

The Passing of the Boers

THE passing of the Boer now hastens apace. The beginning of his end is at hand, and at any moment may come the burst that will announce the last act of the most interesting historical drama that has come upon the world's stage during the century.

And a bloody tragedy will this last act be, as has been most of the others in his history, for however comical the situation and ridiculous the attitude of the Boer may appear to Europeans, he is a furious, God-fearing fighter, and man to man, has already proved himself more than equal to Britain's best, as witness the several bloody battles of the short two months' war of 1881, ending with the disastrous defeat and rout of the British at Majuba Hill. Then he was not so well equipped with arms and munitions, while his foes had the most modern of both. Now the Boer has the very best that plentiful ready gold will buy, and is moreover an expert in their use under any and all conditions.

Well may the British Government hesitate to again engage with such a foe. Yet the time is full; the national interests of the English merchant and miner are impeded by the Boer, and he must go, cost what blood and treasure it may.

The Boer whom the British found at Cape Colony in 1806, when the fortune of war gave them that their first start in the game of land-grabbing on the Dark Continent was not, as is often supposed, of pure Dutch extraction, although that strain largely predominated.

He was the ultimate product of 154 years' growth from a mixed stock of Hollanders, Germans, Swedes and Finns with a few British—116 men in all, whom Captain Jan Van Riebeeck, on behalf of the Dutch East India Company, brought from Holland in 1652 to establish a revictualling post for their ships at the Cape of Good Hope. Five years later the port became a colony in the proper sense of the word and the spreading out and making permanent homes in the surrounding country began. Then, too, began the development of the real Boer—not in Cape Town, visited by ships of all nations going to and from the Indies and corrupted by contact with Europe and Asia, but out in the country of the Hottentots, the lion and the giraffe, who habitually made place before him; warring with the first and fighting the second and his like, who numerously

abounded from his flocks and "kraals"; he spent half his time in the saddle, always with ready rifle. His horse was as a part of himself, and his aim as quick and true as his eyesight.

The growth of the colony, though slow at first, became more rapid after the middle of the seventeenth century, as its importance began to be more appreciated by the Dutch East India Company. With visiting ships came men from all nationalities, and loads of young Dutch women were regularly sent out from Holland to provide them with wives. The revocation of the edict of Nantes, 1685, sent several hundred French Huguenots, most desirable to the Cape.

This process of admixture and assimilation produced not Holland Dutchmen, but South African Dutchmen, Boers not to be duplicated elsewhere on the face of the earth.

Cape Colony passed permanently under the British flag with the capture of Cape Town by General Baird in 1806, though it had been held by them under a Governor sent out from England from 1795 until restored to Holland by the peace of Amiens in 1803.

Though inaugurated with fair promises, which were well pleasing to the colonists, who had suffered long under the oppressive exactions of the Dutch East India Company, the rule of their new masters soon became far heavier than that of the old.

General Craig on taking possession issued a proclamation stating, "The monopoly and the oppression hitherto practiced for the profit of the East India Company is at an end. From this day forward there is free trade and a free market. Every one may buy from whom he will, sell to whom he will, employ whom he will and come and go wherever he chooses, by land or by water. No new taxes will be levied, and those in existence which are found oppressive to the people will be done away with. The paper money shall continue to hold its value, but the English make their payments in hard coin." This from the representative of the British Government sounded well and promised contentment and prosperity. Had his successors lived up to his promises the Boers would have long remained in Cape Colony; the "Great Trek" would not have been made and the history of Boer wars and British defeats in the past and now about to come would not have to be written.

The policy outlined by General Craig was entirely ignored by his next successor and those after him. In its place were measures calculated to crush the very life out of the colony. All important offices were held by Englishmen with inordinately large

The hardy men of the Transvaal can "trek" no longer. The British surround them and the hand of England begins to close. The Boer has gold and can fight. Will he win, or is the day near when he shall at last fall before his old, bitter foe?

salaries, which consumed more than two-thirds of the whole revenue. All trade with countries east of the Cape was reserved for the English East India Company and heavy duties were imposed on all goods brought from the West in other than English bottoms. The Government fixed the price at which the farmers should furnish supplies to the garrison and ships of war plying at the Cape, and further large issues of paper money were made. Oppressive personal laws, tyrannically enforced, abridged the liberties of the colonists and kept them in a state of sullen discontent. An influx of 5000 British settlers in 1820-21 was followed by a decree requiring all official documents to be published in English and the proceedings in the courts of law to be in that language, and then that all memorials and petitions addressed to the Government should be in English or have a translation attached. The outside Circuit Courts were done away with and all criminal cases required to be taken to Cape Town. In no other colony has Great Britain ever pursued such harsh measures as were had in dealing with the Boers.

