



BY ERNEST E. WILLIAMS.
 (Author of "Made in Germany.")

SOUTH AFRICA.

THE gold mines of Western Australia have brought about in that Colony a phenomenal growth in population and trade during the last two or three years; owing to the gold discoveries on the Yukon, the Far North-West is now fluttering with an abnormal boom; but the section of the Empire which in the final decade of the nineteenth century has aroused much the greatest interest is that generically known as South Africa. The chief causes of this exceptional interest are gold, diamonds, bloodshed, Mr. Rider Haggard's romances, and the vagaries of "Uncle Paul." That is to say, the modern interest in South Africa has a sensational basis, and has been effected in part by circumstances somewhat extraneous to the essentials of orderly industrial development. Moreover, the parts of South Africa which are attracting the most attention to-day are the outlying sections of the British Dominion there—Rhodesia, which is still in the embryonic stage of development by chartered company, and the Transvaal, a republic over which the Queen of England exercises no more than a contested suzerainty. Following the programme hitherto adopted in this sketch of the Imperial Heritage, those divisions of South Africa may be eliminated from our present purview.

CAPE COLONY.

There is a cosmopolitan air about the history of the Cape of Good Hope. A Portuguese, Bartholomew Diaz, discovered it unwittingly four centuries ago, and named it

the Cape of Torments. In 1620, Englishmen landed and took possession, though they did not remain to settle. Thirty years later the Dutchmen tried their luck, the Dutch East India Company taking possession of Table Bay, chiefly as a port of call on its Indian route. It also, however, started colonisation. From that time onward (as the English Colonial Office knows to its sorrow) the Dutch element has been an integral and conspicuous element in South Africa.

Frenchmen also went there in a body, but not officially. It was a band of three hundred exiled Huguenots who, in the latter years of the seventeenth century, settled in the Berg River Valley under the protection of the Dutch East India Company. But though this Company began South African colonisation, it does not appear to have made a great success of the business, and the Colony had got into a somewhat deplorable state when, in 1795, General Craig took forcible possession of it in the name of King George the Third. Eight years afterwards, at the Peace of Amiens, the Colony was restored to the Dutch, but only for a very brief period; Sir David Baird again took possession on behalf of England on January 19, 1806. In case Little Englanders and our foreign friends should see in this forcible planting of the Union Jack cause for adverse moralising, let them remember, in mitigation of our offence, that one of England's first acts after taking the country was to abolish slavery therein, a course, by the by, which roused fierce wrath among the pious Dutch Boers. British colonisation practically dates

from 1820, when 4,000 settlers, aided by an Imperial Government grant of £50,000, landed at Algoa Bay. It is not my purpose to follow the chequered and bloodstained political fortunes of the Cape, or to enumerate the fresh acquisitions of territory whereby from time to time the Colony's boundaries were enlarged. Suffice it to say that in the work of South African colonisation neither money nor men's lives have been spared. We have paid a heavy price for South Africa.

It may be objected that the lives of natives have also been sacrificed somewhat prodigally; but the defender of England has an effective reply to the insinuation. Statistical returns show that the native population has grown most satisfactorily under British rule; and considering the bloodthirsty and pugnacious habits of many of these natives when left to themselves, it may fairly be stated that they would have been less numerous and prosperous to-day than they are had England kept away from the Cape. Among the inhabitants appearing in the Cape population returns as "other than European" the numbers in-

