

**A WOMAN'S PART
IN A REVOLUTION**

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A Woman's Part in a Revolution by Mrs. John Hays Hammond

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MRS. JOHN HAYS HAMMOND

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BY *Mrs. John Hays Hammond*
MRS. JOHN HAYS HAMMOND

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LONDON AND BOMBAY
1897

TO the American Public, whose sympathy was my chief support through days of bitter trial, this book is gratefully dedicated. My personal experience forms the subject of my story. The causes of the Revolt in Johannesburg and the ensuing political questions are but lightly touched upon, in deference to the silence enforced upon my husband as one of the terms of his liberation by the Boer Government.

NATALIE HAMMOND.

BOUGHTON,
BICKLEY, KENT,
FEBRUARY, 1897.

A WOMAN'S PART IN A REVOLUTION

"I hope I may be able to tell the truth always, and to see it aright according to the eyes which God Almighty gives me."—THACKERAY.

I

TOTSEY, the terrier, lay blinking in the hot African sun, while Cecilia Rhodes, the house kitten, languished in a cigar-box wrapped about with twines to represent bars of iron. Above her meek face was a large label marked "African Lion." Her captor, my young son Jack, was out again among the flower-beds in quest of other big game, armed with my riding-crop. The canvas awnings flapped gently in the cool breeze. Every now and then a fan-like arm of one of the large Madeira chairs would catch the impetus and go speeding down the wide, red-tiled verandah. I

looked up from the little garment which I was making upon this quiet picture. It was the last restful moment I was to know for many long months—such months of sufferings and agonized apprehension as God in His mercy sends to few women.

David, my husband's black coachman, drove rapidly through the gate and, coming up to me, handed me a letter. It was from his master and briefly written. Jameson had crossed the Border ; Johannesburg was filled with strange people, and he thought it wise for me to move with our family and servants into town. Rooms had been secured for us at Heath's Hotel, and he would meet us that night at dinner. This summons was not entirely unexpected. For many months the political kettle had been simmering. Johannesburg had grown tired of sending petitions in to the Government to be answered by promises which were never redeemed. An appalling death-rate of fifty-nine in each thousand, directly traceable to lack of proper sanitation, resulting from bad government, spurred the general discontent, and a number of representative citizens, unwilling longer to

wait upon gods and Government, finding all attempts to obtain redress of their grievances by constitutional means ineffectual, determined to enforce their demands for right by arms if necessary. As arms for the Uitlander under the law of the Transvaal could only be obtained by a permit, guns and ammunition were smuggled into the country hidden away in oil-tanks and coal-cars.

My husband had vast interests in his charge, many million pounds sterling had been invested at his instance in the mining industry of the country, and actuated by a sense of duty and responsibility to those who had confided in him, he felt in honour bound to take an active part in the movement, for the protection and preservation of the property placed under his control.

My leaving for the Cape, in case affairs should assume a dangerous phase, was frequently discussed between us, but I could not make up my mind to leave my husband, feeling that the separation would be more trying than if I remained, even should a conflict be forced upon us. In addition to my wish to be with him, I knew that many of