

**KRUGER'S
SECRET SERVICE**

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Kruger's secret service by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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BY

ONE WHO WAS IN IT

LONDON

JOHN MACQUEEN

HASTINGS HOUSE, NORFOLK STREET, W.C.

1900

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

KRUGER'S SECRET SERVICE.



CHAPTER I.

IN order to make my connection with the Secret Service of the Transvaal perfectly clear, and how it was that I came to hear Doctor Leyds discussing, in cold blood, the proposed murder of Mr Cecil Rhodes, it is necessary that I should go back to the days of the Reform movement in Johannesburg, which was worked in connection with the Jameson Raid. In those days I was engaged in business in Johannesburg, in partnership with a friend. One morning, while strolling down to our place of business, we discovered to our astonishment that the streets were full of armed men. Before this, of course, there had been

rumours of various kinds floating about the gold-reef city, mysterious talk of some movement to be initiated against the corruption and tyranny of the Pretorian oligarchy. But to members of the outside public like ourselves nothing definite had as yet been revealed. One can easily imagine, therefore, our feelings of astonishment and surprise, and even of alarm, when we saw the streets of Johannesburg crowded with men carrying arms: some with rifles, some with carbines, some with fowling-pieces, some men carrying only one weapon, others carrying in their arms half-a-dozen.

The crowd all seemed to be setting in one direction. We followed the drift of the people, and found that its objective was the rooms of the Reform Committee. We did not know, of course, at this time that this was the headquarters of the Reform Committee; we only knew it was the Goldfields Buildings. The Goldfields Buildings are at the corner of Fox Street, and about three hundred yards from the Goldfields Hotel, where the corps to which I ulti-

mately belonged was organized by Major Karri Davis, now so well known in connection with the present South African campaign, and in particular with the relief of Mafeking.

As we approached the Goldfields Buildings, we became aware of a vast crowd assembled in their immediate neighbourhood, and of a man speechifying and gesticulating wildly to the mob. My friend said to me :

“What’s up?”

“Haven’t the slightest idea,” said I; “but we had better cut along and see.”

We put our best foot forward, therefore, and were just in time to see wagons draw up full of rifles and cans of dynamite. Just as we reached the outskirts of the mob we heard an orator uttering the following words, words for the authenticity of which I can vouch, and which I shall never forget till my dying day :

“Gentlemen, the cat is out of the bag. The time has now come when as true Englishmen we should strike for justice and liberty.”

The people were frantic. Cheers went

up, and his speech was practically drowned with shouts and roars of applause.

Perhaps it is well to pause here, and state the general impression that prevailed among the crowd who listened to the speech delivered in front of the Goldfields Buildings. It is a comparatively easy matter to work upon the fears of a large body of men and women in a lawless state of society, as that of Johannesburg then undoubtedly was. For years Johannesburg had been suffering under the tyranny of the Transvaal Government. When protests were made against this tyranny, they were met by threats on the part of the Boer oligarchy. All the men in Johannesburg, therefore, who had not made a special study of politics, and who were all the readier to fall victims to rumour on that account, were prepared at any moment to believe the worst. Their fears were easily roused, and they were ready to listen to any influential man who was supposed to have a secret and intimate knowledge of affairs, and who was ready to come forward and assure them publicly that the

state of things in Johannesburg was as bad as it possibly could be, and that if they were prepared to defend their lives, their rights, and their liberty, they must strike at once and for ever.

I do not say that this is an accurate sketch of the facts as they actually were. But I do say that this is an accurate sketch of the feelings of ninety-five per cent. of the working population of Johannesburg. If any deception was practised, it was not practised by them. They could not be supposed to know all the secret strings that were being pulled. All they knew was that the Boer Government was corrupt and tyrannical and a constant menace to themselves, that it had commandeered them to serve in its wars without any right whatsoever, and that it might at any moment threaten them with all the penalties possible to a despotic and unscrupulous government. When, therefore, the wealthiest men of Johannesburg came forward and informed the working population that the state of affairs had become so critical that every