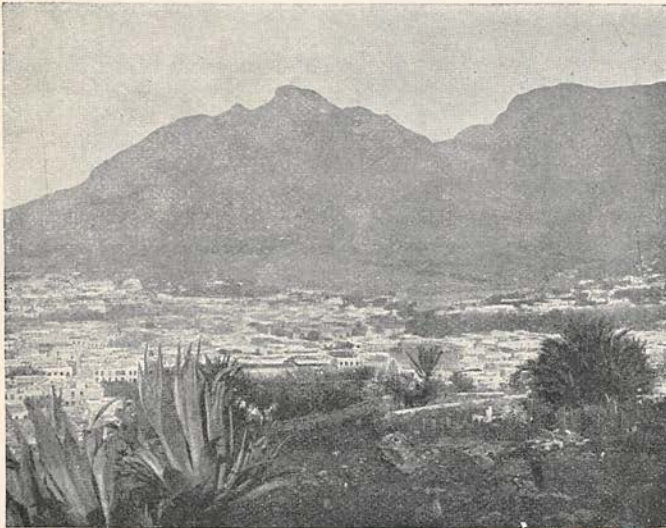
from 260,417 in 1879, to 476,985. The total European population of the Colony, with these two added districts, was, according to the 1891 census, 376,987.



The total area of the Colony, including British Bechuanaland, is 177,004,320 acres, whereof no less than 126,145,704 acres have been disposed of. Cape Colony, therefore, wears a settled air when compared with the vast areas of Australia and Canada awaiting the farmer. But, leaving comparisons and regarding the actual area yet unalienated, it will be seen that there is still room for new settlers; for the unalienated lands comprise an area not far short of the total acreage of Great Britain.

Industrial statistics are hard to come by in Cape Colony, and the compiler of the Statistical Register laments the difficulty he experiences in getting returns. According to the latest available, it appears that during the last census year (ending March 31, 1891), 80,360 tons of flour and meal were produced in the Cape mills; 2,615,588 gallons of beer were brewed; 493,638 lbs. of tobacco, 104,114 lbs. of snuff, and 3,835,824 cigars were manufactured; 336,752 lbs. of candles were made; 335,311 gallons of spirits were distilled; and 24,362,446 bricks were baked. If to these productions be added the output of tanneries, fellmongeries and woolwasheries, and wagon and cart works, we find that the total approximate value of the output was £9,238,870.

Later information exists with respect to the Cape's mineral output, the total value of which, in 1895, was £5,307,156. Asbestos, coal, copper ore, gold, salt, and other minerals contribute to this sum, but only in comparatively small amounts: by far the greater part of it was furnished by diamonds, the output of which reached a value of £4,775,016.



From a photo by]

[W. H. Hazel.

CAPE TOWN, WITH TABLE MOUNTAIN IN THE DISTANCE.

creased from 484,201 in 1875, to 619,547 in 1891; in the section termed Griqualand West, the increase was from 32,903 in 1877, to 53,705; in the Transkeian Territories,

But though diamonds make such an attractive glitter in the list of the Cape's industries, agricultural and pastoral pursuits must not be overlooked. Over 2 million

bushels of wheat were produced in 1896, over $5\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels of other grains, nearly 36 million bundles of hay, and over $4\frac{1}{2}$ million lbs. of tobacco. The Colony carried 14,409,434 sheep, and the wool production reached a total weight of 45,521,508 lbs.; in addition, 7,210,915 lbs. of mohair were produced, 294,478 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. of ostrich feathers, 3,204,440 lbs. of butter, and 49,470 lbs. of cheese.

Cape Colony has also a reputation for fruits. Excepting vines, peach trees occupy the largest space. From the vineyards were produced, in the '95-6 season, 1,636,566 lbs. of raisins, 5,687,224 gallons of wine, and 1,264,512 gallons of brandy.

Nor is the Cape Government unmindful of the claims of agriculture on its regard. A Department of Agriculture was formed in 1887, and in '93 a Minister of Agriculture was appointed. The Government has also appointed two agricultural schools. This attention to productive rural industry is a more encouraging item in Cape Colony's prospects than is the dazzle of the Kimberley diamond fields, even though their store were increased tenfold.

NATAL.

Natal cannot claim high rank among the self-governing Colonies. It may be doubted whether the honour of separate self-government would have been conferred upon it at all had not peculiar political and racial considerations induced the gift. The Colony's origin was the secession of discontented Dutchmen from the Cape; the proclamation, in 1843 (a few years after the first settlement at Pietermaritzburg), of the district as a British Colony, combined with the inimical local feeling thereby called forth, obviously

suggested the appropriateness of granting independent legislative powers. These date from 1856. It was a time when Colonial self-governing ordinances were in much the fashion in

Downing Street, and, were it possible to forget the miserable motive and theory which underlay the policy, we should be glad to remember the one sign of a decent attitude towards her children

which the Home Government adopted in the middle Victorian period. Certainly England has had no reason to regret the gift of semi-independence to Natal. The Colony, though its population is heterogeneous, has been, since the early troublesome days, steadily loyal to the Empire.

