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Life Story of an Indomitable Man

Career and Characteristics of "Oom" Paul Krueger, Recently Re-elected President of the Transvaal Republic.

The recent re-election of Paul Krueg-er," "Oom" Paul, as the Dutch of South Africa delight to call him, to With the discovery of great stores the presidency of the Transvaal re-public, gives interest to the following lic began the troubles of the Boers. public, gives interest to the following readable sketch of this remarkable man printed in the Chicago-Times-Herald at the time of Krueger's first rise into international prominence a newspaper readers, and which culmi year ago. No one of the great men of the world

has a more interesting personality and career than Paul Krueger, president of the Transvaal republic. During his life time he has raised himself by his won efforts from cowboy to king. His title is that of president, but for all that he is a king in everything else, and no monarch in the world rules ers, who served until the downfall of his subjects with more autocratic hand. It is true that there is a congress, called the volksraad, and it has the lawmaking power, but when the volkaraad refuses to do as Mr. Krueger wishes he threatens to resign. This he has done five or six times, and it has always resulted in "Oom Paul's" having his own way. Thus he rules not by fear or by armed force, but be-cause the Boers have absolute confidence in his judgment and are willing

to allow him to be virtual dictator. Krueger's career has much in it to remind one of Lincoln. The Americans in the republic call him the African Lincoln, and the strong will is a trait of both men, just as much as is the fact that both rose from humble beginnings to be rulers of their nations.

The republic of which is Krueger is the virtual dictator is really an oligarchy. The Transvaal has an area of about 309,000 square miles. In this vast territory only a million people live. And of these three-fourths are the native blacks, who are of a low order of intelligence, There are 300.0 whites, and of these less than 30,000 have any voice in the government, and these constitute the body of men who have suc-cessfully defied Cecil Rhodes, Chamberlain and the power of the British nation which had hitherto carried things in Africa with a high hand.

RECENT DIFFICULTY.

It is this oligarchical rule that has been the cause of the recent disturbances in the Transvaal. The 90 per cent, of the whole number of white people who are disfranchised have al-ways been hostile to the rule of the Boers and have plotted to bring about British rule in the Transvaal, being themselves for the most part of British birth. That these whites are disfranchised is to a great extent their own fault, and is not the injustice that it would seem from the bold state-ment of fact. The truth is that foreigners in the Transvaal have the same rights as they have in the United States. The British want to be allowed to vote without being naturalized, but the laws of the Transvaal, like those of the United States, do not allow foreigners to vote unless they have sworn allegiance to their adopted country and renounced allegiance to that of their birth. And this can only be done after a residence of a certain number of years.

That the foreigners have been checked is due to the gentus of Krueger and tlings of the rude wagon threw the

The foreign population, lured by the yellow metal, constantly increased, and they have caused the trouble which now exists and which is familiar to

ated in Jameson's raid. A MODERN WASHINGTON

There have been but three presidents of the South African republic during its existence of forty-three years. Until 1871 M. W. Pretorius was president; he was succeeded by Thomas F. Birgthe republic in 1877. Then Stephanus Johannes Paulus Krueger became president, and since then he has been the leader of the Boers, for whom they have the same feeling that Americans a hundred years ago had for George Washington.

So humble is the origin of President Krueger that very little is known of his early life. It has been said that e was born in Mauch Chunk, Pa., and that at the age of 12 years he ran away from America to Africa. This story is told by a Charles Krueger of Indiarapolis. However, the president himself says that he was born in South Africa, and the story is therefore chiefly interesting as illustrating the obcurity which surrounds the early life of the statesman. Rustenburg, South Africa, was his native town; the year of his birth was 1825, and he is now 73 years of age. His father was a farmer, and he received his training in the yeld on horseback with a gun in hand. His father belonged to the "Dopper" or Dutch Separatist church, whose members at that time gave more attention to physical than mental ac-complishments, so that Paul did not see very much school, but he learned a great deal about the use of the rifle. When the great trek began he was 11 years of age, and he accompanied his father during the exodus. It was then that he learned to hate the English. Fierce battles took place with the Mat-abeles during the trip, and in these, youngster as he was, he used his rifle. After spending a year in the Free State the family crossed the Drakens-

berg River into Natal. Then followed the murder of Retief and his party, and laagers at the Bushman's River were attacked, and when Dingman's Zulus were repulsed with great loss the trekers left the ill-fated land and entered the Transvaal.

STRANGLED A PANTHER. When yet a boy Krueger was famed for his skill with the rifle and for his courage. He was a sprinter, too, and e could outrun any of his young associates. He wore no shoes, for his par-ents were too poor to buy them, but barefooted he trudged along the hot sandy wagon roads of South Africa. Few anecdotes are related of his youth, but one is told that illustrates

empty wagon home. When they were about five miles from home a large panther made its appearance. The oxen took fright and bolted. The joselaborately carved. Some

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to nothing else. For the foreigners are little sister on the ground. She was at not like the miserable, native Kaffirs. They are men of English birth, and full of pluck. Not only this, but they have wealth as well as brains, for they have vast fortunes, which they have armed, he fought the panther. It was made from gold and by robbing the natives, and they also have that keenest of incentives to lure them on in their contest with the Boers-other gold mines that the Boers will not allow to be dug.

