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Author(s): Bartle Frere

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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
AND MONTHLY RECORD OF GEOGRAPHY.

On Temperate South Africa. By The Right Hon. Sir BARTLE FRERE,
Bart., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., &c., late Governor of the Cape Colony, and
H.M.'s High Commissioner for South Africa.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, November 22, 1880.)

Map, p. 64.

I PROPOSE this evening to ask the attention of the Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society to the state of our geographical knowledge of the temperate region of South Africa, and to the facilities it offers as a basis of operations for exploring the interior regions of Central Africa, by following the lead indicated by Livingstone in his first journey of exploration.

Strictly speaking, of course, the term "Temperate South Africa" would be taken as including only the extra-tropical portion of the continent; but owing to the elevation of the greater part of the region near the tropic of Capricorn, the temperate region extends north of the tropic, and may be roughly described as bounded to the north by a line starting from the West Coast at about Cape Frio, or the southern limit of the basin of the Cunene or Nourse river, whence following the line of water-parting between the basins of the Cunene river on the one hand, and the affluents of the Zambesi and the waters which fall into Lake Ngami on the other hand, the line would run east and south to the water-parting which separates the basins of the Orange and the Limpopo rivers to the south, from the basin of Lake Ngami and the Zambesi river to the north, continuing in an easterly direction to about 28° of E. long. Thence the boundary of the temperate region trends in a south-easterly direction,

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through regions not yet fully explored, excluding much of the basin of the Limpopo and its affluents; and when it has reached the southern limit of that basin, follows the line of mountains which join the Drakensberg till they reach Zululand, where the low-lying coast districts about Delagoa Bay may be considered as outside the temperate and within the sub-tropical region.

From Zululand the Indian, and from Cape Frio the Atlantic, Oceans complete the boundaries of Temperate South Africa.

The total region within the boundaries described is about equal to 1,190,000 square miles, that is to say nearly one-third the size of Europe, or six times the size of France.

Within almost the whole of the tract thus bounded the climate and general conditions of human life are such as suit men of European race. They can live, and thrive, and multiply in the manner exemplified by the history of the Dutch and English speaking population of the Cape Colony.

South and west of the line I have indicated I believe that almost everywhere the country is fairly healthy for Europeans, and families of European stock may live as they have always done in the Western province and the Karroo. As the desert and the tropic are approached, the heat is at times excessive, but never, I am assured, so great as to prevent outdoor labour by Europeans.

North and east of the lines I have defined, a malarious fever is met with in all low-lying localities, and especially where the frontier bends southward to the north of Delagoa Bay. Such fever, if not unknown south and west of the line indicated, at any rate does not interfere with the ordinary conditions of healthy existence for men of European stock. North of that line, however, the malarious tracts are sufficiently numerous to be a great practical difficulty in the way of European settlement.

If, again, a second line be drawn in advance of that just described from the Portuguese frontier on the west coast to the Zambesi, and down the Zambesi till the Portuguese settlements are again reached, it will include those tribes which are connected by commerce and occasional intercourse with our South African European colonies. With these further regions between the Limpopo and the Zambesi the white settlers of the Transvaal and other South African European colonies have already considerable commercial relations, but except a few traders and missionaries there are no European settlers.

Let us now consider what European colonies or States under European rule actually exist south of the first-mentioned line. The following table enumerates them, with their area and population, according to the latest returns :—

Colonies or States.	Area, Square Miles.	Population.
Under the Cape Parliament and Responsible Government.		
Cape Colony Proper	199,000	720,984 *
Basutoland	10,293	{ 127,707 natives. 469 Europeans. †
Kaffraria, Griqualand East, and Pondoland	20,000	285,000
Natal	21,150	{ 22,650 whites. 290,000 native Africans. 12,900 Coolies.
Transvaal	114,360	{ 260,000 natives (about). 40,000 whites † "
Orange Free State	42,470	{ 25,000 white. 25,000 coloured. †
Griqualand West	16,630	{ 32,940 12,337 white.
Disputed Territory (Keate's Award) ..	7,000	12,000

All these are now within the limits of British territory, between the sea, the Orange River, and the Limpopo, and (with the exception of the Orange Free State) are more or less under the government of the British crown.

Beyond the limits of British territory and south of the Portuguese boundary on the east coast are

Countries.	Area, Square Miles.	Population.
Zululand	100,000	250,000
Tongas	4,400	20,000
Swazis	4,400	40,000

All the above countries, provinces, and colonies are within the area habitable by Europeans as colonists.

North of the Limpopo and south of the Zambesi are a number of native States imperfectly known to our officials, but constantly visited by traders—chiefly English—and a few missionaries, through whom there is much occasional intercourse with these states, sufficient to give to each party some idea of the resources and disposition of the other. The Matabele, the principal of these tribes, were a very barbarous branch of

* Cape Colony Census, 1875:—Europeans or whites	236,783
Malays	10,817
Hottentots	98,561
Fingoes	73,506
Kaffirs or Bechuanas	214,133
Mixed and others	87,184

† In 1875. Total	720,984
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‡ A much larger estimate of the population of the Transvaal is given in the Report of Mr. Henrique Shepstone at p. 16 of Parliamentary Bluebook C, 2584:—

Natives	774,930 souls.
Europeans:—	
Dutch	33,739
Others	5,316
	39,055 "
	813,985 :