Natal's area comprises about 20,000 square miles, or say 12,000,000 acres, whereof about 2,000,000 acres have been given to the natives.

These natives form the Lulk of the population; their number is estimated at from 450,000 to 500,000. The white population, composed chiefly of English, Dutch, and Germans, numbers 45,000, and there are about 40,000 Indians, imported by the Government for the performance of certain of the coarser kinds of labour. The country is well watered—from a landscape painter's point of view magnificently watered—but all the rivers save two (and these for only a few miles of their course) are useless from the navigator's standpoint. Many of the beautiful waterfalls and cascades, which make a gleaming network of the country, will probably some day be found invaluable for the generation of electrical power; but they render the watercourses quite ineffective as means of transport. For this the Colony has to depend partly on its coast line (whereof there is one mile to every 118 miles of superficial area), partly on its State railway system, which is already 379 miles in length, and is "still growing"; and for the rest on the coach and wagon roads which intersect the country in divers much-needed places.

Natal depends in the main for its wealth



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HOWICK FALLS,
NEAR PIETERMARITZBURG.



on agricultural industries—using the word agriculture in its widest sense. Its capacities in this direction are at present, notwithstanding the Colony's half century of life, very

dubious privilege of growing sugar cane. In many other parts of the Empire, besides those distressful islands, the Empire's sons are devoting themselves to a branch of industry which should be profitable, but is rendered precarious and too often ruinous owing to the pusillanimity of the Home Government in the face of bounty-fed beet sugar.

Natal also means entering the world market as a tea planter. Already some 2,500 acres have been planted, and the estimated return on the proportion of them bearing was, for the year 1894-5, 800,000 lbs. This industry should have a good future. The tea planters at present under way appear to be thriving, and the industry is particularly well worth the attention of men whose capital is not large. Natal also grows, or might grow, other products which pertain to

sub-tropical climates. Oranges, for example, are now being cultivated, and a beginning has been made with rice. This latter industry should certainly be prosecuted with more vigour, for rice grows well in certain parts of Natal, and the Indian population would provide a good home market. At present the rice consumed in Natal is mostly imported. Bananas and pineapples are being grown in the Colony, and pay well.



From a photo by

ENGLISH TEA-PLANTING AT NATAL.

[W. H. Hazell.

far from being fully exploited. There still remain in the hands of the Crown about 1,380,000 acres (valued at 10s. an acre). The area under cultivation is about 320,000 acres, of which about a quarter is properly cultivated by the white population. The rest is tilled in rudimentary and intermittent fashion by the natives, their favourite crops being maize and Kaffir corn. Second in importance to these grains is the sugar



From a photo by

KIMBERLEY MARKET PLACE.

[W. H. Hazell.

cane, to which are devoted about 36,000 acres. It is not a large area, but the cultivation is worth notice as a reminder that the West Indian Colonies do not monopolise the

Another product to which Natalians are turning their attention, and are likely to do so increasingly in the future, is the cultivation of the wattle. As I have already said, when

speaking of this industry in reference to Australia, the wattle tree is eminently suited to certain sandy soils which might else be regarded as useless. By the cultivation of the wattle they may become very profitable. The bark, when sold to the tanners, will produce £20 an acre (some consider this estimate too low); there still remains the wood, which is of commercial value to the tune of from £15 to £20 an acre; and, finally, the wattle blossoms can be used in the manufacture of scent. This is not a bad return for a cheap cultivation on cheap lands, and the industry should make big strides. At present the yearly value of Natal's bark output is between twelve and thirteen thousand pounds. There are various other rural industries awaiting development in Natal, particularly the cultivation of sisal hemp.

