volksraad would consider your goodwill.

President Kruger : I help you from my heart, but I do it to help you as brother, not to pay you for any sacrifice.

After some questions by Dr. Leyds, State Attorney, with regard to the meaning of the Free State in its railway plans, Mr. Klopper said :—“ Chairman of the Volksraad,—the Report drawn up by us and placed before you is for the world. Our negotiations are secret.”

(Signed) C. BORCKENHAGEN,
Secretary of the Free State Deputation to the
Transvaal.

THE TRANSVAAL COMMISSION.

REPORT.

I. Concerning the construction of a railway which shall connect Pretoria with the Cape Colony, your Commission desires to draw your attention to the letter to His Honour, the State President of the Orange Free State, dated the 4th April last, wherein His Honour points out that the railway connection *via* Bloemfontein deserves preference over that *via* Kimberley. Your Commission agrees wholly with the conclusion contained in that letter. Therefore your Commission noted with pleasure the reply of this Government to the question of that Government that no concession or grant be given to the construction of a railway north of the Vaal River from Kimberley *via* Christiana, Bloemhof, etc., that the reply of this Government read:—"That the Kimberley—Pretoria Railway was already disapproved by the people," and the Government of the Orange Free State need trouble itself no longer about it. Your Commission therefore prefers the line *via* Bloemfontein above that *via* Kimberley, but to prevent misunderstanding your Commission adds thereto at once "that the time does not appear to have arrived for the laying of the railway connection from Pretoria with the Cape Colony, *via* Bloemfontein. In this

respect it appears to your Commission that the Government of the Orange Free State proceeds from the correct stand, seeing in her communications she speaks of the proposed lines Pretoria — Bloemfontein — Colesberg as a connection between the Delagoa Bay—Pretoria line, and the Cape Colony railway systems. These two matters must first exist before they can be connected. It is known that the line Delagoa Bay—Pretoria is still only in state of becoming. Before this last line now is wholly or at least partly built and exploited, the construction of the line Colesberg—Bloemfontein—Pretoria, or even the negotiation there-over or consideration thereof will do injury to the success of the Delagoa Bay line,—because the line *via* Bloemfontein will not be able to exist chiefly on the import and export trade and passenger traffic of the Orange Free State itself, but, on the contrary, on the through traffic between the Cape Colony and this Republic. Again, that through traffic to this Republic shall, for the greater part, consist not of the produce of the Cape Colony itself, but of goods brought in from overseas. For those goods the nearest harbour is Delagoa Bay, the best, and for this Republic, the most profitable. Therefore everything must be avoided that can hinder the progress of that harbour. When the through traffic of the railway *via* Bloemfontein

is already developed and the course of trade has been laid along it, to get it diverted would be difficult, and the injury which your Commission feels must be avoided, will already be done.

2. The solution of the question of mutual Customs rights, the Government of the Orange Free State holds, must be found in a South African Customs Union. Your Commission on the contrary would for the present not recommend such a Union :—

Firstly.—Political treaties with other nations stand in the way of this Republic at present. Your Commission points to the treaty with Belgium.

Then your Commission notices that this Republic has no harbour of its own. As long as this is the case a General Customs Union will always have the difficulty that the collection of customs accruing to this Republic is left, at least for the greater part, in the hands of other States or colonies.

The possession of our own harbour would first place this Republic on equal footing and in equal circumstances with other States and colonies bordering on the sea.

Another matter would be the admission, as provided in the old Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the Orange Free State, free, and without payment of duties, of the products of

the soil and industry of both Republics. Your Commission can recommend this strongly. Only your Commission allows itself the remark that, as experience has proved, good measures would have to be taken to prevent foreign goods being imported into the Republic, as products of the Orange Free State, and thus coming in free of import duty.

A still closer connection would be created than by these regulations, through the contracting of an offensive and defensive alliance.

3. Regarding the Cape Colony,—your Commission desires to make the following remarks.

Concerning a General Customs Union, in which the Cape Colony would take part, your Commission can abide by reference to the remarks that are made above concerning it. It remains, therefore, to consider the proposal made to this Government by the Cape deputation concerning mutual Customs rights, and the reply of this Government thereto. Your Commission identifies itself wholly with that reply, and would therefore recommend your Honourable Council to authorise the Government, subject to the later ratification of the Honourable Volksraad, to enter into an agreement concerning mutual import duties on the products of this Republic and the Cape Colony, on the method as proposed in the said answer of this Government. It is self-evident that such an agreement can only

come into force after other political treaties, and especially that of Belgium, no longer stand in the way. The Honourable Government has informed your Commission that steps have already been taken by it to remove the difficulties existing in that connection, and recommend your Honourable Council to express your approval of the steps taken, and your hope that those negotiations may lead to a satisfactory issue.

Finally.—It will be sufficient for your Commission regarding railway connection with Cape Colony to refer to what is stated above about railway connection. It is, therefore, unnecessary to declare that your Commission wholly agrees with the reply given by this Government, regarding this matter, to the Cape deputation. Your Commission holds further that the question whether a railway line from Kimberley to Pretoria shall have likelihood of existence, next the line Delagoa Bay to Colesberg over Pretoria to Bloemfontein, only then can be considered when the last-mentioned line is completed.

A true Copy.

(Signed) C. H. BOESCHOTEN,
Secretary of the Volksraad.

EXTRACT AND COPY FROM THE MINUTES OF THE
HONOURABLE VOLKSRAAD OF THE TRANSVAAL :
DATED 3RD JUNE, 1887.

Article 441.—The Volksraad identifies itself unanimately with the first part.

Article 442.—The Volksraad identifies itself with the remarks, limits, and conclusions comprised in the third portion of the report now under consideration,—authorises the Government to conclude an agreement with the Cape Colony in the meaning and under the conditions and instructions described in that part, expresses its satisfaction with the steps taken by the Government in the matter of the treaty with Belgium, and the hope that the negotiations in connection therewith will lead to a satisfactory conclusion.

A true Copy.

(Signed) EDUARD Bok,
State Secretary.

Secret.

SECRET COPY OF VOLKSRAAD'S RESOLUTION
PASSED IN THE SECRET SESSION OF THE
HONOURABLE VOLKSRAAD OF THE TRANSVAAL :
DATED 3RD JUNE, 1887.

Article 439. The Volksraad resolves to authorise the Government to carry on negotiations for a secret treaty with the Orange Free State, and further to conclude that treaty with the object of securing uniform policy for both States in future.

The above-mentioned secret treaty with the Orange Free State shall rest on the following principles :—

1. The Orange Free State binds itself not to build or permit any railway or tramway connection between any of the States or colonies of South Africa bordering on the Orange Free State and the South African Republic,—nor any portion of such line without the express consent of the South African Republic.

2. The South African Republic shall undertake not to build or permit any railway or tramway connection between Pretoria and any of the States or colonies bordering on the South African Republic, except those borders on the north and east side of the South African Republic, nor any part of such line, except with the express consent of the Orange Free State.

3. Only it will be free to both parties to build or allow to be built their respective portions of the straight line Pretoria—Bloemfontein.

4. A certain liberty of import, export, and through traffic rights can be allowed and accepted in the proposed treaty.

5. Neither of the said parties shall conclude a Customs Union with one of the colonies of South Africa except with express consent of the other of the contracting parties. This condition is absolutely necessary for the obtaining and maintaining of a closer political Union of both States.

6. The South African Republic shall undertake to pay to the Orange Free State (as compensation for the eventual acquirement of the share pertaining to the Orange Free State of the customs levied at the seaports, herein shortly named the "Rebate") a subsidy to a maximum of Twenty Thousand Pounds Sterling per annum, for a period not exceeding ten years,—but only if the following eventualities occur.

(a) That the Orange Free State can obtain no rebate.

(b) That the Orange Free State requires money for the building of a railway or tramway, in accordance with this treaty, and it is impossible to meet the interest, or guarantee therefor, out of the finances of the

Orange Free State itself, or the revenue of such rail or tramway, and to cover the capital to be paid for it.

7. The Orange Free State shall bind itself to do its utmost (wherein the South African Republic shall support it as much as possible) to obtain the said rebate, but if the grant of that rebate should be conditional, then the Orange Free State may not accept it without the express consent of the South African Republic.

8. The conclusion of this treaty, as well as of a Treaty of Commerce and Amity, shall be subject to the condition that an offensive and defensive alliance between the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, or another political treaty which will secure the same object, namely, the political Union of both States, shall be included therein.

9. This secret treaty to be concluded for a definite period, for instance, about twelve years.

A true Copy.

(Signed) C. H. BOESCHOTEN,
Secretary of the Volksraad.

Secret.

—————
TRANSVAAL VOLKSRAAD RESOLUTION. ARTICLE
45I. DATED 3RD JUNE, 1887.
—————

The Volksraad resolves to authorise the Government to acquaint the Government and the Deputation of the Orange Free State that,

in case some points which are submitted in the Secret Volksraad Resolution, Article 429, dated 3rd June, 1887, comprising the principles on which a secret treaty is offered by the South African Republic, specially in point 1, thereof, may raise difficulties for the Volksraad and Government of the Orange Free State, the Government of the South African Republic is empowered, as it is hereby authorised, to enter into further negotiations regarding these points in order, if possible, to meet those difficulties and clear them away.

A true Copy.

(Signed) C. H. BOESCHOTEN,
Secretary of the Volksraad.

From the minutes of the proceedings at Pretoria, it will at once be seen that from first to last President Kruger declared that he placed an offensive and defensive alliance as the primary and essential basis of any negotiations with the Orange Free State, and he declined to agree to anything until that was accepted by it. He would only continue relations with us on the terms of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce which we had declared to be lapsed, and he would not agree to our entering into any convention for customs or railways with any adjoining British Colony, until his railway from

Delagoa Bay to Pretoria was complete, and until this took place he would be prepared to grant the Orange Free State a contribution of £20,000 per annum for a period of ten years to compensate the Orange Free State for the delay ; no argument against that position would he accept.

It did appear to me at one session of the Conference that President Kruger and his Commission were feeling the strength of our arguments, but after our colleague, Mr. Klynveld, took the extraordinary position of telling President Kruger that he had "converted" him to his own views, and that he was convinced that his policy was the best for the Republics, there was no advantage to be looked for in prolonging the Conference, which I therefore ended. My other colleague, Mr. Myburgh, was absolutely at one with me, and we were at a loss to understand how Mr. Klynveld could so far forget himself, as well as the fact that we were not there to be converted by President Kruger, and declare adherence to his impossible views,—impossible for the interests of the Orange Free State, and contrary to the terms of a resolution which Mr. Klynveld had himself proposed, and carried through the Volksraad,—namely that closer Union with the South African Republic was impossible so long as the Suzerainty of Great Britain was in existence over it. We began to understand the position somewhat more, however, when we ascertained

later that Mr. Klynveld, and the secretary of the Free State Deputation, Mr. Carl Borckenhagen, had had separate meetings with the South African Republic Executive, of which fact Mr. Myburgh and I received no official intimation.

Our mission being ended, we started on our return journey, after taking leave of President Kruger, his Executive Council, and the Transvaal Volksraad, which, as before stated, was then in session. When I bade President Kruger good-bye in his room, he handed me a closed envelope stating that it contained the final conclusions of his Government on the various matters discussed, to be laid before the Orange Free State Volksraad.

At the first outspan from Pretoria, I said to the other members of the Commission that I did not feel satisfied to carry a sealed packet to the Volksraad, of the contents of which I was not quite assured, and that I desired to open the packet in their presence, in order that we might acquaint ourselves of the tenor of the contents. Mr. Myburgh agreed,—but Mr. Klynveld and Mr. Borckenhagen stated that they were sick of the business, knew all about it, and did not care to read the document. As the time of our outspanning was short, I said that we would postpone the opening of the packet until we arrived at Johannesburg, but then, open and read it I would, and if there was anything in it,

outside of our discussions, I would not leave the Transvaal, but would return to the Capital and have it rectified. On hearing from the secretary of the Commission, Mr. Borckenhagen, that he had not quite extended his minutes, I enjoined his doing so without delay, as they would form the basis of our report to the Volksraad.

We arrived at Johannesburg, which was then just a hamlet composed of some tin shelters and one brick house, known as "Stock's Hotel." At this time the goldfields had been open just six months. We took up our quarters for the night in the hotel. After supper I again asked Mr. Klynveld and Mr. Borckenhagen to come to the room occupied by Mr. Myburgh and myself, to examine the packet entrusted to me by President Kruger. They absolutely declined to see the papers, stating that they knew all they contained, and that they were not going to be bothered about them. I then told them that they could do as they pleased, but that Mr. Myburgh and I considered it absolutely necessary to assure ourselves of the contents. Accordingly, we opened the packet, and found therein a secret treaty of offensive and defensive alliance upon the conditions of our not building any railway, or entering into a Customs Union with any British Colony for *ten years*, undertaking to indemnify the Orange Free State to the extent of £20,000 per annum during that time,

together with some other provisions. There was no letter explaining that that was solely the attitude of the South African Republic on the points raised by us, and that our Commission had not signified any acceptance or agreement therewith, and had only undertaken to lay it before the Volksraad. As these papers reflected the discussions from the South African Republic point of view, we agreed that it was now only necessary to have our minutes completed, and read by us. The documents were, therefore, carefully locked away, and did not see the light of day again until I produced them in the Volksraad, together with the minutes of the Conference, which could show the attitude of the delegates upon the questions during the discussion. I had no small difficulty in getting the secretary, Mr. Borckenhagen, to finish these minutes,—which he did not do until the last day of our return journey, at Brandfort. I am thus minute with this matter, because when these documents and minutes were read, and discussions took place, with closed doors, in which these facts were reflected upon, my co-delegate, Mr. Klynveld, could not deny that neither he nor the secretary, Mr. Borckenhagen, had seen them till their production in the Volksraad, and indignation was expressed by several members regarding these occurrences. On the 15th June, 1887, the secret session ended.

The Volksraad dealt with these matters, with closed doors, on the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th June, 1887, and on the secrecy being removed, it appeared that a resolution was moved by Mr. Klopper, and was duly passed, regretting that an agreement had not been arrived at with the Government of the South African Republic, on terms acceptable to the Orange Free State, but as the Volksraad of the South African Republic had granted power to President Kruger to come to Bloemfontein, and re-open negotiations, the Volksraad resolved to appoint a Commission of six members, who, with the President of the Orange Free State, should meet the President of the South African Republic, with his Commission, and endeavour to arrive at an agreement acceptable to both States. It further appeared that President Brand took umbrage at the terms of this resolution, as being a breach of his prerogative, and tantamount to a vote of no confidence. During this discussion, too, certain acrimonious remarks were made by Mr. Klynveld, which President Brand took as a personal reflection upon himself, and he left the Raad. Shortly afterwards a letter was handed to me from President Brand, in which he resigned his position as President of the Orange Free State. Quietly considering this crisis, I brought the contents of the letter to the notice of the Volksraad, and, pointing out

the undesirableness of an immediate discussion while minds were disturbed and feelings warm, I asked that we should adjourn. The Volksraad agreed that I should adjourn the Raad till the next morning,—which was done. In the interval I interviewed the President. I pointed out to him that in face of previous resolutions of a similar kind, he had taken no action, that I was certain that there had been no change in the feelings of confidence which the Raad had in him, that it was wrong to think that the remarks made by Mr. Klynveld were shared by the rest of the members, and that I felt sure that I could get a complete and full vote of confidence passed, and a request that he should withdraw his resignation. We had a pretty long interview, as the President had been badly ruffled, and felt that his life and work as President had not deserved such reflection. He realised, however, that he could not attribute to the whole Raad the remarks which had hurt him, and he agreed that if I got such a resolution passed he would reconsider his resignation. Next morning, the 16th June, 1887, the Volksraad, after hearing what I had done, passed a full vote of confidence in President Brand, asking that he should withdraw his resignation, which it declined to accept, and that he should continue his valued co-operation. This resolution was carried by 49 votes to 1, and a Commission of three members

was nominated to carry a certified extract thereof to the President. At the afternoon session President Brand entered the Raad, accompanied by the Commission, and stated that in consequence of that resolution, and the many tokens of support received by him, he would withdraw his resignation.

The Commission appointed to act with the President, when President Kruger came to enter into further negotiations on matters of mutual interest, consisted of Messrs. Myburgh, Klopper, Fischer, McDonald, Bester, and myself. Nothing further, however, was done in regard to the various matters at issue, pending the visit of President Kruger and his Commission, which took place in October, 1887. Some days before they arrived in Bloemfontein, which was on the 5th day of October, 1887, our Commission met President Brand and discussed our position, and it was decided to commence negotiations on matters regarding which we entertained no doubt that a satisfactory arrangement would be arrived at, for instance, a Treaty of Commerce, the questions of the Islands in the Vaal River, and so to reach the important matters of railways, Customs, and closer Union. When, however, the two Commissions met on the 6th October, 1887, it soon appeared that it would be impossible to adhere to that intention, for as soon as President Brand produced the Treaty of

Amity and Commerce for the consideration of the Transvaal Deputation, President Kruger immediately referred to the Conference held at Pretoria, and the correspondence relative to it to show that the consideration of such treaty was dependent on the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance or other political alliance.

Several meetings of the two Presidents and the Commissions of the Republics took place, and correspondence on the points at issue was submitted, especially in regard to closer Union, regarding which President Brand and our Commission proposed a treaty for Federal Union between the two Republics, but without success on any point. On the 22nd October, 1887, our Commission reported to the Volksraad that as President Kruger and his Commission persistently maintained the attitude laid down in the original treaty submitted by him, and gave no sign of agreeing to any other proposals which we considered fair, and that also in regard to railways and Customs Union no agreement could be arrived at, it was desirable that the negotiations should be closed, and that the further correspondence be left in the hands of the Executives of both sides. Further, the Commission was unanimous that closer Union could best be regulated in Federal Union, and that President Brand should continue to urge this in his

correspondence. With regard, however, to Customs Union, the Commission recommended that the President should be empowered to send delegates to a conference to be held with the colonies of the Cape and Natal, and, regarding railways, that the Volksraad should resolve to build a line through our State and arrange for its connection as proposed in his opening speech. The report of the Commission was dealt with in the Volksraad, with the result that His Honour, President Brand, was empowered to nominate a Commission to attend a Customs Union and Railway Conference with such instructions as he deemed requisite.

I have thought it right to give a full account of the whole course of negotiations towards a friendly solution of existing questions with the South African Republic, and with reference to the desire expressed for closer Union with that State, so that it may be seen that there was no desire for amalgamation with the South African Republic, under which we should lose our autonomy; that, on the other hand, the South African Republic desired nothing more nor less than the offensive and defensive alliance which, in my opinion, would have been a breach of the Convention of the 23rd February, 1854, by virtue of which we held Sovereign Independence. That independence would have been imperilled thereby, and ourselves made sharers in the

Convention: Cape Town, Cape Colony, Natal, Orange Free State, Customs and Railways.



FRONT Row: P. A. Myburg, Seymour Haden, Sir Gordon Sprigg, Sir John Akerman,
BACK Row: F. F. Blaine, J. G. Fraser, J. H. Hofmeyer, I. Robinson, A. Fischer. (Secretaries; J. Skirving, I. Noble, J. Watson).

animosity cherished against the British Government, which appeared very clear to me during the conference in Pretoria in June, 1887.

The following year, 1888, was very critical for the Orange Free State. First of all, I would mention that when the matter of closer Union with the South African Republic came up for discussion, a resolution was passed on the 28th May, 1888, on the motion of Mr. Abraham Fischer, which, while appearing to follow up the recommendation of the Commission for Federal Union in the previous session, definitely accepted the principle of a defensive alliance between the two Republics. Then President Brand had appointed Mr. Myburgh, Mr. Fischer, and myself as delegates to the Customs Union and Railway Conference which met in Cape Town, in which the Cape Colony and Natal took part with us,—but the Transvaal Government had declined to do so, and the results of our negotiations were reported to him and dealt with on the 30th May, 1888, and following days. (I insert here a photograph of the members of the Conference, taken then.) Meantime, however, namely on the 16th May, 1888, one of the members of our Commission, Mr. Myburgh, had suddenly died, to the deep regret of all who knew him, by whose death the Orange Free State lost the services of a true patriot and a highly gifted and conscientious representative in the Volksraad.

The report on the Customs Union came up first, and stated that the Commission had succeeded in obtaining complete acknowledgment of our rights to a share of the Customs levied at the coast, subject of course to a commission for collection, and that a Convention would be submitted to regulate all matters in connection therewith.

After considerable discussion the Volksraad adopted the report on the Customs Union and empowered the President to conclude a Convention with the Governments of Cape Colony and Natal in terms thereof, and to arrange all measures required to give effect thereto.

On the 1st June, 1888, the report of our Commission on the Railways Conference was discussed, and Mr. Abraham Fischer elucidated its terms. After long discussion the report on the railways was, on the motion of Mr. J. A. Venter, adopted, and was duly carried by my casting vote as Chairman, and His Honour, the President, was empowered to proceed with surveys to Bloemfontein on the south side, and to Harrismith on the north side, from the Cape and Natal respectively, and to take measures to secure our connections, and to commence construction.

As it appeared to me from the discussions that very close voting was likely to take place, and it might even come to my casting vote, my mind was considerably exercised in view of the

importance of the decision for the interests of the State on the one hand, and the fact of the numerous petitions on the table against it, on the other hand. It, however, appeared to me to be imperative to vote as I did, and secure the advantages of obtaining railway connection with the maritime colonies, without further delay, and once and for all put an end to the interminable discussions, which had already lasted for a period of ten years, upon a policy so absolutely necessary to the development of our inland State. No sooner, however, was the resolution of the Volksraad published than thunders of indignation and reprobation were heard all over the State, and a committee was formed by the anti-customs, and anti-railway party, which called for delegates from all parts of the State, to meet at Dewetsdorp, to protest against the resolution of the Volksraad, and my action as Chairman in having given my casting vote in favour of railways, in face of the great number of memorialists who declared against their introduction.

I at once decided that it was my duty to attend this meeting of delegates at Dewetsdorp, and to make matters clear to them, as it appeared to me from the correspondence in the press that there existed a great deal of ignorance and misunderstanding in regard to the proceedings of the Volksraad, and the constitutional position with regard to the action of the Chairman. I

therefore interviewed President Brand, acquainting him with my intention. He completely approved of my going to the meeting, saying that he was convinced that the people only required to be enlightened in regard to these matters, and reminding me that : "*Great was the Power of Truth and it would prevail.*" Accordingly, on the day before the congress was to meet I went to bid the President good-bye, and he wished me every success. He was, however, I noticed not looking very well.

Half-way on my journey to Dewetsdorp, I outspanned at the farm of a Mr. Kruger, a member of the Volksraad, and a pro-railway man. As soon as he saw me, he said : "You are surely not going to the congress?" I replied that that was "just my intention." Mr. Kruger thereupon begged me to turn back, telling me that I would not be sure of my life. I laughed, and asked him to go with me—but he then became serious, and told me that he had heard that it was stated that if I went to Dewetsdorp I would certainly be shot. I then told him that I felt that it was my clear duty to the Volksraad and to myself to go to the meeting, and to show the people that they were wrong, and acting against their best interests and the best interests of the State. I then proceeded on my journey. On arriving at Dewetsdorp I drove to the house of an old friend, Mr. Hermanus van der Schyff, and asked him

to give me hospitality for the night. He said : " First, tell me, are you come to attend the meeting ? " When I answered that I was, he said : " Then I must tell you that it is better for you to leave here at once, as there are men here who have sworn that they will kill you." " Well," I said, " old friend, I will risk that, only give me lodging and a place for my horses." I am of opinion that all this was merely " bluff " in the hope of keeping me away, but it caused my friends great uneasiness. Mr. van der Schyff then welcomed me and said : " Well, come in, with all my heart, here you will be quite safe." On enquiry I ascertained that there was quite a concourse of people, and that all the delegates had arrived. A meeting place had been obtained in the wool store of Messrs. Badenhorst Brothers, and the committee had drawn up regulations for the meeting. The members of the committee were the following : Messrs. Christian de Wet, and his brother, Jan de Wet, of Maboela, and Mr. Tobias Wiese, and I found that, besides myself, the only other members of the Volksraad who had come to attend the meeting, were Mr. Andries Burger and Mr. Jan Roux. The meeting was to begin at 10 a.m. the next morning.

I spent a good night, as I was very tired after my journey, and I did not let anything spoil my breakfast. When the bell rang for the meeting I gathered up my papers and went to it. My

good host preferred not to accompany me. I met several people, some were well known to me, others were more or less strangers, but all looked serious at what they appeared to consider was sheer foolhardiness on my part. I, however, retained my usual demeanour and friendly expression to all, and I took my seat in the middle of the gathering. There was a temporary platform at the one corner of the room, which was for the committee. Mr. Christian de Wet was Chairman, and he declared the meeting open, and asked the minister of the Dutch Reformed Church to open the proceedings with prayer. After that, the rules drawn up by the committee were read, providing *inter alia* that no speaker should speak longer than 15 minutes, and that no member of the Volksraad should be allowed to speak. This latter was very evidently aimed at me, and confirmed me in my suspicion that the committee had received information that I would be present. However, the notice was read, convoking the meeting, and stating its object to protest against the resolution of the Volksraad on the customs and railways, and the action of the Chairman in giving his casting vote for railways. The Customs Union Convention was first brought under discussion. Mr. Wiese took the lead, and gave his opinion regarding the matter, pointing out the strenuous opposition of the burghers to it, that it would only bring

taxation on us, that the products of the Transvaal would also be taxed, together with all the other stock arguments used by the leaders of this agitation to rouse the feelings of the people. He then moved for a committee to draw up a protest against the action of the Volksraad. When Mr. Wiese had finished, Mr. Jan de Wet followed with much the same arguments and allegations. Then there came a pause. No one else seemed desirous of continuing. Mr. Christian Richter then called attention to my presence in the meeting, and moved the cancellation of the rule of the committee debarring Volksraad members from speaking, adding that this meeting was specially called to protest against the work of the Volksraad, and that the Voorzitter of the Volksraad, who was one of the delegates to the Customs Union, was present, who, he asked, could give them more information about this than the said Voorzitter? He moved that he be heard. This was at once seconded and carried by the meeting, and I was called upon to speak. On rising to speak from the platform I said straight that I had a strong feeling that it was my duty to be there, and make clear any and all matters they might not understand, and so enable them to come to a right conclusion in the interests of the country. I then recounted to them the whole history of our claim to Customs on all goods consumed by our people, and collected by the

maritime States, which had been guaranteed by the Convention of the 23rd February, 1854, but which, notwithstanding continual application, we had not received. I reminded them that all this time the Customs were being paid by them, and went into the Treasury of the Cape Colony, and of Natal. This we had now secured for our own Treasury.

The meeting listened with the closest attention, and I had just got to the point of my negotiations at Cape Town, when the Chairman, Mr. Christian de Wet, stated that my time was up, and I took my seat. Immediately, however, another member of the meeting moved the cancellation of the 15 minutes rule, stating that I should be allowed to explain the whole matter to them. This was carried, and the Chairman thereupon called upon me to proceed with my speech. This I did, and I declared myself open to answer any question they might choose to ask me, stating that I would do my best to give them a clear explanation, pointing out that there must naturally be a great deal of ignorance and misunderstanding among them, because even one of their leaders had stated that the Convention would not only bring taxation upon them, but would mean the taxation of Transvaal produce as well. I then placed the Convention in the hands of Messrs. Wiese and de Wet, and I asked them to read out the provision which would bear them out in their

statements. This of course they could not do, and on my reading out the provisions in favour of the Transvaal produce and the admission of our right to a share of the customs collected on goods consumed in the Orange Free State, proving that they had all along been taxed by the colonies on those goods, and that those Customs were retained by those colonies, but would now come to our State, these two leaders then admitted that they were mistaken. I pointed out that if these leaders admitted that they were mistaken on such cardinal points, I thought that they ought to be very careful, otherwise great harm would result, not only to the State, but to themselves. I then emphasized the false position that they had been led to take up. Ostensibly they were here to protest against the Volksraad. Now, the Constitution nowhere gave them the right to protest, and if such protest were placed in my hands, when the Volksraad met, I would deem it my duty to refer it to the State Attorney, which would mean trouble for all concerned. I drew their attention to the fact that they only had the right to approach the Volksraad by dutiful petition for relief in any grievance they might have. As I was speaking, I could see that the meeting felt that they had been misled, and the discussions ended in a resolution to send in a petition, instead of a protest, to the Volksraad for reconsideration of the matters, and it was

arranged that a certain number of the delegates should meet at Bloemfontein at the next sitting of the Volksraad to watch proceedings. After an adjournment for luncheon the meeting resumed, and the question of railways was placed under discussion, and more especially my action in giving my casting vote in favour thereof, ignoring the opposition which had been made. The Chairman desired me to introduce the matter, but I suggested that, as it was specially my action as Chairman which was questioned, I preferred the leaders of the anti-railway party, and any member who chose, to state what they had against the introduction of railways into the State, and against the Volksraad, or my action as Chairman. I would take notes of the criticisms, and then reply to them. This was agreed to. I took down a whole lot, and when all had finished saying what they had to say, I replied *seriatim*. Many I could take together, for they were the usual arguments against railways, as being unnecessary, detrimental to transport service, and injurious to horse-breeding, likely to entail heavy land taxes, which had ruined numbers of farmers in the Western Provinces, as certain to encroach on their property rights, etc., etc. Against my exercise of the casting vote, however, there was very considerable animus. What right had I, they asked, to ignore the memorials, and how many votes did I bring to bear in

deciding the matter. Some said two, and some said three. Also, a statement was made to the effect that if the burghers had gone to the Volksraad and shown a rifle there, I would not have *dared* to act as I did, and so forth. I informed the meeting that if they had all been there, with all their rifles levelled at me, I should have recorded my vote not otherwise than as I had done. I stood under my oath to the Constitution which enjoined that I should give a casting vote when the votes were equal on any question, and further, half of the Volksraad shared my views. I told them also that I only had ONE vote which I could exercise when the votes were tied, and there had to be a decision, and that I voted according to my oath, for what the best interests of the country demanded, and I felt sure that, on calm reflection, they would acknowledge this. This closed the discussion, and it was agreed that this subject should also be referred to the Memorial Committee to be further dealt with. I had the satisfaction of knowing, however, that my presence and work were appreciated. Several of the prominent delegates admitted to me that they had been misled, and they were pleased that I had come and explained the position to them.

This meeting at Dewetsdorp broke the opposition, because although another meeting was held at Brandfort, which the Government Secretary, Mr. Blignaut, and I attended, and a third

meeting was held at Ladybrand, the views expressed at the latter meeting went to approve the Volksraad's actions.

Needless to say my revered chief, President Brand, was highly pleased with the change of feeling obtained.

I have been rather particular and full in my account of the fortunes which accompanied the dealings with these matters, but I thought it requisite to the understanding of the mentality of our people—how easily misled and led astray, a ready prey to designing agitators, and yet open to conviction when fairly advised and acquainted with the intent and aim of any project which is brought to their notice.

DEATH OF PRESIDENT BRAND.

Now we come to the greatest misfortune that could have befallen our beloved State.

On the 8th June, 1888, in view of the fifth lustrum of his Presidentship on the 9th May, 1889, the Volksraad decided to have a fresh election on the 18th December, 1888, and unanimously recommended His Honour, Johannes Hendricus Brand again, as sole candidate for the office. On the requisition which I was enjoined to send the President, he again accepted nomination, expressing the hope that his health, which was anything but good, would improve during the leave which he intended to take. Alas! however, Man proposes but God disposes.

Late in the evening of the 14th July, 1888, while in the midst of my family, a knock came to the door of my house, and Dr. Krause was there with the startling tidings that my honoured chief, the beloved President of the Orange Free State, had succumbed to an attack of heart failure, and had suddenly passed away. I immediately went over to the Presidency to express my sincere condolence with Lady Brand and the family, and to ascertain her wishes in regard to the funeral. I then interviewed the Government Secretary, Mr. Blignaut, who desired to consult me as to the steps to be taken by the Executive Council, in terms of the provisions of the constitution, and Chapter 24 of the Statute Book, which provided that on the death of the President, the Landdrost of Bloemfontein should immediately convene a meeting of the Executive Council, which should in such case exercise the powers of the President, and at once convene a session of the Volksraad to provide for the vacancy,—which was done.

All the necessary arrangements were made for a State funeral. The reception room of the Presidency was draped and there, on a catafalque, the embalmed remains of our President lay in state, and for the day of the burial were taken to the Dutch Reformed Church, under a guard of honour. After the funeral service at the Church, the remains of the President were

conveyed to the city cemetery, followed by all the chief officials of the State, and thousands of mourners from all parts,—as many as had been able to reach the Capital in time. It was indeed a deeply-mourning procession which followed the great President of the Orange Free State to his last resting place. Grief was evident in every countenance, and tears from many eyes bore witness to the fact that all realised the irreparable loss which our State had suffered in the death of him, who for twenty-five years had served as its head, sacrificing all his personal interests, and raising it from chaos to the proud position of being the model State of South Africa. Several funeral orations testified to the tactful attention and unselfish devotion of our beloved President to all his public duties, and to the great excellence of character which he had always displayed in his intercourse with his people, but, above all, to his strict and unbending loyalty to the land of his adoption, and his far-sighted policy, so faithfully pursued to secure its best interests and peaceful development.

It fell to my lot, as Chairman of the Volksraad, to bear witness, on behalf of that body, to the numberless virtues which had characterised President Brand's career, and the complete confidence which the Volksraad had always had in his wise guidance of all its affairs. He was conspicuously free from any animosity towards

the British Government, although on several occasions he had to withstand it vigorously in defending our State against any breach of the Convention of 23rd February, 1854. In his dealings with the South African Republic also, he evinced the most sincere desire to maintain friendly relations, while he felt it his duty to avoid any entanglement with it. Nor was it from the various governments of South Africa alone that the news of President Brand's death called forth tributes of respect and of sympathy with the Orange Free State in its loss, but from the great powers of Europe as well, and from America.

The Volksraad met on the 20th August, 1888, to make provision for the vacancy caused by the death of President Brand, and after having declared its sense of the irreparable loss the country had sustained, and having expressed its sincere sympathy and condolence with Lady Brand and the family, it appointed a Committee to report regarding the erection of a monument to the President's memory. Mr. Blignaut was then appointed as Acting State President until an election could take place, which election was fixed for the 18th December, 1888. The Volksraad thereafter proceeded to the nomination of a candidate for the Presidency, with the result that the Chief Justice, His Honour F. W. Reitz,

obtained 32 votes. I accordingly sent him the usual requisition on behalf of the Volksraad, which he duly accepted.

The Volksraad met again on the 9th January, 1889.

The Acting President announced that the Chief Justice, His Honour F. W. Reitz, had been elected by a large majority. It was decided that the inauguration of the new President should take place on the 10th January, 1889, and that the usual address, on behalf of the Volksraad, be presented to him. And so on that date the Volksraad accompanied His Honour F. W. Reitz to the Dutch Reformed Church, where the usual ceremonies took place. In my capacity as Chairman of the Volksraad, I administered the Oath of Office, and an address first by me, and then by the President, completed the function.

During the rest of the special session, after consideration of the correspondence which had passed between the Acting President and the maritime States, resolutions were passed by the Volksraad, definitely authorising the State President to enter into Customs Union, and to build railway lines from Colesberg to Bloemfontein, and from Durban to Harrismith.

The Volksraad met again in May, 1889, and many matters of urgent importance were dealt with, and chief of these were several treaties

which had been entered into with the South African Republic by President Reitz, and a Commission which he had asked to accompany him. Among others, I was asked to be a member of that Commission, and to accompany President Reitz to Potchefstroom to meet President Kruger and a Commission from the Transvaal Volksraad, there to resume negotiations, and to try to reach a settlement of the matters still in question. The Commission consisted of Messrs. Borckenhagen, Klynveld, C. H. Wessels, J. A. Venter, R. MacDonald, and myself. When the President asked me to join this Commission, I hesitated to do so, for several reasons. I knew that President Reitz, and the two first-named members of the Commission, namely Messrs. Borckenhagen and Klynveld, were unmistakably pro-Transvaal, and would therefore probably lean strongly towards President Kruger's views, to which I was totally opposed. It appeared to me, however, that if I declined to assist the President, and the Commission on its return presented matter which I considered it only right to criticise, he would be entitled to say that he had claimed my co-operation, but that I had declined to give it. I also felt that, as Chairman of the Volksraad, I ought to go.

We reached Potchefstroom, and entered upon the discussions only to find that President Kruger had not in any way changed the views he held,

or the position he had taken up in 1887 at Pretoria and at Bloemfontein, namely, that an offensive and defensive alliance should be the first matter to be discussed and agreed to, before any other would be considered by him and his Commission. It was pointed out to President Kruger that much as the Orange Free State desired to enter into closer Union with the Transvaal Republic, it would only do so by means of a Federal Union, and to secure that, it was prepared to enter upon a conditional defensive alliance, in which the right was reserved to the State which would have to render assistance to the other to enquire into the circumstances calling for its aid, and the justice of the cause.

The discussions on this matter of a Political Union had lasted for three-and-a-half days, without any agreement being arrived at. We had adjourned for lunch, when, as I was proceeding to leave the room, President Kruger gave me what was, I supposed, a playful slap on the cheek, saying, "Voorzitter, jy is altoos tegen my" (Chairman, you are always against me). I replied, "What else did you expect? I am here to do my best for the Orange Free State and not for you."

Just after we had finished lunch, which we had in our quarters, I got a message from President Reitz requesting me to come and see him. I went and found him and Mr. Borckenhagen together. They had evidently been discussing the position.

President Reitz then said that he wanted my opinion on a certain measure which they thought would end the unfortunate position. Here were the two kindred Republics of South Africa in negotiation for already three-and-a-half days, and still unable to reach an agreement in their mutual interest ; it would certainly be a lasting disgrace if they should fail to do so. He stated that he had, therefore, drawn up a memorandum, proposing to enter into a secret understanding with President Kruger, to interpret the usual provisions of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce, providing for everlasting peace, perfect friendship, and equal treatment between the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, in the sense desired by President Kruger. He thought that President Kruger might accept this, and that it might induce him to meet our views. After carefully reading this document, to get its full meaning, I said to President Reitz that if *he* could show me that the *Constitution* gave him the *power*, at his sole discretion, to enter upon such secret agreement, he might sign it, but if not, he had better leave it alone, and that as he knew he had no such power, which power only the Volksraad could exercise, he would be well advised to leave the matter. President Reitz remarked: "I see you are right," and thereupon destroyed the document. I stated, moreover, that I was convinced that President Kruger would agree to our position. My conviction

was based upon the fact that considerable trouble had already arisen between the Government of the South African Republic and the large body of influential owners of gold mining property, and of diggers, speculators, and the like, who were foreigners to the South African Republic, had no franchise or right of representation in the Transvaal Volksraad, and were clamouring against grievances which they were under on that account, in the way of taxation on the mining industry and otherwise. I had ascertained from some members of the Transvaal Commission that they were afraid it might all end in a rising, and they were desirous of assistance should this occur. It was on that account therefore that President Kruger and his Commission, when in Bloemfontein, had proposed that there should be the right to call for volunteers, which proposal we could not, and did not then accept. Well, it later appeared that I had read matters aright, for, when we met again in the afternoon, President Kruger stated that he and his Commission had agreed to our contention that a conditional defensive alliance would at that time meet the case. The terms of the alliance were then fixed, and all the other matters of Customs, railways, etc., were speedily amicably arranged, and, as mentioned, produced to the Volksraad, and adopted.

In this session of the Volksraad, the matter of railways was also brought to issue. The President

Railway Convention, Orange Free State Natal, 1889.



FRONT ROW: A. Hime, J. G. Fraser, D. Hunter.
BACK ROW: McGregor, H. Binns, A. Fischer.

intimated that he had accepted a proposal from the Cape Colony Government, which had offered to build the line from Colesberg to Bloemfontein on better terms than any of those who had tendered for the concession could offer us, terms which he stated he considered most advantageous to the Orange Free State. His action was approved, and a Commission was appointed to assist him in arranging the necessary contract for the construction of the said line. The Commission consisted of Messrs. Fischer, Barlow, Kellner, Wessels, Klynveld, and myself.

The Volksraad also passed a resolution outlining its conception of what the basis of the Federal Union with the South African Republic should be, and this was referred to the Volksraad of the South African Republic for its acceptance. It was not acted upon by them, however, and was eventually shelved.

On the 18th June, 1889, the Volksraad empowered the President to conclude a Convention with the Government of Natal, to build a railway from Ladysmith to Harrismith, and he appointed Mr. Fischer, Mr. McGregor, then State Attorney, and myself, to proceed to Harrismith, where we met the Commission from Natal, which was composed of Sir Henry Binns, Sir Albert Hime, and Sir David Hunter. I insert herein a photograph taken at Harrismith at that time.

In 1890, in the May session of the Volksraad, the President announced that a Convention was drawn up, which he would sign and produce for confirmation. The President had, before this, been invited to be present at the turning of the first sod of the Ladysmith—Harrismith Railway, but as he was unable to go, he had delegated Messrs. Fischer, Martin, and myself to represent him. He stated that he would lay our report on the Table, but he wished special notice to be taken of the hearty reception and great hospitality accorded to the delegates.

A feature of the 1890 session of the Volksraad was that in addition to the usual nomination of two Commissions to bring the President and the Ministers to the opening, I had to appoint a third to bring His Excellency, Sir Henry Loch, High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape Colony, who was a guest of the President at the time, and who expressed to me his delight at the dignity and decorum which characterised the Volksraad.