Yet Krueger has shown true statesmanship by the way he has always remained the master of the situation. His statesmanship of the past two years has not been more astute than was that displayed by him twelve tinguished himself in the many little The years ago, when the Dutch vanquished the English and won their independence. And in all the history of the Transvaal it has been necessary to use the greatest arts of the diplomatist, This he has done so well that Bismarck has said that Krueger was the only natural diplomat whom he had ever met.

BLOOD THAT TELLS.

In all his struggles Krueger has had the little band of Boers united in his support. That such a small body of men should have been able to maintain themselves so long as a semi-in-dependent state under the condition is one of the most remarkable achievements of the nineteenth century. But the Boers are of good blood. In their veins mingles that of the Netherland-ers, who wrested their liberties from the French and the Spaniards two centuries ago, and also that of the Huguenots, who were expelled from France by Louis XVL at the suggestion of Mme. de Maintenon. The Calvinistic tenacity of liberty and rights survives in the Boers.

Originally the Boers settled Cape Colony, and there begun the British aggression against which they have constantly struggled and which has implanted in them such a hatred of the English that the word "Englishman" is the most severe epithet one Boer can apply to his enemy. The English robbed them of their lands and persecuted them for several generations. Then, in despair, the Boers resolved to seek a new country, where they could be free. Then began the great trek, or exodus, of 1834-36. They divided. One part settled in the Orange Free State the other in Natal. The first were conquered by the British in 1848, but afterward gained a semi-independence.

Later those at Natal were dispossessed of their lands. Again they took else as chief magistrate. During these to their wagons and founded the new republic, at first called the Dutch African Republic, but afterward changed to South African Republic. This was in 1853. The land which they occupied was regarded as worthless, and the British allowed them to live in peace until 1877, when they were attacked by the British governor of Natal. For four years the Boers nursed their wrongs, and then they made a concerted attack upon the British and won every battle. As a result of that war, which was directed by Kruger, the English were forced to allow the Boers a semiindependence. They were recognized as an autonomous republic, but under the suzerainty of the British Empire. Krueger has a warm admiration for This meant that the Boers were to some in everything, but treats people from the United States stonless. His small bleared eyes are ing dynamite into passing clouds in

thing to please you-sure. the mercy of the ferocious animal.\$8.49 to \$59.00 Without a moment's hesitation young Krueger jumped from the wagon and went to her rescue. Although un-SPECIAL ATTENTION TO ORDERS BY MAIL. ALL PURCHASES DELIVERED FREE a hand-to-hand contest and lasted for several minutes, and the panther at times seemed to have the best of it but the boy got the animal in a tight grip and with his strong arm strangled hold Utensils, Crockery, Glassware, Carpets, Curtains and Wall Paper. No such opportunity in recent years it to death.

For some time the Krueger family has enabled you to buy these goods so cheap as now. remained at Potchefstrom, then the seat of government, and then they moved northward A year afterward he entered the Boer army, where he diswars which were fought and quickly rose from the ranks He became a field cornet (outside magistrate) then a district commandant, then a commandant and today he is commander-in-chief of the army as well as president of the called on him recently said that Kruegrepublic

Through all of this period his cour- er's words of parting were: age has been as marked as it was on the day when he strangled the panther More than forty years ago he himself amputated the thumb of his left hand. injured in a gun explosion.

PRIED OUT HIS TOOTH.

A few years ago, when he was suffering from a toothache he gave equal proof of his physical endurance. It was suggested that he go to a dintist. He asked how much the tooth doctor would country. May the United States ever charge and upon learning that it would cost him a couple of dollars he refused to incur the expense. The pain had increased in a couple of days so that he culd not sleep. Then he got up and pried out the tooth with his claspknife and went to sleep without more ado. During the Jamson raid he was anx ious to lead his men in person. When the news reached Pretoria on December 31 that Jameson, with his force, nearing Kruegersdrop Krueger saddled his horse in order to personally lead the burghers into battle. "Now that this Jameson is on the Veldt," cried the old man, "we'll soon see what he's worth." The chief justice of the repub-lic had great difficulty in persuading the president that his brains in Pretora were of more value than his hand and eye would be on the Veldt.

Peace as well as war has been the cene of Kruger's exploits. During ten years preceding the war of indepentence he was a member of the excutive council, and in the following year he was elected president. Since then no one has thought of choosing anyone sixteen years his power has been absolute, and the wisdom of allowing him to do as he pleases has been shown by the great success which he has achieved Perhaps he has made some mistakes, but if he has the world does not know of them. His set policy during that time has been to discourage immigration and prevent the foreigners from participating in the government. This reems a strange policy, but it must be tobacco box. At his feet was a big remembered that his experiences and spittoon. He sat well back, with his those of the Boers with Anglo-Saxons and others hailing from Europe has been such as to convince him that the foreigners are adventurers without honor. At the same time President

the big republic across the ocean is our friend, I love to think of the United States as our big brother. When you go home to the United States tell the peo ple there for me that there is a small nation here loving their country and their liberty, that idolizes the Ameri-can flag and the free institutions of the

REGARD FOR AMERICA.

