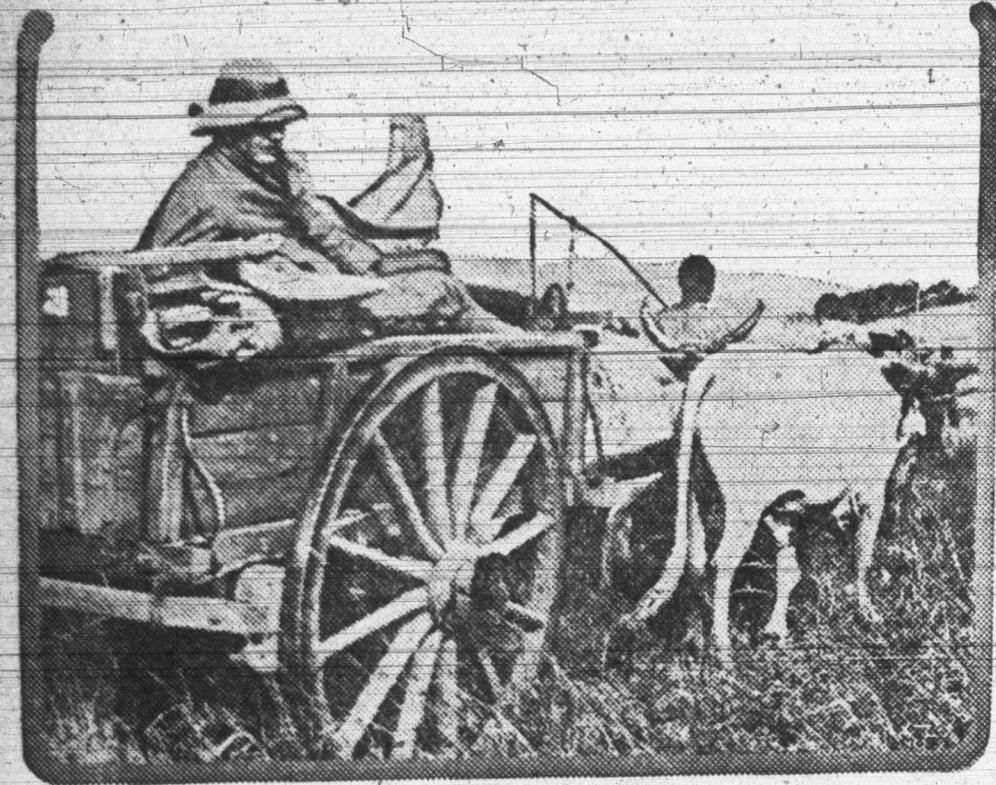


Up Country in South Africa



Bullock Cart of South Africa.

ROORDORP is very like every other South African up-country town, it stands lonely on the veld. Probably some 80 years ago the site was occupied only by a large farmstead which increased its size and importance with the rise of the next generation of the Marais family. Some one hit on the spot as a good stand for a native store, the predicator was given a piece of land for a church which could be the center of religious life for a district covering many miles, says the Christian Science Monitor.

Twenty years ago the S. A. R. (South African Government Railways) ran a line through on its way to tap a more important center and set up a "halt" which by this time has grown into a little wood and iron station where the traveler bound for Roordorp finds himself at six in the morning, after having journeyed all through the night. Quite early the preceding evening he leaves the mountains and for hours traverses the open veld, the high Karoo flat, dreary and covered with scrub and cactus, with rarely any sign of habitation.

The traveler will find the usual rural collection of carts and conveyances of all types standing at the station outspan, from the ubiquitous Ford to the old-world ox wagon with its 14 steers, beside which slept its native driver with his sjambok (whip) of rhinoceros hide. He had most probably been there for some hours, for it is not easy to time an arrival of such a team. The train may be two hours late, but no one appears to care in this land where time seems to be so cheap.

Houses All Bungalows.

In these towns practically all the houses are of the bungalow type and land is cheap. Each house has a large garden, sometimes large enough to be called a farm in most countries. The climate has called for two important modifications—the lofty roof and the broad stoop. As we wander round the town we quickly observe the important part this wide veranda plays in the everyday life of the inhabitants. It is the reception room for casual callers. "Oom Jan" can keep an interested eye on the doings of his neighbors and exchange the news of the day with all and sundry who have driven in from the outlying farms.

The town's central outspan, which generally speaking corresponds to the market squares of towns elsewhere, is particularly interesting at night. This quarterly communion service justifies what is often a wearisome journey. The trek wagon is hauled out, from 14 to 16 oxen are harnessed, and the whole family clammers up and makes itself comfortable under a tent. Full provisions are taken and generally a gift in kind for the predicator.