NOTE.—It may give to popular apprehension a better idea of these areas to say that the Cape Colony is nearly equal in size to France, and nearly double the old kingdom of Prussia; that Basutoland is about the size of the kingdom of Greece; that Kaffraria and Natal are each about double the size of Greece; that the Transvaal is a little smaller than the British Isles; and the Orange Free State a little larger than the old kingdom of the two Sicilies, or about four times the size of Greece.

the Zulus who revolted and left Zululand about fifty years ago, and being headed back by the Trek-Boers then travelling northwards, and checked on the west in their destructive raids on the more civilised but less warlike Bechuanas, turned to the north-east, and finally settled far north of the Limpopo, under Moselikatze, the father of Lobengula, the present chief. They were visited, when Moselikatze was in the neighbourhood of the Rustenburg district of the Transvaal, by Captain (afterwards Sir William) Harris, an accomplished officer of the Bombay Engineers, who was hunting in their country rather more than forty years ago. He gives a vivid and most interesting picture of their barbarous condition, and the character of the chief and people, at that time.

The only material changes which have taken place since then among the Matabele, are due to the action of the missionaries and traders who have visited them, or settled at the capital. Eastward of the Matabele the influence of the Portuguese traders, and of the active slave trade, is more felt.

The following is Mr. A. A. Anderson's estimate of the area and population of the countries north of British territory up to the Zambesi. Mr. Anderson has visited most of these countries, and the areas are generally given, with some approach to correctness, from the map; but the estimate of population is apparently a calculation from the area, of so many souls, generally one to every two square miles.

Countries.	Area. Square Miles.	Population.
1. Matabele (Zulus)	100,000	Thickly populated. { Large and industrious population. { Portions thickly populated, and people industrious.
2. Mashona		
3. Makalaka (Lobengula's)		
4. Makombe, east of Mashona ..	40,000	20,000
5. Gasa Country, Umzila's, &c. ..	70,000	
6. About Lake Ngami, under Moremi, son of Leshulatebe, whose capital is on the east side of the Lake and River Zouga }	40,000	30,000
7. Ovampoland	60,000	
8. Damaraland	100,000	84,000
9. Great Namaqualand	70,000	20,000
10. Bamangwato (Khama)	70,000	45,000
11. Molopolole (Sechele)	30,000	45,000 (exclusive of Bushmen, Dr. Holub says 30,000).
12. Also two chiefs, with an independent following of chief Gaseitsive (Khatsitsive of Holub); chief town Kanya	60,000	35,000
Chief Montsioa	20,000	15,000 (Holub says 30,000).
13. Petty tribes, north of Griqualand West	30,000	20,000
14. Kalahari Desert, 600 miles long by 200 to 400 broad	260,000	
15. Desert of Orange River	20,000	
Total from British Colonies, up to 16° S. lat.	970,000	

I may here add, for the sake of reference, the following estimate taken from Captain Harrel's Report, 17th of April, 1880, on the Cis-Molapo tribes, i. e. those residing between the Molapo and the Vaal rivers.

Tribes.	Chiefs.	Chief Towns.	Population.
Barolong	Montsioa	Schuba	12,500
„	Moroquane	Moroquane	10,000
„	Makobi	Pitsani	2,500
„	Mathlabi	Polfontein	5,000
Batlaro	Bareki	Koningvley	10,000
Batlapin	Mankurwane	Taung	12,500
Mari Batlapin	Mathlabane	Monte and Bkwani	7,500
Korannas and Batsatsing	Massouw	Mamusa	5,000
		say	60,000

All these estimates, it will be seen, are conjectural; but at present none more accurate are procurable.

The Damaras (No. 8 on the list) and the broken tribes of Great Namaqualand (No. 9) have been well described by Mr. Francis Galton, Andersson the Swedish traveller, and more recently and fully by Mr. Coates Palgrave. All the leading clans have, for various reasons, sought to place themselves more or less under the protection of the British Government; but none have been directly received as subjects, though a Resident has been appointed to use his good offices in keeping the peace in Damaraland, and as magistrate at Walvisch Bay. Through that port, and such smaller landing-places as Angra Pequena, much British, Norwegian, and German trade under the British flag is carried on; whilst many missionaries, chiefly German and Norwegian, with a few English, French, and Finns, have devoted themselves to Christianise and civilise the Namaquas and Damaras.

On the eastern side of the Kalahari, so-called, desert, the tribes of Bechuanas, Batlapins, and others, entered as Nos. 10 to 13 on the list, are in a state of civilisation far more advanced than any other in South Africa; and through the agency of the missionaries of the London and other missionary societies, the companions and successors of Livingstone and Moffat, much progress has been made in Christianising them.

The Christian chief, Khama of Bamangwato, rules over the most prosperous and powerful of these tribes in a manner which would do honour to any sovereign in Europe. He is much amenable to the influence of the British Government in the Transvaal, to which he is inclined to look for aid should he ever require support against his aggressive and barbarous neighbours, the Matabele. He is, however, entirely independent, whilst all the chiefs to the south of his country down to the border of Griqualand West are in a transition state, nominally independent, but unable to resist either external aggression

or domestic lawlessness without some aid from their European neighbours. The responsibility for giving such aid has never been acknowledged by the British Government; but the old chiefships have fallen into decay, and the question of what shall be substituted for them must before long be faced by the Governments interested in the peace of those regions, namely the Governments of Transvaal and Griqualand West, and in a less degree those of the Orange Free State and Cape Colony.

The annexed map, from a sketch by Lieutenant Elphinstone Dallymple, shows the relative position of all the colonies and tribes (comprised within what may be termed Temperate South Africa) referred to.