Natal has some claim for consideration as a wool country. It carries about 950,000 sheep, and the export of wool attains an annual bulk of nearly 18,000,000 lbs., worth about £440,000.

In respect to minerals, Natal is largely a country of possibilities. Gold is being prospected for on her borders, but at present the neighbouring Transvaal overshadows Natal's pretensions to wealth in this direction. She is doing better with her coalfields. The output of coal is growing, and reached for the year '94-5 a total weight of 151,520 tons, valued at £75,760. Across the border, too, in Zululand, promising gold-fields are being discovered, and if the proposal to utilise the mouth of the Umhlathuzi River as a harbour for coal shipments to Durban be carried out, another valuable source of coal will doubtless be tapped. The only other mineral which Natal at present produces to any extent is silver lead ore. The value of the '95 output was £29,378. There seems every reason to believe that the country is full of iron ore, and it is said that one mountain is just a mass of specular and

magnetic iron ore. So far, however, the iron treasure in Natal remains intact. Perhaps the opening out of the coalfields and the consequent convenience for smelting works will lead to its exploitation.

THE INDIES.

My glance round the provinces of the Empire is finished. It is an incomplete glance; I have said nothing about the Crown Colonies or about our great possessions in India. This last magnificent jewel in the British Crown could not be even most cursorily described in the space remaining at my disposal. It would anyway require such distinct and separate treatment as to take it



From a photo by

THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE, PRETORIA.

[W. H. Hazell.]

out of our present purview. At the same time, it must never be lost sight of when we attempt to estimate the magnificence of the Imperial Heritage. To win it and to keep it English blood has been shed without stint; only last year added to the volume of the sacrificial stream. Our work in India has been rather that of conquerors than of colonists, yet we have done much of the work of colonisation here also. Before we went there India had a teeming population, and agriculture and many industrial arts flourished; yet British government and the inflow of British capital and the immigration of British manufacturers and merchants must count for much in the development of India's resources. We have conquered, but we have

not forgotten to colonise; and critics who complain that we take more profit out of the country than we have a right to take should demonstrate how India would be any better off than she is now—or as well—if the country were left bare to the rapacity of native rulers, or handed over to the tender mercies of the Muscovites. 'Tis a heavy responsibility which England has assumed in bringing under her charge the 220,000,000 souls who inhabit the Hindustan Peninsula; but the individual who endeavours to sow sedition against that rule because of certain defects or alleged defects in it incurs a responsibility no less great.

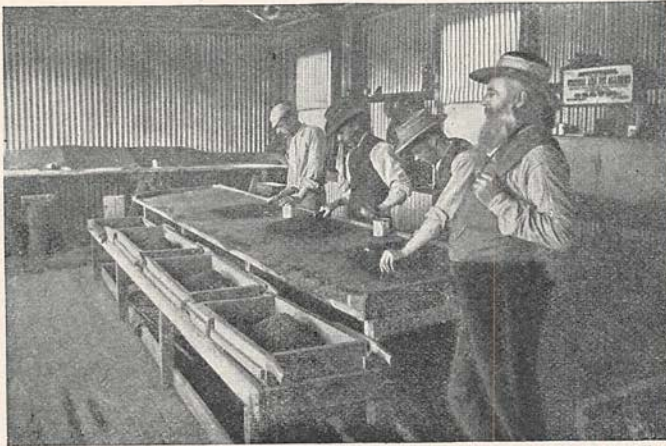
A general view of the Crown Colonies adds to the impression of the Empire's greatness; considered in detail the picture loses some of its rosy colour. Turn from the East to the West Indies, and you are confronted with a set of Colonies whose prospects are as black as those of other parts of the Empire are brilliant. They are among the oldest of England's possessions over-seas; they are by far the least prosperous. Indeed, the

word "prosperity," used in connection with the West Indies, is a word of mockery. The contrast between the wretched state of these dependencies of the British Crown and the magnificent prospects of the other Colonies, particularly those which have self-government, makes the lot of the West Indies appear specially hard; and their case is all the more poignant in view of the fact that their miserable condition is the meed of loyalty to England. One would like to find an escape from such a disagreeable slur on the Empire; but truth forces the confession that had the West Indies gone the way of the other British Colonies in the southern half of North America, and thrown off their allegiance, they would to-day be counted among the Fortunate Islands of the earth, instead of being the Isles of Despair. The United

States would never have abandoned a portion of their Republic to ruin just for the purpose of obeying to the last letter a foolish economic dogma.

