

**EMPIRES OF THE VELD: BEING  
FRAGMENTS OF UNWRITTEN HISTORY  
OF THE TWO LATE BOER REPUBLICS,  
WITH OTHER PAPERS FOR THE MOST  
PART DESCRIPTIVE OF THE LIFE AND  
CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE**

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Empires of the Veld: Being Fragments of Unwritten History of the Two Late Boer Republics,  
with Other Papers for the Most Part Descriptive of the Life and Character of the People by K. J.  
de Kok

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**K. J. DE KOK**

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TWO LATE BOER REPUBLICS, WITH  
OTHER PAPERS FOR THE MOST PART DESCRIPTIVE  
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BY

K. J. DE KOK

(FOR OVER FORTY YEARS A RESIDENT IN THE LATE  
ORANGE FREE STATE.)

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1904.

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## PREFACE.

Many books have been written about the late Boer war, but there exists so much ignorance in regard to the late Republics and their inhabitants that I thought I might do a service to the conquerors as well as to the conquered by publishing my observations and impressions of the unwritten history and the social inner life of the latter, collected during a sojourn of forty-five years amongst them. During that period I have had opportunities of hearing and seeing more than the average traveller. This was owing to my profession of Government land-surveyor, which compelled me to stay many days in their homes and in their company. A year before the said war I published a small pamphlet in the Dutch language, containing various observations, part of which I have translated into English and reproduced in the following pages.

I came to the country in 1855, when a good many of the pioneers were still alive—people who had taken part in the Cape Colonial wars, under English Governors and along with English troops, against the Xosas, Gaikas, Tembus, and other native tribes. Most of these pioneers had taken part in the great Trek, and had successfully fought Mosilikatze (Mzili-



## PREFACE.

kazi) and Dingaana (Dingana), as well as conquered and lost Natal. Their sons and successors compared notes with me as to our mutual experiences in the Basuto wars. I also saw a later generation being educated in the idea of building up a South African Empire. Hence, I have seen the population advance to rest and contentment (especially in the late Free State), and, at a later period, to prosperity and comparative wealth. I was, moreover, present at the last act, when, in 1899, they, as a nation, committed suicide. It stands to reason that I am highly interested in a people I have known and lived among for nearly half a century. I hope and expect that they will profit by the experience they have so dearly paid for, and leave the rôle of conquerors and the game of empire-building to larger nations. As it is, they, as a tribe, will always have great influence in the land, and they ought to know and admit that, having tried to play at independent government and failed, the wisest thing left is to try and live as happy and contented subjects of the most liberal Government known.

K. J. DE KOK.

JOHANNESBURG, OCTOBER, 1903.

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