Two lines drawn from Cape Town show by the scale of miles and the names written on them the distances in a direct line from London of many of the best known European capitals and great cities, and give by comparison a better idea than mere figures of the vast area of South Africa, and the enormous distances apart of the chief centres of commerce and population.

To recapitulate: In that portion of South Africa, which is suited for colonisation and continuous residence by men of European extraction, there are five European colonies and States:—1. Cape Colony; 2. Natal; 3. Transvaal; 4. Orange Free State; 5. Griqualand West. They have an aggregate area of 393,610 square miles—a little less than double the area of France—and an aggregate population of about 336,770 of European extraction, and about 1,105,041 of coloured races, for the most part natives of Africa.

The rest of the tract comprises an area of about double the size of the five European colonies and States, and probably not less than double their population, which is, with comparatively very trifling exceptions, entirely of native race, and independent of Colonial or European government.

To obtain a better idea of the general surface configuration of this area, attention should first be directed to the great river basins, especially that of the Orange River, which geologists tell us must have been a vast inland sea, till it was drained by some great convulsion of nature which opened the gap on the mountains of the West Coast through which the Orange River now takes its course to the Atlantic. The western, the southern, and the eastern limits of this basin are formed by wide mountain ranges, which, rising in successive terraces from the Atlantic and Indian oceans to a height of from 4000 to 5500 feet, are known by various names at different parts of their course, till the Drakensberg rises to its highest peaks, estimated at about 10,000 feet, near the point where the boundaries of Natal, Basutoland, and the Orange Free State meet. The “Mont aux Sources,” as it was named by the French missionaries, is generally held to be the highest point in the whole range, and close to it are the sources of many rivers—some,

such as the Orange River and its tributaries, flowing in a north-west or west direction to the Atlantic; others, like the Tugela, flowing to the east coast.

I may here remind the Society that the Tugela, rising on the north face of this great mountain range, throws itself almost at one leap down 2000 feet to the valleys of Natal below. There are actually, I am told, three falls, though they appear as one, till the spectator is quite close, and the volume of water in the rainy season is very great. These falls have been very little visited, though they are to be reached from either side of the mountains without any serious difficulty or danger.

I would now say a few words on the extent to which the information recorded on our best maps may be considered as fairly accurate.

First, as regards the coast-line.

The coast from the mouth of the Orange River round the Cape Peninsula to the mouth of the Tugela has been surveyed at various times with sufficient accuracy for all purposes of ocean navigation, and the Cape Colony has in Mr. Skene, the Port officer of Port Elizabeth, and Captain May, R.N., nautical surveyors distinguished for their industry and the accuracy of their work. Captain May is constantly employed in surveying harbours and estuaries, completing and extending older surveys, and in other work within the Cape Colony, which is especially useful to local coasting trade.

But north of the Orange River on the west coast, and north of the Tugela on the east, the general coast-line has been laid down only from a running survey executed for the most part more than half a century ago, with partial surveys of more recent date and a more complete character, of particular portions, such as Walvisch Bay and the Guano Islands on the west coast, and Delagoa Bay on the east.

It is no disparagement of the marvellous industry and admirable work of Captain Owen and his fellow labourers, to say that their survey is by no means adequate to the wants of modern commerce.

The Indiamen and men-of-war of fifty years ago had little business near the coast, except in making Table Bay, Simon's Bay, or Algoa Bay, and Owen's running survey was generally sufficient for their purposes; but the great development of coasting steam traffic renders much more accurate and detailed surveys essential to prevent a frequent recurrence of accidents, such as have occurred, not only to coasting steamers, but to men-of-war, like H.M.S. *Boadicea* and *Tenedos*, which in the Zulu war narrowly escaped shipwreck on an unmarked shoal.

I am convinced that there are few things in the power of Her Majesty's Government, which would do more to promote and develop commerce on those coasts, than a careful detailed survey, by a vessel continuously employed for the purpose, assisted by a party travelling by land along the beach.

The expense of such operations, as compared with the security they

would afford against the wreck of valuable vessels, would be very trifling; and, as the subject has, I see, already attracted much notice, I would respectfully suggest that the Royal Geographical Society would not be going beyond the usual sphere of its action, in adding the weight of its influence with Her Majesty's Government, to ensure the complete and thorough survey of both the east and west coasts of South Africa.

As regards the territorial survey of South Africa there is a yet larger field open for geographical and topographical research. Of the whole area on the map before us, the only portion as yet surveyed with any pretensions to scientific accuracy is a coast series of triangulation from a point 150 miles south of the mouth of the Orange River to Cape Agulhas, which was surveyed under the direction of the late Sir Thomas Maclear, and a similar coast series continued under the direction of Captain Bailey, extending from where Maclear's series ends to the Kei river, which was then the frontier of the colony. This latter series is less perfect owing to the loss of some of the data by shipwreck; but it is quite sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes.

But beyond these series, which nowhere extend more than 100 miles from the coast, there is nothing like an accurate foundation for surveying operations, and indeed throughout the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal, the existing system of surveys is incompatible with scientific accuracy, as it is entirely synthetical, effected by piecing together detached surveys of estates without a previous foundation of accurate triangulation.

With a view to provide a more accurate basis for the surveys required in almost all departments of the Government, I invoked the aid of Sir Thomas Maclear's accomplished successor, Mr. David Gill, who is now the Astronomer in charge of the Royal Observatory, near Cape Town; and the Bluebook, of which I have now the honour to present a copy to the Royal Geographical Society, gives an abstract of Mr. Gill's proposals for continuing the trigonometrical survey in the Cape Colony and adjoining territories.