That is what England has done. Her statesmen have lacked the small amount of courage necessary to countervail the Continental sugar bounties, by whose operations the cane plantations of the West Indies are being crushed to death under the heels of a most unfair competition. And the only practical argument which these statesmen have been able to devise for a cloak to their cowardice and fetish-like devotion to a fanciful theory has been a base appeal to the cupidity of the English people. "Put up with the bounties, and have your sugar a farthing a pound cheaper. What matter though you destroy a handful of old and

foolishly loyal Colonies? A farthing saved and a theory gained is all you need trouble about." Thus have treacherous statesmen and false economic prophets argued for a generation, until the abandonment of fertile fields, the ruin of



From a photo by

[W. H. Hazell.]

DIAMOND SORTERS AT THE KIMBERLEY MINE.

colonists, starvation and anarchy among the native population, have become the ordinary description of industry in the West Indies. Last year the present Government aroused itself to the point of sending a Commission to the West Indies to investigate a question whose answer was already patent to everyone, in the hope that it would find some plausible excuse for the Government's continued evasion of its duty. The report of the Commission made plainer than ever the absolute need for countervailing duties if the Colonies were to be saved. Failing the British Government's performance of its duties, the West Indies have only one chance of salvation remaining—the transfer of their allegiance to the United States. The matter would quickly be put right then. But the Government which allows this bait to dally

before the eyes of the wretched and desperate West Indians will have a very serious score to settle in history, even though the shortsighted craze for cheapness-at-all-hazards is so universally present in England to-day that Ministers escape condemnation in their own time.

THE SHADOWS IN THE PICTURE.

The Empire's future is full of magnificent possibilities; great developments of the Heritage are certain to come. Yet there are dangers in the path, and it would be folly to ignore them, even when one is revelling in an enthusiasm which the contemplation of the Empire's possibilities engenders—perhaps most of all then. There are three which I would select for brief mention.

First, there is the growing tendency in the Daughter States, as in the Mother Country, to leave the country life and to crowd into cities. But the position of Mother Country and Daughter States in this matter is altogether different. Economic necessity drives the Briton at home into big cities. In the Daughter Provinces, on the other hand, there is every economic reason why a man should not leave the country side. Rich virgin lands are crying out for tillage; boundless forests await in silence the ring of the lumberman's axe; vast plains call to the sheep farmer and the ranchman to bring their flocks and herds. The cities, on the other hand, comparatively small though they usually are, yet give signs of being overcrowded. In Colonial cities the unemployed spectre stalks grimly, not much less frequently than in England. The professions are overstocked, and emigration agencies beg clerks and the like to stay away from the Colonies. Nevertheless, men who go out from the Old Country all too often stop in the cities, instead of taking up their residence and work on land which would be sold to them very cheaply or perhaps given to them free. In like manner sons of homesteaders in the Colonies commonly drift to the towns, to struggle in some "profession" or mercantile pursuit, feeling themselves altogether too genteel to handle the plough or the hay-fork. Doubtless the gregarious instinct and the fascination of the pavement have also much to do with the growth of this tendency; but whatever be the cause, the result cannot but be disastrous to the best interests of the Empire. The notion may not be quite within the range of practical politics, but it would be an excellent thing to have an agricultural conscription, after the manner

of the European army conscription, and send every young man to rural occupation for at least seven years.