As one wanders round the outspan he will see one of the most heterogeneous collections of humanity and its trappings. In the far corner is a typical group, a wagon drawn up, the oxen away grazing, the Zulu servants tending the fire, preparing a meal or doing to perfection what a Kaffir can do almost from birth—nothing—he does it more thoroughly than anyone else on the face of the earth. He finds complete contentment in sunbasking. Sitting under the tent on the wagon is the major portion of the family, while underneath are the youngsters. Drawn up in lines are other miscellaneous vehicles. The whole scene, were the town buildings removed, would recall scenes from the time of the voortrekkers.

Four Important Buildings.

There are four buildings of importance in all typical dops: First is the politie kantoor (police depot) which is the center for a large area. The members of this mounted force have not only the supervision of a very scattered body of whites, but also the oversight of a large native population. It says much for the fair way in which the natives are handled and for their naturally peaceful natures, that the offenses to be dealt with are usually of a trivial character.

Next in importance among the buildings is the church; plain almost

Broken Links

By A. W. PEACH

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Miss Copeland paused on her way down the dusky corridor and listened—there was no doubt in her mind that her suspicions of the past week were well founded. Thirteen years of city life—most of it spent in the boarding house which had been her only home—had not hardened nor driven away the deep, maternal tenderness which had gone out to many a wife who had drifted into the house.

She knew that in that room a girl was crying—weeping in the low, subdued, silent way that is ever significant of a breaking or homesick heart.

She went on to the door of her room, and then paused again. She remembered the shy, refined, girlish woman, who with her young husband had come to the room early in the week. Something was wrong, greatly wrong; and quietly Miss Copeland turned back, ready to meet the insolent word, the dumb, impassive face of one who welcomes no kindly interference.

She knocked softly, but heard no answer; then she opened the door.

She saw the slight form of a girl stretched on the bed, her dark hair in disarray, her eyes covered with slim bands, her shoulders heaving.

"My dear, may I help you in some way?" Miss Copeland asked gently. "I am simply an old maid living in the house when I am not a business woman. I wish I could help you," the older woman said, a bit eagerly, for the beauty of the girl, her evident refinement, and her grief, appealed to her.

"Thank you—but you cannot help me. I am afraid—and I must be brave." The girl sat up suddenly, brushing her dark hair into place.

"But when Norman—he is my husband—is away, I have my blues out. He is trying so hard, and father has been so terribly unkind!" The tears seemed again to be coming.

Miss Copeland spoke hastily. "Now suppose you tell me about it. I am in charge of a number of girls in a great office—almost a mother confessor. See if I can't help in some way, will you?"

The dark eyes were wistful. "I have no mother I can remember—and I have wanted one so much—to talk to!"

"Then make believe I am your mother; you see, I am an old maid—but I love children. You see—I have suffered a little. I understand. So tell me. My name is Della Copeland."

The girl clasped her hands tensely for a moment, then the tight fingers relaxed. "It's simple—it seems so, anyway. You see Norman and I learned to love each other. Father was angry. You see Norman worked in one of father's mills. He said I was too young—I know I am, but we loved each other, and the years don't count, do they?"

"No, my dear, love knows no years," Miss Copeland answered faintly.

"I told father I would have more years to be happy with Norman. But he—he was stern, and harsh, and unkind. Then we learned he was planning to send Norman away to South Africa. We—we simply couldn't stand that. I wanted Norman to marry me, right away; he wouldn't without father's consent, but father wouldn't even see him. Then he told me he was going to send me away. I told him I would not go—the dark eyes began to gleam, and the listener guessed that the father's spirit was in his child—"that I would marry Norman. He told me I did not dare. I did."

The girl looked wistfully toward the window. She went on, a bit more quietly:

"We were married. Father had Norman discharged. He refused to see me. I did not beg, nor shall I, though I know he loves me. The worst is, everywhere Norman goes for work in his special line father's influence stops him from securing it. Norman—oh, he has been so brave, so kind and so uncomplaining. He is trained in one kind of work, but he's trying to do what he can, and it's hard now."

"Have you asked your father to forgive you?" Miss Copeland asked hesitatingly.

The girl's slight form stiffened and the watcher saw the pride of race stern on her features. "Never! I shall never do that! He must ask us to return!"

Miss Copeland pondered a minute, her hopes sinking as she thought.

"Will you tell me your name?" she queried.

"Why, I should have told you. I'm proud of it, Miss Copeland—Mrs. Norman Barker. My own name is Laurel Jeffery; father owns the Wellston mills."

A long silence fell between them. It was broken by steps that, approaching slowly, quickened as they neared the door. In came a tall, good-looking young man, whose gray eyes could not brighten the shadows beneath them.

He was introduced to Miss Copeland by a proud wife. Taking advantage of her first opportunity, Miss Copeland slipped out and hurried to her own room. There she stood in its silence and dusk, thinking. Finally she reached a decision.

"It is very foolish, very, very; but I shall go and see her father. Those brave, courageous young hearts must not suffer."