The reduction of the value of the paper money, much of which had been issued by the Government, to three-eighths of the face of the notes, and making English silver legal tender at that rate of exchange, caused a loss of some \$4,000,000 to the colonists, most of which fell upon the farmers in the outlying settlements.

A military police, composed of Hottentots and English officers, was another great cause of complaint.

Finally the last straw came in the shape of the emancipation proclamation after Boer resistance to "trek" began in 1835. The Boer farmers, almost to a man, left Cape Colony and sought new homes in the unexplored regions to the north-east.

It was proposed to pay the colonists for their slaves set free. A commission fixed their value at about \$15,000,000. Of this amount the home Government cut off two-thirds actually and the rest practically, by requiring each claim to be proved before a commission in London, and payment then to be made in 3% per cent stock.

The farmers could not well make the

long journey to London, and, selling their claims for a small fraction of their face, swore allegiance to the British crown, abandoned everything they could not readily carry with them and "outspanned" into the unbroken wilderness.

The exodus began in 1835, and for the next three years party after party of Boers, numbering from ten to fifty families, carrying all their belongings in huge wagons drawn by ten or twelve span of oxen each, poured from Cape Colony across the Orange River and then over the Drakensberg Mountains into the more inviting country of Natal.

Sir George Napier, then Governor of Cape Colony, in a proclamation issued in July, 1838, set forth the principle which has governed the attitude of the British Government toward the Boers ever since. It invited the Boers to remain and at the same time informed them that her Majesty's Government was "determined not to permit the creation of any pretended independent States by British emigrants." The Boers protested, but were overpowered, and in 1843 Natal was proclaimed to be a British province.

They spread out over what is now the Orange Free State and some of them crossed the Vaal River and blazed the way for a larger emigration that was soon to follow.

British aggression followed them into the Orange country, and in spite of the warnings of Pretorius, their leader, that the Boers would resist or "trek," again in 1848 the country between the Orange and Vaal Rivers was proclaimed to be British territory, under the title of the Orange River Sovereignty. The Boers were beaten in the battle of Boomplaat, near Bloemfontein and most of them "trekked" across the Vaal, to join their companions, leaving their farms to British emigrants from Cape Colony.

Again they formed a new republic, the independence of which was formally recognized by the British in January, 1852, but what was called the "Great Trek" was not over until 1854.

The Transvaal Government has no standing army, and, with the exception of four volunteer organizations of 1200 men, know little of marching in line and drilling, but they have some 38,000 able men ready for service on short notice, as was seen by the promptness with which the Jameson raid was ended in 1896. In the last three years they have expended some \$3,000,000 for arms and ammunition, all of the most improved patterns.

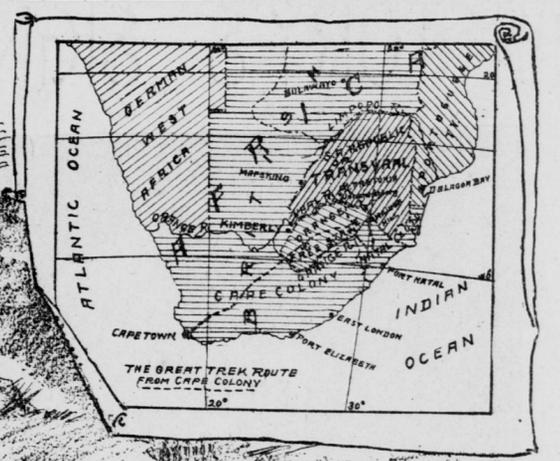
themselves, according to their own laws, without any interference on the part of the British Government, and that no encroachment should be made by the said Government upon the territory north of the Vaal River.

The Boers prospered in their new home in spite of dissensions among themselves and troubles with their native neighbors, and in 1877 the idea of annexing them to the British Crown again took definite shape.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone, on behalf of the British Government, came into the country on a visit of inspection, and after consulting with a few of the inhabitants, on April 12, 1877, hoisted the British flag at Rustenburg, not far from Pretoria. An interval of peaceful but strong protest against this violation of the Sand River Convention was followed in December, 1880, by an uprising of the Boers, led by such men as Kruger, Albert and others, whose still leader in Transvaal affairs, the British garrisons in the towns were besieged and when a strong force was sent from Natal, under Sir Evelyn Wood, to their assistance, the Boers met them at the border and in four successive engagements, defeated them with terrible loss, especially of officers, and at small cost to themselves.

At Majuba Hill, the last and most disastrous engagement to the British of this seven weeks' war, they had every advantage of position, on the summit of Majuba Hill, where they were attacked on February 26, 1881, by an inferior force of Boers in three columns. Outflanked and surrounded, the whole British force, among whom were the famous Gordon Highlanders, broke and fled in utter rout, leaving many dead on the field. A peace dictated by the Boers, reaffirming the guarantee of 1852, was forced from General Wood, who withdrew his forces.