A matter of considerable importance was introduced into the Volksraad by the President in a proposal to modify the Constitution so that the Treasurer General and State Attorney could become additional members of the Executive Council, and the President might be given the power of veto. The Volksraad, however, declined to entertain this, and I may say here that a good

many measures were brought forward by the President, from time to time, either to revoke or modify enactments which his great predecessor had deemed necessary. In most of the cases, however, the Volksraad voted against the change. It appeared to me that President Reitz had not the tact to accept an adverse vote with a good grace and cherished resentment, not sufficiently recognising that the Volksraad was a peculiarly conservative body, and was suspicious of vital change.

Towards the end of the year 1890, railway connection between the Cape Colony from Naauwpoort, *via* Norval's Pont to Bloemfontein, was completed. The Cape Government had lost no time in pushing on the work, and the opening at Bloemfontein took place on the 17th December, 1890, which day happened to be my birthday. Needless to say this event gave me very special pleasure, as I had for so many years done my best to secure this great boon for our country, and had suffered considerable opprobrium on account of my casting vote. We all felt that we could now look forward to accelerated development for our State. Extension of the line to the Vaal River had already been voted in the Volksraad, and authority for the contract had been given to the President in the session through which we had just passed. The auspicious event took place in the presence of official representatives

of the Cape and Natal Colonies, the South African Republic, and the Portuguese Government of Lourenco Marques. Great festivities had been arranged, and everything passed off smoothly and without any untoward occurrence.

In May, 1891, the President announced the formal agreement with the Government of Cape Colony for the extension to the Transvaal, and stated that already fifty miles of earthworks had been finished, and that the work on the Ladysmith--Harrismith line was also proceeding rapidly.

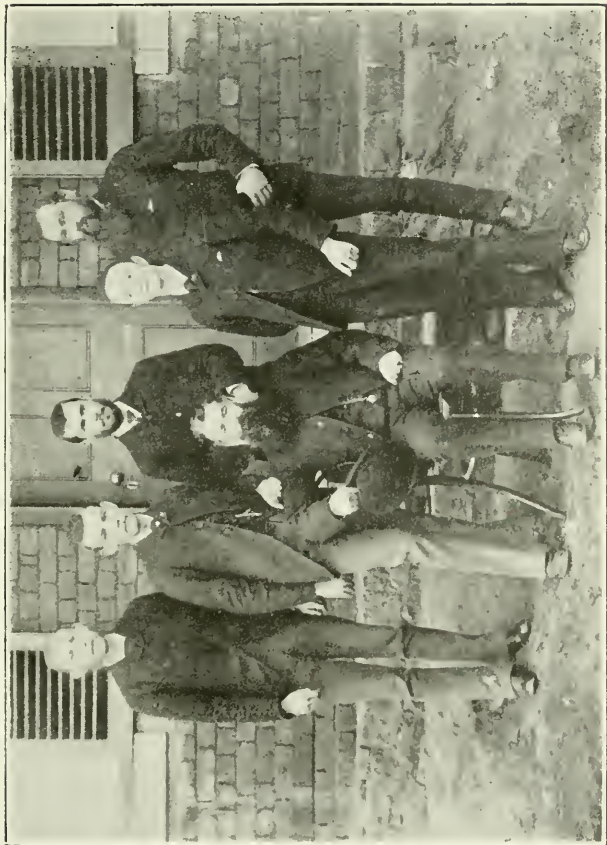
The returns from the Customs Union had enabled our Government to meet all the ordinary expenditure, and had left a considerable balance which could now enable the Volksraad to provide proper buildings for hospital, gaol, and other public institutions, and to undertake the bridging of some of the larger rivers. The people of the State, therefore, had now the complete proof that all their opposition had been contrary to the best interests of the country.

It was in the session of 1889 that President Reitz announced the appointment of Mr. Marthinus Theunis Steyn as State Attorney of the Orange Free State in succession to Mr. A. E. Krause, who was promoted to the bench as Second Puisne Judge, on the reconstruction of the High Court—necessitated by his own election to the Presidency, when Mr. Melius de Villiers became Chief Justice and Mr. Reginald Gregorowski First Puisne Judge.

In the following year, 1890, in consequence of Judge Krause accepting office as State Attorney of the South African Republic, President Reitz announced the further promotion of Mr. Marthinus Theunis Steyn to the vacancy as Second Puisne Judge of the Orange Free State High Court. I think that this is a convenient place to mention the following particulars. I had known Mr. Steyn as a boy at the Grey College. He was the son of Mr. M. Steyn, a farmer in the Bloemfontein district, who became a member of the Executive Council, and afterwards of the Volksraad. Having shown aptitude for study, upon the advice of some friends, Mr. M. T. Steyn was sent to Europe, and decided upon the profession of the law. Having failed to pass the admission examination at Leiden, in Holland, on account of alleged insufficient knowledge of Dutch, he was admitted to the Inner Temple, London, on the 15th January, 1880, and called to the Bar in November, 1882. After his return to Bloemfontein I met Mr. M. T. Steyn again, and was informed by him that he intended to practise in the Orange Free State. I welcomed him back to his home, and to our profession. Some little time later he expressed a desire to obtain an opportunity of making himself acquainted with the practical part of the profession, with the local provisions for the practice thereof, and with the statute law of the Orange Free State. Having a room vacant in my

office at that time, I told him that he might have the use of it, and avail himself of the chance of getting up the practical part of his profession. I further undertook to put in his hands any application or other work which I could not find time for, as I was very fully occupied. Mr. Steyn expressed himself pleased to avail himself of this offer, and did so. I insert here a photograph of my office staff taken at this time, in which Mr. Steyn appears. Later Mr. Steyn married my niece, the daughter of my brother, the Reverend Colin Fraser of Philippolis, whom he had previously met on the journey to Europe, and with whom he had renewed his acquaintance at my house. On this account, therefore, I was very pleased and interested to see that Mr. Steyn made his way, and got a standing in the profession, that he was afterwards appointed State Attorney, and subsequently obtained a Judgeship. He continued in my office to the time of his preferment as State Attorney, and succeeded in obtaining considerable work, both before the High Court and in the Circuit Courts. There was, however, one feature of our acquaintance which I never could understand, not knowing of any cause for its existence, and this feature was that, notwithstanding my friendly attitude towards Mr. Steyn, there never ensued anything like confidence or cordiality towards me, with the result that, even while he was engaged in my office,

Office Staff, 1883.



J. G. Fraser.
J. S. de Vletter, J. Brebner, George Scott, H. B. Austin, M. T. Steyn.

our intercourse was mainly confined to matters of business, as such arose, and the ordinary interchange of polite greetings. I never, however, allowed this peculiar attitude on the part of Mr. Steyn to influence my conduct towards him, but eventually I found the explanation.

During this time my own business had grown to such a great extent that I had to make a large increase in my staff, but, under God's providence, my health remained fairly good, and I was equal to the pressure of both my private and my political work, and, in addition thereto, to a considerable burden of Church and public duties. One improvement, which greatly relieved the Chairman of the Volksraad in his work, was an addition voted to Section 10 of the Constitution that besides the Chairman, a Vice-Chairman should in future also be elected at the annual opening of the Volksraad.

In the following year, 1892, a further change was made in the personelle of the High Court in consequence of the resignation of Judge Gregorowski as First Puisne Judge. Judge Steyn was promoted to the vacancy thus created, and Mr. MacGregor to the Second Puisne Judgeship, whereby the State Attorneyship became vacant. This was followed by the unusual appointment of Mr. Gregorowski as State Attorney, regarding which I considered it right to point out that it was the first instance, to my knowledge, where

a judge resigning from the Bench was appointed to the position of State Attorney, and that I did not think that it was in the interests of justice that all the influence which a judge might have obtained with juries in criminal matters should afterwards be exercised by the same person, as it inevitably would be when prosecuting in such cases.

The position of affairs in the South African Republic arising from the persistent demand on the part of the mining population for the right of representation in the Volksraad, and the refusal, equally persistent, on the part of that government to admit it, while none the less levying considerable taxation on the industry, was already becoming embittered, and clearly foreshadowed trouble more serious still. Amongst this population there was also a large number of Orange Free State burghers, who had gone up to the South African Republic, attracted by the special opportunities existing there, hoping to improve their condition. These burghers were also debarred from obtaining the franchise there. On one occasion this was mentioned to the surprise of many members of the Free State Volksraad, who found it difficult to understand that, while the Orange Free State was allied with the South African Republic by a Defensive Alliance and a Treaty of Amity and Commerce, its privileges should be denied to

our own people, who were thereby placed on the same footing as foreigners. To me it only afforded confirmation of my conviction that as long as President Kruger secured the assurance of our support in any trouble which might arise, he was not prepared to extend any special privilege to us. I had arrived at this conclusion when the proposal of Federal Union with us was shelved by the South African Republic.

In his opening speech of this session, 2nd May, 1892, President Reitz proposed, *inter alia*, that the Volksraad should grant him general leave to be absent from the State during such time as he might consider necessary, from time to time, either in the interests of the State, or in his private interests. This proposal was discussed on the 30th May, 1892, and the Volksraad resolved that he might leave to be present at the opening of the railways mentioned in his speech, and for that purpose nominated the Government Secretary as Acting President during his absence. The Volksraad, however, declined to give the President general leave, holding it necessary that the consent of the Volksraad must be obtained for each occasion on which he might wish to absent himself. On the following day, I received a letter from President Reitz announcing that in consequence of the resolution of the previous day, he felt himself compelled to resign his position as

President. This letter was read, and I advised that its consideration should be postponed. It was resolved to consider the matter on the 1st June, 1892. A Commission was appointed to see the President to ascertain what his objections were to the resolution of the 30th May, and to request him to reconsider his letter of resignation. The Commission duly reported the result of their interview with President Reitz, to the effect that it had got him to withdraw his letter on condition that he would not leave the State without the consent of the Volksraad, and, in exceptional circumstances, when he considered it unavoidable, for family reasons, if such leave was not obtainable, he would go. The President desired to see a pertinent resolution regarding this matter passed, and he would submit to it, although he did not recognise the constitutional power of the Volksraad to pass such prohibition.

On the 2nd June, 1892, the Volksraad, on the motion of Mr. Klynveld, declined to accept the report of the Commission on the views of the President regarding the resolution of the 30th May, 1892, but while there was no desire to evince any want of confidence, the Volksraad felt it was right to express clearly and strongly that the presence of the State President, in the interests of the State, was continually required within the State, and the Volksraad trusted that he would reconsider his letter.

A Commission was appointed to acquaint President Reitz with this resolution, and reported in the afternoon of the 2nd June, with a letter from him withdrawing his resignation. In my opinion this whole crisis was caused by impulsive irritation on the refusal of the President's proposal in paragraph 28 of his speech, which he at once took as a vote of no confidence. I therefore took the opportunity, when speaking to the final motion on the matter, to point out that there was no ground for such view on the President's part, and that if he were to regard each refusal of the Volksraad to the matters he proposed, and on which it differed from him, as want of confidence, and there were many such, there could not be the co-operation which was so desirable. I myself could not help coming to the conviction that these frequent attempts on the President's part to force his opinion on the Volksraad would be prejudicial to the influence which he could otherwise attain.

The opening of the "Natal—Harrismith" line was fixed for the 13th July, 1892, and took place with all ceremony in the presence of representatives of Natal and the Orange Free State, and a very large concourse of rejoicing visitors. Our union with the railway system of Natal was accomplished. We were not, however, to have its extension into the State at once. A change had come over the railway

position in the north-east of South Africa. The South African Republican Government took up the attitude that the Potchefstroom Convention on the matter of railways had lost point through the extension of the "Colesberg—Bloemfontein" line to the Vaal River, which line was rapidly nearing completion. President Kruger now deemed a direct line from Natal, *via* Charlestown, to Pretoria, more in the interests of his State. I may here state that I felt quite sure that as that line was much more in the interests of Natal also, there was little hope that the extension of the Harrismith line would be proceeded with, if at all, until the Charlestown line was built. We were quite powerless to influence the position to secure the extension at once, and my surmise proved to be correct. Personally, I viewed this change of policy as involving a clear breach of the arrangements arrived at between the Orange Free State and its neighbours. I feared that it might re-act against the great desire now being manifested from all parts of the Orange Free State for railway connections with the existing main lines. It was somewhat difficult to believe that where formerly such strong and bitter opposition had been made by the burghers against the building of railways, there now appeared to be an almost universal desire to obtain them, especially now that the line from

Bloemfontein to Vaal River was in full working order, and the advantages thereof were being realised. At a later session, indeed, there were no less than nineteen motions for connection with the main line, and I felt that a warning must be given against schemes too extensive, and that in every case there should be searching investigation before a decision was taken.

In 1893 I was re-elected for Bloemfontein, and also as Chairman of the Volksraad, and on the 1st June of that year I had to preside again over the choice of a candidate for the Presidentship, as the period of office of President Reitz was nearing its end. The result of the election by the members was to recommend President Reitz again for the position, he being chosen by 43 votes to 8. I was instructed to send the President the usual requisition, and the election by the registered voters was fixed for the 22nd November, 1893, and the inauguration for the 10th January, 1894. President Reitz accepted the requisition. He had, however, three requests to make, and he wished to discuss these with a Commission. Accordingly, on the 6th June, 1893, a Commission was appointed to meet him, to ascertain his wishes, and to report thereon. On the 8th June the Commission reported that President Reitz's acceptance of the requisition was unconditional,

and he withdrew his requests. The Commission was of the opinion, however, that should President Reitz be chosen, the Volksraad might approve that he should visit Europe for three months, on full salary, and further, that he might be granted, on application, a short period of leave annually to attend to private matters beyond the State. Increase of salary the Commission could not recommend, but under the changed conditions existing, a grant of £600, by way of table money, payable in monthly instalments, might be made, and this was decreed.

On the 5th June, 1893, the opening of the new hall for the Volksraad was carried out with due ceremonial amidst the rejoicings of a large assembly of the people. Before leaving the hall, which we had occupied until then, I reminded the Raad that the said hall had been dedicated on the 31st May, 1875. I then recounted the history of the former places of assembly in years gone by, and of the Chamber which the Raad was just vacating, and referred to many of the old members, who had now passed away, mentioning Messrs. J. J. Venter, G. P. Visser, T. J. de Villiers, A. J. G. Roux, P. A. D. C. Myburgh, G. F. Enslin, and a number of others, and, above all, President Brand, who during a number of years had, with his admirable wisdom, served the Raad with advice. I urged that now, as we were entering into our new Chamber, we should

resolve to do so with a fresh determination to use our best efforts to promote the true interests of our country and people.

President Reitz opened the new hall, and the usual formalities were observed. The Volksraad at last found itself in possession of a building worthy of the sovereign legislature of the Orange Free State.

In the following session, January, 1894, the first call on my work as Chairman of the Volksraad was the inauguration for the second time of President Reitz, who had been re-elected. This was duly carried out with the usual formalities. In this session also it was decided to extend the Natal—Harrismith line to Kroonstad, and several other lines were urged by the President and other members of the Volksraad, but no other was resolved upon during that session.

It may be asked, if this is an autobiography, why mention is not made of so many other matters which were dealt with by the Volksraad, such as Education, Jurisdiction, Telegraphs, Hospitals, Public Works, Mounted Police, etc., in regard to all of which important resolutions were passed, and continual progressive development was fostered and carried out, from session to session of the Volksraad, in so far as the public revenue permitted, especially as that revenue was now, owing to the receipt of our share of Customs and railway returns, in a healthy condition. My

reply to this question is that I am only confining my remarks to such incidents as appear to me to be necessary to show my attitude and action on special occasions, and on special matters which had a bearing on our inter-State connection in South Africa. A minute account of all the matters which were crowded into a period of fifty years of intense occupation would be impossible.

It became patent to me that under the regime of President Reitz a coterie was forming of those who had, in my observation, shown a decided pro-Transvaal trend of thought, and the editor of *The Express*, Mr. Borckenhagen, left no stone unturned to influence, through his paper, the Orange Free State people against British policy in South Africa. I noted opinions developing which, I felt certain, would culminate in serious political trouble in the near future. I was also greatly strengthened in my opinion through the events which took place during the session of 1895. I was re-elected to the Chairmanship of the Volksraad, and Mr. Abraham Fischer was chosen as Vice-Chairman. The session was opened by the Government Secretary, Mr. P. J. Blignaut, who, in the absence of President Reitz, read the Speech—the first paragraph of which signified that the President had requested that this should be done, and was placing the report of his medical advisers before the Raad—leaving the

matter in its hands. I had already received and communicated to the Volksraad a telegram from President Reitz, announcing that he was in Cape Town, and expressing his regret that owing to illness he would be unable to be present at the opening of the session. On the 2nd April, 1895, the Volksraad expressed regret that the President was prevented by illness from fulfilling his official duties, granted him six months' leave, with full salary, to proceed to Europe for special treatment, as recommended by his medical advisers, and proceeded to provide for the position during his absence. A motion was made to appoint me as acting President during the absence of President Reitz from the State, but I at once signified that I did not desire to be considered for the position, and Mr. P. J. Blignaut was again nominated as acting President during the absence of President Reitz.

Now I wish to say here that although on two previous occasions for the recommendation of candidates for the Presidency my name was brought forward—once with 8 votes, and second time with 12 votes—I had never interchanged a single word with any member about the matter. Of course I could not prevent friends of mine, or members, who deemed me competent, from nominating me on any occasion, but I can honestly say that up to that moment I had never felt any ambition for the office. I was in a good

position, my business brought me in a better return than the President's salary, and I was occupying an honourable place in the State, therefore why fetter myself with the bonds of the Presidency. I would not have accepted an acting appointment under any circumstances. In fact, at that crisis, Mr. Blignaut was, in my opinion, absolutely entitled to the position, as he had been filling it up to that moment, during the absence of President Reitz.

The session took the usual course, various matters coming up for consideration. On the 18th April, a resolution was proposed and carried, not without some pointed objections, to the effect that the Executive Council should enquire whether the Government of the South African Republic would favour the discussion with delegates from our State of points of mutual interest to both the Republics. On the 26th April, 1895, a telegram was received from the South African Republic stating that the Government would be glad to receive a deputation after the South African Republic Volksraad had met, and they desired that the Orange Free State should signify beforehand what points of discussion would be brought up. Thereupon a committee, consisting of Messrs. Klynveld, Fischer, Botha, J. P. Roux, C. J. de Villiers, C. R. de Wet, and G. A. Esselen, were appointed to draw up a programme of points for discussion, and to lay it before the Volksraad,

and finally, as members of the deputation of seven to go to the Transvaal, Messrs. Fischer, Klynveld, Burger, Botha, C. H. Wessels, C. W. H. v. d. Post, and J. J. van Niekerk, were nominated. On the 30th April Mr. Klynveld absolutely declined to be a member of the deputation, and in his place, therefore, was chosen Mr. C. R. de Wet, who in former years had been a member of the Volksraad of the South African Republic, had later led the anti-railway agitation in the Free State, and who, some years afterwards, achieved guerilla fame in the Anglo-Boer War.

It at once appeared to me that there must be some reason for the manipulation of the personnel which was chosen, and as I was in a very good position to watch all the by-play which generally accompanied any discussions affecting the South African Republic's relations with us, it was clear to me that there was a strong desire to have a very decided pro-Transvaal majority in the deputation, and that Mr. Klynveld resigned because the Vice-Chairman of the Volksraad, Mr. A. Fischer, was the first delegate chosen for the deputation.

The deputation returned on the 29th May, 1895, and the report was tabled and printed.

The points discussed between the deputation and the Government of the South African Republic comprised :—

1. A law regulating the export of cattle, stock, and produce from the Orange Free State to the South African Republic.

2. The reduction of railway tariff for such stock and produce.

3. The desirability for the participation by the South African Republic in a General Customs Union for South Africa.

4. The erection of one or more bridges over the Vaal River.

(b) Concerning the Mint of the South African Republic.

(c) Closer union with the South African Republic.

5. Better understanding ; to be obtained by personal discussions by delegates.

During the discussions of the third point, the acting President reported the receipt of a letter from the Government of the South African Republic, announcing the annexation by the British Government of the territory of Zambaan, Umbigese, etc. — and the correspondence regarding the same. Thereupon a discussion followed, resulting in a resolution of the Volksraad referring to the said annexations, and stating that whereas it had been done without any previous consultation with any other Government of South Africa, it would unavoidably delay and restrain the better co-operation and understanding so much desired between the various States and

colonies of South Africa—and the Volksraad expressed regret that this step should have been taken by the British Government, and the hope that it might still find terms to withdraw the annexation in the interests of South Africa.

In paragraph 4 (c), of the report, the discussions disclosed that the assurance had been given by the deputation to the Government of the South African Republic that any proposal made by it regarding closer union would be considered by the Orange Free State. This was confirmed by the Volksraad, and the Executive was instructed to inform the South African Republic to that effect. This matter was finally dealt with by the Executive on the 28th June, 1895, a resolution being tabled whereby the President of the South African Republic was empowered to appoint a Commission to negotiate closer union between the two Republics. Thereupon the Volksraad resolved that a Commission composed of the Chief Justice, the State Attorney, and five members of the Volksraad should assist the President with the object of concluding closer union between the two Republics, with power to go beyond the State for that purpose, to appoint substitutes if any of the five members of the Volksraad could not go, and to publish the result of the Conference, if possible, before the next session of the Volksraad.

The following five members were chosen, namely : Messrs. Fischer, Klynveld, Fraser, Van der Post, and C. H. Wessels. The whole development of the appointment and work of this deputation went to confirm the conviction already expressed by me previously herein, namely, that a considerable party had been formed among the members of the Orange Free State Volksraad to favour the persistent attempts of President Kruger to bind our State to the South African Republic in the closest possible manner, in spite of the fact that there was already existing a defensive alliance, that a complete programme of Federal Union between the Republics had been passed by the Orange Free State, but shelved by the South African Republic, and the only further way of establishing closer union would be by the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance, or complete unification of the two Republics. Reviewing the whole question, as one of the five delegates nominated, I considered it right to decline. The chief reason animating this decision was the knowledge that President Kruger only desired to obtain an offensive and defensive alliance. Holding the conviction that this measure was only desired to strengthen his position as against the British Government, towards which he cherished bitter hostility as appeared from the obviously acrid tone of the correspondence regarding the

condition of the mining population, I did not consider it in the interests of the Orange Free State to contract any closer union. I had already opposed the defensive alliance, believing with the late President Brand that it would invalidate the Convention of the 23rd February, 1854, by which we had Sovereign Independence, while the South African Republic was under the suzerainty of the British Government. I felt quite convinced that there would not be much likelihood of my views carrying weight with the Commission, as it was to be constituted. Unforeseen circumstances occurred, however, which for the time being, at least, delayed the discussion and decision of this matter. These I will deal with in a fresh chapter.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

The Volksraad was called up by the Acting President, and met on the 11th December, 1895, to receive official notice that President Reitz's health had not improved, that he felt unable to resume his duties, and therefore tendered his resignation in order that the Volksraad could elect a successor. The President had also written to me stating that he had hoped to be able to present his resignation personally, but that he was too ill and weak, and therefore he had asked the Acting President to read his

resignation to the Volksraad, and also to lay on the Table the medical report of his condition.

Without much discussion the Volksraad, with expression of its deep regret and sympathy with President Reitz in his illness, and with grateful recognition for his services to the State, accepted his resignation, and further voted him an annual allowance of £1,400.

The Volksraad then ordered the necessary arrangements to be made for the election of a new President, and meanwhile appointed Mr. Blignaut again as Acting President. Proceeding then to the recommendation of a candidate for the Presidency, the Volksraad decided to recommend Mr. M. T. Steyn as its candidate,—he having received 34 votes against 20 votes which were given for me. When the choice was to be made Mr. C. H. Wessels stated that I would be proposed as one of the candidates, and he thought it better that I should not occupy the Chair during the voting, to which I replied that I had already decided that if my name was mentioned in connection with the Presidency I would ask the Vice-Chairman to preside. This was done. I quite understood the bearing of Mr. Wessels' remarks. He was measuring my corn with his bushel!

In an earlier part of this narrative, where I have mentioned the name of Mr. M. T. Steyn, I expressed surprise that he never evinced any

cordiality towards me, in spite of my friendly attitude. I now ascertained the cause. On the evening of the 10th December, 1895, I had a visit from one of the prominent members of the Volksraad, and while we were chatting together, he said, "I would like to know what it is that Steyn has against you." Not being aware of having given Mr. Steyn any reason to have anything "against" me, I replied to this effect, adding, "Why do you ask?" I received the reply, "Well, I have just come from a private meeting of the members of the Volksraad, to which we were invited at Steyn's house, and we were considering whom we should appoint as Acting President in the interim, before the new election. Many of those who were present thought that you should be chosen, as a great number of important matters stood to be dealt with, without delay, with all of which you are very fully acquainted, but Steyn raised great objection to this, saying there was, of course, no question of ability, but there was always a tail of the Union Jack sticking out about you," and added further, "he is not a son of the soil." These statements Mr. Steyn emphasised by reference to my signature to the Federation Memorial of 1868. I replied to these statements to the effect that I would not have accepted the Acting Presidentship in any case, for the reason that in the first place I had already determined to recommend Mr.

Blignaut again for the position, and in the second place it would have meant a dead loss to me in regard to my business. I stated further that I had not entertained even a notion that I was being thought of, since I had so clearly stated on a former occasion that I would not think of accepting such a position. My visitor then told me that he had been greatly astonished to find the hostile feeling which Steyn appeared to bear towards me, remarking, "He has married your own niece, and I know what your attitude towards him has always been."

I could, of course, at once see that propaganda had already been carried on by Mr. Steyn's cousin, Mr. C. H. Wessels, and others who shared his views. I concluded that Mr. Steyn would be the favoured candidate. I determined, however, that I would not allow the knowledge just obtained to influence my conduct and performance of my duty as Chairman of the Volksraad in any way, and I trust this will appear clear in my further narrative.

Immediately after the close of the December session I received a requisition, signed by over 400 voters in Bloemfontein, asking me to offer myself for election for the Presidency. This forced me to consider what was, or might be, my duty towards my fellow-burghers and the State, if there were other parts and constituencies in which the same desire was shown. Several more requisitions having come in, signed even as the

first, by many of the most progressive and reliable residents, more especially in the various urban centres, demanding that I should put my riper experience and knowledge at the services of the State, I earnestly weighed the whole position and considered the chances of success. I realised that the fight would be a strenuous one. Mr. Steyn's position was a strong one. He was related to two of the most numerous Boer families in the State, namely, the Wessels and Steyn families—members of which could be found in every district—all of them influential and well-to-do, who would all be canvassing for him. Then, although he was a mere beginner in politics, his position as judge had given him influence in the eyes and minds of the people. It was an open secret that propaganda had been made on his behalf, even when on his circuit journeys, emphasis being constantly laid on the necessity of having "*a son of the soil*" in the chair. Further, Mr. Steyn had the majority of votes in the Volksraad and an influential committee was being formed to secure his election. I knew also that the old calumnies about the "Federation Memorial" would be trotted out to convince the Boers that I was an "*Englishman*" and "*pro-English*" in my political views, and more than all this, that I was inimical to the closer union of the two Republics. I recognised that I would have to fight envy, ill-will, ignorance and prejudice. What had I to

rely on? First of all, my long record of faithful service to the State from the year 1864 to date, namely, 1896—a period of over thirty years, both on Commando, in the Civil Service, as member and Chairman of the Volksraad, and on all important conferences or matters of interest and benefit for the State. Then, I was born in South Africa, the son of a Scottish minister who had left his country and his family, and had devoted his life to the religious and moral welfare of the Dutch people of South Africa. My mother was also South African born, although of German parentage, and my relatives on her side were all settled in this country, her eldest brother having been member of Parliament for Richmond in the First Parliament of the Cape Colony—all of which ought to show that I was not an “*Englishman*” but a “*South African*.” Then, in regard to the much discussed “*Federation Memorial*.” I could refer them to the Volksraad Minutes of the 7th December, 1858, and of the 10th and 11th January, 1859, to show clearly that the Volksraad of this State applied for Federal Union with the Cape Colony and Natal, and had appointed a commission to negotiate about it, and therefore my having signed this memorial was not such a heinous matter as my enemies would like to make out. Moreover, was this not the policy of Sir George Grey, of which, to judge by a letter which I quote below, President Reitz himself seems to have approved.

Sir George Grey : by G. C. Henderson. Letter written by Mr. F. W. Reitz (President Reitz) to Sir George Grey, October, 1893.

“Had the British ministers in times past been wise enough to follow your advice, there would undoubtedly be to-day a British dominion extending from Table Bay to the Zambesi. . . . What the result would have been upon the welfare of the human race is a question I need not discuss ; but there can be no doubt from an Englishman’s point of view, the fact that your policy in this direction was so often rejected can only be regarded as a calamity.”

Sti’l, in spite of all this, it seemed to me that I could not feel assured that there was much chance of success, for I realised that the majority of the voters would be guided by their feelings and prejudices, and although they would be quite prepared to say that I was the more experienced candidate, yet they would prefer, as they, themselves, afterwards expressed it, “ A bull out of their own kraal.” I therefore hesitated about accepting the requisition, but at the same time I could not rid myself of the conviction that I was bound to enter the contest and to seize every chance of warning my fellow-burghers against the closer union policy, as being fatal to our own continuance as an Independent Sovereign State in South Africa, and I felt that even if I only had to face defeat, I would still have the satisfaction of showing

them where the spurious patriotism into which they had been sadly misled would surely bring them. So, at least, I should be guiltless of their betrayal into the wiles of the Transvaal policy, which was the aim of the protagonists of closer union. I held that the interests of the Orange Free State should stand *FIRST* and not be subservient to the South African Republic, as a certain section seemed determined to make them. After much reflection, therefore, I decided to accept the requisitions—and I did so. My acceptance was followed by the following incidents.

On the day after my acceptance I received a telegram from Pretoria, reading: "Secret meeting of Executive held last night, decided oppose your election, round sum voted." This was confirmed by a letter from the friend who had interested himself in the matter, in which he advised me that a certain emissary from Pretoria (mentioning his name) had already left for our part of the world. I then felt no regrets at having decided to stand. On the same day, as I was passing my opponent's house, I saw the said emissary leaving.

I still felt, however, that the Jameson Raid, to which it is my intention to refer fully later, and the intensely hostile feeling which it had aroused would militate strongly against my chances of success. This proved to be the case—because the result of the election showed that the number of

votes which I got were only about one-third of the signatures on the requisitions. However, having decided that I would stand, I made up my mind to do my best and to fight a clean fight, without vituperation, detraction, or any other underhand means to secure a successful issue. My experience during the contest, however, showed me very clearly that the same treatment was not meted out to me.

As the sessions in 1895 had been long, and the work I did in connection with my election was arduous, I felt the necessity of some change and some rest, and I decided to go to Cape Town for a short holiday. I was not, however, to enjoy my stay there for very long. Early in January, 1896, I received a telegram from the Acting President of the Free State, acquainting me with the news of the Jameson Raid, and calling for my immediate return, as the Volksraad had been convoked for the 10th January, 1896, and a commando had been organised and sent to the Vaal River, with a detachment of artillery. I immediately returned, and on my arrival in Bloemfontein I ascertained that a Transvaal force had met and defeated Jameson's force, which had surrendered, and were now prisoners in Johannesburg. I was informed further that Messrs. Fischer and Klynveld had been sent to Pretoria to find out and report upon the exact position. There was a great deal of concern rife as to what

might happen if the Jameson Raid prisoners were dealt with under Martial Law, and I had occasion to point out to the Acting President that President Kruger could demand their trial by the British Government, under the terms of "*The Foreign Enlistment Act*," which fact was duly communicated to him.

The Acting President, Mr. Blignaut, received an intimation from His Excellency, Sir Hercules Robinson, that he would be at Bloemfontein on his way through to Pretoria, and I was asked by Mr. Blignaut to accompany him to meet His Excellency, which I did. During the time in which the engine of the train by which he was travelling was being changed, Mr. Blignaut and I had an interview with His Excellency in the General Manager's office at the station. The old Governor of the Cape was very much perturbed about the whole matter, and he expressed the fear that the South African Republic might take extreme measures with the prisoners. He was very much relieved to hear that President Kruger had been informed that he could demand that the British Government should try the prisoners under "*The Foreign Enlistment Act*." On my enquiring from His Excellency as to how it was possible that a hostile force of some 800 men, with artillery, equipment, etc., could be mustered within British territory, under his jurisdiction, apparently without his knowledge

or restraint, he replied that it had been represented to him that a force was necessary there for the protection of the men engaged on the construction of the railway to the north, and for the preservation of the peace in the native territories abutting on the line, and therefore the necessity for vigilance as to any other project did not arise.

We were pleased to learn shortly afterwards that His Excellency was to take over the prisoners and that it had been arranged that they would be dealt with under the "*Foreign Enlistment Act.*"

The Volksraad met on the 10th January, 1896, to deal with the troubles and matters arising from this mad filibustering scheme. I call it a "mad filibustering scheme" because if the originators of it had only used the most ordinary common sense, and had made themselves acquainted with the Commando Laws of the Republics, they would not have entertained the idea for one moment, or imagined that their action could possibly succeed, even if the Johannesburg conspirators were prepared to meet them, because the Transvaal Government could, within 48 hours, have surrounded the city with an overwhelming armed force.

Well! there was hardly a dissentient voice in the condemnation of this outrage, which at a public meeting I characterised as the greatest

crime that was ever wrought against the peace of South Africa. The more the particulars became known, the greater the indignation the whole matter aroused, and to my mind it struck the death knell of the success of any negotiations then being carried on to improve the position of the British residents in Johannesburg, or for the securing of representation for them. This occurrence so shattered the confidence of the two Republics in the British authorities in South Africa as to reinforce very strongly the opinion that they must henceforth stand together, and take the necessary measures to ensure their independence. This feeling appeared very clearly when the report of Messrs. Fischer and Klynveld was tabled and read in the Volksraad, which stated, *inter alia*, that the Chartered Company was at the head of the Raid, with all its influence, power, and means, and that the grievances of the Johannesburg people, as far as they existed, were only used by the leaders in the plot to secure their sympathy. Further, that the real aim of the movement was the overthrow of the existing Government in the South African Republic, and its independence, and that probably the intention was the same with regard to the Orange Free State. It was reported that assistance had been organised all over South Africa, that guns, rifles, and ammunition had been brought into Johannesburg in great quantities, and that even

the native tribes were being excited and aroused, and that they had taken up hostile attitude. It was said that documentary evidence of all these facts could be produced. The effect of all this, enhanced, as it was, by the indignant eloquence of Messrs. Fischer and Klynveld, regarding such action in a time of profound peace, may easily be understood, and had only one result, and that was to move every man in the Volksraad to immediate action in resolving that there should forthwith be an offensive and defensive alliance between the two Republics.

After discussion a commission was appointed to report upon the measures which would become necessary if the Orange Free State were called upon to take action.

The proposals recommended by the two delegates were :—

- (a) To authorise the Acting President to signify the deepest sympathy of the Orange Free State with the South African Republic in the troubles occasioned by the Raid.
- (b) To congratulate the South African Republic on the stand taken, the prompt action, the victorious result, and to express the conviction that the immediate and thorough means taken by them were conducive to the peace of all South Africa, and to trust that the Almighty would

continue to bless the efforts of the South African Republic to preserve its peace and independence.

- (c) That in case the help of the Orange Free State should be called for by the South African Republic, whether in terms of the political alliance, or of pressing necessity to such degree as to place its independence in danger, immediately to take the necessary measures, according to the information received, to go to the assistance of the South African Republic, and to call upon the Volksraad to provide further assistance.
- (d) That correspondence should be entered into with His Excellency the High Commissioner showing that, in the opinion of the Orange Free State Volksraad, the existence of such Government as the British South African Company had proved to be a grave and imminent danger to the peace and prosperity of all South Africa, and that the peace and mutual confidence which ought to exist between the States and colonies of South Africa had been greatly shaken, and that there appeared small chance of this being regained and established until the charter of the said company should be revoked, and the territory controlled by it placed under the direct control of the Imperial or Cape Colonial Govern-

ment. Further, that the Orange Free State Volksraad intended in the meantime to obtain from the Imperial Government a guarantee against a similar occurrence.

All these proposals were passed unanimously, and a commission was appointed to revise and report upon the required alterations in the following session. This chief business of the extraordinary session being finished, it was now closed, and I turned my attention to the matter of the election contest which I was called upon to enter into by numbers of my fellow-burghers.

The Acting President had requested me to go to Vaal River, where our burghers and the artillery were encamped, to convey to them the thanks of the Government for their prompt and ready response to the sudden call made upon them, and I undertook that duty at the commencement of my election tour. I had previously organised my election committee, appointed correspondents in the various towns to arrange meetings for me to address, and arranged with the editor of *De Burger*, a Dutch paper, then being run in Bloemfontein, for articles and correspondence in promotion of my candidature to appear in his paper. That was the only paper I could get, the *Express* having at once espoused Mr. Steyn's candidature, and

the *Friend of the Free State* having taken up a more or less non-committal attitude.

On my arrival at Vaal River, the whole force was assembled, and from a buck wagon in their midst, I complimented them on their appearance, their readiness to comply with the orders of the Government, and their willingness to go to the assistance of our neighbours. I stated that as the troubles in the Transvaal had now subsided, and there was therefore no longer any necessity for them to remain in the field, I had been deputed to express to them the thanks of the Volksraad, and to instruct them all to return to their homes. The artillery was ordered to return to Bloemfontein.

I then proceeded to Vrede, and opened my campaign there. As the time was short before the election was to take place, I held no less than twenty-eight election meetings in succession throughout the State. In some places I met with strong opposition,—in the towns more or less with sympathy, in the country often with dissent from my views. I had, of course, expected this,—seeing that Mr. Steyn's political manifestos outlined strong support for closer union with the Transvaal, while mine intimated complete opposition to that measure. I lost no opportunity of emphasizing, as strongly as I could, that the policy of my opponent would bind us hand and foot to the Transvaal,—was in fact

a betrayal of the interests of the Orange Free State, fatal to our independence, and would eventually lead only to the extinction of both the Republics in a war with the British Government, in which war our God-given country would be the battlefield and the sacrifice. I emphatically stated that the Orange Free State had not a shadow of cause for war, and therefore would not be justified in participating in one against the British Government. Some of my supporters thought that I was wrong in taking up such a strong attitude, as it left me a very small chance of carrying the Boer vote with me. I assured them, however, that I knew that the result of the election was a foregone conclusion, as I had come across election agents frequently, who were of strong Transvaal sympathies, and who were working for my opponent, some of them armed with tangible means of securing the votes in his favour. I was aware also that practically a farm to farm canvass was taking place, which I could neither afford nor undertake. I further assured my supporters that in spite of all this I was strongly impressed that it was my clear duty to warn our people in the most emphatic manner against the ruinous policy they were being misled into supporting, and to endeavour to explain its true meaning and result to them, without reserve, and that it was my intention to speak straight on all subjects. I was fully

assured in my mind that the first work that my opponent, if elected, would undertake, would be to place all the power and resources of our beloved State at the disposal of President Kruger, and I warned them that I knew the mind and the hostile intent of that individual.

Another feature which became clear to me during my tour of the State was that the people were quite prepared, and even eager, if hostilities with the British Government occurred, to join with the Transvaal against that Government, and if reminded that the British Government was the most powerful Government in the world, they would remark that they did not believe that. They would then refer to the victories gained by the Transvaal in the War of 1880-1881, at Bronkhorstspuit, Langsnek, Ingogo, and Majuba, —which clearly showed, in their opinion, that the two Republics would have no great difficulty in being able to overcome any force brought against them, and they could not be convinced that they had only met a few isolated companies of the "Twenty-Fourth" and other Regiments. Then, too, the recent victory over "Jameson's Filibusters" at Doornkop was such a proof of prowess in their minds, that they felt they could all go and do likewise.

In due course the election came off. Mr. Steyn was elected by a large majority, as I had expected would be the case. It was not a bitter

disappointment to me, as I had foreseen the result from the first. I had, however, done what I considered was my duty, I had fought a straight and a clean fight,—and that was all that mattered.

On meeting Mr. Steyn shortly after the result of the election was known, I congratulated him, and told him that I could have done so with less reserve if the contest had been as clean on his side as it had been on mine. On Mr. Steyn enquiring what I meant, I explained to him how everywhere I had met proofs of the propaganda which had been made on his circuit tours, both against President Reitz, and against myself as having been too long under the British influence to be able to act rightly towards the Orange Free State. Further, I informed him that I was fully aware of the activities which had been made on his behalf by the South African Republic. He thereupon denied everything.

The result of the election was announced to the Volksraad on the 4th March, 1896, and Mr. Steyn's inauguration was carried out with the usual formalities.

One often hears of the irony of fate. I surely had to realise the meaning of this to the fullest extent. I could not resign my position as Chairman of the Volksraad and so escape the performance of my duty, as this would have been interpreted as an insult to the head of the State, and would have left cause for reflection

on my character as a Christian and a gentleman. After due and careful consideration, therefore, I resolved to do my duty, having regard to the solemnity and importance of my office, and of the fact that I had to give force to the choice of the people, without any personal consideration.

I think that I may claim to have succeeded.