The second danger to which I would refer is the industrial competition of the foreigner. Foreign competition, however, is so large and so complex a matter that I could not hope to treat it adequately here. Still, it needs to be kept in view; for the extent to which the foreigner is creeping into Colonial markets is giving rise to great and well-grounded uneasiness. The matter last year was made the subject of a voluminous Blue Book, wherein were published despatches from the Colonial Governors, showing that in practically all cases the foreigner was seriously encroaching on Colonial markets. The statistics adduced in proof are not quite up to date, as they only carry us down to 1894, but that year is not too remote to be useful, and the examination of some later figures has convinced me that the position has not become less alarming since 1894. The Blue Book makes comparisons between 1884 and 1894, and the summary of them proves that the total imports into the Colonies increased in that period by 1 per cent., but the foreign proportion of these imports increased by about 20 per cent.; and even if a three years' average be taken, in place of single years, the figures still show very badly: 3 per cent. is the total increase, 18 per cent. the foreign. But the actual growth of foreign competition is yet greater than the figures disclose; the returns on which they are based only give the port of shipment, and consequently foreign-made goods reaching the Colonies *via* London are credited to British manufacture.

The Colonies are not to blame for this desertion of the Mother Country. True—with the most honourable exception of Canada—they tax British imports as heavily as foreign, but they have an adequate excuse: England admits foreign imports as freely as Colonial. The present trend of trade shows the urgent necessity for a Customs Union, based on a preferential tariff within the Empire. It would be desirable in any event thus to cement the family tie; Mr. Chamberlain's Blue Book demonstrates that the course is imperative now. If additional evidence were needed, it would be found in the many disadvantages (in respect to freight, etc.) under which British manufacturers labour in their attempt to hold the inter-imperial markets against the foreigner. Still, British manufacturers must remember that the absence of preferential trading

arrangements does not altogether explain the decline. They have much to answer for themselves. They do not push hard enough

any doubt of the existence of the treasures, but because I decline to admit them as wealth in the best sense of the word, and because I believe the craze for getting them is an evil in both a national and an individual view.

Gold is not real wealth, save in a very minor degree. It fills no stomachs; it protects no man from the inclemency of the air; as a thing of beauty or an addition to the joys of life it is of very dubious importance. It has its uses: it is a convenient medium of exchange and as good and reliable a money standard as we are likely to get; it has a certain decorative value, and performs other useful functions in the arts and the

crafts. When you have said this, you have said all that can be said in its favour; but you have not said enough to justify one-tenth part of its exalted position in the industrial world; you have hardly said enough to prove its claim to be considered wealth at all to any but an insignificant degree; you have not said enough to prove that, in a broad economic sense, it is worth troubling to get any more of it for some time to come; for gold is not perishable, the leakage of waste must be very slight, there is plenty of it in the world already for all present practical purposes, and a big increase in the output



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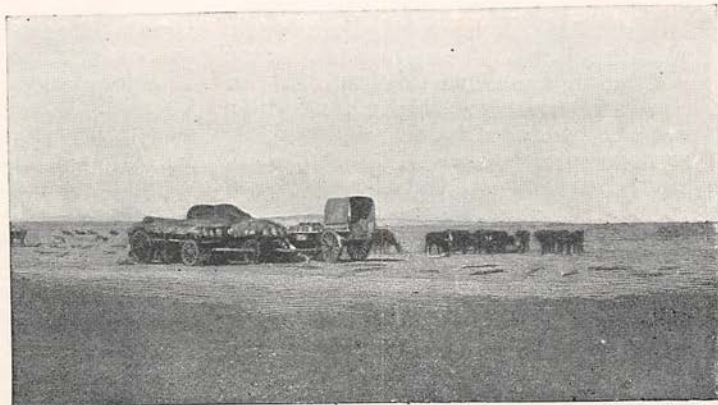
A GROUP OF BASUTO WOMEN AND BOYS.

[W. H. Hazell.

to enable them to hold their own in the struggling crowd of competitors; they are not keen to adapt themselves to their markets. Let us have Imperialism by all means; but let us also have a due meed of business common sense; else Imperialism on its commercial side will never be fully realised.

THE GOLD FEVER.