I feel assured that Mr. Gill's proposals will secure the hearty concurrence of all scientific geographers; and here again I feel sure that the legitimate influence of the Royal Geographical Society with Her Majesty's Government will not be exercised in vain, if the Council of the Society should see its way to bring to the notice of Her Majesty's Government the inestimable economical value of a sound scientific basis for all local surveys, which can only be afforded by such a system of triangulation as Mr. Gill suggests.

Let us turn now to other agencies for extending our geographical knowledge of these regions.

We have, I think, a very imperfect idea of the extent of missionary agency at work beyond the British boundary, and every mission station is of course a point where much accurate geographical information is

obtainable regarding the neighbouring country, and often for a long distance ahead, towards the less known interior.

Whilst in South Africa I obtained returns of most of these stations, of which the following is a summary :—

The Church of England sent returns of fourteen stations, generally near the border, but some from 100 to 150 miles inland, chiefly in Kaffraria and Zululand. There are seventy-one European agents at work, with several out-stations.

The Church of Rome has three stations in Damaraland and the Tati and Matabele districts, about 130 miles north of the Limpopo ; sixteen European agents chiefly connected with the orders of the Jesuits and of the Holy Ghost. One of the former, Father Law, has already contributed some valuable notes on the geography of Matabeleland.

The Dutch Reformed Church has three permanent stations with three out-stations, under fourteen European agents. Two of these stations are beyond the border of Transvaal, and one in Great Namaqualand.

The Wesleyan Church has sixteen stations beyond the colonial border, most of them in Kaffraria Transkei. There are sixty-five European agents, and many out-stations.

The London Missionary Society has eleven stations beyond the British frontier, chiefly in Bechuanaland, with twelve European missionaries, who are working in the field which was occupied by Moffat and Livingstone. The nearest station is 700 miles from Cape Town, and the furthest 1600.

The Rhenish Mission has twenty-one stations in Great Namaqualand and Damaraland. The stations are from two to forty days' journey beyond the Orange River, the day's journey being reckoned at from six to eight hours a day travelling by ox waggon, say from 18 to 26 miles. These stations employ 200 Europeans, missionaries and agents of various kinds. Nine of the stations are amongst the Herero Damaras, four among Nama Bastards, and the rest among Namas of pure blood.

The Royal Geographical Society is aware how much we already owe to members of this mission for our knowledge of Damaraland, and it is unnecessary to point out what a good position these missions occupy, for collecting geographical data regarding the regions north and north-east of Damaraland.

The Finnish Missionary Society has four stations in Damaraland, with four European agents. I may mention that the reason given to me for the attention of these missionaries being first directed to South Africa was the belief of some Finnish philologists that the language of the Namas and Bushmen belonged to the same family of languages as some of the less known languages of Northern Europe and Asia.

The three stations of the Scotch Church and Free Church Missions on Lake Nyassa, so well known to the Royal Geographical Society, and

so flourishing, employing thirty-one European agents, are classed by their brethren at the Cape as belonging to South Africa; but I think we must limit ourselves to the regions south of the Zambesi.

The Berlin Missionary Society has two stations, and the Moravian Church four, beyond the Orange River. The missions of the latter Church to the Hottentots and Namaquas are, I believe, among the oldest and most efficient in South Africa.

The French Protestant Missions have three stations, employing seven agents in Trans-Gariep. This does not, I believe, include the mission of the Rev. Mr. Coillard, who started from Basutoland with the intention of establishing a mission beyond the north-eastern frontier of the Matabele country; but not having succeeded in getting permission from Lobengula, the king of the Matabele, he finally selected a site not far from the Victoria Falls on the Zambesi, which will probably become an advanced point of geographical as well as of missionary work in that direction.

In all there are about eighty-four fixed stations of various missionary societies, with more than that number of out-stations, manned by some 412 European teachers of various classes—beyond the British frontier. These missions belong, as we have seen, to almost every branch of the Christian Church. The Church of England, the Church of Rome, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Wesleyans, the London Missionary Society, the German Rhenish Mission, the Finnish Missionary Society, the Free Church of Scotland, the Berlin Missionary Society, the Moravian Church, the French Protestant Missions—eleven societies in all.

When it is considered that each of the agents employed by these societies is a man of some education, and often a man of the highest culture and great intellectual power—that most of them have some, and many a most intimate, knowledge of the native languages, and all are in the course of their duty constantly in communication with natives of all classes—it will be apparent what an enormous agency for geographical and other scientific discovery is available in the missions beyond our border, and I have every hope that under the direction of my friend Mr. David Gill, the resuscitated South African Philosophical Society, originally founded by his great predecessors, Sir John Herschel and Sir Thomas Maclear, and of which he is President, will make good use of such opportunities.

Let me now say a few words on the machinery for geographical and other discovery available in the great body of traders, who are extending lines of commerce hundreds of miles beyond the British frontier.

I do not now refer to the “Smouzer” or “Winkler,” the pedlar on a large or small scale, who drives a small trade without generally going very far afield; I refer rather to the trader who embarks a considerable capital in one or more 12-ox waggons, and who generally travels with a

party of at least one companion of European descent, with several native servants as driver, fore-looper, and hunters, or other helpers, sometimes, where game is plentiful, mustering a considerable number of guns. The amount of capital thus embarked is very considerable. I have been assured, on apparently good authority, that one Swedish house in Cape Town turned over annually a capital of 200,000*l.*, almost entirely employed in territories north of the Orange River beyond the British border.

