

**A HISTORY OF  
SOUTH AFRICA FOR  
USE IN SCHOOLS**

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A History of South Africa for Use in Schools by E. C. Godée-Molsbergen

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**E. C. GODÉE-MOLSBERGEN**

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Posthumous  
Librarian  
5-2-1923

14 May 23. E.H.W.

TO  
THE YOUTH OF SOUTH AFRICA

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“Our fathers trusted in thee : they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

“They cried unto thee, and were delivered : they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.”—PSALM xxii. 4 and 5.

“Kent gij dat volk vol heldenmoed  
En toch zoo lang geknecht ?  
Het heeft geofferd goed en bloed  
Voor vrijheid en voor recht.”

*The National Anthem of the former  
South African Republic.*

“Alles sal reg kom.”—PRESIDENT BRAND.

“At length we are at peace, God be praised, and long, very long, may it continue. All wars are follies, very expensive, and very mischievous ones. When will mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their differences by arbitration? Were they to do it, even by the cast of a die, it would be better than by fighting and destroying each other.”—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 1783.

## PREFACE

ALL of us are familiar with the fable of the father, the son, and the ass, the moral of which is that it is impossible to please every one in this world. It is therefore not unlikely that this History of South Africa, which is probably as faulty as the work of human hands is apt to be, will find some to criticize its contents, and others its arrangement.

Let us glance first at its contents. It will be ready for use in schools in a very memorable year for South Africa, the year 1910, an epoch-making year. A United South Africa, the cherished dream of many hearts, the fruition of almost every hope, will then be an accomplished fact. By strange and devious paths, such as no mortal mind could have conceived, South Africans have reached their goal, guided thither by an all-wise Providence, notwithstanding diversity in tongue and nationality. South Africa to-day is home, and homeland too, of men and women, descended from widely different nations, it is true, yet welded together into a new people!

The birth of this nation was the outcome of much travail. Storm and stress and the shedding of blood are inseparably associated with the growth of a nation, and it is our duty to recall the sufferings of the past, however sad the task. May no son of South Africa, whether of Dutch or English parentage, be found to date her history from the time when he himself reached years of discretion, or from the day on which he first set foot on her soil! Young South Africa, sitting on the school benches of to-day, and destined to learn the contents of the following pages, will not, at any rate, grow up in ignorance of their country's past, a history of more than common interest, in that we can trace its course step by step from the coming of the first white man right up to the present day. The story is one to cause the heart of the young Afrikaner to throb with gratitude towards Providence for the favour shown his people, and to thrill with love for his country, and his nation, without necessarily withholding praise from where it is due.



A word as to arrangement. Teacher, as well as scholar, should above all things avoid the mistake of thinking that the study of history consists in learning by rote a number of dates and names. On the other hand, the scholar should remember that it is of no use whatsoever to study history without supporting it at the same time with a strong framework of dates. There are some fifty or more, occurring time and again, which he must master. There are others, not to be committed to memory, but of interest to those who wish to know, for instance, in what year Cape Town was lighted with gas, or when Lerothodi died, and who have no reference books or papers at hand to apply to for the information. The intelligent teacher would be able to discriminate, and would, moreover, by wise instruction, instil into his pupils a feeling of responsibility, a love of truth, respect for the opinion of others, patriotism, and a quickened desire to gain further information about foreign countries, about the British Empire, and also about the great Continental Powers, in order to appreciate properly the position occupied by the Empire of which United South Africa forms a part.

And along with the hard facts of history, and the dry dust of dates, let the teacher mingle stories, telling them graphically and vividly, and above all with an eye to truth—stories of Jan van Riebeeck's residence on the shores of Table Bay; of the heroic deeds of such men as Jochem Willemszoon, Woltemade, Richard King, Piet Uys, General De Wet, and others; of the chivalry of General Colley; of how Sir Benjamin D'Urban championed right; of the escape of President Steyn, and the burial of President Kruger; of the sorrows and sufferings of the widows and orphans of the combatants who fell in the war, whether Boer or Briton; in short, of all that makes the young heart thrill with courage, love, reverence, and sympathy! Thus the study of history would help to develop character! The introduction to this subject offers a wide field for narrative in the case of beginners. A book like this, containing but a few hundred pages in all, is not the place for romantic descriptions of events.

A simple introduction, §§ 1-66, has been added for the sake of beginners, and even those who have never studied geography or history before, will find no difficulty in understanding it. The language used is as simple as possible. The large type and sub-headings, in addition to a list of dates and a series of questions, will be useful in giving the child a knowledge of the history of his country which he lacks as yet. But even students, and candidates for the Taalbond

Examinations, who require a short summary of South African history, will find this work helpful. Its purchase would involve no waste of money, for it can be used year after year with profit.

No statement has been made in this book which will not bear investigation. The value of an historical work must always depend upon its impartiality and its accuracy, and in writing a school history, the historian must be particularly careful not to prejudice youthful minds by false representations of facts. The author has tried not to lose sight of the "*sum cuique*" in this work. He takes this opportunity of stating, for the benefit of those to whom he is probably a stranger, the motives which prompted him to undertake it. Called, as he was, to South Africa to share in the task of preparing her youth, in the shape of the students of the Victoria College at Stellenbosch, for their life's work, and born and bred in a land bound by the closest of ties to her Dutch-speaking inhabitants, a land, moreover, where the claims of relationships are not lightly discarded, it was impossible for him to refuse the request of the *Zuid-Afrikaanse Taalbond*, the *Zuid-Afrikaanse Onderwijzers Unie*, and the *Afrikaanse Christelike Vrouwen Vereniging*, to write a School History of South Africa, when by so doing he could serve Young South Africa in an even wider sense. Nor could he fail to appreciate at its proper value the moral support given him in his task by three such important organizations. That this book may do for the youth of South Africa all that the above-named associations fondly hope from it, is the fervent desire of the writer.

The author derived his information regarding certain important periods of South African history from a personal examination of the Archives of the Cape Government, as well as from a series of blue books, green books, and other official documents. He is indebted to Dr. Theal's excellent standard history for matters pertaining to native affairs. He also consulted *Precis of the Cape Archives*, the work of Liebrandt, the learned and energetic former Keeper of the Archives at Cape Town, as well as the Rev. Spelstra's important publication respecting Church matters. He has felt it his duty to become acquainted with the contents of the larger, and, in his opinion, the more important portion of the literature extant in several languages on the subject of South Africa.

The reader will no doubt be generous enough to pardon such printer's errors as may occur, when he remembers that thousands of miles separate printer and author.

The latter will welcome criticisms and emendations from competent critics, and he will bear them in mind in view of a possible second edition. He hopes to receive newspapers, periodicals, etc., containing critiques of his work, in anticipation of which he now tenders his thanks.

The English translation is the work of Miss M. le Roux, B.A.

E. C. GODÉE-MOLSBERGEN.

STELLENBOSCH,

18th September, 1909.