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Boers Defeat Gordon Highlanders on Majuba Hill.

Since the discovery of the rich gold fields within their borders, bringing in a large influx of foreigners, mostly British, and the gradual cutting them off from any further "trekking" by British annexation of the country to the west and north of them, they have seen the inevitable and prepared for a last and long struggle.

They may be successful for a time, but with a large disloyal population in their midst and the might of the British Empire against them from without all around, cut off completely from all communication with the outside world, the result is a foregone conclusion.

Whether in two or ten years, the British flag will ultimately triumph, the Transvaal will have passed and the Boer will follow.

CURIOUS SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PINES

IS THE ONLY GROVE IN THE WORLD OF THIS PECULIAR SPECIES. LOVES THE SEA AND WILL GROW ON BARREN SANDSTONE CLIFFS.

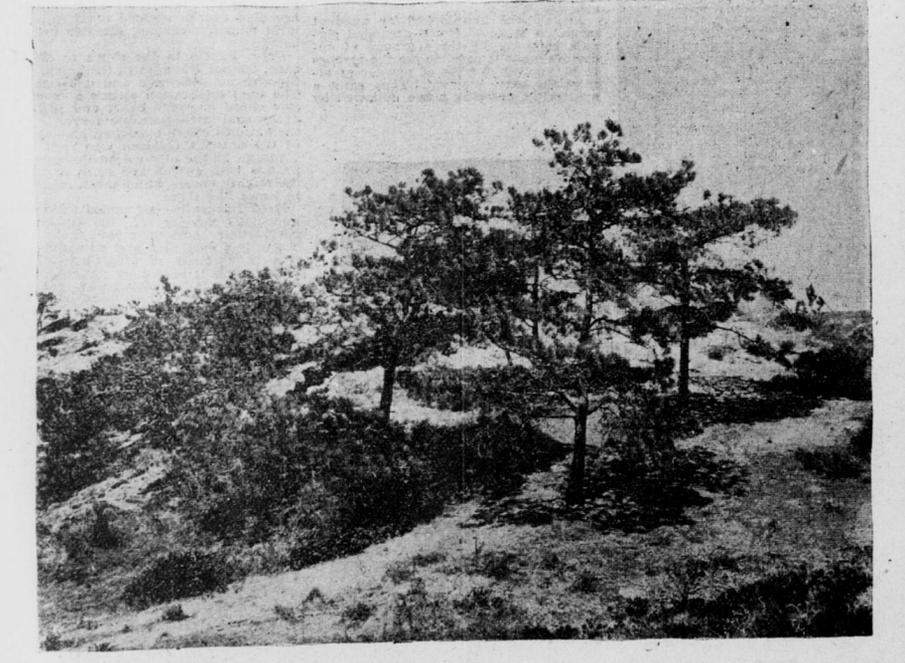
ON the sandstone cliffs that jut out into the sea eighteen miles north of the bay of San Diego, and in the unsightly little canyons that mar the beauty of the sandstone formation, is found the Pinus Torreyana—a pine tree that with the exception of a few specimens growing in Lower California, on Santa Rosa Island, off the coast of Southern California, and near San Pedro, is found in no other part of the world.

The grove in San Diego County contains nearly a thousand specimens of the rare and unique pine, which in spite of the buffeting winds from the ocean and

the ravages of thoughtless woodchoppers has thrived and grown and lent beauty to the otherwise barren landscape along that part of the coast. Though it has been nearly half a century since the grove was discovered and the species given a name by a scientist, no definite steps have ever been taken by the authorities of San Diego to preserve the trees. The City Council of San Diego—the corporate limits of the city extend to a point further north than the grove of pines—has before it an ordinance setting apart the pine lands as a park reservation, and there is not a member of the Council so

disloyal to the city as to vote against the adoption of the ordinance.

This pine tree was first made known to the world by Dr. C. C. Parry, a noted botanist and member of the Mexican Boundary Commission in 1850, who, finding it was a new species, dedicated it to the veteran American botanist, Dr. John Torrey, who may be called the father of systematic botany in America. This plant, so far as the United States is concerned, is practically confined to the locality near La Jolla, though it is said that a few scattered trees are found near San Pedro, in the mountains of Lower California and on Santa Rosa Island. The tree is known to the world only through San Diego. For



Grove of Pinus Torreyana on Santa Rosa Island.

CORNSTALKS FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE

UNITED STATES NAVY WILL CARRY A FELT OF CELLULOSE ARMOR. PREVENTS WATER COMING IN WHEN PIERCED BY PROJECTILES.