One of the members of such a firm told me that they employed sixty waggons, to each of which one, and sometimes two Europeans were attached, with from twelve to sixteen oxen to each waggon, and sometimes in the more distant expeditions, the hunting party of one waggon alone consisted of as many as sixty natives armed with guns. This was in Damaraland and in countries to the north of it, on the west coast, of which I am now more particularly speaking. A considerable discretion is allowed to the trader in charge of the waggon, who generally directs his course to regions where he hears that game, especially elephants, are plentiful, and, besides what he shoots himself, he purchases from the natives, ivory, ostrich feathers, the more costly horns and skins, carosses or fur rugs, &c., and generally does not return until his waggon, carrying about four tons, is well filled. It is to be remembered that the oxen graze where they travel, and rarely get artificial food of any kind; that the party depends for its subsistence on the game they shoot, and flour or porridge of Indian corn; that worn-out clothing is usually replaced with improvised leather; so that, as long as the waggons hold together and the oxen do not die, the trader can travel on wherever he can get permission from the native chiefs, and is not tied to time or to any particular route.

I think I mentioned in a former communication to the Royal Geographical Society the instance of Mr. Thomas, an American trader, who believed he had penetrated as far as lat. 14° in the country at the back of the Portuguese possessions on the west coast.

But though the man in charge of a trader's waggon habitually selects the least known and least frequented tracts, it is rather difficult to obtain from him the results of his observations. He has rarely much scientific education, and sometimes little, if any, beyond the ability to read and write English or Dutch; still more rarely has he instruments, and after his day's trek is finished, he is well tired before he gets to sleep. Should he be better qualified by education and natural ability for observation, he is bound by self-interest or the injunctions of his employer to keep his knowledge to himself; and while there is much game in the country it would be suicidal policy to boast of his hunting exploits or geographical discoveries.

I speak now mainly of the hired servants of the head traders. The traders themselves are often men of education, who take a pride in

giving aid to the scientific explorer or inquirer. But they have other things to do beside writing books of travels, and he who would learn from them, must go amongst them, and draw on their stores of knowledge by personal communication.

The traders into the Zambesi basin generally are connected with firms in the eastern parts of the Cape Colony and Natal, and have little to do with those who frequent Damaraland and the west of the Kalahari Desert. I met several of the Zambesi traders who were men well qualified to contribute largely to our stores of African geographical and scientific knowledge. Some of them, such as Mr. Selous and Mr. A. Anderson, have contributed valuable papers to the *Field* and other periodicals, and there are few visitors to the Victoria Falls who are not well acquainted with their names and with those of other traders, such as Messrs. Phillips, Westbeach, &c., to whose hospitality and friendly aid most travellers in those regions have at one time or another been indebted.

The winter season (April to September) is that usually selected for travelling, and they return in the summer to the high lands of the Transvaal to replenish their stores and dispose of the proceeds of their winter campaign. Sometimes the Zambesi traders go for this purpose to the sea-coast at some of the ports between Durban and Cape Town; but more commonly they rest and fill up their stores at some of the advanced traders' stations in the Northern Transvaal. Here in districts which, as late as Sir William Harris's time, were the resort of the elephant and giraffe, the traders find ready to their hand assortments of every kind of goods needed for the trade with the interior. Let me describe, as an example, such stores as I myself visited at Heidelberg, Pretoria, or Klerksdorp—the latter, perhaps, the most striking from its being in but a small village, with a few houses of farmers in addition to those occupied by the trader and his assistants. Mr. Leask, the owner, is an energetic Orkneyman, who has himself been for ten or eleven years a trader in the Zambesi country, and having married a well-educated Englishwoman, has settled down at Klerksdorp, where his household has every comfort which would be found in a similar home in a Scotch country town. He employs two or three young Englishmen, who with their families live near the store, and assist Mr. Leask in affording hospitality and shelter to the traders who annually visit him. At his table one guest will recount his travels prospecting for gold in the little known regions north and east of the Waterberg, which are described by Mauch as the probable source of the riches of Sofala. He drops little more than mysterious hints as to the results of his prospecting; but has many an interesting tale of adventure by flood and field, among tribes hardly known by name to his hearers. Another guest will follow him with descriptions of wild ostrich and lion hunting in the Kalahari, of the sufferings of his party in the Great Thirst Land, when they lost their

Bushmen guides, and of the scores of elephants they had slaughtered by driving them into the swampy country towards Lake Ngami. Then will follow the experiences of a trader who almost annually visits the Zambesi, who has pushed beyond it till he believed himself to be within ten days' trek of the place where Livingstone died, and who has heard tales of the great traveller from the natives, who revere his memory as the Doctor who practically preached, by example, goodwill to all men, and whose smallest acts have been magnified into magical performances by the natives. Thus Livingstone's experiments to ascertain the depth of the Zambesi Gorge at the Falls, by a line with a newspaper over the stone to make it visible as it descended, are related as a marvellous flying-machine with which he could cross the vast gorge; and his persuading a savage and sulky chief to let him pass through his country, is accounted for by the Doctor having shown the barbarian, at the bottom of a hole where he smote the earth with his staff, the legions of red-coats he could summon to his aid.