Two revered old friends, namely, the ministers of the Dutch Reformed and the Wesleyan Churches, and several other friends whose opinion I valued, specially congratulated me, saying that I had excelled myself, that every sentence of my address was right, and that there had been no wrong note. I was devoutly thankful that my utterance had been guided and controlled.

As the session came to a close on the 6th March, 1896, I took the opportunity of my closing address to announce that, after due consideration, I had decided to retire from the chairmanship of the Volksraad, and to resume my seat as member for the City of Bloemfontein. I had come to this conclusion in order not to place myself in a false position on any occasion, because I felt that if I used my influence against any proposal made by President Steyn, it might be attributed by his supporters to chagrin at his election to the presidency in preference to myself. On the other hand, should any circumstances occur in which they might expect me to give any advice or opinion, and I did not do

Railway Convention : Orange Free State and Cape Colony—Bloemfontein, 1895.



FRONT ROW : C. Elliott, J. Laing, J. G. Fraser, C. H. Wessels, J. Keyter, G. Turvey, C. de Villiers, R. Brounger.
CENTRE : R. Gregorowski, W. P. Schreiner.
BACK ROW : A. Fischer, C. van der Post, P. MacDonald A. M. de Villiers, Secretary, Volksraad.

so, it might be attributed to the fact of his relationship. I had resolved not to do anything which might provoke friction or unpleasantness, and which would militate against the good feeling existing between my brother, the Reverend Colin Fraser, of Philippolis, who was the father of President Steyn's wife, and myself.

The Volksraad met again on the 7th April, 1896, and Mr. v. d. Post was chosen as my successor, who, on taking the Chair, complimented me on my twelve years' occupancy of that position, and the success with which, during all that period, I had maintained the dignity of the office and the decorum of the Raad.

Among the matters brought up for discussion and approval was the Report of the Commission appointed in the last session of which I was Chairman, to negotiate a convention with the Government of Cape Colony for the building of railways for the Orange Free State, which matter had been dealt with on the 12th May, 1895, and in the opinion of the Acting State President, Mr. Blignaut, and the whole Committee, contained the best and most favourable terms for the State. It very soon appeared, however, that President Steyn was only in favour of the Convention because it had been already concluded, but that he did not deem it desirable to give foreign Governments too much power in the State, and considered it better to

take the railways over at once. The discussion which followed clearly showed that the majority of the Volksraad had adopted President Steyn's view, and declined to confirm the convention, to the great loss of the State. I may say that I looked upon this change of attitude as one of the results of the Jameson Raid, and the closer union policy.

On the 27th May, 1896, it appeared that this policy was still further to be discussed with the South African Republic, by President Steyn, and a Commission for that purpose. The Commission was composed of the following gentlemen, namely: Messrs. Klynveld, Van der Post, C. H. Wessels, Blignaut, and Burger, who were again to meet President Kruger.

I once more opposed this project, recounting the history of the matter, and pointing out the immediate danger involved to our beloved State, but it was all to no purpose and the matter was resolved upon.

The alteration of the constitution was also proposed on the ground that newcomers to the State could obtain the franchise too easily, and might eventually outvote the older population. The President desired that the following points be considered, namely:—

- (a) The method of obtaining burgher rights. According to existing enactment there was no provision for an oath of allegiance or renunciation of former subjecthood.

- (b) The powers and duties of the Executive Council and its relation to the Volksraad, with a view to the prevention of friction.
- (c) Possible alterations in the constitution.
- (d) The creation of some authority to interpret points in the constitution with the object of obviating friction, should any dispute arise as to meaning.

The President also suggested the introduction of the method of Referendum, but the Volksraad refused to entertain the suggestion.

I felt assured that the memorials desiring such modifications arose out of the Jameson Raid, and were intended to prevent immigration which, it was represented, might result in a condition of things in the Free State similar to that existing on the Goldfields. It is impossible to emphasise too strongly the effect of that notorious incident upon the mind of the Free State people, or the extent to which it was utilised to induce them to consent to innovations, the preparation of a line of defence against the threat to their independence. Meanwhile a commission was appointed which, with the Chief Justice and State Attorney, should revise the constitution (Chapters 1, 2 and 3) and report upon the modifications desired therein. That report was tabled and discussed in the following session of 1897. It proposed :—

- (a) A provision for certificates of naturalisation after five years' residence.
- (b) An oath of allegiance which should be taken as renunciation of former fealty.
- (c) That the President should be empowered to grant to burghers of the South African Republic certificates of naturalisation on taking the oath of allegiance, provided that the sister State granted the same privileges to burghers of the Orange Free State.

The ground, it would seem, had not been sufficiently prepared, for, at the first time of asking, the report failed to secure the necessary three-quarters vote of the Volksraad and a reconsideration was passed with Clause (a) amended to three years' residence, as already provided in the constitution, and Clause (c) excised. For the grounds upon which I moved, unsuccessfully, the rejection of these modifications, I would refer to the minutes of the Volksraad of 20th May, 1897. That the Volksraad had confidence in my judgment of the matter, however, may be inferred from the fact that its first choice fell upon me for membership of the commission which was to consider other suggested alterations.

It is interesting to see how rapidly opinion developed on these points when once the Volksraad came to deal with the question of closer union with the Transvaal, regarding which the

President reported having met President Kruger and his commission in accordance with the mandate of the Volksraad of 11th March. The following documents were tabled on 11th June, 1897, for confirmation.

1. Protocol to the existing Treaty of Amity and Commerce of 1869. This provided for a certain measure of reciprocity between the two States in matters of taxation both of persons and products (political rights being expressly excluded), and laid down arbitration in the event of any dispute as to the interpretation of any section of the said treaty.

2. Political treaty and protocol between the two Republics.

3. Draft resolution concerning a Federal Council of deputies of both States.

Federal Union, indeed, was the ultimate object in view, but as that could only be carried into effect after some years, and as it was desired to give some expression to the common feeling, a political alliance was the expedient adopted, whereby it was laid down :—

1. That there should be everlasting peace and friendship between the two States.

2. That the States bind themselves mutually to support each other with all available powers and means whenever the independence of either may be threatened or attacked, unless the State which must grant support demonstrates the unrighteousness of the cause of the other State.

3. That they must, as speedily as possible, inform each other of matters which may endanger the peace and independence of either or both.

In simple language, an offensive and defensive alliance, the real provisions of which appear very clearly in the terms of the protocol thereto, defining the rights, privileges and duties of the officers and men supplied by the assisting State and regulating questions of commissariat, ammunition, and the like. It was agreed, further, in order to foster the closer union between the two States and in view of the fact that the burghers of both would be bound, according to the terms of the alliance, to stand together in time of danger, to recommend to the Volksraads of both republics to grant reciprocally the full franchise to anyone able to produce a certificate that he is a loyal and fully enfranchised burgher of the State he is leaving, and likewise to his descendants, subject to such oath of allegiance or other formalities as the respective Volksraads may further prescribe.

The resolution regarding Federal Union led to the appointment of a commission on the subject, which, after conferring with delegates representing the Transvaal, brought in two Reports, the one in June, 1898, and the second in April 1899. The first of these recommended as follows:—

1. Uniformity in the constitutions of both States.

2. Uniformity in legal proceedings.

3. Uniformity in laws relating to the Orphan Chamber, and Insolvent Chamber, Estates, Registration, Limited Liability Companies, Assurance, Trade Marks, Patents, Marriage Laws and Weights and Measures.

4. That subjects of foreign powers shall be liable to taxation not *lower* than that payable by the burghers of the States respectively.

5. That instead of certificates for free import into the Orange Free State being STAMPED, a round sum be paid to the South African Republic to compensate it for the costs of supervision and control.

6. That a court of appeal for both Republics be created.

7. That the coinage from the South African Republic's mint should be legal tender in the Orange Free State.

8. That with regard to already existing obligations, the respective interests of both States be, as far as possible, maintained in the consideration of eventual contraction of foreign agreements.

9. That measures be taken to improve the position of poor burghers of both Republics.

With the exception of numbers 7 and 9, these resolutions were adopted.

The second of these reports, namely, that of April, 1899, is specially interesting, in view of the negotiations which were then taking place between

the Governments of Great Britain and the South African Republic, in the light of which it ought to be considered. Its recommendations were the following :—

1. That a university for both Republics be created under a joint council of equal members to be appointed by the Governments of the States, and a teaching university in each of the States.

2. To create a court of appeal for both Republics.

3. Renewed recommendations to make the Transvaal coinage legal tender in the Orange Free State.

4. That the right to vote be conferred reciprocally by the Orange Free State and the South African Republic, on the burghers of each Republic residing in the respective States.

5. That the Dutch language be maintained as the national language of the people in both Republics.

6. That a separate body be created to decide constitutional questions.

7. That there be uniformity in the arming of the burghers, as far as this was possible.

8. That certificates of competence for a profession, granted in one or other State, be mutually recognised.

All these treaties and resolutions were approved by the Volksraad with the minimum of discussion,

only a minority opposing them as prejudicial to the interests of the State. But, as if all these provisions were not enough, the crucial point of all these pro-Transvaal proceedings appeared when a draft law was introduced by President Steyn, through the State Secretary, by a resolution setting aside the publication required by the Rules of the House. This was a proposal for an addition to the Commando Law of the State in order to give effect to the protocol to the political alliance, and virtually placed the burghers of the Free State at the disposal of the South African Republic, and *vice versa*, in times of trouble, whether internal or external, because the words "from outside" had been deleted in the defensive alliance of Potchefstroom. The resolution was dealt with and passed and the matter was submitted to a meeting of the commandants of the whole State, convened by President Steyn in November, 1898. From this meeting emanated a draft law which came before the Volksraad in the following session. Great objection was raised to it, but it was referred to a committee for revision and report.

Together with other members of the Volksraad I pointed out that the terms of this law were altogether contrary to the provisions of the constitution, which gave the Volksraad power to pass a Commando Law to provide for the safety of this State, and that that had been done.

It did not mean that the Volksraad could enact legislation to compel burghers of the Free State to render military service to another State. But it was all to no purpose. The whole course of the negotiations carried on by President Steyn and the pro-Transvaal party showed their complete surrender to President Kruger's political aims, and the absolute subordination of the legislature of the Orange Free State to the business of giving effect to his desire to have the forces and resources of that State at his disposal in the hostilities between the British Government and the Transvaal which he, President Kruger, knew to be the inevitable result of his own stubborn refusal to alleviate the position of that section of the population which had committed itself to the development of the mining interests of the Transvaal, and was heterogeneous to the rest.

The only *apparent* reserve of any Free State interest was that of the offensive and defensive Alliance, that the State which was called upon to render assistance might point out the unrighteousness of the other's cause. I say "apparent" for the ethics of the matter seemed wholly prejudiced throughout. In my opinion it was a wholesale betrayal of the Orange Free State, which could only end in its destruction. I allowed no opportunity to pass of reiterating my conviction.

THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A SETTLEMENT BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND
THE TRANSVAAL REPUBLIC.

While these matters were occupying the attention of the Volksraad, the position of affairs in the South African Republic, in the light of which alone the negotiations already detailed can be understood, was gradually becoming more and more acute. The presence of His Excellency Sir Alfred Milner, Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner, at the opening of the session of 1898 was an unusual feature. After the opening formalities on April 4th, the Volksraad adjourned to give the President an opportunity of discussing matters with His Excellency. In the following year, on the 18th of May, the President informed the Volksraad that, on the invitation of the Government of the Orange Free State, President Kruger and Her Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner had agreed to meet in conference at Bloemfontein, on May 30th, to have a friendly discussion of the various questions pending between the two Governments. That this conference absorbed the interest of the whole State was without question, as everyone seemed to feel that the position of affairs on the Goldfields, and the failure of every attempt, so far, to arrive at a solution might mean trouble eventually for the Orange Free State. In my own mind

I foresaw that, if no accord was achieved at that Conference, it would be, in view of the sentimental agreements existing between the Republics, the beginning of the question of our independence.

When I was in Pretoria in 1887, discussing mutual interests with President Kruger, I found myself on one occasion alone with him and his commission, while waiting for the other delegates to appear, and I was rather taken aback when he put the question to me, "Voorzitter (Chairman), what would you do if you were in my position, with a considerable number of people, mostly foreigners, who had acquired large mining properties, and wanted representation in the legislature, while they are quite strangers to our people, mode of life, and ways of Government?" and he then proceeded to enlarge on some of the cases of trouble he had to deal with. My reply was: "Why not follow the plan President Brand initiated when the troubles arose on the Kimberley Diamond Fields? There, of course, the Orange Free State had only one district involved, and you have goldfields all over the State." On President Kruger asking me to explain, I said that President Brand got the Volksraad to declare the diamond fields a mining district, with the capital at the mine, so bringing the population under the constitution, with the right to send one mining representative to the Volksraad for the district and one for the capital, with a high qualification

for the seat in the Volksraad, and the possession of a claim as qualification for the diggers to vote for the mining member only of the Volksraad, thus instituting a purely mining franchise for a purely mining representative. A channel was thereby secured along which all information as to mining conditions, suggestions as to measures necessary to the prosperity of the mines, grievances and the like, might be brought directly to the notice of the Volksraad. Qualified representatives would thereby be placed between the Government and the diggers, to whom the latter might look to lay their desires and difficulties before the legislature.

President Kruger listened very attentively to what I had to say, and turning to Mr. Klopper, the Chairman of his Volksraad, he said, "Do you know, it is not a bad plan, and worth considering." President Brand's method, however, was not adopted, and when the South African Republic Volksraad began to look for means to meet the position it altered the Constitution, providing for a First and Second Volksraad,—the former for the old burghers of the State, under the old franchise, and the latter for the newcomers, with a franchise provision so circumscribed, and with representation so hedged about, that it was only with great trouble, and after a lengthened residence that it could be obtained, while at the same time all the obligations and

duties were to be exacted, to which the other burghers of the State, who had full representation, were subject. And so the dissatisfaction and discontent continued, and frequently high-handed action on one side or the other ended in occurrences which accentuated the difficulties, created bitterness, and even led to bloodshed, and left no prospect of better conditions.

Other circumstances arising from time to time also increased the tension, for example, what is known as the "Drifts Question," when President Kruger threatened to close the drifts on the Vaal River against any ox-wagon transport into the Transvaal from the colonies or States of South Africa, a threat which aroused very high feeling between the maritime colonies and the Orange Free State on the one hand, and the South African Republic on the other, and also reacted on Johannesburg, as the limitation of the transport would immediately affect the cost of living there.

With a view to ending the rates war, of which this threat was the culmination, a conference was called at Pretoria in April, 1895, which I attended, along with Advocate Gregorowski, to represent the Free State. In spite of the efforts of Mr. Schreiner, representing the Cape Colony, to bring about a settlement of the vexed problem of the division of railway receipts, the conference could reach nothing more satisfactory than the following:—

Railway Conference, Pretoria, 1895. S.A. Republic, Cape Colony, Orange Free State, Natal,
Portuguese Territory.



FRONT Row : Col. D'Araugo, J. G. Fraser, J. B. Smit, Senor Cennati, D. Hunter, G. Middellburg, I. Laing.
BACK Row : R. Gregorowski, E. Esselen, W. P. Schreiner, C. K. Murray (Secretaries to Delegates).

“ This Conference finds that the moment had not arrived when a final agreement can be come to regarding the division of the various railway receipts and resolves to close its session until circumstances provide an opportunity of again conferring about the matter.”

In the end, as the result of a threat of vigorous action on the part of the Cape Colony Government, President Kruger climbed down. A few months later occurred the “ Jameson Raid,” culminating in the surrender of Dr. Jameson’s whole force at Doornkop, and the arrest of the members of the Reform Committee. Thereafter all these differences and difficulties became the subject of diplomatic action between the British Government and the South African Republic.

A British representative, in the person of Mr. Cunningham Greene, was appointed to watch the interests of the people, and to be the channel of connection with the South African Republican Government, and proposals on the franchise question became prominent. Deputations from the Cape Colony also visited President Kruger to urge the desirability of amicable settlement. Among others, Messrs. Hofmeyr, “ Onze Jan,” as he was called, and Mr. Herhóldt, two prominent South Africans, went up to the South African Republic, and I had the privilege of meeting them at the Presidency, while visiting President Steyn, during the short time they were in

Bloemfontein. Mr. Fischer was also present. I took advantage of my visit to ask Mr. Hofmeyr, whom I knew well, whether there was any ground in the rumour which was then current that if war broke out between the South African Republic and the British Government the people of the Cape Colony would espouse the cause of the South African Republic and help them with all the means in their power. I was pleased to get his reply that there was no ground for the report, that it must be remembered that the Cape Colonists were British subjects, and that it would be monstrous to expect them to take up arms against their own Government. Well, Mr. Hofmeyr's proposal to President Kruger to fix the franchise on the basis of a sliding scale was not entertained and eventually there came a proposal from the British Government that a commission should be appointed, consisting of delegates from the Transvaal, and an equal number of delegates representing the British Government, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry de Villiers, if I remember rightly, to arbitrate on the existing differences and endeavour to effect settlement.

At this time a case was pending before our High Court in which Mr. Fischer was for one side and I for the other, and it was on the roll for trial the next day, when he came to me and said that President Kruger had wired for him in connection with the proposal which had

been made by the British Government, and he wished me to consent to a postponement of the case as he had to leave for the South African Republic immediately. I agreed to do this, but I took the opportunity of saying to him, "Well, as you are going to see President Kruger, for God's sake advise him to agree to the proposed commission—it will form a bridge for both parties to retire from a position which has already become acute." Mr. Fischer replied, "Then you may as well say that the British Government can tell President Kruger what laws he can or cannot make in his own country." I answered, "Well, as sure as you are going to advise him in that spirit, the fat will be in the fire." He replied, "Oh, you can never see any good in President Kruger," and left me.

It was not true, however, that I could not see *any* good in President Kruger, but it was true that I could not see *enough* good in him to allow the State I loved, in whose service I had spent so many years of my life, to be sacrificed to the perverted policy he was pursuing.

On the 18th March, 1898, I had occasion to address my constituents, prior to the approaching session of the Volksraad, in the Town Hall at Bloemfontein, and I stated, *inter alia* :—I feel it my duty to address you on the general position of affairs in South Africa, seeing we form one great family of States and colonies in South Africa,

which, notwithstanding other influences of a contrary tendency, are indissolubly bound up in common interests and common destiny. It cannot be denied that affairs in South Africa generally are in a critical condition, and that there is great unrest arising from conditions which I am happy to state do not exist in the Free State. When we look at the general position of affairs we find that the political atmosphere is very much clouded, and you can hardly take up a paper without seeing prominent public men assailing each other on one platform or another. You have the fact that Imperialists and anti-Imperialists, Republicans and anti-Republicans, Leaguemen and Bondmen, Capitalists and anti-Capitalists, South Africans and ultra-Africanders assail each other, and as a result we find their differences are accentuated, differences which, on calm consideration, would disappear wholly, and in any case would afford no solid ground of separation, of isolation, or disintegration. It would be a happy day for South Africa if the talent, energy and power which are expended in providing this unedifying display were concentrated on the material advancement of mutual interest with conciliatory purpose, because we would then lose sight of the sorry spectacle that South Africa is exhibiting at the present moment of a community overridden by morbid politico-racial sentiment and split up in various factions in which

envy, malice and uncharitableness are rampant. It may be asked, how does this bear on us? I may say that anything which fosters strife, race hatred, and it cannot be doubted that this is the result of most of these utterances I have mentioned, reacts upon us as a community. Moreover, I wish to point out that it has become the fashion now in the discussion of any political matters to speak of the Republics in the plural, and to make out that they are the cause of all the evils. Whether it is railways, taxation, or anything else, everything is laid at the door of the Republics. Now, gentlemen, as your member in the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, I take this opportunity of publicly protesting against the current mode of expression, because although certain ground may have been given, to look at us in that manner from the discussions and the resolutions which have been taken with regard to closer union with the South African Republic, we are still absolutely independent. We have not yet sold our birthright for a mess of potage. We still stand on our own rights, and we will only take such responsibilities as result from our direct actions. Now this phase of the matter brings me into touch with our local conditions, and I wish to touch only upon such conditions as affect us here and to avoid controversial matter. I take the matter of the closer union first, because I look upon it as the most important, affecting as it does

not only our separate national existence but the individual status of everyone of us. You will know what a salient position this matter took up in the past session of the Volksraad, and how a small but solid phalanx, of which I had the honour to be one, fought the battle of the minority against it, from start to finish. This battle I am prepared to face again, and to face as often as the question will occur, because that is what I consider my oath as a member, my conviction as a politician and my common sense as a man demand from me, namely, strenuously to uphold the independence of our State, untrammelled by any bonds, except those which unite us in amity with all South Africa around us, heartily to co-operate for the general peace and welfare and to hold the balance of power which our central position has given us, as equally as we can amongst all without sacrificing the influence which it confers upon us, until such time as we can, upon equal conditions, enter into a general South African Union. That was the position and the policy which was achieved and maintained by our late President Brand, of glorious memory. That is the position which a spurious sentiment would call upon us to sacrifice. To sacrifice for what? What appears to me to be a vassalage to the South African Republic, which would give you the extreme privilege of fighting its enemies and policing its citizens, without giving you a

voice in the affairs of that country. I take this opportunity of saying, in passing, that the sentiments which the late President Brand had and the views which he held upon that question of high policy are utterly at variance with those which were attributed to him on a late occasion. I may serve some purpose if I shortly refer to the negotiations regarding the question of closer union, although they may be known to a great many of you, but may be of interest to many of the new citizens. In the early eighties, petitions were sent to the Volksraad asking for measures to be taken for a closer union of the Republics. Those petitions were not entertained, in fact, were rejected, and very peremptorily rejected until 1887, when a deputation was appointed to proceed to Pretoria to consult with the Government of the South African Republic about the matter, and also with regard to other things of mutual interest. Of that deputation I had the honour to be one, and it appeared to me then that the only desire which existed on the part of the South African Republic was to have an offensive and defensive alliance with the Orange Free State, but no other connection, and it resulted in a proposal of that nature being made by that State to the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, which was, however, not entertained. In October of the same year (1887), when the President of the South African Republic came to

Bloemfontein with a deputation, negotiations were again opened with regard to these matters, but that Government again put forward as the basis of any negotiations an offensive and defensive alliance between the two Republics. The discussions of that conference are matters of history, and they are extremely valuable as showing the views which the late President Brand held upon that matter, and he clearly demonstrated the impolicy of any such union for our State. That conference had no result, and matters were left in that condition until 1889, after the election of President Reitz, when a deputation, of which I was one, went with the latter to Potchefstroom to meet the Government of the South African Republic about these same points. At that conference, again, which was principally held on a request from our State, with a view to obtain what is readily given between two nations, even if they were not kindred with each other, namely, a Treaty of Amity and Commerce and an understanding with regard to railway matters and Customs Union, and we were met with a proposal that the conditions, *sine qua non* should be an offensive and defensive alliance before any other matter could be discussed, and when it became evident that the conference would be futile and no result would be obtained, then the Government of the South African Republic yielded so far that a conditional defensive

alliance was entered into against "enemies from without." Mark those last words, because they are of great importance on the question. "Enemies from without"—leaving to each Government to decide upon the justice of the cause which called for aid. It was only when that was conceded that the Treaty of Amity and Commerce was concluded and also the railway arrangements. There was no desire on the part of that State to enter into a Customs Union. Matters remained in that condition until the occurrence of the "Jameson Raid," when our Volksraad met after that occurrence. A simple resolution was taken by which the chief provisions of the Treaty of Potchefstroom were set aside, and the burghers of this Republic were by that resolution placed at the disposal of the South African Republic, under any circumstances which appeared to endanger its independence, whether from within or from without. At the conference which took place last year between the Government of the South African Republic and ourselves, that provision was practically adopted, and a new treaty was entered into in which these words "*from without*" were left out, renewing only the right of the Government who had to lend the aid, to demand enquiry, and promising assistance with all available forces. This treaty was confirmed in the last session of the Volksraad, and, moreover, a Commando Law was passed to give effect to that

treaty, regulating how the burghers of each State were to be furnished with ammunition and provided with the necessaries of life when on service in the other country. There was also a further provision proposing to enfranchise Transvaal burghers here and Orange Free State burghers in the Transvaal, as another measure which was calculated to foster the Union. Now against all those provisions I deemed it a matter of duty to be in opposition, but the only thing our opposition was successful against was the enfranchisement of the Transvaal burghers here, or ours there. That is the whole history of the negotiations which led up to this position. Now, it must be perfectly clear to you that we are in alliance with the South African Republic by that treaty, by which we are liable to be called up for service under arms, under any circumstances, in which the independence of the South African Republic, or independence of the Orange Free State, may be endangered by "enemies from without" or "enemies from within." In other words, we are bound to fight for the Transvaal against their enemies, and we are bound also to police its citizens should any trouble arise in its midst. That is a position which I consider was utterly at variance with the requirements of the Orange Free State. You must remember it is not to a Federal Union which we are bound. All those

steps which had been taken up to 1889, were distinctly laid down in the Potchefstroom Treaty as preliminary to the Federal Union by which there would be a local Government in the South African Republic Government, a local Government here and a Federal Government over the two. That is a position to which I did not see any great objection, because it gave us, through the Federal Government, a voice in the decision of all questions which would affect the welfare of the two communities. But from 1889 up to this last year, no step was taken from the side of the South African Republic to give effect to that Federal Union. On our side, in 1892, a Federal Council was appointed with exactly the same powers which were given to the Federal Council which lately had a session in Pretoria, but on the side of the South African Republic nothing further was done. It appeared to me from that, that the South African Republic was perfectly satisfied by the alliance which was obtained in which they could dispose of our burghers in any trouble they had without giving us a voice in their affairs. Whether it will be any different now, I do not know, but judging from past experience I say "NO." There is no wish in the South African Republic to give us a voice in their affairs while they are able to dispose of our bodies and our rifles. Now, I ask you, under these conditions, what is this philo-Transvaalism giving us? Where

is our *quid pro quo*? It may be said by the philo-Transvaalists that these treaties are mutual. The circumstances which *may* arise with us *may* arise with you. I say that that "may" is extremely far off, that we have never required those provisions, and as long as we abide by our Convention of the 23rd February, 1854, and stand to our constitution, a righteous constitution, and as long as we stand to our engagements with a righteous Government, we shall never require a defensive alliance from the South African Republic to maintain the Government of this country or to maintain its independence. That independence is sacred to me because I have borne arms for that independence, and in the thirty years I have been resident here I have done my humble share to build up this Government upon righteous principles, and therefore I do not wish to see this country placed in a position whereby its independence would unavoidably be jeopardised. I know that our people and we, as Republicans, are sometimes swayed, and very strongly swayed, by sentiment whenever any wrong or crime is committed against our compatriots or co-Republicans of either State, and you, with me, in this very hall have expressed your regret at such occurrences. But I do not believe for one moment that the burghers of the Orange Free State, in calm judgment and with these issues before them, would endorse the policy which has been pursued

of late years in regard to closer union, and the circumstances at the present time differ like night from day from the circumstances which existed at the time this movement for closer union was first entered upon. Then there was a population co-equal with ours and of the same nature. We were all of the same stamp of men and there were no divided interests, and we could readily have gone into a union without any bad results. I say it, not because I wish to throw mud at the Government of the South African Republic, but because the question affects our *existence*, affects the individual status of every man. The circumstances which exist there are not such that any burgher of the Orange Free State would desire to place his life, his property, under such a Government. Look at the reports which have been placed before the Volksraad of the South African Republic during the last twelve months, and ask yourselves the question whether our people for one moment would tolerate the misrule, the misgovernment, which exists there. I ask you, would the burghers of our country feel that they were justified in taking up arms in any trouble which might arise there, which might be because of that very misrule? I say "NO"—our people will not feel justified. And, if that is the case, then I ask to what purpose have we got this alliance? Do we deceive anybody by that alliance? NO—we are deceiving ourselves, and we are deceiving our

neighbours of the South African Republic by entering into this alliance. A question of such vast importance is the question upon which I consider it is the duty of every man to ask himself, "Is there for us such certainty in such alliance that we can risk the lives of our people to maintain it?" I say again my answer is "NO." I do not consider that the Government of the Orange Free State is in a position to maintain the independence of the South African Republic against any great power by force of arms with the slightest chance of success, and in regard to both these countries I say our strength lies in our weakness. Our strength lies in the recognition of the position which we hold and the conventions which we have with the mightiest power in the world, the power which guided by a sense of justice and righteousness, and the power which will not interfere with what has been conceded to us in the conventions to which they are parties, as long as we act up to the conditions these conventions impose upon us, and therefore I maintain there is no necessity for any defensive alliance and I consider it my duty to oppose it.

We now come to the fateful session of the Orange Free State Volksraad which opened on the 21st September, 1899, having been called up specially to deal with the report of the results of the conference between the South African Republic and Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

In the first paragraph of his opening speech President Steyn said that the Raad would regret to hear that, notwithstanding the efforts made by him and the Executive Council, the relations between the Government of the South African Republic and that of Her Britannic Majesty's Government were exceedingly strained. He followed this up with particulars of the negotiations. They had arrived at last at the position that a certain Franchise Law had been proposed in which a residence of SEVEN YEARS for naturalisation was laid down, and a project added for extension of representation in the Volksraad for the Witwatersrand goldfields, which afforded a basis for further negotiation. Her Britannic Majesty's Government had then demanded that that should be submitted to a Joint Commission, notwithstanding that the intrusion of such a commission in the internal affairs of the South African Republic was not justifiable. In the interests of peace, and the prevention of possible fatal consequences to South Africa, he had felt that he ought to advise the South African Republic to accept such a Commission, and had done so. Before this could be replied to, an officieuse negotiation, as he was then informed, had taken place between the British agent, Mr. Cunningham Greene, at Pretoria, and the State Attorney of the South African Republic, in consequence of which the Government of the South African

Republic had declared itself prepared to grant the following :—

- (a) FIVE YEARS' FRANCHISE, with retrospective action, as was proposed by His Excellency the High Commissioner, at Bloemfontein, on 1st June, 1899.
- (b) Eight new seats in the first Volksraad, with the assurance that in future the representation of the goldfields shall be not less than one-fourth of the whole.
- (c) That the new burghers, even as the old, be allowed to vote for the State President and Commandant General.
- (d) To act upon the friendly hints of Her Majesty's Agent in framing the law.

This offer was made under the express conditions :—

- (a) That Her Majesty's Government shall consent in the future not to interfere in the internal affairs of the South African Republic.
- (b) That Her Majesty's Government shall no longer further insist on its assertion of the existence of the suzerainty.
- (c) That Her Majesty's Government will agree to arbitration.

This offer was educed, as appeared from a letter of the State Secretary to the British agent, on the 15th September, 1898, by suggestions of the British agent to the State Attorney, and

which, in good faith, and upon express enquiry of the Government of the South African Republic, were accepted as equivalent to an assurance that the proposal would be acceptable to the British Government. To the surprise of the sister Republic, the British Government declared itself prepared to submit the offer to a Commission, but declined the conditions, notwithstanding that these were made, as already stated, on suggestions of the British agent. Her Majesty's Government was prepared to discuss the nature and scope of an Arbitration Court at Cape Town, but immediately signified that there were other matters of difference which were not fitted for submission to arbitration, without, however, saying what these were.

As the conditions were not accepted, the Government of the South African Republic looked upon its offer as lapsed, but declared its willingness to accept the invitation, which was still awaiting the answer of Her Majesty's Government to a Joint Commission. Although His Excellency the Secretary of State for the Colonies had signified through the British agent that the counter offer would not be looked upon as a refusal of the invitation, he now declined to proceed with the Commission, and required that the lapsed offer should be carried out without the condition, and also that the foreigner (*uitlander*) should have the right to speak his own language in the Raad.

This the Government of the South African Republic refused, but was still prepared to abide by the acceptance of the invitation to a joint committee on the accepted law and project of representation.

“As every concession of the South African Republic was only met with new demands, and more and more war preparations from the other side, after consultation with the Executive Council I felt no liberty to urge on the South African Republic the acceptance of this last demand, because we were unanimously of opinion that this could not equitably be expected of it, and seeing that matters were becoming critical, I deemed it my duty to call up the Volksraad.”

The President concluded his statement by reminding the Volksraad that as we were under political alliance with the South African Republic for the last ten years, it could not be a matter of indifference to us if the Republic were plunged into trouble, and it was for the Volksraad, if that occurred, to decide what our attitude should be.

The President stated that he still felt bound to point out that according to his conviction nothing had yet happened to justify a war against, or an attack upon, the South African Republic, as a war over the points of difference which could easily be settled by a Commission of Arbitration, would be an insult to religion and

to civilisation, and a crime against humanity. He also produced telegrams and correspondence, among which was a telegram from President Kruger, dated 18th September, 1899, which read :—

“ Telegram received from Dr. Leyds according to information from London new Convention prepared wherein independence of Republic guaranteed but demands disarmament demolition of forts cancellation foreign representation independence for courts from Government ”

President Steyn also produced some telegrams which had passed between President Brand and President Kruger and the High Commissioner at Cape Town concerning the grant of internal independence in 1884. The discussions then took place in secret session, but were afterwards published.

Now although the President's speech gave the impression that a completely impartial consideration had been given to the negotiations between the South African Republic and Her Britannic Majesty's Government, it will at once be clear to anyone reading his account of the trend of events leading up to the political impasse, that he deliberately impressed on the Volksraad that the grievances of the diggers were simply a cloak to the designs of the foreign capitalists, backed up by the British Government,

to get possession of the goldfields, and to put an end to the two Republics, and thus destroy the Africander spirit in South Africa, a policy which appeared desirable on account of the victory of the Africander party in the Cape Colony elections; that only English subjects were concerned as all other foreigners were quite contented in the South African Republic, and that the cry for the franchise, and equal rights, and reduction of taxation, was no real ground for grievance.

“Can you remain neutral? Matters are dark; your brothers are threatened with war. Are you to put aside your solemn alliance existent for the last ten years? Are you to repudiate your word of honour, or are you going to show the world that although small and weak you are strong enough to keep your word, and where one Africander fights for a good cause, the neutrality of another Africander is a sin against Africanderdom?”

Thus President Steyn addressed the Volksraad, in a manner, as I held, out of keeping with his position as President, prejudicing every argument by a racial appeal, and misleading the members of the Volksraad, and all in the face of his own declaration that, although matters had become critical, nothing had yet occurred to justify hostile action, in fact, that the matters at issue were still under diplomatic action.

One would, therefore, have expected that every word he uttered would have been carefully weighed to ensure calm reasoning on the position, and to avoid rousing hot blood, as the maintenance of peace and the securing of a peaceful settlement between the contending parties was the paramount duty of the Volksraad. I listened, therefore, with very deep regret to the statements made by the President, which declared the whole matter hopeless, and attributed every difficulty to evil designs and unfriendly intrigue on the part of the power, under convention with which we held our independence, in friendly co-operation with which, under President Brand, our stability and prosperity had been secured. I could only conclude that the whole reason why the Volksraad had now been called up was to make preparation for the Orange Free State to join in the hostilities which the Government of the two Republics now felt to be, or rather, wished to make inevitable, as there seemed to be no desire manifested in the discussions to bring further pressure to bear in the interests of peace. The longer the debate lasted the more bellicose the opinions, with some few exceptions, became. I still felt that it was my duty to point out that the existing differences could even then be easily settled by diplomacy, although England had given the negotiations a wider range, and that I did not look upon the position as hopeless.

I did not share the President's views,—but thought that he should have taken up a position similar to that which President Brand had adopted, namely, that of mediator between the parties, and that as no war had yet been declared, the Government should point out to the British Government the blood relationship existing between the people of the two Republics, and urge diplomatic action to secure peaceful settlement. We owed it to the world, and to our people, to undertake this mediation to avoid a bloody war. In addressing the Volksraad I said:—
“The word *NEUTRALITY* had been heard in this debate, but there can be no such thing under the political alliance, unless we can show the unrighteousness of the cause. We stand before the future, and it does not help to refer to former history. Many dark chapters have been mentioned with regard to the behaviour of the English Government, but, I ask, cannot doubtful dealings be shown in the history of the two Republics? It is our duty to do everything in our power to secure peaceful settlement.”

I tabled a motion which read as follows:—

The Volksraad of the Orange Free State having heard paragraph 1 of the President's speech, and the correspondence thereunder filed:—

1. Regarding the critical circumstances of South Africa, and especially the strained condition of affairs in connection with the differences

between the South African Republic and Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

2. Considering that there is danger threatening that hostilities may break out through which all South Africa may be enveloped in the flames of war.

3. Allied to the South African Republic in the closest bonds of blood and alliance, and standing in the most friendly relations to Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

4. Conscious of the stern duty resting upon us to apply all that is possible to the preservation of peace, and to prevent the fatal consequences which would be born out of a war for all South Africa.

5. Realising that the existing difference does not involve righteous cause of war, and ought to be solved by friendly negotiation.

The Volksraad therefore enjoins the President to address an earnest and pressing appeal to Her Britannic Majesty's Government still to endeavour to arrive at a friendly solution in the way of peace, either by means of an impartial Commission of Enquiry, or in other diplomatic manner, and further to urge the Government of the sister Republic, by further possible effort, to arrive at a peaceful solution, even on the proposal of the High Commissioner, at the conference at Bloemfontein, concerning the franchise of foreigners and reasonable representation, and

further to exert every possible effort to conserve the peace.

This proposal, I could see, made an impression upon several of the members of the Volksraad, but, as will appear later, did not meet with the views of the President, who warned the Volksraad against division with all earnestness. I resented this, and I pointed out that the terms of my motion met every point that he had raised in his speech, and stated that I regretted that my well-meant efforts in the interests of peace were so wrongly interpreted.

While the discussion proceeded, on the 25th September, 1889, President Steyn came to the Raad and said he had received a telegram from the Field Cornet of Harrismith, announcing that about 2,300 troops had left Ladysmith in the direction of our State, and he proposed asking for an explanation from the High Commissioner at Cape Town; that on the same date he had received from the South African Republic the reply of the British Government to the last despatch of the South African Republic, which, after replying categorically to the points therein signified, regretted that the South African Republic declined to accede to the offer made by Her Majesty's Government, and that Her Majesty's Government was thus forced to consider the position anew, and to formulate its own proposals for a final solution of the differences which had

frequently arisen during many years as a result of the policy pursued by the South African Republic. Her Majesty's Government would send the result of these considerations to the High Commissioner later.

On the 26th September, 1899, the reply of the High Commissioner to the enquiry regarding the movement of troops, stated that they were only sent to Glencoe, and not to the border of the Orange Free State, and that he still abided by his telegram of the 19th September, 1899, and the hope expressed therein with regard to the difference with the South African Republic, and repeated the assurance given therein to the Orange Free State.

The attitude of the Volksraad now came to this, namely, that the time for *talking* was past, and it was now the time to *act*. A committee, on which I declined to serve, was appointed to draw up, in consultation with the Executive, and report to the Volksraad, a considered resolution regarding the position with recommendation still to try, by way of diplomacy, to prevent a destructive war, and, provided that the honour and independence of the Republics remain untouched, to endeavour to obtain a peaceful solution.

On the 26th September, 1899, the President desired to give the Volksraad a reply in terms of the political alliance, and he stated that he could not advise the South African Republic to accede to the

shameless demands of the British Government, that he trusted that the reply of the Volksraad would show the world that the two Republics had done all in their power to prevent bloodshed, and that they only took to arms when it became clear that the extinction of the two Republics was the aim of the British Government. "The people are ready for the contest if peace is not obtainable."

Thereafter Mr. Klynveld brought in the report of the commission nominated to draft resolutions in reply to the telegraphic despatch of September 25th, from the President of the South African Republic, wherein the Orange Free State was asked to take the necessary steps to give effect to the political alliance, in view of the last despatch of the British Government.

The Commission adopted the first five paragraphs of my motion, and added :—

A.—That the Government of the South African Republic during negotiations with the British Government lasting during several months, had used every effort to obtain a peaceful settlement of the differences raised by foreigners in the South African Republic, and adopted by Her Britannic Majesty's Government as own cause, which efforts have unfortunately only resulted in the British Troops being concentrated on the borders of the South African Republic, and are still being reinforced.

RESOLVES : 1. To enjoin the Government still to take every means to conserve the peace, and in peaceful manner to assist towards solution of existing questions, provided this can be done without breach of the honour and independence of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic and desires clearly to make known that no cause of war exists, and if a war were undertaken or caused by Her Majesty's Government against the South African Republic this, morally, would be a war against the whole white people of South Africa, and in its consequences fatal and criminal. Further, that the Orange Free State, by virtue of the political alliance existing between the Republics, will honourably and faithfully fulfil its obligations whatever may happen.

B.—The Volksraad having noted the telegraphic despatch of the President of the South African Republic to the President of the Orange Free State, dated 28th September, 1899, wherein His Honour refers to sections 1 and 2 of the political alliance between the two Republics and asks that the necessary steps be taken to give effect to it, and having been acquainted with the reply of the President of the Orange Free State, dated 28th September, 1899.

RESOLVES : That the Government of the South African Republic shall be acquainted :

1. That the people of the Orange Free State earnestly feel that all efforts must be used to

preserve the peace in South Africa, as the war would only have fatal results to the progress and prosperity of all the States and colonies of South Africa, and that if hostilities break out much innocent blood will be shed and race hatred be increased.

2. That although convinced that, thus far, everything possible has been done by the Governments of the South African Republic and Orange Free State to arrive at a peaceful solution of the differences between the South African Republic and Her Britannic Majesty's Government, the Volksraad still trusts that efforts will be made by the South African Republic to prevent a fatal war.