A NEW device in warship construction has been found, which, it is believed, will make the American navy, ship for ship, the superior of any other in the world. Curiously enough, the material for this improvement comes, not from our seaboard products, but from the waste of Western farms. Its value lies in the fact that it will prevent a vessel's fighting ability from being destroyed even after she has been pierced in a dozen places.

Mr. Lewis Nixon, formerly a United States naval constructor and who is now engaged in building warships for the government at Elizabethport, N. J., says of the new invention:

"The value of some light substance that will preserve the stability of light armored vessels by displacing water that might enter after a projectile has been appreciated by naval constructors ever since we began to build steel armored vessels.

"To meet this need the French originated the use of cellulose, which, when fired into, swells up under the influence of water and prevents further inflow. After various trials it was adopted in our navy. Thus, in the Columbia, the

New York and the Olympia, there are thick protective decks of ample strength to keep out the shells of any vessels they are liable to engage, while their stability is protected by belts of cellulose several feet thick along the edges.

"No thoroughly satisfactory cellulose material for this purpose was discovered, however, until the pith of cornstalks was utilized in its manufacture. Corn pith is a perfect obturator. It absolutely prevents water from coming in by the opening made by an 8-inch shell. When chemically treated it is thoroughly fireproof and in every way it meets the requirements of the situation.

"For keeping out water, a cellulose belt of three feet may be said to be about as efficient as a 6-inch belt of steel, so that we can protect our stability when we have a good protective deck back of it to protect the vitals, with 100 tons of cellulose, where we should require 1600 tons of armor.

The use of corn pith for this purpose was suggested several years ago by Professor Mark W. Mersden, who had observed its remarkable absorbent qualities. He brought the matter to the attention of the Bureau of Naval Construction, and at their suggestion devised an apparatus for separating the pith from the stalk. In 1896 the navy authorities were induced to make a test of the new product. A 250-pound projectile was fired through a steel coffin

dam packed with cellulose three feet thick. The shell made a hole a foot in diameter through the structure. The water was immediately turned on and continued for an hour. At the end of that time not a drop had come through, and the packing at the hole in the rear of the plate was not even dampened.

Three factories now in operation are employed in turning out the product. The largest of them is at Owensboro, Ky. The others are at Rockford, Ill., and Chester, Pa.

Since the whole process of this manufacture is a new one, the machinery by which it is carried on had to be especially devised. The problems which it presented baffled the inventor for some time, but he has at length succeeded in perfecting machinery which makes it possible to turn out the finished products on a large scale.

The stalks must be well ripened before cutting, and must be thoroughly cured. After stripping off the ears the farmer hauls the stalks to the factory, where they are paid for at the rate of \$2 per ton.

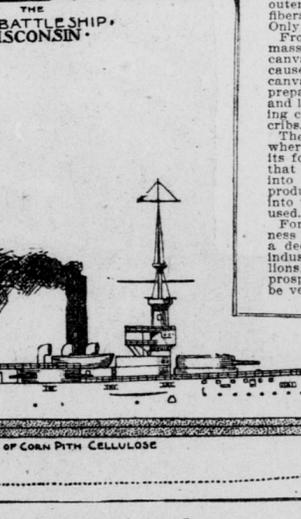
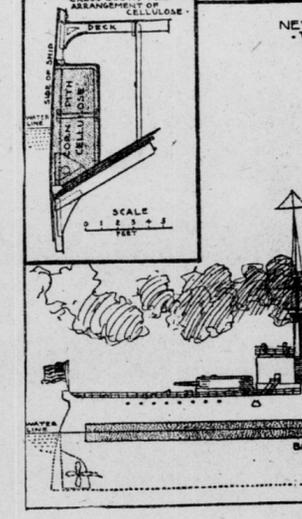
The piles of stalks, just as they come to the factory, are fed into big cutting machines, which chop them into short lengths. Elevating shafts carry them to the roof of the factory, where they pass over great screens with fans to separate the leaves and lighter parts.

An ingenious machine, with upright knives, strips off the "shive," the hard outer portion of the stalk and the tough fibers that run lengthwise of the stem. Only the soft inner portion is left.

From the stripping machines the whole mass falls upon long traveling strips of canvas. The elastic nature of the pith causes it to bound up and down on the canvas until it falls off into a receptacle prepared for it. The chopped up stalks and leaves go to the end of the traveling curtains, where they are dumped into cribs.

The pith goes next to the compressor, where it is packed to about one-fourth its former bulk. Even then it is so light that only about three tons can be packed into an ordinary freight car. The other products are used for making paper and into the prepared food in which they are used.

For a new industry the cornstalk business is remarkably active. By the end of a decade the statistics of the cornstalk industry will probably be counted in millions, and its influence in adding to the prosperity of the great corn belt should be very marked.



Corn Pith Used for Armor.