Nor were Mr. Leask's stores the least interesting part of his establishment. The import stores contained everything that the up-country trader could require, including the latest importations in millinery and furniture from London or New York, harmoniums for churches and mission stations, and pianos for the fore-trekkers' daughters; while in the stores on the export side were collected many valuable trophies and curiosities from the far interior. Two waggons were loading up some eight tons of ivory destined for Port Elizabeth. Packages of ostrich feathers were piled opposite rows of rhinoceros horns, bundles of elephant and giraffe tails, heads of almost every kind of large game, and bundles of skins of all the rarer and more beautiful furs. Everything spoke of a commerce extending through civilised regions to wilds rarely visited by the white man, and a diligent gatherer of notes from the frequenters of the store might collect anecdotes of the brief history of these lands since Moselekatze and the fore-trekkers first met, fifty years ago, in regions then almost unknown to Europeans, varied with descriptions of the enterprising trader's last winter visit to regions which Livingstone gave his life to explore.

This is one of the circumstances which renders the Transvaal so excellent a base for exploring Central Africa. At places like Klerksdorp or Rustenburg, or, still better, at Shoshong, Khama's capital, the traveller might find an advanced base for his operations in penetrating the far interior. Here he might deposit in safety his collections, might replenish his stores, and from time to time return to recruit his strength and that of his followers, and to make a new departure in his exploring tours. As far as I could judge from the somewhat vague descriptions of the men who had crossed it, the belt of unhealthy country bordering each bank of the Zambesi is narrower in the region of the Victoria Falls than further east or west, and if the confidence of the tribes on the

northern bank is once gained, a comparatively healthy high land where cattle would thrive and waggons could travel might be gained by the traveller towards the Lake Region.

Mr. Humphery, a young traveller now present, who visited the Victoria Falls a few seasons ago, gives the following account of the mode of passing the Tsetse-fly Belt on the south bank of the Zambesi about seventy miles above the Falls.

Leaving the last halting-place free from tsetse in the evening, they travelled all night to avoid the insect, and before morning reached a narrow strip of country free from fly but without water, though there was grass for the oxen. The next night a shorter march brought them to the river in time for the oxen to drink and return back to the spot free from fly before daylight.

It must be remembered that the tsetse-infected tract varies from year to year with the movements of the large game, and according to the nature of the season; and that the area where the fly is fatal appears to be diminishing rather than increasing.

I have said nothing, in speaking of Damaraland, about the Trek Boers, whose presence there may prove a new element in African colonisation.

It is about twelve years since the idea took possession of many of the families of the Dutch fore-trekkers in the Transvaal, that an easy route northward was to be found by crossing the Great Thirst Land to the upland pastures north of Damaraland.

One of the first to make the experiment on a large scale was Mr. Van Zyl, an intelligent and wealthy Boer who, accompanied by his wife and family of several stalwart sons and a little daughter, with many native servants, moved gradually to the edge of the desert, propitiating the petty chiefs on his road, and by patient inquiry and observation, and never moving till he knew what was before him and had secured water for his cattle, reached the pasture country on the Damara side of the Kalahari Desert, and hunted for several seasons in the valleys sloping towards Lake Ngami and its northern affluents.

About four years ago, having communicated with Mr. Coates Palgrave, then on a mission to Damaraland, he reached Walvisch Bay, and with his family took shipping to Cape Town, and having disposed of the proceeds of several years' hunting and trading, which were said to amount to several thousand pounds in value, he returned to the North-West viâ Walvisch Bay, and established himself, and built a house, beyond the north-eastern limit of the Damara country, in a tract where previously there had been no settled inhabitants nor recognised ruler.

I was sorry, however, to hear before I left the Cape, that he had not been allowed to remain undisturbed. He had been attacked by some of the Namaqua tribes, who supposed him to be connected either with their enemies the Damaras, or with the Trek Boers; and after being plundered

and ill-treated, he only saved the lives of himself and his family by taking refuge with the Damaras.

The whole of the country in that quarter is much disturbed, and there appears every prospect of a renewal of the wars between the Damaras and Namaquas which up to a few years ago devastated all that region.

Mr. Van Zyl had been followed by more than one large body of Boers "travelling or emigrating" from the Transvaal. They left for the most part some years before the annexation of the Transvaal, and their movement appears to have been caused by various motives.

Some were dissatisfied with the then Government of the Transvaal Republic; but many more appear to have been actuated by non-political motives—by restlessness or love of change—by the same longing to reach the promised land of freedom which prompted the earlier emigrations from the Cape Colony many years ago, and by exaggerated reports of the fine pasturage and abundant game which had rewarded Van Zyl's enterprise.

But unfortunately those who followed Van Zyl appear to have lacked his judgment and discretion. They did not always secure the friendship of the tribes east of the Kalahari, through whose territory they must pass. They marched at the wrong seasons and by wrong routes. They failed to secure water for their cattle, and had to remain long in unhealthy places. Numbers died from fever and starvation. Many more lost all their waggons and cattle; and they arrived in the Damaraland side of the desert much reduced in numbers, and sorely impoverished.

But their spirit was unbroken. When their destitute condition became known in the Cape Colony, assistance was generously sent them via Walvisch Bay by their English and Dutch friends in the Cape Colony and Transvaal. Ample supplies of food, clothing, and money to purchase stock from the Damaras, to the aggregate value of several thousand pounds, were sent up to them in charge of Mr. Haybittel, an experienced trader. But few families availed themselves of offers to return to the Transvaal, via Walvisch Bay, and in a coasting steamer to the Cape. The great body determined to remain and push onwards through the good pasture country which they found to the north of Damaraland.