3. That should, however, these efforts happen to prove fruitless, and consequently the independence of the South African Republic be touched, the Volksraad declares that the Orange Free State will honourably and uprightly hold to the conditions of the alliance existing between the Republics, the preliminary steps being already taken to fulfil its obligations thereunder. The Volksraad, however, still hopes that a peaceful settlement of the questions between the South African Republic and Her Britannic Majesty's Government shall be possible of attainment.

C.—The Volksraad having heard paragraph 2 of the speech, and considered the documents produced under it, and that :—

(a) Whereas it clearly appears that all concession on the side of the South African Republic is taken as proof of weakness, and is only used as ground for further demands.

(b) Whereas out of the whole course of the negotiations it clearly appears that the policy of the British Government is to make the so-called foreigners' grievances in the South African Republic the base on which the colossus of British paramountcy, over all South Africa, including the two Republics, must be founded.

(c) Whereas the Orange Free State as part of the South African people is closely allied to the South African Republic, by bonds of blood, and further is bound by solemn treaty to come to its assistance if the independence of the South African Republic is threatened or touched.

(d) Whereas as from the concentration of British troops on the borders of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, it may be inferred that the British Government is preparing to make an attack by force and therefore the independence of the South African Republic is threatened, even if not touched.

RESOLVES: To enjoin the State President still to use all his best powers and to exert his influence to help and aid, as he has hitherto done, towards a peaceful solution of the difference between the South African Republic and Her Britannic Majesty's Government, provided that if he does not

succeed in his efforts and the South African Republic is obliged to defend her independence in arms, he is empowered to take all necessary measures and steps for fulfilling the obligations resting on the Orange Free State by virtue of the conventions between this State and the South African Republic. Meantime, to take all such steps and measures which the rest and peace in the State, and the safety of our borders, as well as the possible participation in war may render necessary and demand.

This, it will be observed, directed the President to prepare for possible participation ; it did not empower him to declare war. This point, as will be seen later in the narrative, was very clear to Mr. Klynveld.

The reporter, Mr. Klynveld, notified that the Commission proposed that the resolution under letter " A " should be published after confirmation, but that those under " B " and " C " should be kept secret.

After discussion the President stated that if the British troops were strengthened, he would do as the High Commissioner had done, and telegraph him that, to allay unrest among the people, a burgher force would be placed along those borders ; further, that he would telegraph that resolution, as soon as adopted, to the High Commissioner, with request for its transmission to the British Government, and would also

telegraph it to the Consul of the Orange Free State in England, for publication to the British people. It was thereupon adopted. After some further discussion Resolutions "B" and "C" were also adopted, and it was left to the President to publish these and so much of the discussion as he thought fit. He was further authorised to appoint a War Committee.

The last measure taken at this session, which was also to be the last session the Volksraad was destined to hold, was the final reading of the law for the election of Commandants, and the amendment of the Commando laws.

Thereafter followed the usual closing formalities, with remarks by the Chairman and the President. In the remarks made by the State President he gave voice to what, in my ears, seemed an ominous foreboding, namely,—“that he could hardly find words in which to describe his state of mind at this solemn closing of possibly the last sitting of the representatives of his country,—and it was with a burdened mind that he saw the Volksraad departing.” No wonder!—there must have been present in the mind of President Steyn the consciousness of the fact that he had let no opportunity go by without bringing all his influence, and the prestige of his office into play to *BIND* the Orange Free State into the bonds of the Transvaal. He could not but be aware that, the interests

of the Free State already so merged in those of the Transvaal, defeat meant the sacrifice of independence,—an independence securely and honourably maintained, under his predecessors in office, for a period of forty-five years, now to be sacrificed in a hopeless struggle with the paramount power in South Africa, with which, even at that moment, the Free State held the most friendly relations, and all as the result of the attitude he himself had assumed and the policy he had pursued during his term of office, without the least shadow of justification. To me, who had persistently opposed the closer union with the South African Republic and had already, in 1887, fathomed the implacably hostile spirit cherished against the British Government by President Kruger, the Transvaal Volksraad, and people,—a spirit which, I felt sure, was certain to be the cause of trouble to South Africa in the future,—it was perfectly clear to see what manner of pressure had been brought to bear on the members of the Volksraad and on our people, how every possible argument had been used to inculcate the belief that, unless they joined the Transvaal and showed the British Government a front, the Republics would be swallowed up piecemeal, and generally, so to exploit the feeling of patriotism that every endeavour to prove to them that, so long as the Orange Free State was faithful to the terms of

the Convention of 1854, the British Government would never repudiate its solemn covenant, was of no avail whatsoever. My own conviction was that true patriotism demanded all one's powers to maintain, intact, the peace and prosperity of one's own country and people, and that it could only be spurious patriotism which would sacrifice that condition in circumstances such as those in which the Orange Free State was called upon to comply with the terms of the political alliance.

There was, as yet, no war, and the independence of the Transvaal had not been threatened or attacked. The whole matter of the differences was still in the hands of the diplomatists. The proper attitude was to hear what the new proposals for a solution would be, and to see if it was not possible to renew negotiations to better purpose. This, however, the warlike resolutions now taken rendered impossible. The whole case had been heard, and judgment passed. The injunction laid upon the President to make further endeavours towards a peaceful solution was the merest make-believe, for his true mind and purpose may be inferred from his declaration that he would not advise the South African Republic to consider further the "shameless demands of the British Government." Nor is there any evidence to show that President Steyn made any further attempts to carry out

that injunction. On the contrary, it is known that the ink was hardly dry upon it, when orders were issued calling up considerable commandos of burghers. These were equipped for war and, with sections of artillery, placed upon the borders of the Free State opposite Aliwal, Burgersdorp, and Colesberg, on the south-east, over against the railway line to Kimberley and Mafeking on the north-west, and on the Natal border, near Ladysmith, while, not far from there, at Charlestown, in the South African Republic, was concentrated a large force of Transvaal burghers.

Needless to say these preparations for hostilities and the spirit which animated the younger generation especially, caused deep unrest and anxiety on the part not only of the British element but also of many of the more advanced and experienced section of the older population, and I was frequently appealed to with the question: "Can nothing be done to stop this madness? We have no quarrel with the British Government." To which I could only reply, "The President was enjoined by the Volksraad to do all in his power to secure a peaceful solution—your appeal must be made to him. I have done what I could for years in the Volksraad against this suicidal policy of surrendering our State to the Transvaal." But, worst of all, these measures must have proved to the British Government, as they were no doubt

meant to do, that the way for further diplomatic action was barred. These dispositions had just been made when, on the 29th October, 1899, just a month after the last session of the Volksraad, in which both the President and the Volksraad had declared that no just cause of war existed, an ultimatum, signed by both Presidents, Kruger and Steyn, was hurled at the British Government, and lit the flames of war around our prosperous and, hitherto, peaceful little State. Our forces commenced operations against the power which, up to that moment, was our friend. Nothing on earth could, in my opinion, justify the policy which designedly had brought it about that that power was now our enemy.

EPISODE VII.

Incidents of the War Period.

I HAD been asked to act with the Treasurer-General of the Orange Free State and Mr. v. d. Post as member of a financial commission to control the expenditure during the war, and, as the die had been cast, I did not refuse to do so. The War Fund, which we had specially to control, was a contribution of £250,000 from the Government of the South African Republic in accordance with the mutual arrangement. I thoroughly understood that it was not intended to give me any say in the military measures for the conduct of the war, and was not surprised to find the position almost a sinecure. However, it kept me in touch with the progress of the campaign.

The first intelligence received from the comandos was that they had entered the colonies, on all the borders, that bridges were being blown up, telegraph lines were being cut, stations taken possession of and looted and fighting taking place. After consideration hereof, and in view of the retaliatory measures which would of necessity follow, I thought it my duty to interview the

President, although I was uncertain of the reception I might get, as he had unmistakably shown that I was not *persona grata* at the Presidency. On his enquiry as to the object of my visit, I replied that I thought it right to remind him that the course he was now pursuing was absolutely at variance with that which had always guided the actions of the old leaders of the Orange Free State people, which was to maintain a *defensive* attitude until *offensive* action was brought against them. I stated that I had nothing to say against a force being on our border to guard it against hostile incursion, and that I considered that we were sufficiently assisting our ally by keeping our own borders safe, but that I could not agree with our troops marching into adjoining friendly colonies of our own kith and kin, proclaiming their territory, occupying their public offices, destroying their public property, and subjecting them to martial law regulations, in a word, aggravating intensely the difficulties of their position as British subjects of Dutch blood and sympathy, and virtually forcing them into rebellion against their own Government. Such action must inevitably involve not only the forfeiture of our independence but also an additional burden of misunderstanding, bitterness, and loss. The President's reply was to the effect that he was not going to discuss the matter with me, that we differed totally in our views, and the Executive War Council had decided

on those measures. Thereupon, I wished him good-bye.

My two sons, Allan and Norman, respectively 18 and 16 years of age, were commandeered from the "Grey College," which they were attending, and I equipped them, according to the requirements of commando law, with horses, arms and rations, and then settled quietly to my own work.

The only source of information as to the course of events were the telegrams edited and published by the War Department. For myself, I had intimate communication with very few outside my family other than my friend and neighbour, the late Rev. H. T. Kriel, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. One day in November, 1899, I had just gone over to the parsonage to see my minister about some church matter, which, as elder of the church I had to attend to, when I was astonished to see the President go over to my house, and just as Mr. Kriel and I came out, we met him hurrying over to the parsonage. We met on the stoep of the parsonage, and, in a more or less excited manner, the President said that he had just received a telegram from President Kruger announcing the result of the action at "Nicholson's Nek" near Ladysmith, in the capture of the officers and men of the British force, 1,100 strong. On my questioning him, he stated that he had no doubt whatever as to the truth of the communication, and on my

saying that although it was no doubt matter of satisfaction then, it would make no difference to the ultimate issue, the President just went away without further remark.

That disaster to the enemy troops was followed by many more throughout that December, with occasional set-backs to our forces as well, but the actions on the Tugela, and around Colesberg, and at Stormberg, and Magersfontein were all in favour of the Republican forces, and the hopes of the two Governments rose in proportion. With the arrival of huge reinforcements to the British troops and the assumption of the command-in-chief by Lord Roberts, the delusive satisfaction, which had been fostered by temporary successes, rapidly vanished. Whatever visions of ultimate success may have been entertained by President Kruger and his rash ally of the Orange Free State were finally dissipated.

In February, 1900, the barrier between the Modder River and Kimberley was broken down and the city relieved, to be followed by the surrender of General Cronje and his whole force of four thousand men near Paardeberg. The defeat of General de Wet's commando near Abraham's Kraal, and Driefontein, and its precipitate retreat to Bloemfontein, completed the process of disillusionment.

A few incidents before and in connection with the occurrence of the surrender of Bloemfontein on the 13th day of March, 1900, may bring to your mind, my children, the circumstances accompanying that change in our lives.

Shortly after the fight at Magersfontein, about forty-two of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who had strayed in search of water, were captured near Bisset's Farm, and sent to Bloemfontein. They were dismounted from the wagon which had brought them, at the entrance to the town, and marched past the Presidency to be viewed, I presume, by President Steyn and Mr. Brounger, who stood to see them pass. To me this seemed a wanton proceeding. The poor weary "Kilties" could have been taken down to the prison along the road by which they had come, and they would then have been spared the humiliation of being exhibited through the town in their tattered war-worn condition.

As a member of the Volksraad I had the right of entry to the prison, and this I had exercised, feeling it my duty to do what I could to alleviate the condition of prisoners-of-war, Colonials or Britishers. When these Highlanders were brought in, it was something more than a duty, for were they not my father's folk?—and I took them a cart-load of various provisions and clothing, much of which had been supplied by persons in the town who were moved

to sympathy and help from time to time during the war. Not long after, when taking some more comforts to the prison, I was informed by the superintendent, John Mulligan, that he had received orders not to allow me to do so any longer. I was determined not to submit to this. All our prisoners at Simonstown and other camps were well rationed, and allowed to see their Colonial friends and relatives and to receive gifts. It seemed only right that British prisoners should receive something of the same consideration. I interviewed the Landdrost, who informed me that he had been instructed by the Government Secretary to give the order. He, in his turn, had received his instructions from the War Council. I thereupon went to Headquarters and asked the State President why he had prohibited my efforts to alleviate the condition of the prisoners. It was only reciprocating the treatment meted out to our own unfortunate people at Cape Town ; it was, in my opinion, a clear duty and a Christian privilege. Moreover, as a member of the Volksraad I had always had access to the gaol, and I claimed the same right still. As I had always taken care that nothing was done to abuse the privilege, this order appeared to be a reflection which I resented. The President thereupon issued an order to the Landdrost revoking the prohibition, and I was able to pursue my efforts.

As the British forces drew nearer Bloemfontein some of my constituents having informed me that it had been decided by the War Council to defend the city against the enemy, I was interviewed by the Town Council, and it was thought necessary that the Mayor, Dr. B. O. Kellner, and I should interview the President, and point out to him that it would be criminal folly to defend the city, as was commonly reported to be the intention, to emphasize that it was not a fortified city, that such action would expose it to bombardment, and would place hundreds of defenceless women and children in danger, and to state further, that there was intense unrest among the inhabitants and that we desired to know what the true position was at the moment.

The following memorandum contains particulars of the interview which took place. It was immediately thereafter typed, and signed by the Mayor and myself. I think it right to give it here, verbatim, in order to show that the action taken to save Bloemfontein from bombardment and in connection with the surrender of the city was straightforward and right. It arose out of circumstances which were within the personal knowledge of the State President, and leaves no ground for aspersion upon our loyalty as burghers of the Orange Free State. We did what was our clear duty to the residents of the city who had called for our intervention to secure their safety.

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH HIS HONOUR,
PRESIDENT STEYN, HELD ON SATURDAY, 10TH
MARCH, 1900, AT 11 A.M., BY THE MAYOR
OF BLOEMFONTEIN, AND THE MEMBER FOR
BLOEMFONTEIN.

Mr. Fraser : Your Honour, we are come to see you because there is great consternation among the residents under the rumour that the Government intends to oppose the enemy in the immediate vicinity of the city, and the fear exists that this may lead to bombardment, and we would desire to ascertain from Your Honour what the position of affairs about this is, in the present crisis.

State President : The meaning is to let the commandos take up positions at Spitzkop and Bainsvlei, and hold up the enemy there.

Mr. Fraser : But, President, offering battle there, in that vicinity, will certainly expose the city to the danger of bombardment, and it would be criminal to endanger hundreds of defenceless women and children.

State President : I cannot help that. You speak as if I must only care for the city, and not for the State, and you speak as if the burghers will certainly flee.

Mr. Fraser : That is certainly my expectation in view of the result of the action at Modder River, and it is also in the interests of the State that the *CAPITAL* be not laid in ruins, and the

women and children exposed to destruction, which may easily occur if artillery fire take place.

State President : The war officers are of opinion that good positions can be taken at "Bainsvlei," and they must just do so where they can, and I see no danger for the city, because they also must keep the enemy at a distance.

Mr. Fraser : Yes, but if our burghers are defeated, and, struck by panic, rush into the city, followed by the enemy, I cannot see how danger can be avoided. It also appears to me more in the interests of the city that the burghers move up along Modder River and take up other positions; whereby all danger for the city can be avoided, and they can then form a focus for a new force against the enemy, than first here at Bainsvlei to expose them to destruction under the heavy artillery fire which the enemy can bring to bear on them.

State President : I cannot help that. The plans have been agreed to by the war officers.

Mr. Fraser : Yes, but the war officers receive their instructions from the State President, according to the Constitution, and they could, therefore, easily make a change in the position.

State President : But I agree completely with my war officers, and you know what it means if the capital is taken.

Mr. Fraser : Yes,—I know what that means,—it is the ending of the Government, but,

President, if any mishap occurs, and women and children are killed, the responsibility lies upon you.

State President : Yes, I am prepared to assume the responsibility.

Dr. Kellner : Then there is no more to be said,—and we have done our duty.

Mr. Fraser : There is still a point regarding which we desire to speak to you. You are ready to leave the city. Some of your officials have already left.

State President : Yes, but I shall only leave at the last moment.

Mr. Fraser : Will you remain to surrender the city?

State President : No.

Mr. Fraser : Well, but then it will be necessary that measures be taken for the safety of the residents after you leave.

State President : Why? The Government is still here.

Mr. Fraser : Yes, but the moment of your departure may come at any time, and I deem it my duty to say to you that, as soon as you leave, the Mayor and I, as member, with some other gentlemen, will form a Committee of Public Safety, with the help of the police, to guard against disorder, and to do what we can to protect the city from bombardment, and on the arrival of the enemy to surrender it, and I state this to you now, so that it may not be said

later, that the residents have done anything unknown to the Government.

State President : But the Government is still here, and the Landdrost is here to surrender the city.

Dr. Kellner : But, President, it will be better that there should be a Commission with the Landdrost who can watch and act for order and safety. The public look to us, and therefore it is necessary to take timely care.

State President : But the municipal authorities are there if the Government goes away.

Mr. Fraser : Yes, and it is as chief of that authority that the Mayor and I, at the request of many of my constituents, interview you concerning this, and you can have no difficulty in giving the Commissioner of Police instructions to place himself under our guidance when the Government goes away.

State President : I do not mean to leave till the last moment, but there can be no reason why the Commissioner of Police shall not be of assistance in the maintenance of order.

Mr. Fraser : The Committee of Safety would simply be an interim measure until the city can be surrendered, when the troops arrive, which the Committee shall certainly do to prevent the city from bombardment.

Signed : B. O. KELLNER. (Mayor.)

Signed : J. GEO. FRASER.

(Member for Bloemfontein.)

This ended the interview.

On the following day, namely, Sunday, the 12th March, 1900, as I came from Church, I met numbers of our burghers who told me of the defeat at "Driefontein" and stated that their wagons were outspanned above the town to give their cattle water,—when they intended moving on. It was not difficult to see that they were demoralised and panic-stricken. An old client of mine, one Lodewyk de Jager, I took home to dine with me, and he described the position as hopeless. Presidents Kruger and Steyn, he said, had met at Modderriverspoort and tried to rally the burghers there, but as soon as the balloon went up, as the signal for the British to advance, and the first cannon shots were fired, it was a case of "Laat maar vat, Abel" (Start away, Abel). Abel was the driver of the Presidential conveyance. He had been for sixteen years in my employ, but had been commandeered to drive President Steyn. Lodewyk de Jager further stated that it was of no use thinking to overcome the British forces. By the evening that contingent had disappeared.

On the following morning, namely, Monday, the 13th March, 1900, my brother-in-law, Mr. James Palmer, who was a member of the Executive Council, drove up to the gate of the Presidency, and I saw him hand a letter to President Steyn, which he read and took into his house. Mr. Palmer then came over to my house, and said that

Lord Roberts, with the advanced portion of the British troops, had arrived at his farm the previous day, after the action at "Driefontein," was advancing to Bloemfontein, and had sent a despatch to President Steyn by him, containing a Proclamation to the inhabitants of Bloemfontein.

My eldest son, John, had been placed on Mr. Palmer's farm in order to protect his family and stock while he was absent in town from time to time on Executive work, and I was pleased to get news of him, and to hear that he was well.

On the afternoon of that Monday, 13th March, 1900, gun fire and pom-pom firing were taking place towards the south-west of the city, and I went out to the kopje which adjoined the Presidency to try to locate it. I found that it was in the neighbourhood of Brandkop. While I was still on the kopje, I saw President Steyn, accompanied by another horseman, ride out from his yard in the direction of the Lunatic Asylum, and immediately afterwards his cart, drawn by four horses and driven by the faithful Abel, also left the yard, and proceeded straight down Douglas Street to the lower end of the town, where, I was afterwards informed, President Steyn joined his cart, and so abandoned the capital. I was not to set eyes on him again until after he returned from Europe, after the declaration of peace. As we had arranged, I immediately informed the Mayor of Bloemfontein, Dr. Kellner,

that President Steyn had left the city, and we thereupon sent for the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Markus, who placed himself under our orders, and arranged with the Landdrost, Mr. H. D. Papefus, to meet us the following morning so that we could go out and locate the firing which had taken place, as I had heard that two commandos, under Generals de la Rey and De Wet, which had arrived the previous day, had taken up positions near Brandkop, and were digging trenches, or rather, were adding to those which the convicts had begun to make during the previous days. Accordingly, next morning, namely, Tuesday, the 14th March, 1900, we met as arranged and rode out in the direction of the firing, which had recommenced near De Wet's position, in a direction across the valley, towards "Kafferberg," and we concluded that as return fire was made from that point, Lord Roberts' troops were approaching from that side. We then rode back to the city to get some breakfast, and thereafter to go out to meet the British Commander-in-Chief. Just as we were nearing the city we noticed that the Boer laagers had broken up, and were moving away as rapidly as they could through the nek, north of the city, towards the Modder River. The artillery passed my house, following the laagers, and the last gunshot of the British artillery fell in the grounds of the Lunatic Asylum, meant, I presume, for the Free State artillery train, but quite near

enough to justify our action on behalf of the safety of the city and our fellow-citizens.

After breakfast, the Mayor of Bloemfontein, the Landdrost, Mr. H. D. Papenfus, and the Sheriff, Mr. Raaff, accompanied me in my cart to go out to meet Lord Roberts. We first encountered, on Monument Road, Major Chester Master, whom I had known as A.D.C. to Lord Milner, in Cape Town. We stopped,—and I was referred by him to Colonel Rimmington, who then directed us where to find Lord Roberts, who, with the members of the Headquarters Staff occupied a kopje near Sydenham, within rifle shot of the railway line. Leaving the cart, we were taken up and introduced to Lord Roberts. We stated that we had come to inform him that no opposition would be offered to his occupation of the city, and we stipulated for the safety and favourable treatment of the inhabitants and their interests, which Lord Roberts promised to accord to us. I also mentioned that the Government had retired from the town, and that we had taken interim measures for the safety of the place.

At the request of Lord Roberts we awaited the arrival of the advanced divisions of the troops, which were approaching under General French, and we then returned to Bloemfontein. On our arrival at the Monument we found some of the rowdy element busy carrying out furniture from the Police Barracks, but a picket ordered out by

General French quickly put a stop to this and forced the return of the looted articles. I only mention this incident to show how very necessary it was to take protective measures pending the arrival of the troops.

The army then marched into the city, towards the Government Offices, where Mr. Collins, the acting Government Secretary, presented the keys, and from there to the Presidency, where the Union Jack was hoisted, as it was to be occupied by Lord Roberts and his staff. While the flag was being hoisted, Lord Roberts said to me, "Mr. Fraser, you must be glad to see the old flag hoisted here to-day." My reply was, "No, my Lord, for thirty-seven years I did my best, under our late President, Sir John Brand, to help in building up this State along the paths of civilisation and progress, and it is not a pleasure to see it all broken down now, through colossal madness, but since it had to come, rather that flag than any other." His Lordship then replied, "I can appreciate your feelings fully." I then retired to my house, wondering at the dealings of Providence with our country, and regretfully considering the nemesis brought upon it through the ingratitude of our Government and people. We were blessed with the guidance of our great President, Sir John Brand, for a period of twenty-five years, in which our State was brought out of chaos to peace and prosperity, and became a

model State in South Africa. But under the regimes which followed his death, the spurious patriotism which was so assiduously and disastrously fostered in the minds of our simple people, the chief motive of which was personal aggrandisement, assisted, only too successfully, the intrigues which betrayed our State to the anti-British schemes of President Kruger, and subordinated its highest interests to what were frequently stated to be ambitious designs as to the chief place in the united States of the future.

I was still weighing the circumstances and pondering what my course should be, burdened as I was with the care of so many interests. There were my obligations, as member for the town, to my constituents, my duties as Director of the National Bank, and as Chairman of the South African Mutual Assurance Society, financial interests which called for vigilant care. I was an elder of the Dutch Church, and Superintendent of the Sunday School, member of the Hospital Board, Chairman of the Asylum Board, member of the Board of Trustees of the Eunice Institute, and of the Grey College, Chairman of the Board of Finance of the Dutch Reformed Church, administering its funds, and custodian to its securities, with much else, not forgetting the liability towards my numerous clients, who had entrusted me with the management of their estates, and the investment of their capital,—

all matters requiring my personal attention and application. I had come to the conclusion that, as I was exempted by law from personal service on commando, and moreover would, before many months had passed, enter my 60th year, and as it was most likely that I would be the only Orange Free State official who could act as mediator between the military authorities and the people, it was my clear duty to stay in Bloemfontein and share its fortunes. Doubtless I could have done like many others,—got leave from the Military Government to go with my family to one of the coast towns, and be out of all trouble, but I felt that that would be wrong to all who trusted me and might require my aid. I mention all this because I was told that my taking active part in the surrender of Bloemfontein and my remaining under the British flag was declared to the burghers to be treason to the State,—while I acted on the conviction that I could still best serve my country so. While I was certain that the war so foolishly entered upon was hopelessly lost, I felt that if President Steyn could, at that point, have advantageously obtained an armistice, and the chance of negotiating for peace, there might be an end of hostilities and destruction.

It was while thus engaged that I got a note from Lord Roberts asking if I would be good enough to come over and see him. My house

was just opposite the Presidency, on President Square, and I went over to see him as desired. He asked me if President Steyn had published a Proclamation which he had sent him by Mr. James Palmer, and when I said "No," he wondered whether it had been delivered. I assured him that I saw the paper handed to President Steyn by Mr. Palmer, on the previous morning, when he arrived in town, and that he had informed me that it was a Proclamation. Lord Roberts afterwards sent me a copy of this Proclamation, which I append hereto, and expressed his surprise that it had been suppressed. The Proclamation reads as follows:—

PROCLAMATION.

To the Inhabitants of Bloemfontein.

Aasvogel Camp,

11th March, 1900.

Her Majesty's Troops are within a short distance of Bloemfontein, and will enter the Town in a few days. If no opposition is encountered the Town will be protected, and peaceful inhabitants remain unmolested. If opposition is met with, the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief will be compelled to take such steps as may seem to him best to overcome it. This may result in damage to the Town, and loss of life, which the Field-Marshal would regret. The inhabitants of Bloemfontein are hereby warned to take such measures

as will, in the event of opposition being offered, lead to the security of their own safety.

This Proclamation was accompanied by a letter from Lord Roberts' Military Secretary, addressed to me, namely :—

Government House,
Bloemfontein,
March 21st, 1900.

Dear Mr. Fraser,

Lord Roberts asks me to send you the enclosed copy of the Proclamation he issued on the 11th instant, and sent on ahead to Bloemfontein. A translation of the same, in Dutch, accompanied the Proclamation.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN.

Continuing the interview, Lord Roberts said that he had sent for me as I was the oldest and chief official person in the city, who seemed to have the full confidence of the inhabitants, and had at the same time a sound knowledge of the country and the people, and the conditions now existing, and he would be very glad if I would give him the benefit of my advice, as he desired to make the change of conditions with the least possible disturbance in the ordinary life of the people. He presumed that I was going to stay in Bloemfontein, and as the establishment of communications with

the Cape Colony and the re-equipment of the army had become very necessary he would probably have to delay his forward march for some months, and would in the meantime have to attend to local demands. My reply to Lord Roberts was, —“ My Lord, I am a burgher of this State, and a member of the Volksraad. Provided that nothing is required of me derogatory to my allegiance in that regard, I am willing to do all in my power to help you in rendering your occupation as easy to our people as possible, and I will be glad if you will permit me to bring to your notice any hardship which may be caused by inadvertence or ignorance of local conditions on the part of your subordinates.” It gives me extreme pleasure to say that Lord Roberts not only assured me that I could rely on his word that nothing would be required of me that I could not in honour comply with, but stated that he would always be pleased to hear of anything which might militate against the peace and welfare of the inhabitants, and I have to say that in all the time of my contact with him I found him to be of most delicate and scrupulous honour in word and in deed.

Lord Roberts also introduced me to Major-General Prettyman, whom he appointed Military Governor of Bloemfontein, and requested that he would give me every opportunity to ascertain and inform him as to the good government and welfare of the citizens of Bloemfontein. In this

way I was enabled to get permits to visit the prisoners-of-war camps, the detention house, the Provost-Marshal's Office, the hospital, railway station, and, generally, to be free of movement within the confines of the city, which were privileges I could and did frequently use in the interests of my fellow-citizens and fellow-burghers for their benefit, and in proof of the good intentions of the authorities for all concerned.

Immediately after the occupation of the city sentries were placed at all the public buildings, and Proclamations, dated respectively the 15th, 17th and 20th March, 1900, were published authorising the municipality to carry on as usual, that the ordinary civil and criminal laws would continue in force, and that the Landdrost's Court would resume its sittings, with Mr. James Collins as Landdrost. Mr. D. G. A. Falck continued in charge of Posts and Telegraphs. The Proclamations also assured immunity to all who desisted from hostility and quietly pursued their ordinary occupations, with the result that within a few days, with the exception of the military regulations which had to be observed, Bloemfontein was returning to its normal civilian life. Numbers of burghers and residents surrendered themselves under oaths of neutrality.

Prisoners-of-war began to be brought into Bloemfontein Gaol, and I at once made it my duty to go there every morning to see who had been

taken, and having noted the names and numbers identifying them, I used to go to the Provost-marshal's Office and examine the reports sent in with them, so as to find out whether they were merely taken in arms, or had some special contravention of the military regulations alleged against them, and in many cases I was able to render assistance to relieve them from false charges and military penalties.

As time went on it appeared to me that in many cases arrests were made on affidavits affirming some contravention of neutrality, made from spiteful or malicious motives, with a view to getting men whom I knew to be trustworthy, respectable burghers, removed from their farms and sent away to prisoners-of-war camps near Cape Town, in order to get possession of their stock. This became so prevalent that I considered it my duty, in fulfilment of my promise to Lord Roberts, to draw the special attention of the Military Governor to the injustice inflicted on those burghers, and in the month of June, 1900, I addressed a letter to him, the contents of which I quote here, to make clear what the position was that I desired to see remedied. The letter reads as follows:—

Sir,

I deemed it my duty in a former communication addressed to you on the 13th June, 1900, strongly to show what the results of such indiscriminate

actions were and how it was striking not only at the prestige of the Government, but also at the confidence which the burghers had shown towards it. And you have on various occasions allowed me to point out that while certain military measures might be necessitated yet their application to a conquered population ought nevertheless to be made with every consideration which humanity called for, and that the innocent ought not to be indiscriminately involved with the guilty, as this could only lead to the conviction that those who had surrendered and were honestly endeavouring to act up to their obligations were simply victims of misplaced confidence. You have been good enough to allow me, from time to time, to say where I thought alleviation could be brought to bear on such conditions, and this emboldens me to address you again and to state candidly the results of the policy which has been pursued, as they come to my notice in my contact with the Boer population, and which in my opinion call for the most earnest consideration with an eye to the immediate future of this colony. From letters in my possession I can prove that burghers whose respectability and trustworthiness were formerly never questioned, and who held positions of importance, but who surrendered under the proclamation of Lord Roberts and who were acting fairly up to their undertaking, are now

prisoners-of-war, taken from their homes without warning, hurried to the nearest railway station, and sent down without so much as a chance of making provision for their affairs, or even of taking farewell of their wives and children,—whose stock has been swept off, in many instances homesteads and steading destroyed; who to this day have had no specific charge brought against them, and do not know why such action has been taken: men who would have been staunch supporters of Her Majesty's Government. I ask you, Sir, is such treatment calculated to inspire confidence or loyalty, or will it not rather leave a rankling wound and abiding distrust for years to come. And what is the present position? The country is being converted into an uninhabited desert. In some districts every homestead is burnt, and all the population swept off into hastily improvised camps, under conditions of life which even the Boer, in spite of his hardihood, finds a hardship, with families so divided that in some instances the mother does not know where her children are, while all their possessions on their farms, where these have not been burnt, have been left a prey to the first comer, white or native, who chooses to possess himself of them. Towns are evacuated, the stores destroyed, houses, furniture, clothing, etc., left to be despoiled, the owners deprived of the chance of seeking their livelihood, and I ask you, Sir, who are the chief

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sufferers,—Boers, as well as English? Are they not those who were prepared to settle down under the new regime and become good subjects of the British Government, and is such treatment calculated to inspire confidence or loyalty, or will it not rather dispel any sense of security they might have felt under the Proclamation, and instil utter distrust for the future? I do think that it would have been better to have left the people in occupation of their farms, where they could foresee their own need, and could have endeavoured to help each other to cultivate and provide crops for their subsistence, rather than to coop them up together only to brood over their present suffering and to console each other over the hard measures which have been meted out to them, and the future starvation and destitution which is before them, all of which will only tend to eradicate every germ of confidence which they commence to feel, and to perpetuate the hatred which will ever seek to undermine and destroy the future peace of this Colony.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. GEO. FRASER.

This letter was submitted to the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain, who returned the same with the letter of the Military Governor, as Deputy Administrator of this Colony, to the

High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, who returned it to me with a letter from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, which contained a request that I should furnish the names of burghers who had been dealt with in the manner I stated, and I forwarded the following reply:—

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 25th ultimo, covering copies of letters from the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for this Colony, and now I beg to comply with the request contained therein by forwarding a list of names of burghers who had surrendered under Lord Roberts' proclamation, and who were deported this Colony without any specific accusation being made against them as far as I have been able to ascertain. This list contains only the names of burghers out of this district occurring to me out of numbers who have called for my advice while in prison here on their way to the sea-coast and, where time and opportunity afforded, could be largely augmented from communications addressed to me. What is true of this district will also be found true of the other districts, and I have no doubt whatever that the results of the Commission of Enquiry, now investigating such cases in the prisoner-of-war camps around Cape Town, will still more fully bear me out in my

allegations on this head to the late Military Governor, Major-General Sir George J. Prettyman. I also append a letter, one of many such, with translation, from Mr. F. W. Coetser, ex-Orphan Chamber Valuator of the Ward Kaffir River, now in the Refugee Camp here, which is exactly typical of the treatment meted out to numbers of burghers who loyally observed their neutrality and which the writer, who is a man of influence in his Ward, and well-known to me as a right-minded man, addressed to me to point out what he deemed one of the chief causes militating against the peaceful submission to the authorities. May I commend it to your careful consideration, and beg for such amelioration of his position that he may be able to rejoin his children.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. GEO. FRASER.

These papers and the list of names furnished by me, containing forty names, were sent down to the Commission of Enquiry, with the result that thirty-eight of the burghers named were returned to Bloemfontein. Two had already been sent on to Ceylon, but were returned later.

This incident will show that my forecast was right,—that it was better for me to abide in Bloemfontein and mediate, where I could, to establish

good relations between the people and the new regime, and this is only one of many occasions in which my intervention was not only courteously received by the Government, but led to the adjustment of wrongs which had taken place.

Shortly after the occupation a dreadful outbreak of typhoid fever took place among the troops, who had been stationed at Modder River to secure the surrender of General Cronje's force. This was supposed to have been caused by drinking the river water, which was badly poisoned by carcasses of cattle which had perished within the camps occupied by the Boer commandos, and had been thrown into the river. This outbreak spread so rapidly that every building which could be used was appropriated as hospitals for treatment of the sufferers, and the mortality became so high that as many as from fifty to sixty deaths occurred daily. In connection herewith I had an unpleasant experience with an officer commanding one of the regiments in the vicinity of the city. The only building which had not been utilised for hospital purposes was the Girls' High School "Eunice," which was then housing the teaching staff and a number of students from the Transvaal, Cape Colony, and Basutoland, who could not be returned to their homes before hostilities commenced. These premises the officer in question stated he required, and that the women must be cleared out

immediately. When I explained that this was impossible, he lost control of himself, and let loose a most unsavoury vocabulary upon me. It was of no use to explain the difficulty of the position, and eventually I had to point out to him that, while his conduct was certainly by way of exception to what I had generally experienced, I did not propose to stand his bullying manners, and must report him to General Prettyman, which I did. Next day the Military Governor sent for me and, with an expression of personal regret, handed me a letter of apology from the officer referred to. The General then explained that, unless proper accommodation could be speedily secured, a number of men must simply die in their tents. When he asked if I could make any suggestion, I told him that I felt myself responsible, as one of the School Trustees, for the safety of the women and girls, and that they had a legal claim to be properly housed and provided for. If, however, he would authorise me to make any outlay of money necessary, I might be able to secure other accommodation for them. This he agreed to do. I got the consent of the ladies to their being moved, and having found other suitable quarters for them, handed over the Institute buildings to the Military Governor.

From the foregoing it will be seen that my position was not entirely free from trouble in

my endeavour to act up to my duty. With this exception, however, I wish to record the continued kindness with which Sir George Pretyman and all the members of his staff uniformly treated me, and the desire manifested that any avoidable hardship and injustice should be prevented. Soon, however, a Deputy Administrator for this Colony was appointed in the person of Major Hamilton John Goold Adams, for all civil government, while the administration of military government passed to the General Officer Commanding for the time being. From the time of Major Hamilton John Goold Adams' appointment as Deputy Administrator, until he retired as Governor of the Orange River Colony upon its entry into the Union of South Africa, he permitted me to collaborate with him in the reconstruction of the country, in the enjoyment of his full and unbroken confidence. His appointment was made after the annexation of the Colony by Proclamation read by the Military Governor to a large concourse of people in the Market Square. Regarding this Proclamation I had asked the Military Governor whether Her Majesty's Government had decided on permanently annexing the Republics to the Empire for the future, as South Africa had suffered severely from the vacillating nature of the British Government's policy in the past, and he

informed me that the permanent annexation of both Republics had been decided upon.

The first matter on which I was asked for assistance was the establishment of a Peace Committee, in order to open correspondence with the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church, and other prominent men, who would no doubt desire to see an end of the hostilities, as all must now be convinced that the struggle was hopeless for the Republics, and that prolongation, though possible, could only lead to greater troubles, distress, and destruction. After consideration, I agreed to form a Committee, and to be its Chairman, and to keep the Deputy Administrator advised as to its resolutions and action. The position then existing was that a large number of the congregations of the Church were pastorless. Some of the ministers were with their congregations, but were uncertain as to their ministry, many had gone to the neighbouring colonies, a few were with the Boer forces, and it was thought that their return to their congregations and the re-establishment of regular worship might have a beneficial influence in the interests of peace. Meanwhile the religious interests of the people were in many instances not being attended to, and were bound to suffer.

At a meeting of the Peace Commission, of which the members were, besides myself, Messrs. D. J. H. v. Niekerk, J. S. Theron, H. S. Viljoen, members

of the Volksraad,—G. J. v. Tonder, J. D. Palmer, members of the Executive Council of the late Orange Free State,—it was decided to address a letter to the Rev. Marquard, Moderator of the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church of the late Orange Free State, stating what the conditions were, with the request that steps might be taken to secure the return of ministers to their congregations so that their influence could be brought to bear in the interests of peace, and the restoration of the scattered congregations.

Before quoting from that letter, which was signed and despatched on the 5th June, 1901, by three of the gentlemen named, and myself, I may state in connection herewith that I had received letters from the Military Governor some six months previously, in my capacity as the Chairman of the Financial Commission of the Dutch Reformed Church, requesting me to place myself in communication with the ministers of that Church, acquainting them that the Government was prepared to place the Commission in a position to continue the payment of their grant, provided they signified their submission and took the oath. In consequence of that request I issued a circular to all the ministers, with results which I communicated to the Military Governor in my letter of the 19th December, 1900, that five of the ministers had taken the oath, that nine did not consider themselves at liberty to

do so, and that one was prepared to do so, but was informed by the Officer Commanding at Cape Town that the contents of the circular were only meant for those ministers who were still in the Orange River Colony, while the Moderator was not prepared to consider the matter at all, being of opinion that it was for the Synod to decide whether the grant could be accepted under the conditions stated or not. As some of the ministers were in Ceylon, and others through lack of communication might not have received the circular and thus not have been in a position to decide upon it, it would be for the Military Governor to decide the question of the grant finally, or leave the ultimate decision until conditions were more settled. Further, that the Rev. Marquard in his position as Quæstor of the Synod desired that the grants continued to those ministers who had taken the oath might be paid out to them directly, and not through the medium of the Financial Commission. I made this communication to the Peace Commission so that they might know the feeling of the ministers. It was, nevertheless, our duty to do what we could, and the letter was sent to the Rev. Marquard at Stellenbosch. After stating the resolution of the Commission it read, as literally translated by me :—

The Commission cannot understand on what grounds the great majority of the ministers of

the Dutch Reformed Church of this Colony can justify their attitude during the last twelve months. Allowing that they may have had a strong conviction that there really has been a just cause of war, and even granting that they may have had the strongest sympathy with their burghers, still, from the nature of their office, they were not called upon to take up a political standpoint, or in consequence of such conviction, sympathy, or standpoint to sacrifice the interests of their congregations and to persist therein, notwithstanding the so fatal issue of the war for this State.

Ever since the commencement of the war there has been no regular Gospel Service in most of the congregations of the late Orange Free State, and since the occupation of this territory no spiritual labour, so that thousands of the members of the Dutch Reformed Church, in addition to all their dreadful suffering and distress, are deprived of the comfort of God's Word, and the preaching thereof.

Still in eight or nine of the thirty-seven congregations in our land, the ministers have remained, and the Commission must therefore conclude that where these have subjected their personal convictions to the dispensations of God's Providence over our people, in order to remain faithful to their highest calling, this ought not to have been impossible for the remainder, and it cannot be otherwise than that

the faithful preaching of the Gospel of Peace and the faithful leading in the prayers to the God of Peace, as well as the faithful care of the congregations would have done much to prevent the scattering of the congregations and the total destruction of our people, which can be the only result of the continuation of hopeless hostilities.