This is the third great danger to which the Empire is exposed. It does not, of course, appertain exclusively to the British Empire; but as the greater part of the world's auriferous area lies within the Empire's bounds, and certainly the greater part of that which is being most actively prospected at the present time, the peril menaces us in a special degree. It is a peril, and a grave one. In the foregoing pages I have avoided laying more stress than I could help on the auriferous and argentiferous and other similar mineral deposits of the Colonies dealt with; not because of



From a photo by]

BULLOCK WAGONS OUTSPANNED AT BLOEMFONTEIN.

[W. H. Hazell.

will rob it of the special value for which it is cherished.

Yet who regards it in this light? Certainly not those responsible for Colonial Government statistics. When, in their Handbooks and Yearbooks, they enumerate by divisions their Colonies' varied forms of wealth, how careful are they to impress upon the reader the extent of their auriferous areas! how they chuckle over the increased outputs! They tabulate their agricultural wealth, their forest wealth, their fisheries and their budding manufactures; but it is when they come to their "mineral wealth" that their statistical and patriotic enthusiasm reaches its highest pitch, and even there it is on the gold and silver, rather than the coal and granite, that the enthusiasm most gloatingly disports itself; and in proportion as they can adduce large actual and prospective outputs they appeal with gleeful confidence to the world's regard. They count as their chiefest wealth that which is not wealth; they care less for proving to the world their ability to feed and clothe it, and fill it with beauty and delight, than they care for appealing to the gambling instincts of men: for that is simply what the gold craze means. A man hopes, by enduring hardships and privations for a season, or by risking his savings (as the case may be) to acquire a fortune more quickly than he could hope to do by following some genuine productive industry; and that is gambling in its essence. In this, too, as in other forms of the vice, the gambler more often loses than wins. On the whole, it is a source of satisfaction that most mines are failures. Certainly Governments, which are the trustees of the State's best interests, should no more encourage this particular form of gambling than any other. We should think it odd if the Queensland Government were to count a State lottery among its wealth productions, or the Canadian Government to put "Excellent opportunities for poker" in a conspicuous place on the list of the Dominion's inducements to the emigrant. The dissimilarity at root is not so great.

I admit there is one argument tending towards a different conclusion. Gold-mining sometimes hastens a country's development. Australia and the Cape show that this argument is not without foundation. Just as

the Victorian farmers of a generation ago were in not a few cases men who had been enticed from the Old Country by the El Dorado of Ballarat, and failing to make fortunes, remained to till the land in which they had been grubbing for gold; so it is fair to argue that the same economic processes obtain in other parts of the Empire. But, granting all the legitimate force possible to this argument, I do not think that on the balance it can be shown that the spasmodic attraction of a crowd of all sorts and conditions of men—usually of the inferior sorts and conditions—can be compared, in a statesmanlike view, to the slower but more orderly development of the country by a better class of men, as is the case when emigrants seek the gold of the harvest field, rather than the will-o'-the-wisp which flits around Bonanza Creeks and arid or icy fastnesses.

The Colonial Governments should remember that, as a general rule, the hunt for gold means the neglect of their undeveloped lands and the immigration of a class of settlers who are unlikely to contribute much to the permanent development of the country. Colonial citizens should beware of putting into power politicians who are actively interested in mining speculations. Men desirous of earning a competence should consider whether it would not be better to seek it in the healthful occupations of rural life, preferably to the heart-wearying, often heart-breaking, pursuit of the glittering treasure which Mother Earth has hidden from her sons' eyes, and locked away from their grasp. Investors should remember that not one mine out of a hundred staked out gives back even a respectable proportion of the gold which is put into it, and that if they speculate at all in mines they should risk no more money than they would be prepared to lose at a game of cards.

It is the old story of the Nibelung's Ring. The gleaming gold enchains men's desires; and it is the cause of half the world's woe. I am not a moralist, and am not urging the point with a metaphorical meaning. I do but ask all who are interested in the future of the Empire to consider whether, even in a literal and industrial sense, the truth of the old Norse legend does not receive a new application in the modern mad quest of gold.