When last heard of, a large body, comprising 200 waggons, had crossed the Cunene River into Portuguese territory, and after some ineffectual negotiation with the Portuguese authorities at Mossamedes, had recrossed the Portuguese boundary, and were making their way through a good hunting and pasture country to the north-east, and some families seem to have settled between the Damaras and Ovampos, in a region previously uninhabited, which they have nearly cleared of elephants and ostriches.

I have heard the total number of these "Trek Boers" estimated as high as 600 families. Those who returned via the Cape gave sad accounts of their sufferings in passing the "Great Thirst Land" and from fever in the low-lying regions towards Lake Ngami; but they

generally attributed their sufferings to want of experience of the country, and not to any insuperable difficulties from want of water, if they had known where to dig for it, or of healthy spots for halting, if they had known the country better. They described the region they had reached north of Damaraland as well adapted for settlement, and did not think their companions there would ever wish to return south. Till Mr. Haybittel communicated with them, they were greatly in want of everything but what they could procure in the chase, having been obliged to abandon on the road large quantities of stores, and to use leather in place of their worn-out clothing. He furnished them with supplies of European clothing, coffee, sugar, garden seeds, and seed corn for immediate use, with some cattle and goats for breeding, and put them in communication with traders who would supply their further wants.

Their future is a very interesting problem. They are likely to found a progressive colony of European race communicating with Europe through the ports of Walvisch Bay, or still more probably through the southern ports of the Portuguese possessions on the West Coast. They are likely to receive considerable accessions from European and American adventurers of various races. But there is much risk of their falling off in the civilisation which they brought with them from their old homes in the Transvaal and Cape Colony. The elders are all rigid Calvinists, "and something more"—"doppers," who view with disfavour even the hymns of their old Dutch Reformed Church, and have little toleration for any literature beyond the original text of Scripture. But they would, I have reason to think, hail with gratitude any one of Churches akin to their own who would visit them as pastor and teacher, and if he added to his qualifications as a missionary some knowledge of medicine and surgery, he would be still more acceptable.

I have met many earnest young men of the Scotch and Dutch Presbyterian Churches who might find a new field of labour among the Trek Boers, and it is not out of place to mention the subject here, for no young geographer could desire a more promising field for geographical research than might be open to him by such a mission.

I have endeavoured in these brief remarks to give you some such idea as I myself received of the physical aspects of that great southern temperate region which is already so largely occupied by colonists of our own stock, and which seems so clearly destined to form a home to many millions of settlers of our own or kindred races. Time does not allow me even to allude to the vast natural resources which are now being developed to such an unexpected extent. I may not detain you by telling you of the mineral riches of the craters, which in ages long before the continent took its present shape, were the factories of diamonds which modern industry is extracting to the value of over two millions annually. I have passed over hundreds of miles where the scattered farmhouses as frequently send their waggons for coal as for wood to

neighbouring ravines. I have met waggons conveying many tons of lead just extracted from the Marico mines, and I have seen vessels of copper formed from the native metal by the Bushmen of Damaraland, indicating ores of even greater richness than those so successfully worked by the copper mining company in Little Namaqualand. But neither on the mineral nor the great agricultural riches of the country can I now dwell, for it is not so much as a future home for the overflowing millions of our race, as for the road it opens to Central Africa, that this southern plateau of Temperate South Africa has its chief interest for the Royal Geographical Society.

It is as a safe and sure highway to the central regions of the continent that I think attention may now be profitably drawn to the route by which the great African problem was first attacked by Livingstone.

There are many now present who can remember the joyful surprise with which his countrymen heard of the unexpected success of his first great journey.

In his second journey he essayed to take up by a more accessible route the clue which he had previously followed, and would no doubt, but for the death of his companions, have soon reached the point for which he was making, when he first fell in with the Zambesi. But life was too short for his great designs, and though much has been filled up by the gallant men who have followed him, there is yet the vast region between the Upper Zambesi and the Central Lake region which remains to be explored, and which I submit might be most easily reached by steadily following up the original direction of Livingstone's first journey.

We have seen that, at least as far as Khama's capital at Shoshong, there is no difficulty to be encountered greater than besets an ordinary Transvaal trader or farmer, travelling by ox-waggon to his home in the Transvaal.

At Khama's capital he might form his base for further operations in a civilised though small community of his own countrymen, and in perfect safety for any property he may wish to leave behind him. Nor, after leaving Shoshong, need he fear any real danger or difficulty till he is within two marches of the Zambesi.

To reach that river is now an undertaking by no means formidable to an ordinary tourist, and time and temper are alone required to secure the confidence of the chiefs beyond the river, and obtain their permission to penetrate to the unexplored regions beyond.

If, as Dr. Holub told us, the chiefs are convinced that the traveller is of the same race and disposition as Livingstone, the road is speedily opened. I think at our last meeting we saw and heard enough of Messrs. Thomson and Stewart, to assure us that the race of travellers like Mungo Park, Bruce, and Livingstone is not extinct, and we may trust to the energy, sagacity, and humanity of such men to complete that portion of his great work which Livingstone died in performing.

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Previous to the reading of the paper, the PRESIDENT, Lord ABERDARE, said it would not be necessary on his part to introduce to the Society their distinguished friend and former President, Sir Bartle Frere. But he would say of him, that however important and arduous the public work in which he had been engaged, he had never for a moment forgotten that he was a Fellow of the Society, and never had lost his interest in the study and the promotion of geography. Thus much he deemed it right to say: more than that would be simple superfluity.

On the termination of the paper,

The PRESIDENT said they were fortunate in having amongst them Sir Henry Barkly, the distinguished predecessor of Sir Bartle Frere in the government of the Cape Colony and South Africa. He hoped he would favour them with some remarks on the subject of the paper.