The Commission therefore feels itself constrained to appeal to the absent ministers of our Church by reason of the solemn bond between them and their congregations, by reason of the claim of Christian love and by reason of the value of thousands of souls who are now without Gospel Service, to examine themselves with the question, what must weigh in the light of God's clear ordering, persistence in refusal, or submission and return to the demands of their calling, and with the setting aside of all political convictions, to resume the great work of restoring the congregations.

The Commission suggests your sending this appeal to all the ministers concerned and have no doubt that when the spiritual leaders of the people resolve to return to God's Work, the Lord of the congregations will also make their way thereto prosperous, and shall make their labour work together to the restoration of peace, and the reconstruction of the now scattered and neglected congregations.

I regret to state that this letter was without sympathetic result.

His Honour the Deputy Administrator continued his efforts towards peace, and in consultation with the Commission, wrote to and obtained the services of the Rev. Charles Murray, the devoted minister of Graaff-Reinet, who went and interviewed President Steyn under safe-guard obtained for him. I was informed, however, that his visit was without result. What finally caused the cessation of all attempts to achieve the conclusion of hostilities was the result of a voluntary effort made by a certain burgher of the name of Morgendaal, who approached General de Wet, as I was told, and urged him to put an end to the futile strife. He was shot dead ; by whom it is still uncertain.

I must, further, not forget to mention the devotion of two of the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church who threw in their lot with the comandos and shared their fortunes, while ministering to their religious needs.

Meanwhile military operations continued, but it is not my purpose to give any details of these. My own part at this time, as I have already stated, I considered to be that of mediating where possible in the interests of our own people. That mediation was eventually necessary in the case of my own kith and kin. My niece, Mrs. Steyn, wife of the President, had been taken near Bethlehem and, being brought to Bloemfontein, was lodged at Military Headquarters.

Not long after I was called to the gaol, early in the morning, and found there my brother, the Rev. Colin Fraser, charged with communicating with the commando in which his son-in-law, President Steyn, was. His youngest daughter too, I was informed, had been arrested, and taken to a refugee camp. I lost no time in obtaining permits to take him to the house occupied by Mrs. Steyn and to have his daughter removed from the camp to her sister's house. It was very gratifying to me that I was able to secure their release. Later the Rev. Colin Fraser was allowed to return to Philippolis and his congregation on my undertaking to stand bail for his future behaviour, but a few months later he was again removed with his family to a refugee camp at Bethulie. As the doctor there certified that the conditions of camp life would be fatal to them, the Deputy Administrator arranged with the General Officer Commanding that they should be removed to East London, whither, also, his son, the Landdrost of Wepener, had been sent, and there he secured a house for them all.

In spite of the victorious advance of the British forces, and the fall of Johannesburg and Pretoria, the war dragged out its weary length. General de Wet with his mounted force seemed to find no difficulty in eluding the cordons which were endeavouring to capture him. President

Steyn had a narrow escape from capture near Bothaville, and a report was brought in that his health had failed badly, and that there was some likelihood of negotiations for peace. President Kruger had previously gone, with Mr. Wolmarans, to Europe in a Dutch warship, to be joined there by Mr. Abraham Fischer and Mr. C. H. Wessels. Their purpose was, it appeared, to secure European intervention in favour of the Republics, but this they failed to achieve. In fact it was later reported that the Kaiser Wilhelm, on whom they chiefly relied, had refused to receive them.

It was a time of great strain, almost every day having its share of incident.

A sight not readily to be forgotten was that of about 30,000 troops assembled round Bloemfontein. Among them was the Highland Brigade, some 4,000 strong, under the command of General Hector Macdonald, of Invernessian origin. He had been wounded in the foot at Magersfontein, and was pleased to accept some little attention I was able to show him for the sake of Auld Lang Syne.

Towards the close of hostilities an incident took place which inflicted great wrong on the congregation of our church at Bloemfontein, and still more on our respected and beloved minister, the Rev. H. T. Kriel, "an Israelite in whom was no guile," and a most faithful

servant of God. I felt the matter deeply. The incident came about as follows. On the death of Queen Victoria, memorial services were held in all the local churches except ours. Our minister made a very touching and eulogistic reference to the great Queen as woman, wife, mother, and ruler, but did not consider that a memorial service in addition was needful. This was taken up by the General Officer Commanding at the time as a great insult to the Queen's memory, and as indicating disloyal sentiment. An order was issued commanding Mr. Kriel's departure to the coast. Every effort was made to get this order rescinded, as inflicting cruel injustice and hardship on one who had scrupulously observed his oath of allegiance and as depriving the congregation and the refugee camp of his valued services. It was all to no purpose. The Officer Commanding was inexorable, and we found ourselves pastorless, save for an occasional service conducted by the Rev. J. S. Louw, missionary to the local native congregation.

By the kind intervention of the Administrator, now Sir Hamilton Goold Adams, the Rev. William Robertson, minister of Petrusburg, and consulent of Bloemfontein, who had been removed to the camp at Kimberley, was released and put in charge of our congregation. I wish to state here how great were the services that he

rendered, not only to us, but also to the Church throughout the State, for by his mediation the administration was enabled to appoint ministers of our Church to all the camps, that the religious interests of the people might be conserved against the day when peace should permit the resettlement of the country and the reconstruction of the congregations. Happily that day was not far distant. The strain was becoming too great for such Republican forces as still remained in the field. Commissariat and ammunition supplies were running low, general equipment was inadequate, and the horses were unequal to the demands made upon them. All these circumstances and the untoward fortunes of the war compelled negotiations. The Treaty of Vereeniging closed a chapter in our history and brought again peace to our sadly devastated and stricken country. Peace was declared on 31st May, 1902, and thereafter, to the joy of the inhabitants, martial law was withdrawn and the colony again brought under civil government. On June 23rd a constitution was promulgated placing it under Crown Colony government, with a Legislative Council.

Sir Hamilton Goold Adams became Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony, and the first work which had to be performed was the repatriation of all the prisoners-of-war, some from St. Helena, the Bermudas, Ceylon and

India, and others from the various concentration camps and war prisons throughout South Africa. Repatriation Departments were formed both in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies, and it was computed that the Orange River Colony Repatriation Department would have to deal with a scattered population of approximately 80,000 men, women and children, while in the Native Refugee Department there were at the time of reorganisation 23,000 natives, of all ages, to be dealt with.

While measures were being taken for the re-transportation of prisoners-of-war to their homes, an enormous staff of officers was engaged in investigation of the best means and routes to be followed, what would be required in the way of seed, stock, and agricultural implements in order to put them in the way of gaining a livelihood as soon as they returned, and in deciding how and from what source these necessaries were to be provided. A great deal would have to be found for the people if they were not to starve when they returned to their homes. It was found necessary to appoint in each colony a Commission of persons, well acquainted with the country and its agricultural conditions, to advise the Government as to the minimum of stock, seed, wagons, and the like which would have to be provided, and also the sources from which

these could be most expeditiously and economically obtained.

The foregoing is practically an extract from the despatch of Sir Alfred Milner (now Lord Milner), dated 30th December, 1901, at which date he would seem to have given very deep consideration to the problems which would have to be solved on the conclusion of peace.

Sir Hamilton Goold Adams gave effect to this forecast of the High Commissioner, and from the following quotations from *The Aftermath of the War* it will be seen what part I was called upon to play in the repatriation of my fellow-burghers.

“ At Bloemfontein was constituted a Central Board (Repatriation) of Control and Advice, which exercised control over the transactions of the District Commissioners and supervised their proceedings. The decisions of this Central Board were binding upon the District Commissioners, who referred all cases in their district which called for special treatment.

The Chairman of the Central Board was Mr. J. G. Fraser, who had previously stood for the Presidency of the Orange Free State against Mr. Steyn.”

EXTRACT FROM SIR HAMILTON GOOLD ADAMS' REPORT (Chapter 1551 ; Page 47):—

“ I was fortunate in securing for this Central Board the services of a number of gentlemen

of proved business capacity, who from long participation in affairs under the late Orange Free State had acquired an intimate knowledge both of local conditions, and of the leading people in the various districts. Guided principally by their recommendations I was able to appoint District Commissions that may be fairly said to have been representative even at the outset, of the divergent interests of the individual districts."

Acts 2 and 10 of the Treaty of Vereeniging contained the undertaking of the British Government towards the surrendered burghers, and dealt with Repatriation, Claims, Compensation and Loans, and formed the provisions under which the Repatriation Department was established and had to act.

When His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor asked for my assistance in organising the Executive of the Department, I at once saw it would be a gigantic work, and that with the necessary reorganisation of my own business affairs, I should need all my strength. I felt that I could not refuse my co-operation in the rebuilding of the colony and restoration of our people, and so I undertook the Chairmanship of the Central Board, and recommended as members of the Board Mr. P. J. Blignaut, Ex-Government Secretary of the Orange Free State, and Mr. James Robertson, of Jammersberg Drift. Major

MacClachlan and Lieutenant Beak were secretaries to the Central Board.

The first problem I had to solve was how to interpret Art. 10 of the Treaty, and how to give effect to it. As various magistrates had written to His Excellency and there seemed to be divergent ideas as to the meaning of that Act, I recommended His Excellency to summon all the magistrates of the district to a conference at Bloemfontein, in which the "modus operandi" could be fully discussed, and a uniform line of action laid down for the guidance of all concerned. His Excellency approved of this and convened the Conference. I append a photograph of the members thereof.

I at once drew up regulations governing the proceedings of the Central Board and all the District Commissions in regard to their constitution, proceedings, and application thereof in each district, and providing for the exercise of control and advice by the Central Board. These regulations, after approval by His Excellency, were laid before the Conference of Magistrates, discussed, approved, and printed. Operations were started forthwith and carried on until the resettlement of the whole population of the Orange River Colony had been effected. Here again I was able to devote time and my utmost strength in the interest of my countrymen. Need I say it was a colossal work in which the

Conference of Magistrates at Bloemfontein in 1903.



FIRST Row : Capt. Hume, R.M., Boshof ; Mr. Daller, R.M., Heilbron ; Mr. Bignaut, Member Central Com. ; Major Peterkin, R.M., Ficksburg ; Mr. Bowen, R.M., Winburg ; Mr. Corser, R.M. Fauresmith ; Mr. Harley, R.M., Wepener ; Major McLaughlan, Sec., Central Repatriation Com., Bloemfontein.

SECOND Row : Mr. W. Robertson, R.M., Bethlehem ; Mr. A. Leary, R.M., Harrismith ; Mr. Ashbourneham, R.M., Bloemfontein ; Mr. (now Sir) John Fraser, Chairman, Central Board ; Mr. Baker, R.M., Bethulie ; Capt. Grant, R.M., Kroonstad ; Mr. Du Toit, R.M., Jacobsdal.

THIRD Row : Mr. Van Iddekinge, R.M., Thaba Nchu ; Mr. A. Brand, R.M., Edenburg ; Mr. Hubert Parry, R.M., Rouxville ; Mr. Broom, R.M., Ladybrand ; Mr. Jas. Robertson, R.M., Hoopstad.

intense interest of our Lieutenant-Governor was a great stimulus. The whole work was carried out for the Orange River Colony at an expenditure of about £1,400,000. It will be seen from the proceedings of the Inter-Colonial Council for 1905, that similar work cost the Transvaal Government the sum of £9,093,636. The work, too, was carried out in such a manner that under the fostering care of the Government the burghers were soon in a fair way towards obtaining their own support, and normal conditions were sufficiently restored to make recuperation possible.

GENERAL CONFERENCES, SOUTH AFRICAN CONDITIONS.

An important Conference on South African conditions was convened by the High Commissioner, the Right Honourable Viscount Milner, and met at Bloemfontein on the 10th March, 1903, under the presidentship of the High Commissioner. The Conference was attended by delegations of five members each, attended by special advisers on customs, railways, and legal matters, from the Cape, Natal, Orange River and Transvaal Colonies, and from Rhodesia. A delegate from Portuguese East Africa also attended the Conference, but without authority to commit his Government.

The first resolution passed was to take into consideration in the first instance the question

of a Customs Union and was followed by resolution carried unanimously :—

“ That all the Colonies represented are in favour of the establishment of a Customs Union based on a common tariff and would welcome the adhesion to such a Union of the Province of Mozambique.”

A further resolution was carried unanimously reading :—

“ That this Conference approves of provision being made in any Customs Union Tariff for preferential duties on the products and manufacture of the United Kingdom, and also of any British colony or possession which may offer reciprocal privileges. That this Conference recognises that in the present circumstances it is not practicable to adopt a general system of free trade as between the Mother Country and the Oversea British Dominions, but recommends that, if in course of time an export trade from South Africa should be developed, the Governments of the various colonies of South Africa should respectively urge on His Majesty's Government the expediency of granting in the United Kingdom preferential treatment to the products and manufactures of the colonies, either by exemption from or reduction of duties now or hereafter imposed.”

Then followed discussion of various matters preparatory to the immediate assembling of

a Railway Conference in Bloemfontein, with a view to the decision of certain questions regarded as essential to the proper consideration of the proposed Customs Tariff. These questions were: the appointment of a Committee to draw up the tariff instructions in regard to the protection of the products and industries of South Africa,—the articles which were to be included in the general “ad valorem” rate,—and the duties on meat and grain. These discussions continued over the 11th and 12th March, when the Conference was suspended till the 16th March. On the 16th March discussion took place on the native affairs and position in South Africa, and was continued during the 17th and 18th, when also the question of uniform legislation came under discussion, and on the 19th the resolutions taken seriatim on the native question and on restrictions on immigration in their final form should stand as follows:—

NATIVE AFFAIRS :

1. That the native question embraces the present and future status and condition of all aboriginal natives of South Africa, and the relation in which they stand towards the European population.

2. That this Conference strongly supports the principle of the total prohibition of the sale

of intoxicating liquor to the aboriginal natives of South Africa and urges upon the Governments of the States and colonies concerned the importance of maintaining this principle.

3. That the reservation of land for the sole use and benefit of natives involves special obligations on their part towards the State.

4. That this Conference deplures the misconception existing in certain quarters in the Mother Country regarding South African policy and feeling in the matter of obtaining native labour required for private enterprise and affirms that forced labour is not countenanced by any South African Government, and is repugnant to civilised opinion throughout the country.

5. That, excepting in Rhodesia, the influence of polygamy upon the labour supply of South Africa is greatly exaggerated. That polygamy is decreasing from natural causes. That the advance of civilisation has ameliorated the condition of the native women and that the use of the plough has largely relieved them from field labour.

6. That this Conference is of opinion that an increase of the labour supply may be promoted by still further improving the conditions under which the natives work, and desires to call attention to the value placed by the delegates of Cape Colony upon the system of residential locations now established at the Cape ports, which, if

adopted at other industrial centres would in their opinion lead to a better supply of labour and continuity of service.

7. That where no railway facilities are afforded free shelter under Government supervision should be provided, where food may be purchased by natives travelling to and returning from labour markets.

8. That this Conference after considering all available statistics and hearing the reports of the highest official authorities of the several States has come to the conclusion that the native population of South Africa, south of the Zambesi, does not comprise a sufficient number of adult males capable of work to satisfy the normal requirements of the several colonies, and at the same time furnish an adequate amount of labour for the large industrial and mining centres. Under these circumstances it is evident to the Conference that the opening of new sources of labour supply is requisite in the interest of all the South African States.

9. That all British possessions in South, Central, and East Africa should be an open field for labour recruiting, and that all natives should be allowed to choose their own spheres of work.

10. That in view of the coming federation of the South African colonies it is desirable that a South African commission be constituted to gather accurate information on affairs relating

to the natives and native administration, and offer recommendations to the several Governments concerned, with the object of arriving at a common understanding on questions of native policy. Such Commission to consist of two representatives from each of the colonies and one each from Rhodesia and Basutoland, with the addition of a chairman to be nominated by the High Commissioner.

RESTRICTIONS ON IMMIGRATION.

1. That in the opinion of this Conference there should be uniform legislation with regard to the immigration of undesirable persons into South Africa.

2. That in the opinion of this Conference the permanent settlement in South Africa of Asiatic races would be injurious, and should not be permitted, but that if industrial development positively requires it, the introduction of unskilled Asiatic labourers under a system of Government control providing for the indenturing of such labourers and their repatriation at the termination of their indentures should be permissible.

As a member of that Conference, in the delegation of the Orange River Colony, I have deemed it desirable to give the above resolutions in full, being arrived at by the first General Conference of South Africa, after the war, on

those subjects, and it will be clear that if in all the colonies concerned, uniform legislation had been introduced on those lines, without loss of time, in many instances troubles might have been prevented which have since arisen.

At the further meetings of this Conference it was agreed that a general census of South Africa should be taken in 1904, which was afterwards carried out, and as the Railway Conference had completed their work in regard to the rates, the Conference proceeded to discuss the various items of the Draft Union Tariff seriatim, and the Draft Customs Union which was finally carried unanimously, and after the customary votes of thanks the Conference closed. But the record of its work remains as tangible proof, if any were wanting, of the foresight and political sagacity of the High Commissioner in combining representatives of all South Africa in a joint consideration of its common interests.

NATIVE AFFAIRS COMMISSION.

In 1903 an Inter-Colonial Commission, composed of representatives of all the colonies of South Africa, was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir Godfrey Lagden, entitled *The South African Native Affairs Commission*, which was empowered to enquire into and report upon the condition of the natives existing in

all the colonies of South Africa, under reference, including :—

1. The status and condition of the natives, the lines on which their natural advancement should proceed, their education, industrial training and labour.

2. The tenure of land held by the natives, and the obligation to the State which it entailed.

3. Native law and administration.

4. The prohibition of the sale of liquor to natives.

5. Native marriages.

6. The extent and effect of polygamy.

The Commission was constituted in terms of resolution passed at the Customs Conference at Bloemfontein in March, 1903. Its labours extended over the years 1903-1905, and the evidence comprised in the minutes accompanying the report contains the first complete account of the condition of native affairs generally throughout South Africa, and specially of the circumstances, habitat, mode of life, manners and customs affecting the various tribes and communities of natives in the several colonies. Evidence was also taken in the Orange River Colony, and, among others, I was asked to place the information gained in the course of my experience before the Commission, and this I did at their session in Bloemfontein on the 21st September, 1904. My evidence runs over some

twenty pages of the Commission's Report, and I do not mean to inflict the contents of the 228 questions and answers detailed therein upon the readers of these episodes. Suffice it to say the first subjects of examination were the modes of tenure on which land was occupied in the Orange River Colony by natives and bastards respectively, and the taxes exacted from them especially in regard to the locations of Witzieshoek and Moroka after its annexation to the Orange Free State. Then the various circumstances and resultant rights connected with the tenure of land, such as the responsibility attached to the possession and holding of land involving membership of the community, the question of education, the inculcation of the dignity of labour, the knowledge of how to live, the matter of the franchise and others. In regard to all this I expressed my opinion that, as suggested, it might benefit the natives if they showed some sense of responsibility to such a degree that they were prepared to become good citizens in the next generation, people who would take their share of public burdens and responsibilities, if you gave them individual tenure, which I favoured above communal tenure, you might, as a preparatory measure, inaugurate a separate deliberative Council for them, in which these people, according to the degree of their enlightenment, could debate their conditions of life, and

could arrive at certain resolutions which they thought were good for them. These could then be submitted to the various Legislatures for consideration and for application where necessary and possible. In the absence of the franchise and direct representation, for which a full generation would have to pass, before anything like practical consideration thereof could with any degree of probability be entertained, I considered the only way of giving them a chance of having representation for their position would be to establish some form of separate Native Councils, to which they could send elected native representatives, and that these Councils should discuss any questions arising in regard to their conditions and their grievances. The resolutions which such a Native Council would arrive at would be submitted to the Government and the Government could then see how far legislation taken by Parliament could meet the position. An official appointed by the Government could preside over the Council. It would take the form of a Deliberative and Advisory Council solely. I thought that would be a measure which would gradually accustom the native to open discussion of his grievances,—to the responsibility of that representation, educate him up to the necessity of having it made in the same way as is done in Parliament at present for the white population, and that such free

discussion would be a safety valve against wrong endeavours to exploitation of grievances against the authorities. I emphasize this portion of my evidence, because I am convinced its general application would be advantageous in the promotion of better relations between the white and black races of our country, and have found strong evidence to this effect where this principle has been adopted in the institution of local native councils in locations for their management in the mutual interests. I have in view the vast strides in development which have taken place amongst the natives in the various provinces of the Union during the last eighteen years, and the increasing ambition which is being manifested by them, in all parts of our country, to such a degree that the necessity of paying special attention to their extreme desire for advancement has not only culminated in the establishment of a native college to provide for higher education, but called for the appointment of an official Commission for native affairs which can keep the Government abreast of new conditions which arise.

EPISODE VIII.

Crown Colony Government.

SOME uncertainty seems still to exist as to the functions of the Councils which directed affairs under Crown Colony Government and as to the work they achieved. What, then, were the conditions, and what the matters to be dealt with?

1. The resuscitation of civil government and law now that the military regime with martial law had come to an end.

2. The repatriation of the deported population and restoration to their homes.

3. The reorganisation of the railway systems of the two Republics, these having been under military control during the whole period of the war.

4. The provision of an adequate and efficient police force, the military forces being now withdrawn.

5. The provision of the necessary funds.

Certain other matters of comparatively less importance I need not specify.

It will be clear that while each colony had a vital concern with each and all of these matters,

points 1 and 2 demanded a more local consideration and handling, in accordance with the difference of legal enactment and general conditions in the two late Republics. Points 3, 4 and 5 were matters more of common concern. Speaking generally, then, points 1 and 2 were the particular business of the Legislative Council in each colony, while the remaining three formed the province of the Inter-Colonial Council which was made up of representatives from both colonies under the presidency of the High Commissioner.

I shall deal with this latter body first, and then go on to show how the Legislative Council, acting either independently or in conjunction with it, according to the nature of the business, addressed itself to the work of restoration.

The Inter-Colonial Council was, as I have said, under the presidency of the High Commissioner and included the Lieutenant-Governors of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, the Inspector-General of the South African Constabulary, the Commissioner of Railways, two nominated official members of the Legislative Council of each colony, two unofficial members (elected) from the Council of each colony, with two other members nominated by the Secretary of State, who might or might not be members of the Legislative Council of either colony. All such nominated and elected members held office for twelve months.

The High Commissioner was authorised by the British Government to raise a guaranteed loan of £35,000,000, on the security of the two colonies, of which the sum of £5,000,000 had to be raised for the Orange River Colony, and the balance of £30,000,000 for the Transvaal. Of the full loan only £30,000,000 were raised at first, and this was expended, in round figures, as follows :—

For discharge of old liabilities	..	£4,600,000
For acquisition of railways	..	£13,500,000
For repatriation	£5,800,000
For development	£5,100,000

		£29,000,000

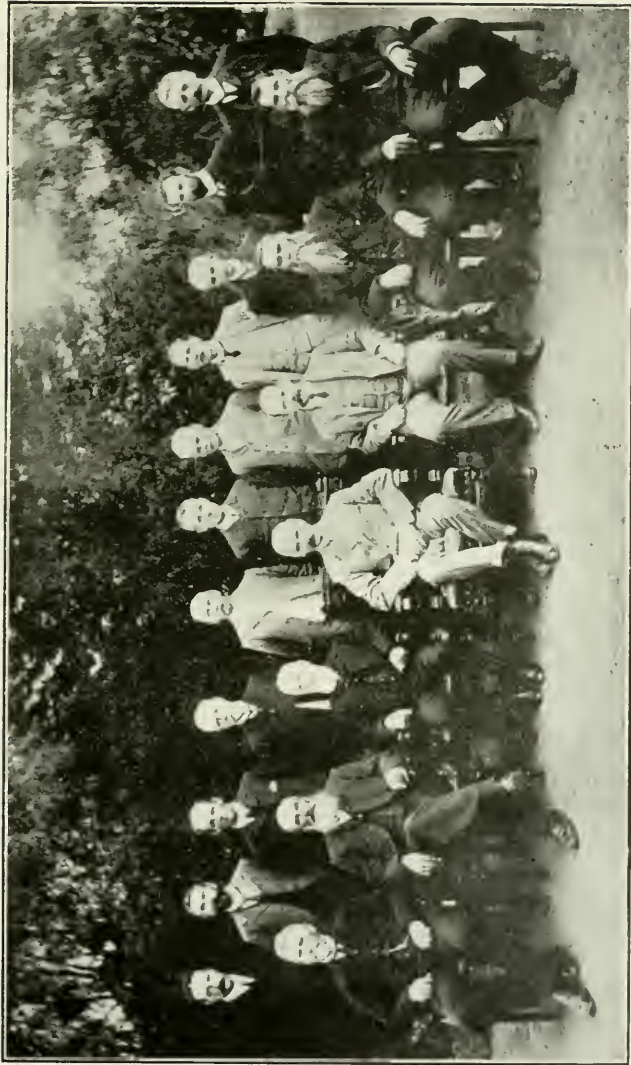
The railways of the two colonies had been vested in the High Commissioner under the name of the Central South African Railways, and were for some time under the management of Sir Percy Girouard, as Commissioner of Railways. The Council found that, while this officer was, no doubt, an efficient director of military railways, it would be more in the general public and economic interest to supersede him and introduce more business-like methods of management. The serious effects of a severe drought made the need for economy more keenly felt.

1st Legislative Council, Orange River Colony.



FRONT ROW : R. Macfarlane, H. Wilson, Lt.-Govr. Sir H. Goold Adams, J. G. Fraser, J. M. Wessels,
BACK ROW : J. F. J. van Rensburg, J. H. Meiring, B. Adams, B. Jackson (Clerk), H. F. Blaine
A. Browne.

Enlarged Legislative Council.



FRONT ROW: J. F. van Rensburg, B. I. Wessels, J. G. Fraser, Lt.-Governor Sir H. Goold Adams, H. Wilson, J. H. Olivier, J. M. Wessels.

BACK ROW: B. Jackson (Clerk), D. Palek, Brinsley-White, Burns Thomson, J. H. Meirings, W. Palmer, W. Stockdale, H. F. Blaine, A. Browne H. Whitworth, Burnet Adams.

The whole condition and administration of the South African Constabulary, too, seemed to call for examination. Sir Hamilton Goold Adams, Sir George Farrar, Mr. Goldby and myself were appointed a select committee to do this work. We visited every depot and our recommendations were to the effect that material reductions and economies could be beneficially introduced and the expenditure was curtailed accordingly.

I pass now to the work of the Legislative Council. That Council was, at first, composed of officials only, but was later enlarged, and in January, 1903, the following new members of the Council were sworn, namely, J. H. Meiring, Collector of Customs, Burnett Adams, Surveyor-General, with R. Macfarlane, J. F. v. Rensburg, J. M. Wessels, and J. G. Fraser, representing Harrismith, Winburg, Smithfield and Bloemfontein respectively. In the following year Mr. Burns-Thomson took the place of my old friend Robert Macfarlane, while four official members, (Directors of Education and Agriculture, the Postmaster-General, and Auditor-General) and four unofficial members, J. H. Olivier, for Rouxville, H. W. Stockdale, for Ladybrand, B. J. S. Wessels, for Kroonstad, and W. S. Whitworth, for Fauresmith, were added, bringing up the total number of members to twenty.

At the first meeting in 1903, His Excellency the Honourable Sir Hamilton Goold Adams

presided, and gave the new members a hearty welcome. His opening speech may be read with great interest, containing, as it does, not only proof of the great advance which had been made with the resettlement of the country, but the first programme for railway construction, agriculture, education and general development. It would extend the contents of this narrative too much were I to particularise all the various matters in the discussion of which I was called upon to take a considerable part, for, to quote from the records of the Council, I was "leader of the unofficial side of the House," but it may be of interest to summarise the work that was actually achieved. My own hope in consenting to serve on the Council was that my knowledge and experience of our country and people might help to secure as little breach of continuity as possible in the work of reconstruction. I think it would be profitable to many of my fellow-burghers of the old Free State to acquaint themselves with the work of the Legislative Council and the unofficial members thereof in their interests.

The reconstruction of the law courts of the country was begun and carried out with all possible despatch. The first appointment was that of Mr. Justice Maasdorp (who received the honour of knighthood from the King in 1904), and a puisne judge, in the person of Mr. Justice Fawkes. Mr. H. F. Blaine was appointed Attorney-General. In

1903 the High Court was equipped with a second puisne judge, Mr. Justice Ward, and created a Court of Appeal for the Orange River Colony. The code of laws existing at the time of the surrender had been translated by Mr. Advocate C. L. Botha, and repromulgated as the law of the land. Although later considerably amended or replaced by other enactments, it continued in force.

The mention of the reorganisation of the law courts brings to my mind a certain striking incident. After peace was declared and all hindrance to travel, by reason of martial law, had been removed, I began to receive visits from men from all parts of the State, some, clients whose interests had been in my keeping during all that troublous time of hostilities, others, men whose wives and children had been in the camps and to whom I had been able to bring assistance of one kind or another, others, old friends who had been induced to approve of the war policy to whom its fatality had now come home with immeasurable tribulation in loss and destruction of property, or in the death of relatives. Most admitted their regret that my advice had not been followed, so that our country's independence might have been maintained and the war, with all its disastrous results, avoided. Nor was this, it seemed, the opinion of old supporters only, but as well of members of the Volksraad and Commandants, who had been, previous to the war, strong political opponents.

But the most striking incident of the kind was the following. Our law courts had been established and several members of the legal profession, among whom I was one, had applied to the High Court for readmission to practice. One day who should enter my office but Mr. Klynveld, who had always opposed me in the Volksraad. He stated that he wished me to apply for his admission as Advocate and Notary, but before giving the particulars required, he said, "My God, Fraser, tell me, how did Steyn ever come to join in the declaration of war against the British Government?" "How can you ask me such a question?" I replied, "you ought to know. You are the man who got my proposals shelved and, after adopting the preamble, got your Commission to bring before the Volksraad the resolutions on which Steyn had to act." "Yes," he said, "but the conditions were not fulfilled. He had still to do his utmost to obtain peace, and by the Constitution only the Volksraad could declare war." "Well," said I, "I have not the resolutions here, but you and the members of your Commission were extremely bellicose in your speeches, and the President was included in the Commission by its appointment. You must have led him to believe that he was at liberty to take hostile action, for when I remonstrated with him about taking offensive action, he said he was not going to discuss the matter with me, as we

differed totally in our views, and the Volksraad was with him. But," I added, "Klynveld, what does it help to discuss this matter now? The country is destroyed, its independence gone, and I have been doing my best to secure consideration for our people, reconstruction for our country, and repatriation of the prisoners-of-war." "Yes," he said, "you are right, and you were right. No discussion can avail now." I then prepared the paper for his application and obtained his admission.

But to return to the work of the Legislative Council, it is astonishing to gather from a reading of the Hansard of its proceedings, how rapidly things had advanced in the Orange Free State within twelve months of the declaration of peace. South Africa, it is true, is a country of remarkable recuperative powers, but these could never have had outlet but for the work of development which was taken in hand. The agricultural department was fully organised and equipped, in fact, everything humanly possible was done to promote the farming interests of the people, and doubtless it is, to some extent, the experience of the work of that department, as then organised, which accounts for the very prevalent opinion that the centralisation of agricultural affairs elsewhere has been a blessing by no means unmixed.

Some reference may be made at this point to the compensation of claims for damages for

which £2,000,000 had been made available over and above the £3,000,000 for repatriation, and a central judicial committee was appointed to deal with the scrutiny and payment of these claims. Such scrutiny was very necessary, for, to my own knowledge, claims in several cases were filed in a very unscrupulous manner. Shortly after peace was declared numbers of our people applied to me to file their claims, but, being then very busy with various important matters, I arranged that a certain Mr. Muller, who had been a clerk in the Auditor-General's office in the Free State, and was then disengaged, should give his whole time to making up these claims, at a very nominal charge, as most of the applicants were impoverished. He drew up, in all, about 700 claims, and continually had to demand a more strict statement of claims, for, in cases with which he was personally acquainted, compensation was sought for the loss of articles which had never been possessed.

In this connection I found that an idea had got abroad among some of the people that the money provided for repatriation and compensation was so much payment in consideration of the fact that their Generals had agreed to make peace at Vereeniging, and they wondered why it could not have been distributed immediately. It was difficult to make them understand that it was no more and no less than a magnanimous

undertaking to relieve their destitute condition on their return to their farms, and to enable them to begin afresh.

RAILWAYS :

Railway development was naturally a chief concern of the Council. It has already been shown that this matter fell largely under the control of the Inter-Colonial Council. The position of the Orange River Colony under the joint Council was for a time uncertain, and later, under Responsible Government, was subject to readjustment. At this date (1905), however, the position was made quite clear by the statement of the Colonial Treasurer to the effect that "the whole matter resolves itself into this, that this colony has a debt only in so far as it has to make good a share, a comparatively small share in comparison with what the Transvaal has to pay, of the total sum by which the railway receipts of the joint railways fail, in any one year, to meet the actual expenditure for the maintenance of the railways, the charges in connection with the guaranteed loan, the South African Constabulary, and other minor services, common to the two colonies."

As far as development in the Orange River Colony was concerned, I was specially gratified on obtaining acceptance of a resolution which I introduced in the Inter-Colonial Council,

authorising the Railway Committee to enter into an agreement, should any satisfactory offer be received for the construction of a line from Bloemfontein to Kimberley, a line which had been advocated for years. Later the construction of the line between Bethlehem and Kroonstad was undertaken by the Natal Government, while various sections of lateral communications were also completed. The Bloemfontein—Kimberley line was opened in 1907. Thus, step by step, and line by line, the whole network of railways laid down by the Volksraad in years gone by was being completed, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the railway policy initiated by President Brand, and persistently advocated by me in face of much opposition, gradually carried into effect, whereby nearly all parts of the Colony were brought into contact, more or less direct, with the coast.

Some mention should be made of the Customs and Railway Conference which met at Maritzburg on the 8th March, 1906, composed of representatives from all four British colonies and from Southern Rhodesia. At a similar Conference convened by His Excellency the High Commissioner for South Africa, Viscount Milner, in 1903, and held at Bloemfontein, certain important resolutions had been passed. The first of these was to the effect that a Customs Union with a common tariff should be established ; the

second, that in any such tariff provision should be made for preferential rates on the products and manufactures of the United Kingdom and of any British colony or possession which might offer reciprocal privileges ; the third, that, whereas a system of free trade between the Mother Country and the colonies was not, as yet, practicable, in the event of South Africa developing an export trade, the colonies should urge upon His Majesty's Government the expediency of granting in the United Kingdom preferential treatment to South African products either by exemption from or reduction of duties whensoever imposed. Now, in 1906, at the close of the Railway Conference, a convention for a Customs Union was entered into and signed by all the delegates, regulating the customs over all the territories concerned, which convention was ratified at a special session of the Legislative Council in May, and came into force throughout South Africa in the following month.

Such conferences, it will be seen, made more and more clear the community of interests as between all the various colonies and emphasised the need for some organic unity, the first step towards the attainment of which was taken in the famous minute of Lord Selborne, who had been appointed High Commissioner for South Africa in 1905.

EDUCATION :

One of the principal matters which called for the serious attention and care of the Legislative Council of the colony was, of course, education, and, in view of what came to pass later, it is of importance to make clear what was actually done by that body.

During the course of hostilities schools had been established in the towns and various concentration camps, and everything possible had been done, with much success, to promote the education of the younger generation. These Government Schools had been under the supervision of Mr. E. B. Sargent, but in 1903, about eight months after peace had been declared, he had been appointed educational adviser to the High Commissioner, and new legislation was necessary. Accordingly, in May, 1903, a draft Public Education Ordinance was introduced, and passed in the following month. Therein provision was made for instruction in the Dutch language, though the objection was then raised that it was not sufficient. This was the main grievance which was represented as oppression, to rouse a spurious patriotism and keep the spirit of hostility alive. The people, on the whole, had been settling down and their acquiescence in the new conditions was being rapidly secured, very largely as the result of the tactful, kindly intercourse with the people of His

Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Hamilton Goold Adams, and by the personal interest he displayed in all matters affecting their welfare.

There was one section, however, whose main object was very different, namely; to inculcate and foster racial hatred by representing to the people that their language was being trodden underfoot, that the aim of the Government was to make them all English, and that it was now necessary to establish separate schools for the children that they might be instructed in their own language, and in their own religion, neither of which, it must be remembered, had been in any way interfered with, but on the contrary, they had been not only permitted but also subsidised. And lest there should be any lingering sense of the generosity of the British Government, it was further represented that the people had not been properly compensated for their losses. In short, every kind of grievance that could be brought to bear was exaggerated and laid to the charge of the Government, and a party was formed of all extremists and discontented persons, which was called "De Unie," with a head centre including, among others, Gen. Hertzog, Messrs. Fischer, I. W. B. de Villiers and Brebner. With the assistance of the Moderator and ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church, they established what were termed the Christian National Schools. These continued until 1905. In July of that year, Mr. Hugh Gunn, the Director of

Education, in moving the second reading of a draft Public Education Ordinance, stated that the Moderator of the Dutch Church, the Reverend Marquard, whose untimely death he regretted, had realised that the system of schools which had been established had not answered, and had approached the Government with a proposal that a conference of representative men should be held, with a view to removing what he called "the slight difference that existed."

The conference, over which His Excellency Sir Hamilton Goold Adams, Lieutenant-Governor, presided, was composed of six representatives for the Government, of which I had the honour to be one, and six representatives for the other side, namely, the Reverend Marquard (since deceased) and the Reverends Van der Lingen and Joubert for the Dutch Reformed Church, and Messrs. Hertzog, De Wet and Wessels for "De Unie," and resulted in an agreement on all points discussed. The most important points at issue were increased powers for School Committees, and the granting of an elected element in their composition. Up to that time, practically all the cost of education had been borne by the central exchequer, and the Government stipulated that increased local control could be granted only if accompanied by local financial responsibility. This principle was accepted by the Conference, and it was decided to grant Committees additional

powers, and to allow the bare majority of members to be elected. This Ordinance embodies the principles agreed to at the Conference. The teaching of Dutch was fully agreed upon, as well as the question of religious instruction, and the five clauses added to the Ordinance were agreed to by all the representatives present. The cardinal result of the Conference, however, was the amalgamation of the Christian National Schools with the Government Schools throughout the Orange River Colony, to secure which and to remove all points of difference existing, and to ensure co-operation in the interests of education in the future, the Government met the representatives with the utmost good feeling.

All these various matters, together with the demands of my own business, were a very considerable strain upon one's strength of mind and body. Fortunately, in 1903, at a time when I was feeling overworked and in need of rest, I was able to get leave of absence from the Council, and sailed for Europe, just forty years after the date upon which I had first gone to the Free State, during which time I had been very actively engaged both in private work and in public service. It was my first holiday of any length, and not only proved of intense interest and pleasure, but also restored me to full strength and vigour.

I still had relatives in London, Edinburgh and

Inverness, and fellow-students were also resident in London. I cannot find words adequately to express the kindness of the welcome I had both in the South and in the North. The Colonial Institute, with patriotic Scottish associations in London, and the Aberdeen University Club, showed me great hospitality. It did my heart good, too, to know once more the unaffected love of my cousins who alone now represented the brothers and sisters of my father,—for these had all passed over,—and the clannish interest of many more distant Fraser relatives.

After visiting the scenes of my youth in Scotland, I visited Denmark, Sweden, Russia and Germany, and after seeing something of France, Switzerland and Italy, hoped to go on to Greece and the Near East, but while in Rome I received a cable which necessitated my return to London to arrange for the treatment of my son. By the help of my old college chum, Dr. John Ford Anderson, I was able to make the best possible arrangements and a cure was happily effected. As winter had set in, making further travel on the Continent uncongenial, we returned home. I found fresh vigour for work, and fresh interest from experience gained of the conditions in the various countries I had seen.

On my return I was much gratified by a banquet given in my honour by the Bloemfontein Caledonian Society, with which I had been

closely connected since its inception, and in reply to the toast of my health I stated that I owed a double allegiance, namely, one to my father's country and people, for, had not my father come to give his life for the religious interests of the people of this country, while I myself had grown up in Scotland from early boyhood to manhood, and in that country I had learned to appreciate the principles of just and equitable government ; and the other, as a South African, to the land of my birth. That land I had tried to serve to the utmost of my ability for forty years, and when disaster was brought upon it, did my best, though unsuccessfully, to avert it. As things were, there was only one thing for a reasonable man to do, and that was to accept the position and co-operate with the Government for the rebuilding of the country's prosperity, and to build with an eye to the day when we should form part of that South African Union which should place our country firm and great against the peoples of the world.

An incident I must not forget to mention occurred in October, 1905, when the Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony, Sir Hamilton Gould Adams, approached me with the request that I would accept the honour of knighthood from His Majesty the King, in recognition of my services to the Government. I deemed this mark of distinction an honour,

and signified my acceptance thereof. In the Honours List of November, 1905, I was decreed Knight Bachelor, and a few months later His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught visited the Orange River Colony and conferred the Patent of Knighthood on me personally at Government House, in Bloemfontein.

EPISODE IX.

The Grant of Responsible Government.

WE come now to deal with the period which followed the grant of Responsible Government.