"I love America, and I believe that

prosper and remain true to the principles of her forefathers is my sincere sish." His own foreign policy is very brief, 'All that we ask," he says, "is to be "It alone." And on one occasion, at Bonkershuit, he said to some Boers who had traveled scores of miles to

"My boys. I have tried to build this ountry for you. It is yours. Never, ever permit anyone to take it from COD

President Krueger is veritable master of the state, and it is believed that with his death it will be destroyed. The onstitution is ambiguous and is construed entirely to suit the president. The rand and the volksraad, the two houses of the congress, are completely under his dictation. He lives in Pre-toria, the seat of the government. The town is small, and it is not nearly so large as Johannesberg, which since the gold discoveries has grown very rapidly and is a progressive city. The government buildings at Pretoria are pretentious, but the home occupied by Oom" Paul is small, a low-built house

of the ordinary South African type. and, like the others, it has a garden with trees and shrubs. He is autocratic in public life, but very democratic in private life, and access to him can be had with ease by anyone. A gentleman who called upon him recently says that he found the president seated in a comfortable padded chair alongside of a table, on which, among some papers, was a big

hands over his chest.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE. He is not a handsome man. His height is more than six feet and he is very fat and waddles when he walks. that their dealings with foreign nations | with consideration. An American who | hidden by the heavy lids. Long, thin the hope of bringing rain. These acts druggists.

straggling halr covers his head. His were brought to the attention of Presiface, with its shaved chin and upper dent Kreuger. He convened the volkslip and fringe of beard something afraad, and the experiment of these inter the fashion of that of Horace trepid Uitlanders was the subject of a

Greeley. is famillar to newspaper long and grave discussion. One Boer readers. His dress is slovenly and he statesman from Witfontein presented does not look like a ruler. He always shakes hands with visitors. He roars in a loud voice when he converses and gesticulates very violently with his left hand. He cannot so employ the other, for in it he holds his big meerschaum pipe, which he constantly smokes. He uses the spittoon frequently and drinks copious draughts of gin and water.

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Literature has no delights for him. The Bible is his favorite book and almost the only one which he has read. It is the only one which he reads at all frequently, "The History of the Princes of Orange," a history of the thirty years' war, part of "Motley's from Lydenburg exclaimed that it

Dutch Republic," Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and Macaulay's account of he has read. In fact he is what might

ing about literature or history. He cannot even speak English. He ple. "We are a brave and a free peo-ple," said he. "We made the English. cannot even speak English.

Piety, not love of the book for its literary merit, is responsible for his treat ingloriously before us. In the reading the Bible so often. For Oom Paul is very pious. Near his house is church at which he is a regular attendant and he often preaches himself. In religion he is what is called a "dopper." It is worth while to explain is calling for rain?" this word, for it shows the extremely close relationship between the "doppers" and the old Puritans. The word that he has always saved seven-eights is derived from "dop," which is German for bowl and is supposed to apply to this sect of religionists because they wore their hair as if the barber had

put a bowl upon their heads and cut around it. According to this derive | owns hundreds of thousands, for plenty tion "round head" would be an alme ,t perfect translation of the word "dipfered to him

This strict adherence to religious forms is a prominent trait of the boers. An apt illustration of the extreme to lose its great mainstay. which it is carried was given during a recent debate in the volksraad.

PIETY.

DON'T RUN ANY RISKS about health. Avoid coughs, colds, fevers, From March to December, 1885, there pneumonia, and all other similar all was a drought in the Transvaal and ments by keeping your blood rich and many hardships ensued. The represenpure with Hood's Sarsaparilla. tatives of a waterworks company final-

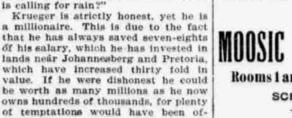
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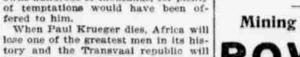
a bill making it high treason to explode dynamite in the heavens that bend above the Transvaal. Such an act, he contended zealously, was trying to fly in the face of providence. If God wanted the South African Republic to have rain he would send it. It was implous for godless Uitlanders to fire explosives in the direction of the infinite. The Witfontein Boer's arguments and his bill prevailed, and dynamiting the clouds was forbidden. Another statesman proposed a measure setting apart certain days for the people to pray in unison for rain.

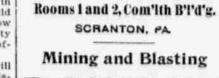
JONAS LONG'S SONS.

would be irreligious to bother God about the matter. A stanch member "William of Orange" is all else that of the Kreuger party resented this. It was an insinuation, he declared, that be called illiterate and he knows noth- the Boens were an inconsequential peo-

who pose as God's chosen people, name of God and the Dutch republic we regained our freedom. God was with us at Bronkerspruit and at Majuba Hill. Shall we hesitate, therefore, to pray whenever veid and spruit







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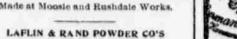
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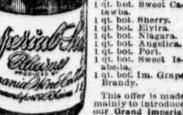
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