Sir HENRY BARKLY said he feared he could add little to the comprehensive account which Sir Bartle Frere had just given of the topography and resources of Southern Africa. So far as his experience extended, he could fully confirm the accuracy of the statements that had been made and the descriptions given, and he also concurred in most of the opinions expressed. He had long believed that the progress of settlement in South Africa and the founding of comparatively large towns like Kimberley and Pretoria, hundreds of miles away from the coast, ought greatly to facilitate the exploration of parts of the interior of that continent of which they as yet knew little. He had had the pleasure of listening to Dr. Emil Holub last year, in the address he delivered before the Society, respecting his explorations of the region of the Upper Zambesi, and he felt then that it was very desirable that further reconnaissances such as he described should be made in that direction. He was glad to learn by recent news from Vienna that Dr. Holub was about to repeat the experiment, and even to attempt to traverse the whole interior from Cape Town to Cairo. He hoped he would be successful, but at any rate a great deal might be done in starting from Pretoria and going by Shoshong in the way that Sir Bartle Frere had described.

The PRESIDENT said Sir Bartle Frere in the course of his address mentioned the name of a young traveller, Mr. Humphery, who had recently reached the Zambesi and the Victoria Falls. One of the great advantages of this route was that, for the greater part at any rate, it was free from the troublesome fevers which had struck down so many enterprising travellers. All who had listened to the account of the sufferings of Mr. Keith Johnston before he succumbed to fever, and also of what Mr. Thomson went through, would see the enormous advantages of a route to the interior so comparatively healthy as that which Sir Bartle Frere had described. But there was one exception to that general salubrity, and that was the belt of country on either side of the Zambesi which nobody could cross without being exposed to this danger. Mr. Humphery was acquainted with those parts of the Zambesi where the fever territory was the narrowest, and any information he could give them regarding it would be most welcome.

Mr. HUMPHERY thought it would seem presumptuous on his part to speak on the subject after Sir Bartle Frere. But he could confirm all that had been said about the facility of the journey between Shoshong and the Zambesi, in support of which he might mention that since he was there two ladies had travelled along it to the Victoria Falls. The danger from fever on the banks of the Zambesi had been much exaggerated. He certainly suffered himself, but this arose chiefly from the hardships he had undergone and from bad food. Other travellers, well-found in provisions, had not a single case of fever. He knew nothing of the northern side of the Zambesi, because, though his party tried very hard, they were not allowed by the natives to cross. Since then traders had opened up the region, and he believed there was healthy country on the other side.

Sir FOWELL BUXTON observed that the subject of Sir Bartle's paper could not fail to be of great interest to all who felt anxious about the continuance of the work of exploration in Central Africa. The line indicated by Sir Bartle compared favourably with others which had been talked about and made use of during late years. At the Brussels Conference, which met to consider this four years ago, the route now suggested was, as far as he remembered, not even thought of, the accessibility of the country from the south not then being known. Still there were long distances to surmount from the most advanced bases of operations; such as Shoshong, which was a long way from the Zambesi, and from the Zambesi to the Lake region there was still a very considerable interval. But it must be observed there is a connection between the Zambesi itself and Lake Nyassa via the Shiré, and the interior was easily reached by that route, and as the Society were informed at the previous meeting, the space between Lake Nyassa and the south end of Tanganyika was likely to prove much more practicable than had hitherto been supposed. Therefore whether they looked to reaching the Zambesi from the coast or from the interior, they could not fail to perceive that the importance of that river had much increased of late years as a means of reaching the interior. One matter of some hopefulness was the fact that the tsetse fly seemed to be gradually receding before the advance of civilisation. Efforts had been made to construct a road from the coast into the interior, and the grand attempt made by the King of the Belgians to introduce the elephant as a beast of burden should not be forgotten. Some attempts had been made also to introduce wheeled traffic, though the fly had hitherto stood in the way. He could not, however, but hope that better success was in store in the future, since it appeared that the tsetse scourge disappeared wherever the large game was driven back.

Sir BARTLE FRERE said with regard to the possibility of getting across the fly belt, the testimony of the chief hunters and traders went to show that the tsetse certainly did to a great extent follow the movements of the great game; and also that as the country became better known, particular points were discovered by the guides where even during the daytime, in the immediate vicinity of the bush infested by the fly, there were cleared spots where the fly never touched a horse, and that those who had been much in the fly districts were able to discover routes through the infested belts by which horses could with great care be conveyed; and of course if that was the case on a small scale, it might gradually be that the means of carrying animals subject to be bitten by the tsetse through the infested belt would increase. Mr. Humphery had told him that traders had conveyed a waggon across the river, and it had been purchased by a chief on the other side, but unfortunately he was not beyond the region so fatal to oxen. However, there appeared to be very little doubt that there was a region perfectly free from the fly at no great distance on the northern bank, and within practicable reach. He hoped nothing he had said would be taken as implying any wish that effort should be slackened in other directions, for in a case of this kind it was only by attacking the unknown region from every side that they could hope for complete success. One of the French missionaries, M. Coillard, who had long been resident in Basutoland, being disappointed in the effort to establish a mission in the direction of Umzila's country, went with his very intelligent and energetic Scotch wife to a position above the Victoria Falls, and was now in hopes of returning to the Zambesi and establishing a mission about 80 or 90 miles above the falls. He was quite sure from what he had seen of M. Coillard that, wherever he placed himself, he would found a new base of operation for further exploration in the interior.