For some considerable time an agitation had been carried on, both within and without South Africa, to secure Responsible Government for the Orange River Colony, and had received a great stimulus from the fact that the Transvaal Colony had been promised a new constitution on Responsible Government lines. Now, knowing our people as I did, and having witnessed the rapidity with which their attitude changed from one of complete aversion, in the first stages, for closer union with the Transvaal, to one of wholesale surrender to it, as the result of agitation and intrigue, aware, too, of the measure of success which was attending the efforts of the Unie party to inflame and keep alive the spirit of hostility, I was firmly convinced that the grant of Responsible Government, especially if based on manhood suffrage, would only tend to quicken racial hatred, for elections would inevitably bring party strife and bitterness.

The old constitution of the Free State, it is true, was based on manhood, or rather, burgher suffrage, and whatever defects it may have had, it suited the political ideals of the Boer population, it secured continuity of executive policy and did, as a matter of fact, achieve the peaceful development of the country, so long as racial difference was dormant, as for many years it was, and so long as personal ambition did not arise to throw it out of balance. This, if it secure sufficient support, can unbalance any constitution in the world; it did, in the end, bring about the destruction of ours.

The first essential, as things were, for the upbringing of the country was peaceful co-operation, and realising that Responsible Government must make that a matter of extreme difficulty, considering, too, how well the Crown Colony Government was serving the country's needs, and that it was gradually, in spite of agitation, winning the support and confidence of our Boer population, I could not resist the conclusion that the premature introduction of the new system would be a grave political mistake. I found, on the occasion of addressing my old constituents in March, 1906, that they fully agreed with this view, and realised the dangers involved.

It seemed to me that, in the existing circumstances, it would be very difficult, in fact, impossible, to find a sufficient number of men of

independent judgment to form both a ministry and an adequate opposition, for without the latter Responsible Government could only be a farce. The opportunity for the self-seeking professional politician was clear enough. But with a country such as ours to be developed on progressive lines, it was essential that there should be the closest co-operation with the Imperial Government and the other Governments of South Africa. As things were, I felt that the old constitution of the Free State, somewhat modified to suit existing needs, with the Lieutenant-Governor occupying the position, as it were, of the State President, and with the power of veto reserved to the Crown, would afford such rights of representation and control as were then reasonable and necessary. Responsible Government meant setting race against race, and proof of the dangers involved in that I could find in the scurrilous hostility of the local organ which spread abroad the views of the leaders of the Unie party. Racial hatred had already brought disaster to our country. The appeal of the moment, then, was to all moderate men of both races to co-operate if we were to have a free Government, a pure Government, and a good Government.

Some time previously I had resolved to accompany my family to Europe, as all required change after the strenuous times through which we had passed, and I determined, as soon as circum-

stances permitted, to place my views before the Government in London. We went by the East Coast route, visiting the various ports on the way, and part of the hinterland of one of the German colonies. Some weeks we spent in Egypt and the Holy Land, returning to Port Said, from Jaffa, to continue our voyage to Brindisi. From there we went on to Naples, and so to Rome for a considerable stay. There I left my family and went on to London.

On the evening before I left Rome, or rather in the night, a gentleman called for me at the pension where I was staying, and brought me a message from His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador requesting me to call and see him at once. On my arrival at the Embassy, His Excellency, the British Ambassador, stated that he had learned that I was leaving for London the next morning, and asked me to act as King's Messenger on the journey, and to take charge of an important despatch to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Downing Street, regarding which he desired the utmost secrecy and haste to be observed. For the moment it struck me as an undesirable responsibility to undertake, but I agreed, and he handed me a pass as King's Messenger, and the despatch, and I thought that as I would probably reach London on the second evening my responsibility would soon be over. On reaching Basle, in Switzerland, I found that we had missed our

connection through delay caused by a landslide, and I began to feel anxious as to the results of the stoppage. However, I interviewed the station-master, only to find that he was very weak in English, while I was equally weak in French. How we would have fared in arriving at an understanding of my difficulties I do not know, had not an English lady kindly come to my rescue, and acted as interpreter for us. She happened to be in the same predicament as I was, and was eager to get to London. The official was very obliging, and eventually discovered a means whereby we could just catch the fast cross-Channel boat.

Our mutual introductions discovered the kind lady to be a sister of Sir Arthur Lawley, Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, whom I had frequently met at the Inter-Colonial Council. We achieved our purpose without any further difficulty, and arrived in London late that night. I learned that there were always confidential officials left, throughout the night, at the Foreign Office in Downing Street, and I therefore went there, as soon as possible, and rid myself of the responsibility of the packet, which had been carefully buttoned under my waistcoat all the way. I explained the cause of my late arrival, and obtained my receipt for its safe delivery.

After acquainting myself with the formalities to be observed, I lost no time in asking for an interview with the Secretary of State for the

Colonies, who at that time was Lord Elgin. On my former visit to London in 1903 I had met the members of the Conservative Government, which had now been replaced by a Liberal Cabinet, and now called on the Honourable Sir Alfred Lyttelton, formerly Secretary for the Colonies, to find out what the reason was for this sudden change of policy in regard to the Orange River Colony, and whether there was any chance of getting the proposal reconsidered. I was informed that a great deal would depend on the report of Sir West Ridgeway's Commission which had been sent out in the Orange River Colony to take evidence regarding the sentiments of the inhabitants. He thought, however, that it was practically decided by the Government to grant Responsible Government. I found this to be the case when I had my interview with Lord Elgin, who received me very courteously and allowed me to state my views. I gave it as my decided opinion that the grant of Responsible Government was premature, and that it would be better to postpone the grant for a further period of five years, until the feelings aroused by the war, which were being cunningly exploited against the Government, had disappeared. There was good reason to believe that this would be the case, for the people were already greatly reconciled to the Crown Colony Government, and did not want the change. It ought to be perfectly

patent to him (Lord Elgin) that, with manhood suffrage and Party Government, the Dutch element, so overwhelmingly preponderant, would for all time outvote the English section and deprive it of any real voice. Lord Elgin allowed that there was much ground for the opinions I held, and it was on that account that the Ridgeway Commission had been sent out for enquiry on the spot, but he was afraid that the grant was a foregone conclusion, as Responsible Government had been granted to the Transvaal, and unless very marked reason existed, could not well be refused to the Orange River Colony. I then asked Lord Elgin when the Ridgeway Commission was to be back, and learned that it was on the return journey. I asked whether he would give me an opportunity of still placing my evidence before it, to which he acceded, undertaking to make the appointment for me. On the 28th July, 1906, I was informed that the Commission had returned, and that Sir West Ridgeway would see me on the Monday following, at 11. a.m. Accordingly, I kept the appointment, explaining that Lord Elgin had stated that I should have the opportunity of placing my views before the Commission, but I was informed that the Commission had already finished, and sent in its report, and on my suggesting a supplementary addendum of my evidence, the difficulty was raised that the Commission had separated, and

that it was no longer possible. I then asked Sir West Ridgeway whether he did not find a very large body of opinion among the people against the change of the constitution to Responsible Government, and he said so large a body of opinion, even amongst the prominent Boers, that the report had suggested, as an alternative, as I understood it, the expedient of a plebiscite. I felt that no more could be done, unless the leader of the opposition could oppose the grant in the House of Commons, but he informed me later that the report had not been tabled, and that he had only had a confidential perusal of the contents, which, of course, he could not use. Of an interview I had with Mr. Winston Churchill, who at that time was a member of the Cabinet, I shall say no more than that it was time wasted.

I then returned to Rome, and with my family finished my tour, reaching London in time to be present in the House of Commons when the Responsible Government Constitution for the Transvaal was dealt with. Shortly afterwards we returned to South Africa, and I resumed the usual routine of my life.

When the tenth session of the Legislative Council opened on 15th July, 1907, the President, now Governor of the Orange River Colony, announced that, since the previous adjournment, letters patent providing for the establishment

of Responsible Government had been signed by the King on the 5th day of June, 1907, and brought into force on the first day of July. Preparations were made and the necessary funds voted and on the 2nd August, a message was received from His Excellency the Governor, conveying the thanks of the Government for the work of the Council, and especially to the unofficial members for their assistance, and the Council rose.

When the Charter arrived and could be examined, I found that my fears were fully justified. The Colony was divided into thirty-nine constituencies, and the principle of manhood suffrage had been adopted, without any provision for a system of proportional representation which would, at any rate, have given the British minority a chance of securing a voice in the Government in proportion to their numbers and influence. The position which that section, therefore, had to face was that for all time they were placed under a Dutch cabinet, which they would never be able to replace, because the racial factor would be exploited, to its full extent, to secure a majority at the elections. The only course, therefore, for that section was to make as good an election contest as possible, and endeavour to secure what constituencies they could, so as to muster, at any rate, a reasonable opposition. Accordingly with some of my old constituents and supporters in the Volksraad, we

formed what we termed the "Constitutional Party," drew up our programme of principles and issued our manifesto, and, as the time was short, we started our canvassing. We secured correspondents who were in sympathy with our principles in all the constituencies, and visited every constituency in which there was a likelihood of sufficient support, even if there was no certainty of success, but, in any case, to show our strength all over the Colony, and so prove that we were a factor with a stake in the Colony, which could not be overlooked. We met with considerable support, founded eleven district associations, and contested seven constituencies, besides those in the capital. Bloemfontein had been divided into five seats. These were all captured by us, and with some seats in the country we had to act as opposition to the Government party, in all about eight out of thirty-nine representatives.

Surely this outcome of the Liberal Constitution forced upon the Colony must have shown the Cabinet in London that the representation of the position which I had made to Lord Elgin was absolutely correct, and that the British section of the people had been utterly deprived of the value of their vote, and left impotent to secure reasonable representation.

We were not long left in doubt as to the results. The House met on the 18th December, 1907. The Ministry was composed of five leaders of the Oran-

gia Unie, namely, Messrs. Fischer (Premier), Hertzog (Attorney-General and Minister of Education), Dr. Ramsbottom (Treasurer), General De Wet (Minister of Agriculture), and C. H. Wessels (Minister of Public Works). The Speaker of the House was Mr. C. G. Marais. The policy of the Government very soon showed its racial trend. As His Majesty's Ministers of a British colony they had to proceed with care and to show some desire to deal fairly, but from their actions it was easy to see that they would avail themselves of every opportunity to bring to bear the power regained.

Among the first measures in the adjourned session commencing in May, 1908, was an Act revising the whole educational system laid down by the Crown Colony Government, which had proved admirably adapted to the educational wants of the Orange River Colony, and was the outcome of a solemn agreement between the Government of the Orange River Colony and a delegation from the Dutch Reformed Church, representing the vast majority of the people of the country. As far as religious instruction was contained therein, it rested on the consensus of opinion of every religious denomination in the country, excepting one, which, before the concordat was arrived at, had sided with the Government, but had afterwards assumed a hostile attitude. Due provision also had been made for instruction in Dutch, although the medium of the instruction generally was English.

From the composition of the Government, and the use made of the language question throughout the agitation against the Crown Colony Government, I judged that the chief effort of the new Cabinet would be directed towards the wholesale alteration of the existing system, in order, by a change of medium, to give all possible prominence to the Dutch language, at the expense of English, and to introduce bilingual qualification which would afford the opportunity of getting rid of the existing teaching staff of most fully-qualified and competent men.

At the second reading, on 26th June, 1908, I moved that the bill be read that day six months, on the ground that the proposals were unnecessary, impracticable, wrong in financial principle, and contrary to the true interests of the country. The reply of the Minister, General Hertzog, made very clear his whole object. He took the opportunity to launch an entirely irrelevant and abusive attack upon Lord Milner, as being primarily responsible for the Three Years' War, which, as I hold, had been deliberately planned and precipitated by the ultimatum issued jointly by the Presidents of the late Republics. He, General Hertzog, remained true to himself when he declared the solemn Treaty of Vereeniging to be a "dead skeleton," ignoring the fact that from that treaty sprang new life for the Dutch people, for which they owe a lasting obligation to the very man whose

reputation the Minister attempted to decry. This was, it is true, only on a level with his attempt to repudiate the concordat on education between the Government and the Dutch Reformed Church, to which he himself was a party. The principle of the bill was affirmed by thirty votes to eight.

The bill went through all its stages, both in the Assembly and afterwards in the Legislative Council, and in my opinion has done more harm to the educational interests of the Orange River Colony than many years can overcome. It was hardly passed when its provisions, on being put into force, showed its impractical character, and roused among the parents, and even among the pupils of more advanced age, racial feelings which had become more or less dormant. Further, it soon became evident that, wherever it was possible, competent men were replaced by others who lacked not only the necessary qualifications, but also the training requisite to enable them to impart instruction and exercise discipline, the knowledge of Dutch taking precedence of all else. Not only in regard to education was this preference shown, but also in other departments, and I name specially the Police Force, which had been most efficiently organised by the previous Government. From this force, under pretext of eliminating the military element, numerous competent officers and men were removed, and their places filled up in many cases by men

absolutely ignorant of police service and regulations, and unable to express themselves properly in the English language. The first officer to be discharged was Major Capell, who was universally acknowledged to be an *expert* in his official duties.

Anticipating events a little, however, I should like to draw attention to certain incidents which appear to me very illuminating in connection with General Hertzog's administration as Minister of Education.

Two years later, in 1909, three of the most competent inspectors of education were dismissed in the most arbitrary manner, without any enquiry or opportunity of explanation. These officers had given eight years of devoted service to the work of education in the Orange River Colony, and had won the respect of the whole community they served, excepting, of course, such as desired nothing more than to gratify a mere illiberal obsession. A motion which I brought forward for an independent enquiry was lost by 28 votes to 8.

In the following year, certain differences culminated in the resignation of the Director of Education, Mr. Hugh Gunn. In the debate which arose upon the matter, I pointed out that the system initiated by the retiring Director had won the approval of the educational experts in the neighbouring colonies as admirably adapted to the needs of the country, and had had the most

prosperous results in actual operation during a period of three years. Its very excellence had evoked the hostility of the reactionaries. The provisions of the system introduced by the Minister appeared to be designed merely to destroy that good work. The result of the Government's policy during two-and-a-half years was nothing more than endless discussion and difficulty, departmental unrest, dismissals and diminished attendance, of which nothing had been known under the previous Administration. It had culminated, at last, in the resignation of the Director, who refused to lend himself to carrying out a policy which was subversive of the true principles of education.

Now when one recalls that all this action against the chief officers of the education department was being taken during the period in which a National Convention was considering a scheme for the creation of a Union of South Africa, when much talk was being made about brotherhood, equal rights for all, and the wiping out of the differences of the past, some opinion can be formed as to the reserve of mind and heart which accompanied all these high-flown declarations.

The whole matter of the dismissal of the inspectors was afterwards thrashed out before the High Court of the Orange River Colony in an action brought by Inspector William Fraser against General Hertzog, for redress and damages

on account of libellous allegations made against him by the latter in connection with the very matter of dismissal. Judgment was given against General Hertzog for £2,000, and costs, Mr. Fraser proving the falseness of the charges brought against him.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR UNION.

Concurrently, as I have said, with all this display of racial spite in the Orange River Colony, negotiations were being carried on with a view to achieving a union of the four colonies. Such had been the dream of many South African statesmen. It was the ideal, the spirit of which animated at all times the policy of one of her greatest leaders, President Brand.

Shortly before the session of 1907 a Customs Union Conference was held at Pretoria, composed of representatives of all the South African colonies, in order to arrive at a general Customs Union. It appeared, however, that, owing to diversity of interests and the nature of existing legislation, the delegates found very great difficulty in arranging an adjustment to which all could adhere. The only method of arriving at a satisfactory settlement seemed to be the establishment of a closer union between all the colonies concerned. The resolutions of the Conference were recommended to the consideration of the Governments concerned, that, on

approval thereof, they might appoint delegates in proportion to the number of inhabitants in each colony (for the Orange River Colony, five) to consider and report upon the possibility of arriving at a union of all the colonies, the most desirable form of union, and to prepare a draft constitution in terms of the said resolutions, such Convention to meet as soon as convenient after the close of the session then in being.

On 22nd June, 1907, the matter was brought before the House, and two days later approved. There was a unanimous expression of opinion as to the desirability of such a Union, in the hope that thereby differences long outstanding might be ended. For once there was no party vote. Just a year later the following delegates were appointed on behalf of the Orange River Colony : the Honourable M. T. Steyn, General C. R. de Wet, General J. B. M. Hertzog, Sir John Fraser, and the Prime Minister, Mr. A. Fischer, as mover. I was not permitted, however, in the ways of Providence, to take any part in the Convention. A complaint from which I had been suffering for some time suddenly assumed an acute form, and on the advice of my doctor I had to tender my resignation as a delegate, and the Honourable Alfred Brown was appointed in my stead. After having arranged my affairs I underwent an operation which, under God's blessing, was successful, but for three months I had to be

content to be at ease. Before this disability occurred I was able to take part in an important debate concerning the arrangement of Inter-Colonial Council matters between the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, as to the Railway Convention, regarding which I pointed out, I think, that our colony had been very much worsted in the terms agreed upon, and had had to undertake liability which was wrongly acquiesced in. But generally I had to rest satisfied to obtain a hand in the Union matter when the report of the Convention came to be dealt with in the session which opened on 30th March, 1909. On that day the Prime Minister moved that the draft South Africa Act agreed to by the South African Convention on 3rd February, 1909, be approved, reserving for deliberation whether any, and if so, what amendments were deemed desirable to be recommended to the consideration of the Convention at its next session. The Prime Minister dilated on the good spirit which animated all the delegates, mentioning in proof thereof that the old name of Orange Free State was to be restored. On the following day I had the opportunity of seconding the motion, and of expressing my opinion generally on the proposals.

I was satisfied that the Constitution provided for Unification, and not Federation; further that it was bicameral, a provision which I

thought requisite, where so many colonies, with their various interests, were being united, that there might be reasonable opportunity of review of legislation proposed. The property qualification for a Senator I thought superfluous. What struck me, however, was that there was no provision for a Capital. There was a seat for the Legislature, and a seat for the Administration, but no Capital. The resolutions regarding this matter display the want of that unity of spirit of patriotism, which characterised the rest of the Act. Otherwise some central point would have been selected, which would have formed the one Capital for the Government, and every department of it, upon which the whole people could have looked as the Capital of the Union of South Africa.

With regard to the question of Native Franchise I deprecated the warmth with which the Mover had discussed it, thinking it prudent not to ignore the rights of those who qualified themselves to obtain it, and that it was wise to leave the matter to the Central Parliament.

On the whole I approved it heartily, and the chief ground upon which it appealed to me was that it put an end, by the provision of proportional representation, to the injustice which had been inflicted on the one section of the Orange River Colony population, and gave it a better chance of making its voice heard in conjunction with the similar sections in the other colonies.

The first special point which seemed to me to require proper definition was the expression "*European descent.*" It appeared, however, that the Convention had difficulty in arriving at a specific definition, and perhaps it was wise to leave it to the Courts, when one reflects upon the extent to which the population of South Africa had already been affected by miscegenation.

Another matter which I moved for reconsideration was the fact that no provision had been made for qualification of members of the Provincial Councils, which I felt was absolutely necessary. I had no predilection for the existence of these Councils at all, which I held, and hold, to be an excrescence upon our constitution, and which appeared to me to be a sop to the Natal Colonists, who were Federationists in principle. I considered it was a fatal mistake to create a local representative body in each colony, outside of the South African Union Parliament, and to entrust it with legislative powers on important matters, as well as with taxing powers. I looked upon their introduction into the Constitution as a fatal mistake, as a Divisional Council with somewhat extended functions would have sufficed. As things have turned out, these bodies regard themselves as having, and arrogate to themselves, a standing and a power that are properly parliamentary, and serve only to keep local differences alive and so thwart the whole object of Union.

With regard to the provision whereby education was made subject to provincial control for five years, and thereafter until Parliament shall otherwise provide, I moved its deletion, as I thought it desirable that the effects of the Union should at once descend upon the children of South Africa, as well as on the adults, a result which would not be secured if different systems of education prevailed. It was more in the interests of the children to be trained under one uniform system of education from the Cape to the Zambesi, and that could only be done by transferring the whole question to the Central Parliament. It was, however, explained that one colony desired this provision, and it was open to the Central Parliament to assume this right, and I withdrew my motion.

On the 2nd April, 1909, approval of the South Africa Act, with certain recommendations, was voted, and the House adjourned. In June of the same year the authority of the delegates proceeding to England as members of the general delegation of the National Convention, was determined, and later, on the 12th October, the Prime Minister was in a position to make a statement detailing the discussions and alterations which had been found desirable in consultation with the Imperial authorities, and reporting the confirmation of the South Africa Act, whereby the Union of South Africa was established.

The manner in which the report of the Convention had been dealt with and the spirit of compromise which reigned throughout, I took to be a good omen that the people of South Africa had realised that the time was ripe to put aside all feeling and minor differences, and laying hand in hand, to go forward on the path of peace, progress and prosperity. It meant the consolidation of the various, apparently, divergent interests, and the assimilation of all the various laws governing life and conditions in the four colonies, whereby there was good hope that the whole people might be so animated by the sense and spirit of unity as to be proud to know themselves citizens of a great United South Africa, citizens of no mean country.

A joint session of the two Houses of the Legislature of the Orange River Colony was held for the purpose of electing eight Senators to represent the Orange Free State Province in the Parliament of the Union. Under the Act each of the four Provinces could elect eight representatives to the Senate, a Government nomination of eight members bringing the total up to forty. I had the honour to be elected as one of the Orange Free State representatives.

DEPARTURE OF SIR HAMILTON JOHN GOOLD
ADAMS, GOVERNOR OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE.

On the 23rd March, 1910, the Prime Minister intimated to the Assembly that His Excellency



Sir Hamilton Goold Adams, K.C.M.G., Governor, Orange
River Colony.

the Governor was to take his departure on the 31st March, and had asked him to state that he would like to come on the following Tuesday afternoon to say good-bye to honourable members at a quarter past four o'clock. Accordingly, on the 29th March, the Prime Minister moved the adjournment till 4.45 p.m., and so it was during the tea interval that our good-byes had to be said. I thought that it might have been so arranged that the whole afternoon session might have been devoted to the farewells to our esteemed Governor, Sir Hamilton John Goold Adams, who had spent about nine years of his life, with conspicuous success, in the repatriation of the people, the rebuilding of our country, and its marvellous development under his fostering guidance, so that due official recognition might have been expressed by the Legislature, and the grateful appreciation of his services might have been tendered to him with some handsome token of the country's gratitude. This was, however, not done. Personally, I sincerely regretted the omission, because the relations which existed between His Excellency and myself were of the most cordial and confidential character, and the very highest esteem was ever felt by me towards him.

In token of his good feeling to me, I got the following letter from him, accompanied by his photograph.

Governor's Office,
Bloemfontein.

11th February, 1910.

Dear Sir John Fraser,

In the hope that you will accept it from me, before I finally leave the Colony, I herewith send you a copy of my photograph, trusting that it may serve as a memento of myself, as well as a reminder of the days when we sat together as members of the old nominated Legislative Council of the Orange River Colony.

The assistance you rendered as a member of that Council, at a time when so few of the old inhabitants had the courage to lend their aid to the Administration in the settlement of this country, will always be gratefully remembered by me.

Very sincerely yours,

HAMILTON GOOLD ADAMS.

This letter and the photographic memento have become doubly valued and sacred in my estimation since my meeting Sir Hamilton Goold Adams again at Sea Point, in 1920, in the tragic circumstances of the severe illness which laid him low, and culminated in his death. He had just finished the term of his Governorship in Queensland, Australia, and broke his voyage to Britain for a stay of some months in South Africa in order to revisit the scenes of his former Administration in British Bechuanaland, and his



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE,

BLOEMFONTEIN

// February 1910.

Dear Sir John Finlay

In the hope that you will accept it from me before I finally leave the Colony I herewith send you a copy of my photograph trusting that it may serve as a memento of myself as well as a reminder of the days when we sat together as members of the old nominated Legislative Council of the Orange River Colony.

The assistance you rendered as a member of that Council at a time when so few of the old inhabitants had the courage to lend their aid to the Administration in the settlement of this country will always be gratefully remembered by me.

Very sincerely yours

Hamilton J. M. Williams

Governorship in the Orange Free State. While on the voyage from Durban to the Cape he contracted influenza and double pneumonia, which ended fatally. I was permitted to visit him in the Nursing Home at Sea Point, and I shall never forget the warmth of his greeting. But his days were numbered, and there remains only the melancholy satisfaction that I was able to be present to pay him the last honours and help to lay his remains in the soil of the land he had learnt to love and had served so well.

Following upon my election as a Senator, a further honour which I received in the course of this year of 1910 was specially gratifying to me. On the 31st March, at the first graduation ceremony under the Principalship of Sir George Adams Smith, the degree of Doctor of Laws of the University of Aberdeen was conferred upon me in absentia, at the instance of Professor Irvine, Dean of the Faculty. Need I say how deeply I was moved by this token of appreciation of such work as I had been enabled to do for the good of my country. The motto of that ancient university had many a time been a source of encouragement to me,—“*They say. What say they? Let them say.*” And so the verdict of my Alma Mater, implied in the grant of this distinction, was very precious to me.

EPISODE X.

Union Parliament—The Senate.

THE first Parliament of the Union of South Africa met at Cape Town on October 31st, 1910, and was formally opened by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn. A number of loyal addresses were passed, the congratulatory telegrams from the Imperial Government and the Dominions of Australia and New Zealand were replied to, and the parliament of the Union settled down to work, with the Right Honourable General Louis Botha, leader of the South African Party, at the head of the Government.

Before the elections for the Union Parliament were held, the suggestion had been made by Dr. Jameson, then Premier of the Cape Colony, that, with the object of avoiding racial and provincial differences, a "best man" Government should be formed. This suggestion, however, was not acted upon and accordingly party organisation came into being. The Unionist Party was formed to represent the views of those who felt the need of a boldly progressive policy, and to take up, as was anticipated, the

role of official opposition, under the leadership of Dr. Jameson. The South African Party secured a substantial majority at the polls, and also held a majority in the Senate, though in that House division on party lines was not by any means the rule. Mr. F. W. Reitz had been elected President of the Senate, with Mr. Clough as Clerk of the House.

The question might present itself why, with my long experience of public service and knowledge of my country and people, I did not seek election to the Union Assembly, and in explanation it serves to state that I was within a few months of my seventieth year, not quite as strong yet after my hospital experience as I wished to be, and to become quite efficient as a member of the Assembly I would have to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the past parliamentary history and development of the Cape and Natal Colonies in particular, and generally with the past legislation of the other parts of the Union,—a task of considerable magnitude to undertake at my age. Moreover, in the opposition in the Orange Free State Parliament were two competent young members, Messrs. Botha and Barlow, whom I wished to see as members for Bloemfontein North and South respectively, both born and bred in the Province, and promising representatives in the former Assembly, and I felt it only right to give

them the chance of securing both seats. I arranged with my supporters to secure the election of Colonel Byron to the Senate, and urged them to contest the two Bloemfontein seats, but when it came to their decision as to who should contest the City, or South, and who the larger country constituency, both desired to contest the City. In the end Mr. Botha obtained election to the City seat, Mr. Steyl, of the South African Party, securing the northern country constituency.

My experience of the Senate soon showed me that that body was not likely to be given what seemed to me, at least, its due and proper place, its full share of responsibility in the affairs of the country. In the first place, we were constantly subjected to long periods of adjournment, there being no work for the Senate to do. This happened so frequently that members generally remonstrated, feeling that there was no reason why draft laws on non-contentious subjects should not be introduced in the Senate, and dealt with, to be sent forward later for consideration by the Assembly. It was, after all, simply a matter of forethought and system, but unfortunately, throughout, time was simply wasted.

It was clear, too, from other points that reasonable consideration was not always given to the position of the Senate. There was one

incident in particular to which I found it necessary to draw attention. Statements were sometimes made in the Assembly by Ministers on matters of public importance, affecting the position of the Cabinet and the conduct of public affairs, without, however, repeating the same in the Senate. I was of opinion that, in maintenance of its privileges and dignity, the Senate was entitled to have such courtesy observed. This particular incident was the resignation of Mr. Hull, Minister of Finance, and I thought that the Senate was entitled to have the confidence of the Government in regard to it. The assurance was given that no discourtesy was intended, and the amend was afterwards made. But the most unsatisfactory feature in the position of the Senate has been, in my opinion, its powerlessness in the matter of the appropriation of public revenue. And I refer not so much to the fact of its not having the right to alter or amend financial proposals, but rather to the fact that while equally responsible with the House of Assembly for the financial condition of the country, it is denied even the opportunity of discussing the annual budget. Not once nor twice only has the Senate been called upon, in the last few hours of a session, when the proclamation of prorogation was already in the Prime Minister's hands, to authorise, almost without opportunity of protest, much less

debate, proposals involving the expenditure of millions. Whatever the explanation, whether the failure to arrange properly the Assembly work or a cynical calculation based upon the powerlessness of the Senate, the fact remains that the Senate has been denied the right of acting up to its joint-responsibility with the other House, not only in the matter of the expenditure under immediate discussion, but in regard to the general condition and prosperity of the country. For financial policy not only reflects, it also creates, conditions of prosperity or the opposite.

One of the main arguments used to support the cause of Union was that of the economy made possible thereby. In place of four administrations we were to have one which obviously pointed, we were told, to less cost and greater efficiency. It is interesting, with this contention in mind, to look at the figures of the annual budgets up to the point where war conditions introduced the incalculable element. In 1910 the amount budgetted for was £13,807,361, which, it is true, was not greatly in excess of the total expenditure of the four separate administrations. Time, moreover, had been too short for re-adjustment. Even so it seemed to me, as far as my experience of the old Free State carried me, financially wrong to budget, as was done that year, for a shortfall, in this case, of £1,456,000.

We had always cut according to the cloth, and the morality of budgetting for a shortfall was not justified by the fact that there was a Railways and Harbours surplus of £1,220,000 to make good the greater part of the deficit. It can never be defensible in a matter of business to count upon a windfall to put matters straight. However, as I have pointed out, the brief period of the Union's existence up to that point made criticism difficult. It is a different matter when we consider the figures for 1911-1912. In that case the estimated expenditure amounted to £16,890,281, an increase over the previous year of over £3,000,000, while the estimated revenue was £14,859,000. Once more a contribution from the Railways and Harbours surplus of over £2,000,000 was considered to be the happy expedient for mainly righting matters. I felt bound to take exception to the course pursued. Expenditure showed an increase of nearly 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. over pre-Union estimates, which was certainly not warranted by the general rate of development of the country. There appeared to be instances of reckless extravagance. The Minister's admission that the country was not in a satisfactory condition was not unexpected in view of the facts, but in this serious position the Senate was invited to acquiesce after the farce of a few hours' discussion. The estimates for 1913-14 showed a deficit of £289,000, and

as there was no windfall on this occasion from the railways, the expedient of a loan was resorted to. The figures for 1915-16 were: Expenditure £16,406,000, Revenue £13,704,000, a shortfall of £2,702,000, with a final deficit of £36,258.

My own criticism on the whole matter is two-fold: first, that the expedients adopted from the outset were financially unsound. There was no attempt to achieve that economy of our resources which was, as I have said, one of the most cogent arguments for Union; second, that to rush the proposals through the Senate at the latest possible moment was to do a wrong not only to that body but through it to the general interests of the country. That body, of which it could have been reasonably required, in the country's interest, that it should develop and maintain an independent and critical, yet helpful, attitude, was reduced, in this all-important matter of finance, to registering in mechanical haste the decrees of the party-majority in the House of Assembly.

As far as its financial prosperity is concerned South Africa has suffered serious set-backs as the result of the spirit of revolutionary lawlessness which has too often of late years manifested itself. The first occasion was towards the end of 1913, when industrial unrest affecting the railways and the goldfields necessitated the

calling out of a portion of the Citizen forces and the proclamation of Martial Law. A great part of the session of 1914 was taken up with the discussion of an Indemnity Bill to cover the action of the Government in suppressing the outbreak and in deporting several of the ring-leaders. I could not, however, owing to illness, continue attendance during this session and I was advised by my doctor to proceed to Vienna to obtain special treatment there.

With my family I joined the German boat "Princessin" at Cape Town in March, 1914, and took the long voyage up the East Coast which, if time allows, is infinitely more pleasing than the west coast route. The arrival at some fresh port every few days, with all the diversity of circumstance, condition, and degree of progress, lends a wealth of interest. Lourenco Marques, so changed from the primitive place I had known nearly half a century before, the colour and beauty of Zanzibar, the German efficiency so conspicuous at Dar-es-Salaam, Tanga and the interesting development of its hinterland, Mombasa with its fourteenth century fort, a reminder of Portuguese greatness and decline, the Arab dhows that come and are gone, like incidents of a world outlived, the passage across the Red Sea with its glimpses of Sinai,—all this variety of scenery, of population and historical association filled the voyage to Naples, which we reached in mid-April, with

expectancy and charm. After a few days at Naples, in which we took the opportunity of revisiting Pompeii and Herculaneum, Sorrento, and Castellamare, we went on to Marseilles, a place of extreme interest, and from there, by way of Cannes, to Mentone, with a visit to Monaco and its marine aquarium, through the indescribable beauty of the Austrian Alps to Vienna. There we received very great kindness from an Austrian gentleman, Herr Elbogen and his lady, who put us in the way of seeing all the beauty of that wonderful city in its pre-war splendour and prosperity.

From Vienna my wife and I were directed by medical advice to Carlsbad, remaining there, with great pleasure and benefit to our health, till the middle of June. Thereafter we joined our family at Dresden, hoping to go on to Berlin, Holland and Belgium. But the murder at Serajevo and the tension which followed upon it made further travelling on the Continent inadvisable, and we arrived in London at the beginning of July. During our stay there we were glad to be able to pay a visit to my wife's grand-aunt, Mrs. Waldek, who had just reached the great age of 103 years. We found the old lady in full possession of her mental faculties, and she was still able to recognise my wife, though she had not seen her for nearly fifty years. We were privileged to have seen her, for just seventeen days later she passed away.

The meeting with the party of South African farmers, then on a visit to Great Britain, gave me an opportunity of hearing from Mr. Nesor the principal results of the parliamentary session which I had been obliged to leave. The kindness of many other old friends, too, made our stay in London a very happy one. The imminent prospect of war, however, changed all our plans. We hastened to Scotland to visit old friends and relations in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness, and hoped still to go on to Beaulieu to revisit an old cousin who had been very kind to me in my boyhood. But the declaration of war put an end to all further visiting and, not without some difficulty, we got back to London, where the most noticeable feature of the war conditions at the moment was the rush of Americans on their way home.

I was fortunate, owing to the kindness of a City Councillor, in getting a ticket of admission to the Guildhall meeting addressed by Mr. Asquith, and other leading men, and with the help of Mr. Howard d'Egville, secretary to the Empire Parliamentary Association, who was most considerate and energetic on our behalf, I was able to hear several debates in the House of Commons, in which leading men of all sections took part.

It was, however, time to return to South Africa. We had secured berths on the "Llanstephan Castle," Captain Chope commanding, and on the

evening of the 3rd October, with all port-holes closed, and lights shrouded, we set sail from the Thames. The news we had on the way was scanty and mainly unsatisfactory, and we reached Cape Town on 23rd October, 1914, to hear of the accidental shooting of General de la Rey, the Maritz treason, and the outbreak of rebellion. We set out for Bloemfontein at once, arriving there just too late to see my son Norman, who was serving in the column raised and commanded by Colonel George Brand, which had moved off to Winburg. Just a fortnight later we had news that Norman had been wounded in the arm and fingers in the fight at Mushroom Valley, but that he was doing well.

Later, in the same month, I was sadly grieved by the death of a very competent and active member of my office staff, Mr. John Klerck, who had been treacherously shot as he was leaving the town of Ventersburg, while doing scouting work for the Government forces. His body was brought into Bloemfontein, and he was buried with full military honours, in the presence of a large concourse of his fellow-citizens.

It is not my purpose to detail the events of that Rebellion. The measures taken by the Government were entirely successful, and the death of General Beyers, and the capture of General de Wet brought the movement to an end. The strife was continued in another form, in the Houses of Parlia-

ment, in the discussion which raged around the Indemnity Bill. In the Senate the second reading was moved by the Minister of Justice, who gave a very clear account of the whole matter, and a very acrimonious debate followed. It is amazing to think that members of the Senate should have dared to use every possible argument to justify or palliate the rebellion against the Government of which they, as Senators, formed a part, allowing themselves to be wholly carried away by political animus, instead of condemning to the utmost the criminal attempt to overturn the Government elected by the rebels themselves, which had, without fear or favour, taken prompt measures to defeat their unjustifiable outbreak. It was amply clear from the discussion that the expulsion of General Hertzog from the Cabinet in the previous year, on account of his unconstitutional action, and the chagrin occasioned thereby, had roused animosity on the part of a certain section. Others were, or declared themselves, angered by the decision of the Government to undertake hostilities against the German enemy on our borders. But whatever the cause may have been it was seemingly a matter of indifference to the bitter Nationalists what poisonous argument they used, so long as it spread the poison further, and insinuations were even made that the death of General de la Rey was due not to an accident but to a conspiracy. Mere abuse hurts no one who has

learned to rate it at its true value, but when a country has an electorate, any of whom are ignorant, inexperienced, easily led, accepting as literal truth the opinions expressed by any person in whom they put faith, however irresponsible, then it is absolutely indefensible that any public man, not to mention one who assumes the leadership of a party, should be guilty of unconsidered utterance.

When I got a chance of expressing my opinion on the events which had necessitated the Bill I supported the action of the Government and the Prime Minister who, at the cost of his own personal comfort and the sacrifice of his health, left the ordinary business of his life and took the field against the enemies of South Africa and the Empire. What I wished chiefly to emphasise was the danger to the future of our country arising from the unscrupulous propaganda of leaders and the readiness of many of the people, helpless in their ignorance, as they were, to follow them blindly. The crime of rebellion was being very lightly regarded. Not only political leaders, but leaders of the Church as well failed to condemn, and almost went so far as to condone rebellion. The people were thereby encouraged to ignore constitutional measures of redress, and to rush to their rifles instead, and all this though they had themselves set up their Constitution and Government. It seemed that there must have been a very deep

reserve on the part of many who had accepted the Treaty of Vereeniging, and were now so anxious to minimise the crime of rebellion and shield the rebels from the punishment they deserved. I could not see why the Ministry had included the penal enactments in this Bill because the Common Law was sufficient to deal with the crime, and it could have been left to the discretion of the Judges, in whom there was every confidence. Exception had been taken to the death penalty, but where they had officers wearing the uniform of their country, who had sworn allegiance, intriguing with the enemy, it was necessary that an example should be made of them to let it be known once and for all that this crime was one on which the death penalty rested. It was to these officers, their care and their fidelity, that the safety of the country was entrusted, and I knew of no country in the world where such treason would not be punishable by death. These crimes should, however, be left to the Common Law and the Judges, who could exercise their discretion on the evidence before them as to the degree of criminality.

I took it that the Government specially desired that leniency should be exercised where the rank and file were concerned. I did not wish to be vindictive, but it would be useful to the future welfare of the country to let it be known that rebellion was a crime punishable by death. It

had been asserted that the people had a noble idea in going into rebellion, but I could not see how a noble idea could be reconciled with the rebellion. The rebels were British subjects, and had sworn allegiance to the Government. They had got British protection and all the benefits that the most enlightened Government in the world could give them. They took up arms against the Government representing them by their own choice. Was that a *noble* idea? They had voluntarily accepted the Constitution. Was it noble, at a time when the Government to which they owed so much and which protected their very existence in a life and death struggle, to go into rebellion, and strike at that Government? Could there be more despicable treason? I could understand the plea for clemency if anyone had advocated the extreme penalty of the law in every case, but there had been nothing of the kind, and the Bill had been emasculated to such an extent that numbers got off scot free without any punishment at all. The penalties in the Bill were of such a nature that I had strong doubts whether they were sufficient to deter and bring home to the minds of the people, forcibly and powerfully, that they had committed a heinous crime, deserving of severe punishment.

I gave the Indemnity Bill my support, while I doubted the leniency displayed. And to anyone considering the leniency with which large numbers

were treated, together with all that has happened since, it must be quite clear, I think, that leniency has failed to secure that wholesome respect for the law, which we look to to prevent such happenings.

As I write, another Indemnity Bill is before Parliament, the debate on which has extended over a period of weeks, thanks to the efforts of the Labour-Nationalist combination to minimise the terrible crimes and tragedies attending the revolutionary outbreak on the Rand, with a view to the relaxation of the penalties provided by law. The strike of miners, of whom about 70 per cent. appear to be Nationalists, the refractory element in our population, rapidly assumed a revolutionary character, under the influence of Bolshevik agitation, as is alleged by some, or at the instigation of members of the Nationalist party, as is alleged by others. Whatever the explanation, the facts are that this outbreak has been attended by even greater loss of life and destruction than the 1914 Rebellion. The question presents itself, when it is found that the same class of people continue to display the same lawless spirit towards authority, only with worse results, can it be said that the penalties imposed on the previous occasion have had any effectual deterrent influence? I felt, then, that leniency was, in many cases, misplaced and would merely encourage

malcontents to ignore constitutional means and have recourse to violence. And now that we have had a second instance of strike license, involving destruction and bloodshed, is it not high time that means be taken to prevent, once and for all, such disorder and interruption with all the loss it entails to individuals and to the prosperity of the community, not to mention the slur which is cast upon the reputation of our country, and the consequent set-back to the development of its resources? Evidently the Government has come to the conclusion that it is more prudent to submit the matter to the operation of the Common Law and the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts of the land.