With her decision made, she sat in the dusk near the window of her room, dreaming—dreaming of a lost girlhood, an empty womanhood, and brooding on the gray and quiet years that lay before her—lonely paths for the walking of lonely feet.

The maid at the door softened her voice. "Mr. Jeffrey says that you must give your name and state your errand, please."

Miss Copeland smiled. "Tell him I have come over two hundred miles for five minutes of his time."

The maid hesitated, but went in.

A moment later she returned smiling.

"He is in the library, where you may see him."

Through the great hall she walked to the door where the maid stood and quietly entered the room.

A man of powerful build rose heavily from a chair, laid down his paper and lifted a strong, stern face. With lips parted he stood as if hypnotized, his gray eyes staring; then the harsh illness seemed swept from his face, a sudden overwhelming wonder and joy took their place. He stepped forward with outstretched hands.

"Dell! Della! It is you—it is you—oh—"

"Yes, Stephen, it is I—but you must not hold my hand," she said, smiling faintly.

"I shall hold it until I am sure I have you here! Della, where have you been? Why have you come? Do you remember?"

"Stephen, are you so glad to see me?"

"Glad to see you! I have been hungry for the sight of your face for fifteen years! Why didn't you answer my letters? Why—" He stopped, making an effort to calm himself.

"Let's sit down," she suggested quietly. "Ah, Stephen, why bring back the old years and the old regrets? I was willing to marry you, you remember, but you didn't have the courage to go against your father's will. You remember, he would have nothing to do with me, you."

His voice was hoarse. "My God! If I only had had the courage! These years, Della, these years—years of memories—" His head dropped. "I was a coward—but it's not too late, Della. You—why, the years have been kind to you—are you—"

"Married? No?" She shook her head sadly. "I couldn't—with my memories."

"Della?"

"Wait, Stephen. I came to see you. You say you wish you had opposed your father. Let me tell you something."

She leaned over, and tenderly she told him of the young couple in the dingy boarding-house room, of the slight, brave young girl of the young husband covering a dread of the future with a present smile. Then she told him their names.

He started to his feet. "My little girl!—there! I wanted to teach them a lesson—I forgot my lesson. I was a coward and—my God! I have paid for it." He turned to her. "I am going to put a call straight to your house—where is it?"

Her heart throbbed at his words. "Stephen, they will be wild with joy!" She gave him the call as she imagined the scene to be enacted in that faraway room of despair.

He shouted the call into the telephone, brushing aside some remonstrance with an abrupt word. He clung to the receiver while he waited—a picture of eagerness.

Then—"Hello, Laurel"—"Father"—"Yes, father"—"I want you to come home! You and—and Norman!"—"There—there—there little girl!"—"Yes, pack up and come!"—"I've been a pig-headed ass"—"Yes, you bet we will!"—"Come right away!"

He turned from the telephone. His eyes were quiet, his face calm. She thought as she watched him that the years had been kind, indeed, to him.

She rose, feeling as if into her heart had entered again the silence and the emptiness, while soon for him the last shadows would pass. "Now, I must go—"

He sprang up and laid his hands gently yet firmly upon her shoulders. His voice was vibrant, yet tender. "You are never going—never, Della, if I can keep you. Now that chance has brought you, no one lives who can take you from me. I was too much of a coward once to take you, and you had too much pride to come to me; but, my dear, we simply must save something out of the years—they must not all be lost years. Don't you love me even a little?"

Her head sank. "Stephen, I have always loved you and always shall; but"—very softly and very quietly—"youth is past—and the dreams of youth."

Putting his arm about her, he drew her to him. "I know, oh, I know, my dear, but youth is not all." His voice was shaking. "The springtime and summer have gone—but the Indian summer—let's enjoy it together!"

She looked up with tears in her eyes. "Yes, I forgot—there is Indian summer—Stephen—Stephen!"

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Such an exodus south is promised, and is, in fact, under way, that the business of furnishing apparel for southern tourists is a more important factor in merchandising than ever before. Nearly all these birds of passage among us mortals are people in easy circumstances, to say the least, and many of them are in a position to command the best in apparel, as in everything else that money can buy. It is an educated, discriminating and exacting taste in clothes that designers must satisfy when they undertake to suit the fashionables that congregate under sunny skies in midwinter. They are there to see and to be seen, and it is not likely that there is any greater fashion parade anywhere than in our own famed American winter resorts.

In millinery there are hats that have their try-outs in the South and become established as styles for spring; they are, therefore, interesting to every woman. A group of three of them appears above, one for dress, one for semidress and one for going-about, the last having a light wrap made to match it.

The sailor shape with soft crown, shown at the right, has no adornment but a big tassel. It is developed in beige color, with braid brim and satin crown. The wide scarf has a long turned-back velvet collar and is gathered at the back, from which long, heavy silk tassels are suspended.

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