SENATE REFORM.

During the debate on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill 1915-16, several members of the Senate reflected on the expenditure of the Provincial Councils and suggested the abolition of those bodies. This was a view which I could heartily support, as the existence of these bodies was, in my opinion, a mistake, an unnecessary encumbrance on our Constitution. Their authority was insufficiently circumscribed; they were arrogating to themselves the powers of local parliaments, exercising powers they were never intended to possess, and involving the Provinces in most extravagant and unwarrantable expenditure,

while all the work could be equally well done by divisional councils, with somewhat extended powers.

Moreover, the expedient of constituting the Provincial Council the electorate for the Senate in each Province is most unfortunate in its results generally, in that the character of the Senate is determined by the quality of the men the Provincial Council can attract and no one, I think, will contend that that quality is always as good as it might be, and in particular, in the Orange Free State, it deprives one section of the population of any representation whatsoever in the Senate.

When the first Senators had to be elected, this was done by both Houses of Parliament, voting together in a joint session by proportional representation, and in the distribution of parties then existing in both Houses, both sections of the people got by proportional voting a share of representation,—namely, two constitutionalists, and six Unie Party men in the Senate. But when the first ten years of the Senate elapsed, it was found that the Provincial Council personelle had been elected, consisting of twenty-three Nationalists and two South African Party men, and when they had to elect the new members of Senate for the Orange Free State there was no need to apply proportional voting because the one party was in so large a majority that it could

elect eight Nationalists to the Senate, and the whole South African Party of the Orange Free State Province got no representative in the Senate, except that the two Government nominees belong to that section. This election result, therefore, verified what I had long foreseen. I had brought forward a motion in the Senate for a Select Committee to consider and report upon the Constitution of the Senate, and when I moved this, the then Prime Minister, General Botha, expressed his appreciation of the action taken. The motion was carried and a Select Committee appointed. That Committee deliberated and brought out a Report accompanied by a draft alteration of those sections of the South Africa Act which comprised the Constitution of the Senate, and that Report was referred to the Government with the request that a draft Bill in terms thereof might be brought up after due publication for consideration of the Senate. Before this could be done the Prime Minister was called upon to attend an Imperial Conference in London, and the matter was left in abeyance.

The position of the Senate in matters of finance, too, went to show that the constitution of the Senate required material alteration in order that members might be in a position to fulfil their responsibilities effectually, and I took every opportunity which offered to point out the necessity for reform. It was the only House

in which the principle of equal representation for the four Provinces was fixed, and for that very reason the Senate was essentially the People's House, and the members of each Province should be elected by the voice of the whole people of such Province by proportional voting, so as to secure representation for every section, and to obtain the services of the best men in the Province. This would secure a thoroughly representative and efficient Upper House, which is not the case under the present system. As a preliminary measure a memorandum was prepared by the Clerk of the Senate, Mr. Clough, relative to the question of the Senate of South Africa after the expiration of the period of ten years, for which it was constituted in 1910, which was ordered by the Senate to be laid on the Table on the 23rd April, 1917, and to be printed. That document is most comprehensive and is divided into several chapters dealing with :—

- (a) The abolition of the Senate.
- (b) The new Senate as already provided in the Constitution.
- (c) The Constitution of Dominion Upper Chambers.
- (d) Composition of the New Senate.
- (e) Functions of the Senate.
- (f) Legislative powers of the Senate.
- (g) Monetary powers of the Senate.
- (h) The process of Suggestion.

- (i) Qualification for Senatorship.
- (j) Quorum of the Senate.
- (k) Miscellaneous provisions.

An Appendix contains a draft Bill for an amending Act of the relative provisions of the South Africa Act. Under each chapter voluminous evidence will be found of the valuable research instituted by the Clerk of the Senate, providing full information regarding Senatorial Chambers in all the parliamentary systems of the world, and proving very clearly that the Senate of the Union of South Africa, as constituted in the South Africa Act of 1909, would require to be materially altered in order to become an efficient Upper Chamber in the Parliament of South Africa. And so it was found by the Select Committee of nine members for which I moved, and which the Senate on the 26th March, 1918, appointed to consider and report upon the future constitution of the Senate, with recommendation of such modification of the South Africa Act as the Committee may deem desirable, with power to call for papers, reports, and take evidence, the said memorandum being also referred to the Select Committee on the 27th March, 1918. The Committee met on the 28th March (I was elected Chairman) and continued its labours up to the 15th April. I brought up the Report on the 22nd April, and discussions thereon took place. It comprised sundry amendments

to the South Africa Act, proposed by the Committee, but included a Majority and Minority Report, and so many divergences of opinion were found to exist on various proposed modifications that the Committee recommended transmission of the Report to the Government, with a request that a Bill dealing with the subject be introduced into Parliament during the ensuing Session, and that such Bill should, after publication, be introduced in the Senate. This recommendation was adopted by the Senate without expressing any opinion on the merits thereof, but, as I intimated before, owing to the absence of the Prime Minister in Europe, which was followed by his lamented death, nothing was done to give effect to that recommendation in the following Session. As it appeared to me to be absolutely necessary that action should be taken in the Session of 1919, at latest, as the duration of the Senate would lapse in 1920, I interviewed the Premier, now General Smuts, who left me under the impression that he agreed with my view as to the necessity of bringing the matter to an issue without delay. However, the Session of 1920 was allowed to pass without any move from the side of the Government except that, on account of pressure being brought in the House of Assembly, General Smuts undertook to submit the matter of the future constitution of the Senate to a Speaker's Conference in

October. Well, this convinced me at once that the Government was quite satisfied to let the unsatisfactory condition continue for another ten years, because whatever result might ensue from the labours of the Speaker's Conference it could not become law before the new Senate was elected for that term, and so there remained the injustice that one whole section, amounting to one-third of the population of the Province, of which I was one of the representatives, could secure no representation. On the 17th August, 1920, the Prime Minister attending in the Senate stated that the Speaker's Conference on the future constitution of the Senate would meet in Cape Town on the 11th October, 1920, that it would consist of the Speaker as Chairman, and twenty members of Parliament, from both Houses, and the members he named were from all parties, namely, five Unionists, five South African Party, six Nationalists, and four Labour members,—from the Senate seven members, and from the Assembly thirteen. Accordingly the Conference met in the Senators' Library, Houses of Parliament, Cape Town, on the 11th day of October, 1920, and was constituted under the Chairmanship of the Speaker of the House of Assembly, Mr. Krige. The Chairman opened the Conference, after intimation that two of the nominated Labour members could not attend but that two others had been nominated in their place.

He pointed out that the Constitution of Second Chambers is a question which has often in history claimed the attention of legislators in other lands. There have been few Constitutional questions in modern times which have caused more perplexity than the framing of a Constitution for the Second Chamber, which is at the same time satisfactory in its working, sound in the principles of construction and applicable to the local conditions. Both British and Foreign Constitutions display almost every conceivable example of a Second Chamber, but the secret of national success is for a country to devise a Second Chamber exactly suited to the conditions peculiar to it. There must needs be differences of opinion, especially when all political parties in Parliament are represented in this Conference, but where all members of the Conference are united in one principle, namely, honestly and sincerely to seek what is best for South Africa, without thought of the special interests of his own class or party, a good result must be achieved. The Chairman then specified the lines on which the attention of the Conference would be engaged, first as to whether further provision is necessary in respect of the future constitution of the Senate than that already existing in Sections 1 and 2 of Act 25 of the South Africa Act, and if so to decide upon the nature of the changes and what form the new Senate would have to take, and following upon

that all other matters incidental to the constitution of the Senate. The Conference would thus have a difficult and complex question to solve, but there were the constitutions and the experience of many Second Chambers to guide it. With the Chairman's approval the Clerk of the Senate, Mr. Clough, who was also Secretary of the Conference, had collected information which has been printed and placed at the disposal of the members to guide and assist in framing a Second Chamber Constitution suitable to the needs of South Africa.

After various Reports and papers had been tabled, rules of procedure adopted, and the information to the Press had been agreed upon, the Conference adjourned till the 12th October, 1920, on which date, pursuant to notice, Senator Whiteside moved :—

“That in the opinion of this Conference a Second Chamber is not necessary.”

Discussion ensued, and the question being put was negatived, Ayes 6, and Noes 15.

After notices had been given, the Conference adjourned till the 13th October, 1920. When it reopened on this date, I moved :—

“That in the opinion of this Conference the future Constitution of the Senate should not be that laid down in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Section 25 of the South Africa Act, but some amendment thereof, or alternative therefor.”

In speaking to the motion I stated that as member, since its inception, of the First Union Senate, of which the term of its existence was now approaching its close, and having closely watched its action and influence under the Constitution, I deemed it my duty to move in that Conference the motion now before it. No doubt the National Convention considered that the Constitution, as laid down by it in the South Africa Act, was calculated to meet and fulfil all the functions of a Second Chamber satisfactorily. In discussing the matter and endeavouring to show that a continuation of the provisions of Section 25 of the South Africa Act was no longer desirable or calculated to secure the best results for the Legislature of this country, I wished at once to say that I had no object or desire to reflect on the good motives of the members of the Convention or on the good faith of any Honourable Member who might differ from me, while I claimed full liberty to state my own views without reserve. I could not disguise the fear that no matter what might result from the Conference the matter had been allowed to be in abeyance so long that it must seem to be futile at that stage to bring adequate and effectual reform into the provisions for the Senate between the date of that moribund term and the new election. The expiring Senate could not be blamed for this, because through the previous three years the necessity of

the consideration of more efficient working of the Second Chamber had been continually brought to public notice without effect, and that Conference was only, at the eleventh hour, called upon to weigh and report upon that most important issue. I made bold to say it was a matter of the most important consequence to place that part of our Constitution on such a basis that it might be truly democratic, fully representative of all sections of the people, and firmly based on the directly expressed will of our people. In my opinion the existing Senate fulfilled neither of those conditions, and when I looked into the future, and weighed the various currents of opinion, thought, and trend of development which were already making themselves felt in our land, continually changing both in evolutionary and revolutionary character, while our Government was flattering itself that it had complete control of the gates of South Africa, I could foresee an awakening at no very distant day, when the present provisions of our Constitution might be taken advantage of to evolve a Senate with the virtual control of all legislation in undesirable hands. Times changed continually and people changed in them, and I was led to this conclusion because testing the provisions for the Senate as now applicable in practice, they would find that the provisions for election cannot avail in one Province to secure representation for all sections

of the population ; that the vast majority of voters in all Provinces had no direct vote in the election of Senators, owing to the system of indirect election by Provincial Councillors who are themselves only elected for small constituencies by nearly all of one section of the population, and these Provincial Councils only elect from among themselves members to the Senate, as was proved by twelve out of sixteen elections which had taken place for vacancies during the past ten years, and the provisions of proportional voting could not be applied there. Therefore, a full, direct, democratic expression of the popular will could only be secured by making the whole Province one Electorate, voting for its members by proportional representation, and this measure would allow of the election of the best men in the various walks of life, and representatives of all classes of occupation, farming, commercial, and professional, whose knowledge and experience might be brought to bear in the revision of legislative measures in a wider degree than was possible under existing circumstances ; it would also do away with the position that while a Provincial Councillor could at once be elected to the Senate, a member of the House of Assembly would have to resign before he became eligible.

After discussion, Sir Thomas Smartt moved as an amendment to my motion :—

“That in the opinion of this Conference the provisions laid down in the Act of Union for the Constitution of the Senate require revision.”

I then withdrew my motion, as the amendment afforded wider scope, and on further discussion it was adopted.

It was also agreed that the report of the Select Committee on the future Constitution of the Senate be taken as a basis for discussion and that the propositions therein contained be taken seriatim.

The necessity for revision of the Constitution of the Senate, as laid down in the Act of Union, and a basis of discussion having thus been voted, the Conference proceeded with its work, sitting daily up to the 22nd October, 1920, on which date its labours were brought to a close.

The proceedings of the Conference will show that the subject-matters referred to it received assiduous attention, exhaustive discussion, and earnest collaboration, and the result as contained in the Speaker's Report, as Chairman of the Conference, clearly manifests the conclusions arrived at to be wholly in favour of amendment of the Senatorial provisions of the South Africa Act, and additional provisions to secure a more effectual Upper House for the South African Parliament of the Union.

On the 1st November, 1920, the Speaker, Mr. C. J. Krige, drew up his Report on the Conference, and sent it to the Prime Minister, and it will be seen that the attitude I all along took up on the necessity of alteration of the relevant sections of the South Africa Act, and regarding the future constitution of the Senate, had for the most part also been held by the Conference, and I would now only emphasize its conclusion unanimously arrived at :—

“ That in the opinion of this Conference it is desirable that a reformed Senate be brought into existence as soon as possible.”

Seeing, however, that the existence of this Report has not even been mentioned by the Prime Minister during the last Session of Parliament, in either House, the Government either does not desire to see its recommendations carried into effect, or finds itself barred by the election of the present Senate on the existing provisions of the Union Act for the period of ten years, and I can only feel satisfied that I was enabled to point out in the Conference the absolute necessity for the change, so that the Upper House of Parliament might become what it ought to be, the best possible People's House to assist in and revise the Legislation of the Union, composed of the best men of the Union, directly representative of the will of the people, expressed both by the majority and minority through

proportional voting, and I freely commend the Report of the Conference to the interested notice of the Electorate of the Union.

Since writing the foregoing, I notice in the daily paper that on the 15th May, 1922, in the Senate, the Minister of Justice, replying for the Prime Minister to a question by Senator Reitz about the Report of the Speaker's Conference, stated: "The Government is not prepared to carry out the recommendations of the Conference. It considers the Senate as at present constituted admirably meets the requirements, and a reconstruction as recommended by the Conference is therefore unnecessary." Notwithstanding this assumption of wisdom, superior to the collective result of the deliberations of twenty members of both Houses of Parliament, expressed in the conclusion "that in the opinion of this Conference it is desirable that a reformed Senate be brought into existence as soon as possible," I hold to the conviction that the country will in the future demand the reform if the Union is to continue, and the Provincial Councils do not force Federation.

Conclusion.

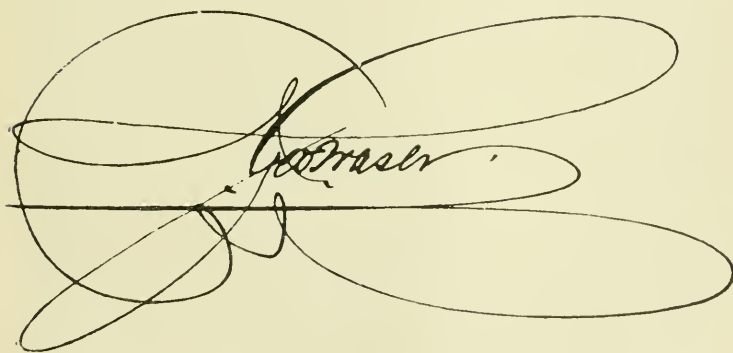
Now I am resolved to lay down my pen. There are still numbers of personal experiences which I know would interest you greatly, but I have confined myself in this narrative mainly to those in which I had to play a part which did not merely affect my person, but also my public career in the various capacities I had to undertake, to show you how wonderfully I have been guided, and how specially the good hand of our God has been kept over me. Originally intended by my parents for the ministry, when it came to the choice I preferred medicine, but it had not to be, for when nearing the finish circumstances prevented completion, and notwithstanding many efforts I had to face final disappointment as to the chosen profession, and I might have become hopeless. However, my mind was directed to other means of securing personal maintenance, and to other ways in which useful application of my education and talents could be made to the development of the interests of my adopted country. Even there, while devoting all my powers to its welfare, and with every endeavour to secure its true progress, within the lines of its solemn engagements, I had to see unwarranted ambition,

dishonest intrigue, and spurious sentiment, under the guise of patriotism, effect its total ruin, bringing its God-given prosperity to the dust, and my fellow-citizens, parted from home and family, sent broadcast over the world. But I was kept and enabled to play a prominent part in the reconstruction of my country, in the restoration of its people, in the conservation of their highest interests, individually, socially and politically, and moreover permitted to rejoice in the establishment of the Union of South Africa. But can we rejoice in the Union of South Africa when we see that although it was entered upon with great *éclat*, with universal assertion of renewed brotherhood, under renunciation of past divisions and with most hopeful expectations of lasting peace, progress and prosperity, new suspicion and distrust, self-aggrandisement and racial supremacy, yea, even disregard of solemn allegiance, have been allowed to recur, and great bitterness of spirit fostered, and carried into the performance of public duties in the highest assemblies of the people. I say yes,—we can still rejoice in the existence of the Union, for notwithstanding all untoward occurrences clouding the horizon of the future, there are increasing evidences of a proper South African national spirit arising, and a better understanding between, and mutual appreciation of, the chief sections of our people, who have

to form the united population of the Union of South Africa.

I have been granted health, physically and mentally, to undertake the narration of these episodes at my advanced age, and I close with the earnest desire that the experiences of my life may prove useful to all who may read them. To all who stood by me and encouraged me in my efforts I tender my heartfelt thanks.

The Author.



C. C. Fraser.

“Clach-na-Cuddin,”
Bloemfontein, O.F.S.,
South Africa,
15th June, 1922.

Sketch made for Philadelphia Exhibition.

Addendum No. 1.

The Orange Free State.

The Republic of the Orange Free State is situated on the north-eastern boundary of the Cape Colony, and is bordered as follows : On the west and north-west, by the territory claimed for the chief, Nicholas Waterboer, under the name of Griqualand West, and by Bechuanaland respectively ; on the north and north-east, by the Transvaal Republic ; on the east, by the colony of Natal ; and on the south by British Basutoland, the Native Reserve Lands, and the Cape Colonial divisions of Albert and Colesberg. Its boundary lines are as follows : Commencing from the "Mont aux Sources" in the Drakensberg range of mountains, along that range in a north-easterly direction to the source of the Vaal River, as taken by His Excellency Lieutenant-Governor Keate, in his capacity as arbitrator between the governments of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic, in February, 1870 ; thence along that river in its northerly, westerly and south-westerly direction to its junction with Riet River ; from this confluence in a south-easterly direction, along the Vetberg line to Ramah ; thence to the nearest point on the Orange River, and along that river in its south-easterly and easterly direction to the point of confluence of Cornet-spruit and the Orange River ; thence northward over Jammerberg to the Caledon River, and north-easterly along the centre of that river to its rise in the "Mont aux Sources" in the Drakensbergen.

The extent of territory situated between these lines is roughly taken to be about 70,000 square miles, but no accurate computation has hitherto been made, and the probability is that the actual extent will be found considerably greater.

The country is divided into the following districts :

	<i>Chief town and Capital.</i>	<i>Villages.</i>
Bloemfontein.	Bloemfontein.	Reddersburg. Brandfort. Bethany.

	<i>Chief town and Capital.</i>	<i>Villages.</i>
Fauresmith.	Fauresmith.	Edenburg.
Caledon River.	Smithfield.	
Winburg.	Winburg.	Ventersburg.
Harrismith.	Harrismith.	Frankfort.
Kroonstad.	Kroonstad.	Heilbron.
Boshof.	Boshof.	
Jacobsdal.	Jacobsdal.	
Philippolis.	Philippolis.	
Bethulie.	Bethulie.	
Bethlehem.	Bethlehem.	
Rouxville.	Rouxville.	Wepener.
Lady Brand.	Lady Brand.	Ficksburg.
Pniel.	Pniel—this district under protest.	

The country consists of extensive, undulating plains, which slope from the great Watershed northward and westward respectively to the Vaal and Orange Rivers, and is intersected at varying intervals by the Wilge River, Rhenoster River, Valsch River, Vet River, and Riet River, emptying their waters into Vaal River; and the Caledon River, which empties itself into the Orange River.

The Wilge River and its tributary streams, Elands River, Liebenbergsvlei, and Cornelis River and Milt River drain the districts of Harrismith and Bethlehem, taking their rise in the Drakensberg and Wittebergen ranges; the Rhenoster and Valsch Rivers run through the district of Kroonstad, the latter also rising in the district of Bethlehem.

The Vet River is formed by the junction of its tributaries, the Sand River and the great and little Vet Rivers, all of which take their rise in the mountain ranges on the borders of the Winburg district, which formerly separated the Orange Free State from Basutoland, but now form part of the Winburg and Lady Brand districts. The Modder River taking its rise near Thaba 'Nchu and receiving in its course Leeuw River, Rhenoster-spruit, Doorn-spruit, Kaal-spruit, and other minor streams, runs through the districts of Bloemfontein, and skirting the district of Boshof, forms a junction with Riet River at David's Graf, about twelve miles below Jacobsdal, and is lost in that stream, which takes its rise near Paul Smitsberg, and in the Watershed between the districts of Bloemfontein and Smithfield. The Riet River receives, on its course, the waters of the Kaffir River, Kromellenboog-spruit, and other minor streams, and forming a junction with Modder River, as above stated, empties itself in the Vaal River.

The Caledon River receives all the small streams arising in the new districts of Lady Brand and Rouxville, as also the tributary

streams of Wilgeboom-spruit and Slik-spruit, and join the Orange River near the village of Bethulie, on the south-east border of the State.

Physical Geography.

The courses of the larger rivers are extremely tortuous and hollow, the banks of the rivers being for the greater part very precipitous, and generally lined with water-willow, mimosa, and other trees indigenous to this country. The streams are usually fordable; during the rainy season, however, they become swollen and impassable.

In every district there are small ranges of rocky hills, the highest being found in the districts bordering on the Drakensberg and Wittebergen ranges, and on the Caledon and Orange Rivers, but everywhere forming the Watersheds, in which the various streams take their rise, and affording landmarks for the division lines of the various districts.

Vegetation.

The plains and table-lands of the Orange Free State are covered with grass, which in rainy seasons becomes rank and luxuriant, affording excellent pasture for stock of all descriptions.

In the southern and eastern districts the grass is burnt off once a year, in order to destroy the old crop, which rots, by reason of the rains, and becomes injurious to sheep and cattle. In the western districts the grass is gradually becoming supplanted by a dwarf bush vegetation, such as is commonly met within the colony.

On the mountain ranges are generally to be found bushes of larger growth, as well as the wild bastard olive, and several other species of trees known in the parlance of the country as the kareiboom, guarrieboom, kipersol, etc.

Agricultural.

The Orange Free State is for the greater part a grazing country, and though agriculture is everywhere attended to on a larger or smaller scale, according to the natural capabilities of the farms, still it is chiefly in the southern and eastern districts that it is carried on as the principal source of production, and it is almost exclusively from the districts of Rouxville, Lady Brand, Winburg, Bethlehem and Harri-smith that grain is brought into the markets of the other districts.

Mineral.

Neither is it altogether without mineral wealth, as diamonds, rubies and other precious stones have been discovered in various parts of the country. Coal also of a very good quality, and in paying quantities, has been found in the Winburg district, as well as on farms in the

Lady Brand and Harrismith districts; and if report speaks truly, a concession has already been granted to a Coal Mining Company by a farmer in the Winburg district. A geological survey would no doubt tend greatly to prove the existence of various other valuable mineral products hitherto only suspected.

Animal.

In the early days of this Republic the distribution of animal life was a subject of great interest, from the fact of the immense variety of wild animals inhabiting the country. Even now the lion still frequents some sections of it. But, owing to the advance of civilization and human industry, the larger animals, as the elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus and giraffe, are disappearing. Upon its vast undulating plains, however, a large and splendid variety of the antelope tribe roam in countless numbers. The country being favourable for the rearing of horses, cattle and woolled sheep, the number of the latter contained therein may be estimated by millions.

Birds abound in great variety, and among those of the larger kind^s may be enumerated the ostrich, eagle, vulture, pelican, hawk, and various species of crane.

Exports and Imports.

The staple articles of export from the Orange Free State are wool, skins, and ostrich feathers, of late years diamonds and other precious stones, while owing to the mining population in the disputed territories along the Vaal River, a large trade in grain and other agricultural produce has been productive of great wealth to the country.

Commerce.

From the same cause, although more indirectly, trade in all articles of import, such as ironware implements, and manufactures in woollen, cotton and silk goods, and articles for consumption, either as necessaries or luxuries, has received a great stimulus, and the commercial community is to all appearance in a very healthy and prosperous condition. The dividends of the Bloemfontein Bank and Board of Executors at 20 per cent. and 15 per cent., respectively, for the past year, may be taken as very fair evidence of this assertion.

A statement of import and export for the Orange Free State could only be furnished with accuracy by the merchants of the seaport towns of Port Elizabeth, in Cape Colony, and Durban, in Natal, who not only receive the produce exported, but also furnish the goods imported.

Climate.

The average height of the Orange Free State above the level of the sea is about 5,000 feet, and the climate generally salubrious. The winter here is cold but dry, the summer usually warm and moist, though droughts are sometimes experienced in the summer months. The air, however, is healthy and dry, as a rule, and this is particularly felt at Bloemfontein and its vicinity; consequently, numbers of invalids suffering from pulmonary affections resort to Bloemfontein and experience much benefit from a residence in this part of the country.

In other respects it has been noticed that the changes of the seasons are to a greater or less degree, according to their duration, accompanied by a greater liability to colds and fevers, generally of a typhoid type, and inflammatory affections, especially amongst children.

The rates of mortality, however, would not seem to be extraordinary, though from the absence of statistics they can only be guessed at. Foreigners do not seem to suffer after being acclimated, on the contrary, they are benefited by the change.

Population.

The population of the Orange Free State has been variously computed, but as a steady and uninterrupted stream of immigration has been flowing into the country for years, and in very considerable numbers since the satisfactory settlement of the Basuto war, the white population may be estimated at 75,000; the coloured or native, 25,000.

Form of Government.

The Government of the Orange Free State is Republican, and its Constitution vests the legislative powers in the *Volksraad*, the members of which are elected by their constituents for four consecutive years. The whole number of representatives (there being one for each chief town of a district, and one for each field cornetcy), is fifty-two. Of this number, the half retire by rotation every two years, and a new election takes place to fill up the vacancies.

The *Volksraad* meets in session annually at Bloemfontein, which is the capital of the State and the seat of Government, if no extraordinary session be convened by the State President, for the consideration of any urgent question which might demand immediate attention.

The executive power in the State rests in the State President, which officer is elected by suffrage of burghers throughout the whole State; his term of office lasts for five years, and he is eligible for re-election. Candidates for the Presidentship are generally recommended by the *Volksraad* to the burghers, and a change taking place in that office does

not affect the positions of the other officials in this country, as is the case in the United States of America.

The State President is assisted by the Executive Council, in which the Landdrost of Bloemfontein and the Government Secretary have session also as official members, and three others chosen by the *Volksraad* from among the most influential members in the neighbourhood of the chief town of the State form the unofficial members provided for in the Constitution.

The unofficial members hold office for three years, retiring successively, and are eligible for re-election, or rather renomination, by the *Volksraad*.

The entire control of the affairs of the State, internal as well as external, rests in the hands of the State President, as far as the public service of the State is concerned, and with the exceptions specified in the Constitution.

The chief executive officer in each district is the Landdrost, who is clothed with the functions both of Magistrate and Civil Commissioner in his district, and is assisted in his duties by the Landdrost-klerk.

Each district has furthermore its Sheriff and deputy; gaoler and staff of constables. Where there are no Government buildings, offices and gaol are hired by the Government.

Each district is divided into the necessary number of wards, each of which elects a Field Cornet, under whom it serves, and who has certain judicial, and in times of war, military, powers.

All the wards combine in the election of a Commandant, who is military head of the whole district in times of war or disturbance, and takes the chief command over the burghers of his district on command.

As soon as the contingents from the various districts have taken the field, and before active operations against the enemy are commenced, the officers, viz.: the Commandants and Field Cornets of the several contingents, meet and proceed to the election of a Commandant-General from among their number, who thereupon makes over his charge to an elected successor, and takes the supreme command of the whole commando, receiving his instructions from the State President.

Burghers of the State are constituted by the following three classes: *First*, Whites who were born in the State. *Secondly*, Whites who have resided in the State during one year, and have fixed property to the amount of £150 registered in their own names. *Thirdly*, Whites who have resided in the State for three successive years; always provided the two latter classes furnish the President with good conduct certificates and written engagements to respect the laws of the State, whereupon they can obtain certificates of burghership.

Burgers of eighteen years of age and upwards have right of suffrage at the elections of Field Cornet and Commandant, but they must be of age and have sundry other Constitutional qualifications to be entitled to vote for a State President.

Judicial.

The administration of justice in the Orange Free State is regulated by the local ordinances enacted by the *Volksraad* from time to time, and further according to the Roman Dutch law. The Law Courts of the Orange Free State are at present the following :

First, The Landdrost Court, which has police and criminal jurisdiction, and can bind over in the sum of £100 for six months, fine up to £5, imprison for three months, with hard labour, and give lashes up to twenty-five ; while it has a civil jurisdiction in all cases up to £37 10s. Special laws, however, give this Court a higher jurisdiction for certain offences.

Secondly, The Court of Landdrost and Heemraden, consisting of the Landdrost and two assessors, who can bind over in the amount of £200 for twelve months, fine up to £10, imprison with hard labour for four months, punish with lashes up to thirty-nine, and have a civil jurisdiction in cases from £37 10s. up to £75. This Court has also special jurisdiction under certain ordinances. From these Courts there is appeal to,

Thirdly, The Combined Courts of Landdrosts, the Circuit Court of the State, which has unlimited jurisdiction, and can try criminally all heavy crimes and misdemeanours, and dispose of all civil cases, from £75 and upwards, brought in the first instance before it, and hears all appeals from the two lower Courts. This Court consists of three Landdrosts : at present it holds its sessions once annually, sometimes in each district, and sometimes for two or three districts combined, in one place. During the interval of its session, the Landdrost of each district is Judge in chambers for his district, and all interlocutory orders are made by him.

Fourthly, The Highest Court of Appeal, before which all appeals from the various Circuit Courts are brought, holds session at Bloemfontein once or twice a year. Till last year the Executive Council constituted the Court of Appeal in highest resort, but the *Volksraad* has made provision for a separate Court, under a Chief Justice properly qualified, and two assessors from among the Landdrosts of the districts. The ordinance constituting this Court is No. 4, 1872, and was enacted last year ; hitherto it has not been carried into effect ; but there is every probability that a bench of Judges will be established as

Supreme Court, as the necessity for this measure is becoming more apparent year by year.

The State Attorney conducts the public prosecution for the State in person before the Circuit Courts, but is represented by the Landdrost-klerk before the lower Courts.

The Law Registry Office for the Higher Courts throughout the whole State is at Bloemfontein.

Ecclesiastical.

The Constitutional Church of the Orange Free State is the Dutch Reformed Church, the chief governing body of which, viz., the Synod, meets once every three years, while the various congregations of the State are classed under two circuits or rings, and each ring meets yearly. Each congregation is governed locally by the Kerkeraad.

Under this Church there are at present eighteen congregations, fifteen of which receive State support.

Besides the Dutch Reformed Church, a branch of the Anglican Church of South Africa, represented by the Bishop of Bloemfontein and a numerous staff of clergy, is established in the Orange Free State.

The capital of the diocese is Bloemfontein, where the Bishop resides, and congregations of this Church are ministered to in Smithfield, Bethulie, Philippolis, Harrismith, Modderpoort, Thaba 'Nchu, and other places. The English minister at Smithfield is the only one of this body receiving State support.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church also has a circuit in the Orange Free State, under a superintendent, resident at Bloemfontein, and a numerous body of ministers, and has congregations in Fauresmith, Smithfield, Harrismith, Thaba 'Nchu, and other places. It receives State support for two of its ministers.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church is represented in the State by a superintendent and several ministers, who labour at Bloemfontein, Bethany, and other parts of the State.

Finally, the Roman Catholic Church, under the care of a priest, is ministering to the wants of its people at Bloemfontein.

Educational.

The educational department of the country is only now receiving that vital attention which a subject of so vast importance to any country ought to have; and the legislation has only of late years been impressed with the absolute necessity of placing this depart-

ment on the best possible footing. Accordingly, a fund is gradually being raised for educational purposes, which in 1876 will place at the disposal of the Government an amount of £56,000.

Meantime, in accordance with Order No. 5, 1872, an Inspector of Education has been appointed, who has already entered upon his colossal task, namely, that of remodelling the whole educational system, and great hopes are now entertained for the future of the rising generation. It is only right, nevertheless, to state, that a Government allowance of £90 a year has for years past been given to each district town, on condition of its subscribing at least one-half more, and attempts to establish good schools have everywhere been made by the District School Committees, comprising the Landdrost, Dutch Reformed Church and three elected members, with varying success in some places, but in others only to meet with failure, which is principally to be attributed to the defective system hitherto pursued.

The principal support hitherto afforded by the Government consists in the liberal allowances made for the salaries of teachers in the Grey College; but owing to the short time that has elapsed since the arrival of one of them, and various other circumstances beyond the control of the Government, the desired results are still to be looked for. Very praiseworthy efforts have also been made on behalf of education by the Anglican Church, in schools established at Bloemfontein and at Smithfield, and this latter has already shown very satisfactory results.

Financial.

The financial department of the State is under the control of the Auditor-General and Treasurer-General, whose offices are also at Bloemfontein. The accounts of revenue and expenditure, with vouchers for each district separately, are sent up monthly, and all balances in the district treasuries remitted monthly to the Treasurer-General.

The Auditor-General publishes a quarterly statement of revenue and expenditure, and makes up the estimates for each ensuing year, which are revised by a Commission out of the *Volksraad*, and after their report voted for the service year.

Notwithstanding the heavy expenditure and consequent debt, occasioned by the last Basuto war, and the issue of Government paper to the amount of £130,000, which for a long time was not valued at more than half the coinage it represented, the financial status of the Government has been steadily improving, as will appear from the following statement of revenue and expenditure for the various service years from 1857:

Year.	Revenue.			Expenditure.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1857-58	18,421	13	5	15,862	7	3
1858-59	24,646	7	7	24,099	11	1
1859-60	19,707	1	7	20,978	12	1
1860-61	20,919	3	10	21,155	13	1
1861-62	32,168	18	2	32,368	0	2
1862-63	41,555	5	10	41,698	13	9
1863-64	42,219	15	3	42,693	7	7
1864-65	41,650	15	2	41,637	4	8
1865-66	66,549	10	8	64,664	3	9
1866-67	132,293	9	9	130,606	0	8
1867-68	146,739	9	1	142,024	1	7
1868-69	70,297	5	4	68,928	19	9
1869-70	59,802	11	9	51,783	12	9
1870-71	78,904	1	2	71,175	14	1
1871-72	84,282	1	10	74,252	5	6
1872-73	112,040	8	3	102,141	16	10

When it is remembered that the country was engaged in war with the Basutos in 1858 and in 1865-69, the extraordinary difference in the relative amounts for those years is readily accounted for, as also the decrease in revenue and expenditure during 1869-70, the country being then prostrated from the effects of a protracted struggle, during which the interests of trade, agriculture and flocks could not receive the necessary attention, and the powers of production were proportionately lessened.

The amount of revenue for 1872-73 contrasts favourably with the last mentioned amount, as does also the fact, that of the £130,000 issued as Government notes, little more than one-third is still in circulation, nearly two-thirds having already been redeemed.

The revenue of the country is raised by quitrents on farms, transfer dues, stamp duties, and fees in the various Governmental departments, licences, hire of State lands, hut-tax on the coloured population, and from various other sources; the mode of taxation being for the greater part indirect.

The estimates voted for the service year of 1873-74, for the expenditure of the State, amounts to £75,188. Under this amount are sundry sums, as follows:

For Civil and Judicial Department	£18,275
For Police	2,800
For Churches and Schools	7,560
For Administration of Justice	1,505
For Prisons	2,495

For Hospitals	£443
For Hire of Buildings	692
For Postal Department	4,530
For Roads	640
For Members V.R.	2,200
For Stationery, Printing, etc.	1,963
For Artillery	2,000
For Ammunition	4,000
For Withdrawal of Government Paper	16,840
For Orphan Chamber	1,200

And also, for various other purposes, the above will be sufficient to convey some idea of the mode of expenditure.

The facts adduced all tend to show that the country is in a prosperous condition, and that if only allowed to improve the years of peace it may soon be able to undertake various reproductive works from which it has hitherto been debarred.

State Lands.

The Government lands of the Orange Free State are still very considerable, though as nought compared with their original size, owing to the sales of farms which have been held from time to time. The value of fixed property of all kinds has increased greatly within the last few years. Even in the districts of Harrismith and Kroonstad, where land formerly was almost valueless, farms are now eagerly sought after, and change hands at very high rates.

The average price of land throughout the whole State may now be fixed at 10s. per morgen.

A rough estimate fixes the number of farms throughout the country as between 6,000 and 7,000. Fixed property changes ownership by registration.

Mode of Registration.

The mode of registration of deeds of all descriptions in the State is generally held to be a more publicly useful one than that in vogue in the colonies. There is a Sub-Registry Office in each district; while the Chief Deeds Registry Office is at Bloemfontein. The transfers or other deeds are passed before the Registrar of Deeds, or Landdrost of the district, as the case may be, and after registration at the head office, are also registered in the district offices, so that an intending purchaser can at once satisfy himself as to the titles, etc., of any property at its district office, thereby sparing both time and expense.

Historical.

The earliest traditional records concerning the territory now known as the Orange Free State would convey the idea that it was not inhabited by any definite race, but rather that marauding bands from tribes of Kaffirs, Bushmen and Corannas from time to time infested it, either to secure pasture for their flocks, or to escape destruction from the hands of some stronger race, and it is only about the years 1816 to 1820 that these records become definite, as determining the facts that about that time an immigration of Griquas, under Adam Kok, settled at Griquatown, and that bodies of Dutch Farmers used first to cross the Orange River with their flocks, during times of drought in the colony, and afterwards settled in the new territory, more especially in the vicinity of the Riet River.

These pioneers were afterwards followed up by whole bodies of immigrants; one body settling in the present district of Boshof, on lands purchased by them from the Chief Dautzez, and another settling on what was afterwards known as the Vaal River District, on lands bought from the Chief Mahura, while many more either leased or bought lands in the territory of the Griquas, who, under Adam Kok, in 1820, had established themselves at Philippolis, along the Orange River up to the junction of the Boschjes-spruit. The numbers of the immigrants were greatly increased by the influx of these Dutch colonists, who felt themselves aggrieved by the emancipation of the slaves, in 1834, and left the colony in large numbers, in order to place themselves beyond British control.

These settlers formed a Government for themselves, after the model of the old Dutch Government of the colony, and matters went on quietly up to 1845, when, in consequence of some fracas between the Boers and the Griquas, which resulted in hostilities, the British Government intervened, and assisting the Griquas with Her Majesty's troops, defeated the Boers at Zwart Koppies; and to prevent a like occurrence, a British Resident was established in the country, with a small force to support his authority.

But a treaty had been entered into between the British Government and Adam Kok, in 1845, in which certain terms affecting the Boer tenure of property in Griqualand were comprehended, which gave great dissatisfaction to the immigrants.

Their acknowledged chief, Andries Pretorius, endeavoured to procure an amelioration of these terms, but without success, and after the proclamation of sovereignty over the territory, discontent broke out into rebellion, and the British authorities were driven back across the Orange River, in July, 1848. Subsequently a force of 500 men was brought up by Sir Harry Smith, and after a short but sharp encounter with the Boers at Boomplaats, the latter were defeated, and the British authority re-established in the Orange River sovereignty.

The territory now remained under that Government, represented in the person of a British Resident at Bloemfontein, where a fort had been erected, mounting three guns, and where the seat of Residency had been established up to 1854. During this period many Europeans and colonists of European descent, also took up their abode in the sovereignty. Owing, however, to the continual embroilments of the burghers with the Basutos, under Moshesh, not in their own quarrels, but in those of the allies of the British Government, and the costs thereby occasioned of keeping up a considerable military force, the abandonment of the Orange River sovereignty was recommended to the home Government and carried out, under the Special Commissioner-ship of Sir George Clerk, who, in spite of the opposition of an influential body of the inhabitants, especially of Bloemfontein, made over the Government of the Orange River sovereignty to a body of delegates, representing the inhabitants of the various districts, by virtue of the convention entered into with them on the 23rd of February, 1854; which convention is the Charter of the Orange Free State.

A Provisional Government was at once formed by the delegates under the Presidency of Mr. Hoffman, and afterwards a Republican Constitution was drawn up and adopted by the *Volksraad*, the members of which had in the meantime been duly elected.

For some time after its erection into a separate State, the Government of the Orange Free State was principally engaged in meeting the difficulties arising out of the many boundary questions with petty native chiefs, in and bordering on the Free State; the principal settlement arrived at being the definition of the Vetberg-line, between Adam Kok and Cornelius Kok and Waterboer; and it was only during the able Presidentship of Mr. Boshoff, that attention was first given to the internal affairs of the country, and some order established by salutary local ordinances, which are in force at the present day, regulating, among other matters, the establishment of proper law courts, tariffs, sale of gunpowder, and liquor laws. But this dawn of order was soon to be clouded by the questions with the Basutos, which assumed greater importance, and eventually, in March, 1858, terminated in war between the burghers of the new Republic and their thievish neighbours.

The hostilities lasted with varying fortunes, and were finally brought to a close by the Convention of Aliwal North, on the 29th September, 1858. The following year, 1859, saw the Orange Free State deprived of the further services of President Boshoff by the resignation of his office; and although there are those who may have differed with him, still the almost universal voice was one of regret at the loss of the man who not only did so much for the internal welfare of the country, but so ably conducted the State through its difficulties with the tribe of Witzie, with the Transvaal Republic, with Scheel Cobus, and with the Basutos.

A successor to President Boshoff was elected in the person of President Pretorius, son of the well-known Commandant-General, Andries Pretorius, of Boomplaats celebrity, who assumed office in 1860. The two principal events during his term of office were, first, the annexation to the Orange Free State of the Bethulie lands, by special treaty with the Chief Lephui; and secondly, the purchase from the Griqua Chief, Adam Kok, on his migration to the territory of Nomansland, in 1861, of all his lands and those he inherited from Cornelius Kok, of Campbell, whereby the Vetberg-line became part of the boundary of the State. It is on this purchase, also, that the right and title to the Campbell lands to the north of Vaal River is founded by the Orange Free State Government. On the resignation of President Pretorius, in 1863, a new election was held, and President Brand assumed office, as the chosen of the people, in February, 1864.

The peace secured by the Treaty of Aliwal proved a hollow one, and as the Basutos not only repudiated their treaty engagements, but continued their depredations and committed various outrages on the burghers inhabiting the frontier, President Brand's first endeavours were directed to the attainment of a satisfactory settlement of the boundary line question, and he succeeded in getting this defined by the arbitration of Sir Philip Wodehouse, Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, October, 1864. Notwithstanding this peaceful solution of the question, the attitude of the Basutos grew daily more and more threatening, and the Orange Free State saw itself forced to arms, and took the field in May, 1865. The struggle lasted eleven months, and a treaty of peace, on very advantageous terms for the Orange Free State, was signed April 3rd, 1866, by which, among other conditions, a large tract of country was ceded to the State.

This new territory was inspected by commissioners, and the farms granted and sold on conditions of military tenure. And as Basuto squatters had everywhere re-occupied this tract, it became necessary to clear the country by a commando, called out for that purpose, March 12th, 1867. But this measure had not the desired effect, for in the months of June and July the Basutos murdered two subjects of the Orange Free State, named Bushe and Krynauw, and flung defiance at its Government, when it demanded the delivery to justice of the murderers.

Consequently, in the month of August, 1867, the commandos of Free State burghers took the field afresh, and soon victory crowned the cause of the Free State, as mountain stronghold after mountain stronghold was taken from the enemy; and there remained now only to Moshesh his own fastness, called Thaba Bosigo. When hostilities were brought to a close by the intervention of the British Government, to whom the Basutos had applied to be received as subjects, a lengthy correspondence was carried on during an armistice or truce which had

been agreed upon, and it was only after a deputation from the Orange Free State had been sent to England, that a satisfactory settlement of the question was arrived at, and defined in the Convention of Aliwal North, March 12th, 1869, whereby advantageous terms of peace and a satisfactory boundary were obtained by the Orange Free State. Immediately after the settlement of this question, negotiations were carried on with the Transvaal Republic, which resulted in a deed of submission, by which the settlement of the boundary between the two Republics was confided to the arbitration of Lieutenant-Governor Keate, of the colony of Natal, and his decision was communicated to the respective Governments in February, 1870, and adopted by them.

But another boundary question which had from time to time engaged the attention of the *Volksraad*, namely, that between the Orange Free State and Nicholas Waterboer, now assumed prominence, owing to the discovery of diamonds in the Vaal River, near Pniel, a mission station of the Berlin Missionary Society. Every means was used to bring the matter to a satisfactory solution without avail, and at last the Orange Free State Government, after a meeting with Waterboer and his council at Nooitgedacht, on the Vaal River, August 18th, 1870, saw itself constrained to proclaim the territorial boundaries of the Campbell lands to the north of Vaal River, purchased by it from Adam Kok, as heir to Cornelius Kok in 1861. Meantime a large influx of people from all parts of the colonies and from foreign countries, to the diamondiferous banks of the Vaal River took place, and gradually spread itself to the present dry diggings at Du Toits Pan, Bultfontein and Vooruitzigt, in the district of Pniel, and while the Orange Free State Government was engaged in the establishment of a proper system of control and sanitary regulations for the mining population, Waterboer, urged on by his agent, presented a petition to the British Government, representing that a great part of his territory had been encroached upon by the Orange Free State Government, and requesting their acceptance of himself and his people as subjects, and asking their intervention on his behalf. Lieut.-Gov. Hay, then acting High Commissioner at Cape Town, thereupon identifying himself with Waterboer's representations forthwith, in violation of the second and other articles of the Convention, appointed commissioners and empowered them with authority over the diggers, which authority was at first only exercised on the north side of the Vaal, though sundry intrigues were carried on amongst the diggers on the south side also, in order to obtain a footing there.

Matters came to a crisis, however, after the arrival of Governor Barkly at the Cape, in 1871, who, adopting the views of the then Government Secretary, Southey, and ignoring the fact that all the grounds to the south of the Vaal River had been in undisputed possession, and under the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the Orange Free

State, since the Convention of 1854, issued a proclamation, October 27th, 1871, declaring Waterboer and his people British subjects, and claiming as his territory, not only the Campbell lands to the north of the Vaal, but also the territory on the south side of that river, up to a straight line from Platberg to David's Graf, at the junction of Riet and Modder Rivers, and thence in a straight line to Ramah and the Orange River.

This proclamation was followed up by forcible possession being taken of the lands in question, in a time of profound peace. In order to avoid a collision, and the dire effects which a war with a consanguineous race in the colony would inevitably entail, the Government of the Orange Free State withdrew its authority and officials from that part of their territory, under solemn protest against this breach of the Law of Nations, and sought to obtain justice for the violation of their territory in arbitration and deeds of submission ; forming subject-matter for a continued correspondence and discussion between the Government of Her British Majesty and that of the Orange Free State.

Many events have occurred in connection with this question, which each in their turn threatened to disturb the peaceful relations between the countries concerned, but sufficient proof has been given that the terms of the Convention, February 23rd, 1854, have not received that due regard which a weaker power may, with justice, expect from a stronger ; and that the endeavours of the Government of the Orange Free State to secure a satisfactory definition of the boundary line made over to them, have but too often been thwarted by those from whom it had a right to expect every possible co-operation. At all events, it is certainly beyond dispute, that the action hitherto taken by the British High Commissioners in these various questions, does not evince the spirit breathed forth in the despatch of the Hon. H. Labouchere, June 5th, 1857, to Sir George Grey, then Governor of Cape Colony, from which the following extract is quoted : " The outlines of that policy, I would recapitulate as follows : to observe strictly the letter and spirit of the treaties into which we have entered with the neighbouring States ; to maintain the integrity of our possessions on the confines of these States, but to avoid any extension of their limits to which they may justly object ; and to forbear from mixing ourselves up with the affairs of the native tribes, except so far as may be clearly indispensable for the protection of Her Majesty's subjects."

Such, then, are the principal events which have occupied the serious attention of the Orange Free State Government to such a degree, that the internal affairs of the State have not received that vital attention which many important branches still urgently demand ; and to this it is owing that the Judicial, Administrative, and Educational Departments, still call for the earnest study of every well-meaning citizen, with a view to their establishment on the best possible footing.

To the political questions also it may be attributed that the national feelings of Dutch and English are not more fully united and merged in the consolidation of the various interests of the country with a sole view to its future greatness.

Happily, however, of late years, a great deal of the bitterness has passed away, and the sympathies of all parties are becoming more concentrated in the common interests of the State.

When it is considered that but twenty years ago, the management of the affairs of this country was cast upon the shoulders of a people untutored as regards government ; exposed to craft of enemies, without and within ; without any standing force ; without military stores, or a public treasury ; with a sparse population spread out over a large extent of territory ; and without any definite legislation ; the rise and present prosperity of the Orange Free State Republic surely bears witness to an almost unprecedented success, and have earned for it the right to be looked upon as one of the leading States of South Africa.

In concluding the short sketch of this Republic, it would be well to state, that besides the amicable relations which the Orange Free State enjoys with the various European powers, it has lately formed a general convention of friendship, commerce, and extradition with the United States of America.

President of the Republic,

HON. J. H. BRAND.

Gov't. Secretary,

HON. F. K. HÖHNE.

Treasurer-General,

HON. C. DE JONGH BLOEM.

Postmaster-General.

HON. W. H. CANISIUS.

Extract.—“Memorandum of Agreement”

Between the Government of Her British Majesty and that of
the Orange Free State.

[No. 173.—*Gouvernements Kennisgeving.*]

BLOEMFONTEIN, AUGUST 22ND, 1876.

The boundary question in dispute between the Government of Her British Majesty and that of the Orange Free State—herein referred to—was satisfactorily settled at *London, July 13th, 1876*, by agreement between the Right Honourable the Earl of Carnarvon representing Her Majesty's Government and His Honour President Brand for the Orange Free State, Her Majesty's Government paying the Orange Free State Government Ninety Thousand (£90,000) pounds sterling in full settlement of all claims and question of sovereignty over the lands hitherto in dispute (Griqualand), and all grounds for controversy now being removed, the two governments agree to seek, by friendly co-operation hereafter, all that can advance the common interest of their respective countries.

Furthermore, the Right Honourable Earl of Carnarvon, for Her Majesty's Government, has proposed to President Brand, as an additional proof of good feeling towards the Orange Free State, and desire for its material prosperity, to pay to the Orange Free State the sum of Fifteen Thousand (£15,000) pounds sterling towards the construction of a railway in the Orange Free State to connect with Natal or Cape Colony.

Addendum No. 2.

Young Men's Literary Society, 12th October,
1894.

Lecture by Mr. J. G. Fraser.

A RETROSPECT.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—Although a lecture is something entirely new for me to undertake, I felt even if I could not claim literary merit for it, I could not refuse an endeavour to further the objects of your Society, and in casting about for a subject on which to engage your attention for a few moments, it appeared to me not undesirable to carry back the thoughts of our young friends to that period of time in our country's history when the generation they represent drew birth.

The greater number of those present are recent arrivals in our midst, and of those born in the State who may be here, none will have a strong recollection of the conditions existing when they first saw the light. It may, therefore, not be devoid of interest to afford them an opportunity of drawing a contrast between the present comparatively prosperous and peaceful development and the throes which agitated the troubled past.

Hence the retrospect which I shall try to place before you, and if you very likely find it somewhat cursory and incomplete you will ascribe it to the difficulty which I experienced to separate myself from the present, and confine myself to the past, and to the fact that almost every phase of those early conditions could be a subject-matter of a lecture in itself.

You have probably all read Mr. Theal's powerful picture of the historical occurrences which led to the exodus of the emigrant Boers, or Voortrekkers, from under the British Government in the Cape Colony, and will be acquainted with the varied fortunes and dread vicissitudes which the several bodies of those heroic pioneers had to undergo on their expeditions into this State, then known as the Trans-Gariep, into Natal and the Transvaal, in search of a new territory in which to establish themselves under a government of their own, and their eventual settlement between the Orange and the Vaal and beyond the Vaal River.

I shall, therefore, not deal with this interesting period further than to touch upon the nature of the very rudimentary and patriarchal authority which they chose to submit to while leading this unsettled and troubled life. Each little band of "trekkers" coming from a particular district chose one leader or "commandant" from its midst, generally the most pious, sagacious, brave and experienced man to guide and direct the "trek" and to control its members. When these bands met with others, and entered upon united action for the common good, these leaders again chose a chief commandant to direct the whole, acting with the others as his council, and when they had overcome their enemies and took up the territory, returning to their avocations as stock and agricultural farmers, these leaders formed the central authority to watch over their safety and to provide for good order and the settlement of their disputes acting under the choice of the trekkers who were all bound at the first call to arm and unite for the common defence.

Under these provisions the first occupation to the north of the Orange and Vaal rivers was made, and for the rest there was no law, save such as the Bible may have taught to apply, or the circumstances of the moment dictated in the interest of safety for life and property.

You will readily understand how small a portion of this State could at first be actually occupied by at the most a few hundreds of these trekkers, but their numbers were augmented from time to time by other parties joining them from the Cape Colony, so that during the period between the great trek of 1837, and the date of our Independence, their numbers grew to several thousands, yet even then only parts of what are now the districts of Harrismith, Winburg, Caledon River, Fauresmith, Bloemfontein and Boshof, chiefly in the vicinity of the rivers, were pretty fairly taken up, while large tracts of country lay waste and open so that at the date of my arrival in 1863, and even after, portions of this State could still be traversed for thirty to forty miles on a stretch without sight of any homestead, and with nothing to be seen but myriads of game of various kinds. The town of Winburg was the first village established by the trekkers, and during the period between 1840 and 1848, was the capital of the Maatschappij, or company as the emigrants then styled it, being under the jurisdiction of a Landdrost up to the commencement of the British regime.

It would stretch this lecture too much to enter closely into the circumstances which led to the hostilities which culminated in the encounters with the British troops at Zwartkoppies and at Boomplaats, resulting in the proclamation of the Orange River Sovereignty and the eventual splitting up of the Trekkers or Emigrants into two distinct independent States, *viz.*, that of the South African Republic by the Convention of Sand River in 1852 with those beyond the Vaal

River, and the Orange Free State by the Convention of Bloemfontein with those between the Vaal and the Orange Rivers on the 23rd February 1854, the date of our Independence. Suffice it to say that the establishment of the Sovereignty led to the adoption of Bloemfontein as the seat of the British Resident and headquarters of the troops, the old Queens fort being erected here, the township laid out under its protection, and the influx of a number of European traders and professional men forming the nucleus of a community which provided the inhabitants with renewed contact with that civilisation from which they had by long sojourning in the wilderness become estranged, a community in which enlightened men had their abode, whose knowledge and experience proved to be of signal service to the people in the critical period which was soon to dawn upon them.

For the British authorities very soon found that the newly-annexed territory, with its numerous barbarous tribes and neighbours, was not to prove a bed of roses. One native trouble after another, with the disastrous experiences of Viervoet and the Berea, brought home that only a costly armament could maintain peaceful occupation, and the policy of the Cabinet of the day favouring a non-intervention course, means were soon found to characterise this country as "a howling wilderness," and to hasten the withdrawal of the too hastily established British supremacy, and, in spite of the protest of the most influential inhabitants, to throw the burden of its government upon their unprepared resources.

Let us look at their condition at this time and we find a few thousand inhabitants sparsely scattered over an area of about 60,000 square miles of territory, surrounded by inimical hordes of savages, while the country itself was infested with beasts of prey of all sorts, the very existence of the people demanding a continual and vigilant defence of life and property, not only on the part of the male and able-bodied, but in their absence also from the female and weak, while they were at the same time involved in a severe struggle to recover themselves from the losses sustained on the long treks, and to build up a home and a broken fortune.

It was this people, dependent upon their personal exertions to secure an existence, which was all at once called upon to assume the government over this vast country, without prominent leaders at the moment to whom they could turn, their own previous system having become disorganised, without any organised force, without money or munitions of war; and when we pause a moment and endeavour to realise that position and see a sparse and struggling population deprived as in a moment of such protection as the British Government, with the aid of its troops, its public chest, and command of means had initiated, and left defenceless in the midst of its enemies, we fail to grasp the spirit which could thus interpret the responsibilities which

had been assumed, and with a thankful recognition of an over-ruling Providence, we yield unqualified admiration to the self-reliance and courage manifested in that critical time. Undaunted by the almost insuperable difficulties which had to be faced, we find the delegates of the people, for the most part with but little education, inexperienced and untrained to the demands of civilised government, manfully taking up the responsibility, and with the aid of several of the enlightened residents, who cast in their lot with them, calmly undertaking the construction of the Republic upon a constitutional basis which for the greater part has been maintained intact to this day, no small proof in my estimation of the sagacity and forethought with which their labours were accompanied.

It must not be lost sight of, however, that among the original settlers of our State, were men of parts, men who could think for themselves, many of them men who had been in positions of trust as heemrader or fieldcornets under the British Government in the Colony, but who, smarting under a sense of injustice, had the moral courage to cut themselves loose from their surroundings, and strike out for a new country, where they could live according to their convictions: men of tried courage, who had learnt to face danger and to rely upon themselves in critical circumstances: moreover, men who as descendants of their Huguenot fathers held the Bible as their rule of faith and conduct, they were for the most part men of this stamp who were delegated to undertake the extraordinary task of constitutional government, and this in some degree explains the capacity which was brought to bear upon it.

When I took up my residence in this land of my adoption, but nine years of the independence of our State had lapsed, and as yet the efforts to establish a stable Government were but very partially successful. The first President, Mr. Hoffman, had been deposed, the second, Mr. Boshoff, had resigned his office, the third, Mr. Pretorius, forsook this country for the South African Republic, various interregna under Executive Commissions or Acting State Presidents had intervened, several wars had taken place with varying results, petty intrigues for place and power were rife, chaos reigned in the State administration, want of confidence was manifested in the authorities, war clouds were threatening, the rulers' hands were feeble, if not powerless altogether, and a deep feeling of unrest was paramount in the minds of the people in regard to the Presidential election then just pending, what wonder that the necessity for better Government was prominently felt.

Combined efforts were therefore made to secure an able and competent administrator to take up the burden of affairs, and led to the choice by the burghers of the State of their great compatriot our late President Sir John Brand, to whose lifelong devotion and faithful

service a grateful posterity will always ascribe the independence and prosperity of their country.

What inestimable blessing to a land is profound peace, such as we are privileged to enjoy. Not a ripple on the surface of the relations which bind us to the neighbouring States. Not an influence to disturb the serenity of our citizens, not an occurrence to interrupt their occupations, or to threaten the safety of person or possession. Not a note to arouse them from the peaceful pursuit of their daily calling. No fear of any hostile invasion to cloud the prospect. No call to arms, no sense of danger, no actual necessity for weapons of offence or defence. No personal sacrifice demanded in defence of the country. And when I look upon our young friends and see them free from any anxiety or worry except such as may arise when business does not run smoothly or any undertaking does not prosper, my thoughts involuntarily go back to the days when I became a burgher of this State, a young man on the threshold of life, and memories crowd upon each other, recalling a very different state of affairs.

For President Brand was barely inaugurated in February, 1864, when the threatening condition of the Basuto border engaged his full attention. The great Chief Moshesh had attained such power as to become a standing menace to the burghers adjoining his territory. Stock thefts took place, and encroachments were made without redress. The relations had become so acute, and—especially after the abortive hostilities of 1858—the arrogance of the Basutos so great, that war became imminent. It was sought to avert this by securing a settlement of boundary differences by the arbitration of Sir Philip Wodehouse, which was favourable to us, and a considerable force was displayed on the border to demarcate it in what was known as the “Line Commando.” But the evil day was only staved off until the following winter, when the country was plunged into the struggle which all knew must be prosecuted until our enemy was subdued, before there could be peace.

The want of speedy and reliable communication between the various parts of the State, and between the State and the adjacent countries and their ports, in those days was not the least of the difficulties to be contended with, and to you who can now rush off by railway to the furthest points of South Africa in 48 hours, and can communicate by wire with any part of the world within 24, it will be almost incredible what the conditions of communication and transport at that time actually were. To Europe there was a monthly, afterwards a fortnightly, mail steamer, but no ocean cable in existence. Except the short railways between Cape Town and Wellington, Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage, and Durban and the Point, there were none in South Africa, and even telegraphic communication was then at its inception.

The Free State had to get all its supplies, whether of war material or merchandise, from the ports by that frequently now undervalued, but then indispensable factor in the development of South Africa, the transport wagon and oxen, the time usually taken between, say, Bloemfontein and Port Elizabeth, being from 15 to 20 days, while personal travelling was done by cart or wagon and horses, and required eight days to get over the same distance, and to Cape Town a proportionately longer time was needed.

The quickest communication within the State was either by post-cart or per express on horseback, the latter being the mode most used by the Government in cases of emergency. Postal service between the capital and the district towns took place weekly, but in rainy seasons (and, by the way, it did seem to rain a good deal more in those early times) it frequently happened that ten days or a fortnight elapsed between the arrival of the post.

This will give you some idea of the complications resulting from this state of things when the Government found itself forced to enter upon war, and to concentrate the various commandos of burghers at a given point on the border, in order at once to confine the operations to the enemy's country; and you can picture to yourself the anxiety and care undergone by the relatives and friends left behind from lack of intelligence as to the issue of the conflict to their husbands, sons, friends, themselves and the country, while rumours of all sorts would be flying over it, only to be found baseless, when after the lapse of some weeks intelligence from the camps would reach the Government and be published for general information.

Those were stirring times, fraught with care and trouble and sacrifice, for within two years, between 1863 and 1865, there was first the "Line Commando" and then the Basuto War, and every inhabitant had to take his part in one shape or the other, either in personal service, or by supplying necessaries for the combatants. Everyone felt we had a powerful and astute enemy to deal with, and it meant fighting to conquer before there could be peace or safety.

What excitement the arrival of the express caused bringing the intelligence that a large force was to take the field. What bustle to despatch the various orders to the fieldcornets of the different wards. What curiosity as to the quota to be furnished by each fieldcornetcy and the town. What misgivings and fears and schemes were called forth when the results of the local consultation of officers became known. What anxious inquiries as to whose names figured on the commandeer lists for personal service, and as to what amount of requisites had to be furnished by the remainder. What excuses to be released. What sudden ailments discovered. What artifices resorted to. But all to very little purpose; the day of muster has come, horses and arms are furnished, wagons loaded with tents and other

necessaries for the field, the final parade takes place, parting cups and some rather deep ones have been drained, friends have assembled to see the start, the roll is called, and amid partings and cheers the commando moves off to the place of rendezvous, and from there proceeds with the various district drafts to join the contingents from the other districts at the appointed spot on the border. Martial law is proclaimed, the Commandant-General elected, the guns and ammunition for the commando are supplied, and the march into the enemy's country begins.

But all this is only the beginning of sorrows, both for the actual combatants and for those who have been left behind. For the former, many of whom have now for the first time to make the experience, there is not only the wearying march and the actual engagement with the enemy, but also the worrying round of camp duties, horse patrols, cattle guard, sentry-go, mess preparations, horse foraging, repair of accoutrements, bullet-moulding and the like, but also the ever-present anxiety about those left behind, regarding whom intelligence came like angels' visits, few and far between, while the condition of the latter is even worse.

For the courts are closed, and stagnation sets in for business and all other transactions. On most farms there is barely a man left, the women and children have to mind the stock, and are for the most part left ill-provided and defenceless. In exposed portions of the State, the farms are abandoned, and women laagers are formed with a few men for their protection and to assist them in finding grazing for their animals, and for this purpose their camp has to be frequently shifted; for the most part they are unable to proceed to any town for supplies, are without any reliable intelligence as to the progress of the war, their whole existence during the absence of their providers being one continual struggle and sacrifice, without any certainty as to its probable duration.

It would require several lectures, however, to give faithful pictures of the actual occurrences of such a time, and of the many incidents, both grave and comical, characteristic of the life in such circumstances, and justice is hardly ever done to the many instances of heroic courage and enduring sacrifice made by the women of our State in that troubled period, I will therefore now only say, be thankful they are past, and value very highly the peace which is our portion.

Just a word concerning the resources of the State at that time to meet the demands of the war, and first with regard to the number of able-bodied men which could be brought into the field. These have been variously estimated, but as far as my own observation then went, I think I am quite right in saying that the greatest number under arms at the same time, including those left to guard the border did not exceed 2,500 men, and with this force the State had to meet

the powers at the command of Moshesh, which the lowest computation estimated at 10,000. It was a providential occurrence that our State had to call out the line commando, so shortly before the actual hostilities broke out, as it furnished a very useful experience in the organisation of the commandos, tested the then existing commando law, and afforded a fair estimate of the measure of preparedness or otherwise of the burghers to take the field, brought the various contingents into united action, officers and men became acquainted with each other, and much useful information was acquired as to the time and means requisite to mobilise and equip such a force, and when it appeared that war could not be avoided, it was also greatly in our favour that several weeks elapsed between the date of the assembling of the commandos on the border and the actual declaration of war, because it took several weeks to organise and put the men in the field in considerable force, and our whole border would otherwise have been exposed to attack. Even then the presence of our forces in the enemy's country did not prevent several hostile raids penetrating our State and devastating and plundering the border districts, one body coming within twelve or fifteen miles of Bloemfontein, and the young men and the old, too, of that day had to arm to a man to protect the city and the fort, barricades of woolbales were drawn across the eastern approaches, and every preparation for attack made, but the enemy had fortunately retired again and met well-merited retribution in the engagement of Verkeerdevley, the results of which completely demoralised them.

And then in the matter of ammunition and arms. The State magazines were only capable of a limited supply and its replenishing depended upon the execution of orders beyond the State and upon the facilities of the ox-wagon transport. Fortunately the Government had shortly before obtained some Armstrong breech-loader guns with ammunition and had increased the Artillery force, so that this arm was of vital importance to the commando. The other guns at the service of the Government were only three in number and all muzzle-loaders.

With regard to small arms, the chief weapon was a Prize & Redman, or a Hayton rifle, usually double-barrelled muzzle-loaders, but the greater number were armed with common smooth-bore muskets, euphoniouly termed a "Sannah" (of which specimens have been preserved in the museum), converted into a percussion cap gun, while the first Whitworth breech-loaders made their appearance in 1865, furnishing a most formidable weapon.

I have particularised the foregoing in order to give you an idea of the very inadequate means at the disposal of our Government in men and arms wherewith to enter upon the great undertaking of subduing the Basutos, and to enable you to more fully realize what that struggle meant to those engaged in it under such circumstances.

Off and on for four long years it lasted, the field being only kept by relays of burghers relieving each other every three or four months, and when the last great effort was successfully made and the final blow was about to be struck, the ægis of the British Government was interposed, in spite of its most solemn undertaking in the convention, and the Basuto episode was finally closed in the treaty of Aliwal North of 12th March, 1869.

Dire, however, were the effects of the long protracted struggle upon our country, commercial and other business was pretty well ruined, the burghers impoverished to the last degree, their farming operations having been neglected for so long a period, while to provide a medium to carry on the war, a Government paper currency, the celebrated blueback, was issued, the value of which was depreciated to one-half and even less. Gold and silver coin was not to be had except at a high premium, and the ordinary change in purchases consisted of cardboard goodfors issued by the old Bloemfontein Bank or business firms ranging from 3d. to 10s., samples of which in the museum will no doubt rouse the risible faculties of visitors, but I can assure you a man was not unhappy in those days even to have a good store of that circulating medium at his command. Honourably, however, both bluebacks and goodfors were later redeemed when a return of prosperity followed and the credit of the country was established on a firmer basis.

It will readily be seen that in the troubled condition of the country in those early days, and with minds preoccupied by the manifold dangers to existence, very little attention could be effectually given to internal development of the land or the improvement of personal conditions, and so we find the very day of small things in regard to every sphere of social life. There were three classes of men chiefly who could count upon the respect and confidence of the people, viz., the officers of Government, the ministers of their Church, and the merchants they dealt with, these could always exercise a very strong influence upon their conditions and affairs, and in no small degree the gradual return to a settled and civilised life may be ascribed to that combined influence. Though inclined to be fractious at first, and to be a law to themselves, the patriarchal rule of their pilgrimage had culminated in the Republican constitution of the country, the authority had been delegated by their own voice, and had emanated from their own representatives, and even as every child was taught to lift his hat and greet everyone, and especially his elders with deference, so the burgher deemed it his duty to show respect to his official ruler, whether Fieldcornet, Landdrost, Raadslid or President, and it was and still is characteristic of him that no matter what position had been previously occupied, as soon as the man was appointed to an office his dignity was recognised, and, if he proved worthy of it,

acknowledged not in any spirit of slavish submission, but with the respectful deference of an equal, and the fear of forfeiting favourable consideration went far to make him the law-abiding individual he is; at the same time instances are not wanting in which they have manifested undisguised contempt for those who proved unworthy of their office, and have successfully resisted the appointment of those in whom they had no confidence. In still greater degree did the influence of their minister operate on their lives. Debarred though they had been through their long and weary wanderings from all religious ministrations, yet with the spark of the faith of their fathers, kept alive by the Bible, and the living power of God's word, the love for the minister and the remembrance of their labours was not suffered to perish, and the knowledge of this fact was utilised by the Government when the Sovereignty was proclaimed in order by the appointment of a minister of their faith, to regain their confidence, and the establishment of ministers of their religion once more in their midst, their organisation into congregations, the pastoral care with its persistent demand for regular observance of their religious duties in their own interest and that of their children, and the standard of knowledge requisite for membership of their Church, forced their attention to their higher interests, and resulted in the abandonment of numberless habits and traits which had developed during the years of the wilderness life, and though still conservative of primitive customs and modes of thought to a large degree, at the time I speak of the necessity of a higher and better life had re-asserted itself and was felt so strongly that they made great sacrifices to secure the residence of a minister and the regular worship with its attendant privileges.

The influence of the merchant again was mainly instrumental in reviving the knowledge of the relations to be observed between men in their dealings with each other, and in imparting information on various subjects, because then, and to some extent still, the merchant was looked upon as a sort of repository of general knowledge, his opinion was asked on nearly every conceivable subject, he was expected to be well up in the news of current events, the store was generally the meeting place and debating room during the sojourn in town, and the dictum of a Fichardt, a Baumann or a Jordan was almost conclusive.

The trade relations of the country were chiefly in the hands of English or German merchants, who had settled here during the Sovereignty, and confined to the Cape Colony, with the exception perhaps of Harrismith, Natal being then a very small factor in South Africa, and Delagoa Bay only known by name. In those days the old system of long credit, long profits and long returns was the general rule, business houses in most cases were supported by merchants in Port Elizabeth, such a thing as an indent executed directly from Europe was hardly

dreamt of, commercial travellers were an unknown quantity, and the good old smouse with his wagon-load of general merchandise was a valued institution, his visit was looked for at the farm as regularly as the change of the season, that is the visit of those who were known for fair dealing, for there were frequent instances where the confiding farmer was grossly cheated, and the rascally trader very much sought for in vain, not daring to return to the same place, though some were successfully followed up and made to disgorge. On the whole, however, then as now, where confidence had been won, trade was generally done with one house, and the position of parties so well-known, that very few losses were incurred. Honesty characterised their dealings, and such a thing as insolvency was not only hardly known, but the very term of bankrupt was one of such opprobrium that any one meriting it was looked upon as an outcast, and it is matter of regret that the wholesome fear of such a condition has become very much less acute in our day. Notwithstanding all the difficulties in which the burghers were involved, and the numberless drawbacks to which they were subject, it is most interesting to note that no sooner was the task of self-government undertaken than their attention was directed to the requirements of the conditions existing, and some of their earliest enactments provided for the support of Religion, Education, and the public service generally, according as the revenue which they at the same time were called upon to create permitted, and this may to a great extent be ascribed to the influence of the more effective Government which was brought to bear during the British occupation, as contrasted with their own former regime, bringing home to them again the necessity of order and safety to the prosperity of the individual and the community.

It has often been asserted, and many writers in the papers of our own day would seem to make it appear that there has invariably been a hostile feeling on the part of the burghers towards the British Government, and an unbroken opposition to its rule, but this view is not borne out by the facts, for at two distinct periods within the nine years after the withdrawal of the Sovereignty, very numerous signed memorials, comprising the names too of leading burghers, were tabled in the Volksraad, expressive of a desire to re-invoke the return of that regime, so that there are good grounds for assuming that the strong and equitable rule of the Sovereignty had left a marked and favourable impression on the minds of the people. The readiness, too, with which the laws then in force in the Colony were re-enacted for this State, some of which to this day form the basis of our system, in regard to the administration of justice, administration of estates, testate, intestate and insolvent, the marriage law, the sale of liquor, and many other matters, afford proof that they had learned to value their tenour and effect.

After the retrocession, too, the influence of the more educated European element left in their midst was most beneficial, the provisions of the first constitution in regard to burgher right and the franchise were liberal in the extreme, the only requisite being a residence during a period of six months, and enrolment by the fieldcornet for service, or commando, or burgher duty. This being so, and the qualification for representation offering no difficulty, several influential European residents were elected to the Volksraad, and took a leading part in the construction of the constitution, the rules of order, and legislative measures, so making their education and experience in the business of life and the conduct of affairs available to their less favoured fellow-burghers in the initiation of measures for the common good, and to the careful study of the various measures of those times, it will be abundantly apparent what an important and beneficial influence was brought to bear by the European burghers of that day.

It is always matter of marvel to me how well and assiduously the Volksraad of those early days acquitted itself of its new and unaccustomed responsibility. Having to create the Governmental machine, member by member, as the demand arose, to meet the emergencies arising from combinations of unforeseen circumstances, and with all their experience in legislation still to make, we find the members meeting sometimes twice, often three times, in the same year, and when we recall the distances to be traversed, the lack of intercommunication, the difficulty of speedy conveyance, and the fact that their allowance was of the smallest, we cannot withhold our admiration for their sacrifice of time and interests to the country's demands.

Nor were the duties of the Volksraad solely confined to legislation. From the very first, and as a natural consequence of existing circumstances, both executive and judicial functions had to be performed by it directly. Wonder is often expressed in regard to the almost unlimited powers which in the Constitution were vested in the Volksraad by the people, but when we reflect that that body was the chosen repository of the public confidence, that it was looked to to establish all necessary Departments of State, and to exercise full control over them, to secure proper administration, that there were absolutely no men to whom they could give unlimited confidence, wherewith to fill up the various offices, no competent legal functionaries, no trained officials, no financial experts, from among whom a reliable *personnel* could be obtained to be entrusted with executive, judicial, and administrative functions, we are no longer surprised that all power was reserved to the Volksraad, to be delegated by it as the development of affairs demanded, and to these circumstances it must be attributed that we find the early Volksraad not only leg's-

lative, but to a great extent administrative and executive, and also judicial, forming the Highest Court of Appeal.

The magisterial functionaries at that time were the fieldcornets, to some extent in their wards, but chiefly the Landdrosts of the towns; and the highest Court under the Volksraad was that of Landdrost and Heemraden. It was, however, speedily rendered necessary to regulate the judicial administration differently, so as to establish a Circuit Court superior to the Landdrost and Heemraden, and this was found in the creation of the Court of Combined Landdrosts, having, with a jury, full criminal jurisdiction, and with higher civil jurisdiction in other matters, while the Volksraad divested itself of its functions as Court of Appeal, vesting them in the Executive Council, and this arrangement of judicial powers existed up to 1875, when a special High Court was substituted, consisting of a Judge and two Assessors, afterwards changed to a Bench of three Judges, as at present.

The most fruitful source of litigation in those days was the land case, having its origin in disputes about beacons or boundaries between owners of adjoining farms, and considering the manner in which the first settlement of the land was made, it could not be otherwise. The first and most effectual title to any land was actual occupation, and as soon as Government was established the burghers applied for and obtained certificates of their occupation and prior right to that ground. The Sovereignty Government issued land certificates, and the republican certificates were known as requests. It frequently happened that no description of the property was made or extent stated, though in many cases both description and extent in minutes were given. These documents were the only title to the property for a considerable period, during which the lines and beacons were a variable quantity until Land Commissions were sent out to inspect the farms and fix their boundaries. At these Land Commissions parties had to appear, present their land certificates, or requests, point out their beacons, state by what right they held them, whether by original occupation or by purchase, and the Land Commission would then proceed to define and describe the property. All particulars concerning it were embodied in the Land Commission report, upon which afterwards a more formal title or grondbrief was issued. Many requests were, however, issued only for open ground, and the Commission would then proceed to inspect and apportion unoccupied ground to each request in succession. Compass-bearings were taken, and often very faultily taken, and beacons of the most temporary nature used, such as for instance an anthep, or antbear's hole, the skull of a wildebeeste or blesbok lying handy, a tree or bush, a kopje, bult, manhaar or randje—descriptions very inaccurately made, very often important omissions occurred, and clerical errors by which a hiatus

would be left. Upon these inspection reports, titles were issued, and when the owners came to verify these upon the land, numberless discrepancies and irreconcilable differences were discovered and encroachments found to exist from one side or the other, while to crown all it repeatedly happened that one Land Commission overlapped upon ground already inspected by another, or even to some extent overlapped ground inspected by itself, such gross errors affecting a whole range of properties, and resulting in a double set of titles being issued for the same extent of ground, culminating in numberless lawsuits, affording a rich harvest for the legal fraternity, while the land owners took each other from the Land Commission to the Circuit Court, and from the Circuit to the Court of Appeal, long periods intervening in the most cases only to find in the end that what with the expenses to produce witnesses, who were usually either the members of the Land Commission, or parties present at the inspection, what with the travelling and other charges of their Counsel and the law costs, they had purchased a very dear experience, at a price far beyond the actual value of the land in dispute.

Let us now still enquire what the state of educational matters was, and we find with regard to the rural population here and there an instance of a more well-to-do farmer able to send a son to a school in town for a few months, here and there a few able to employ an itinerant schoolmaster, but for the most part the instruction required to enable the young to obtain some idea of the responsibilities of church membership was imparted by their parents, mostly by the mother, whose chief, nay, frequently only, means were the "Trap der Jeugd," or as we could call it perhaps "Step by Step," containing the alphabet and rudimentary spelling, and the Bible. In the towns any school which may temporarily have existed was mainly due to private effort, and the attempts of the Government to establish public schools were impracticable and of very meagre result.

The Government allowance for school purposes in each district was £90, a comparatively considerable sum, having regard to the amount of the general revenue at that period, but of small actual value to meet existing wants. The *modus operandi* was usually the following:—A public meeting was called and a school committee elected, subscription lists were opened, and when sufficient private subscriptions offered supplementing the Government grant so as to warrant further steps, a place was hired for a school and a schoolmaster advertised for. If a suitable man was appointed, the school generally flourished pretty well for a year or two, but as the subscriptions ceased to be paid up regularly, or differences arose between parents and master, or master and committee, as children were withdrawn and fees dwindled away, the interest of the master waned, the school died off, and was closed for a longer or shorter period, until

some fresh effort was made by the minister and other interested persons. Nor was it always an easy matter to get parties to become members of school committees, after experience had taught them that failing public subscriptions coming in they had only the Government allowance to look to, and were held personally liable for all expenditure in excess of that amount.

Bloemfontein was the only town where a public school was established on a more permanent basis, and that was, thanks to the munificence of the good Governor, Sir George Grey, the Grey College, which afforded the opportunity of regular and more advanced tuition than the district schools, and hence we find it always had a prominent place in all educational developments. But in the country districts outside of the towns, things were in a lamentable condition.

Even where parents were alive to their children's interests, and eager to obtain some education for them, they were for the most part dependent upon a class of men whose employment was often accompanied by great moral danger to their pupils, men who had failed in other walks of life, and had taken up itinerant schoolmastership just as a means of subsistence, some of them discharged soldiers or deserters, some who had left numbers of enquiring friends in the Colony so as to free themselves from their importunity for the settlement of debt, or fled on account of misdemeanours, a great many without either religion or moral principle and victims to drink, to such the poor farmers living far from the town had in numberless instances to look for the instruction of their children at the great risk of their becoming familiar with forms of evil previously unknown to them, and the history of those times teems with anecdotes illustrative of the peculiar relations which held between the farmer and the master, and the difficulties and annoyance which had to be put up with.

Such a thing, therefore, as a regular, efficient and organised educational work was quite unknown, but the very difficulties which had to be undergone proved a stimulus to the people to procure a proper system, and hence pressure was continually brought to bear on the authorities both of Church and State, for the inauguration of better conditions, and slowly but surely led to the adoption of effective measures. It was only, however, after the close of the Basuto war that the matter could be thoroughly and earnestly taken up, resulting in the establishment of the Education Fund, separate from the general revenue, the interest of which was exclusively set apart to the support of a better system, and its regular and persistent maintenance, and any one cognisant of the educational efforts of to-day would hardly have believed them possible had he seen the conditions from which they have been evolved, but now we can rejoice in the hunger and thirst for education manifested all over our land, in the schools springing

up everywhere like mushrooms, and we cherish the hope of great and true advancement for our State also in this respect in the future.

In thus attempting to sketch some phases of conditions existing thirty-one years ago, I have sought to avoid mere historical details of occurrences and burdening you with statistics, preferring to give you some idea of the circumstances of the country, as I can remember them at that period, so as to enable you to judge of the progress which has been made during that lapse of time and I shall be well pleased if my humble effort led to the conviction that there is very much that is interesting and instructive in the history of our State, to the desire to know more about the land of our adoption, and to a better acquaintance with the many lessons to be learnt from the remarkable preservation and development of its pioneer settlers and their conquest of its difficulties. When we look around and see how rapidly civilization has supervened and nearly European conditions in many respects been attained, it appears almost incredible that a people which had been so long isolated from all contact with the progress of their times should within such a short period be led to adopt so much that was and must have been utterly foreign to any habit either of mind or body in which they were trained, and we no longer doubt that under a continuance of God's guidance, and an average prosperity, it is destined to occupy an important place in the future history of South African development.

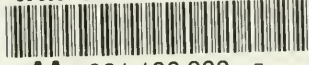
At the conclusion of this paper, the Chairman, Mr. Sowden, invited any of the audience, who wished, to make any remarks on the subject or ask any questions.

His Honour the President rose and expressed the great interest with which he had listened to the paper. He was not such an old resident as Mr. Fraser, although he had been in the State twenty-one years. He had read Theal's History, the Basutoland Records, and had studied the files of the *Friend of the Free State* in order to gain all possible information with regard to the history of the country, and thus could bear out what Mr. Fraser had put before them in such an able manner that evening.

The Chairman welcomed His Honour in the name of the Society, and said they were especially proud as it was the first time he had honoured their meetings.

Mr. Smetham proposed a vote of thanks, and Mr. S. F. Deale seconded.

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