

## THE EDITOR'S CORNER

### Crossing the Rubicon ...

If I seem a little elated at the appearance of our own modest historical journal, I trust I will be forgiven. For, sadly clothed though it is in a simple cover of coloured duplicating paper and its telling and purposeful lines set out by the humble scribe of a duplicating concern, it nevertheless represents the realisation of an aim set very early in our existence.

With this publication we have now crossed the Rubicon of our existence and henceforth there shall be no turning back. We have joined issue with an historically "dead" community, and our aim will be to bring back to life the memory of stirring things that were.

We have a great need of this for it is only when a people can remember its past - be it sorry, be it grand -

that there can be a fresh kindling of the hope that lives on eternally in the breast of every human. We have to make the people go to school again! We have got to start thumping the old textbooks of the past, we have to sit again at the desk of learning, we have to stand again before the Great Teacher of our Nation's "fount of history" to draw from it the energy and inspiration which will give life and meaning to our efforts, to our ways, to our doings and to the thing we call tradition.

### Our Near Neighbour

I have to salute here our near neighbour, the Port Elizabeth Historical Society. I note from the first number of the journal, "Looking Back", that we are about the same age. It is nice to be contemporary to a society which is evidently well-established and is doing good work in our elder sister port. Speaking from a personal knowledge of Port Elizabeth, I have always felt that the delving into the Algoa past is something that needed organised and systematic tackling.

There have been many sporadic efforts, mainly by individuals with no organised backing and with not the means to systemize their findings. From time to time, the history of Algoa Bay have been pieced together as the result of voluntary efforts, chief of which is the sterling effort by Mr. J.J. Redgrave with his monumental work, "Port Elizabeth in Bygone Days".

### Cradock Place

Now we have an organised body there to attend to matters vital to our history. And our sister organisation will have a lot of hay on its fork. To mention just a few: What has been done, for instance about the graves of John Centlivres Chase, the 1820 Settler who came out in Bailie's party in the s.s. Chapman, and his first wife Arabella?

They were buried with other early pioneers of Alcoa Bay in sepulchers on the site of Cradock Place. This area has been built over but what happened to the graves? They were supplied with tombstones bearing the names of Chase, his wife and others. Have these tombstones been saved?

I think the Port Elizabeth librarian, Mr. Harry Edge, in his brochures published at one time, has something about Chase and Cradock Place. These, I think, will bear reprinting in "Looking Back" as a valuable source of information on the man who left behind him the Natal Papers, fount of early Natalian history.

But this is just by the way, to show how we are all interested in each other.

### Our own story

The history of East London is being looked into now and it is hoped that with our Society's efforts, we will soon have a lot to add to what we already have. Our Chairman, Mr. H.H. Taylor, has taken the initiative in writing the story of East London which was serialised in the Daily Dispatch. It is the nucleus of a much larger work. Who will tackle this for us, you, Mark ??

### Public's help

In this regard I again refer readers to Miss Dickie's notes where she touches on Dr. Denfield's Salon of Photographs and his request to the public to assist with the collection of oddments from our past.

There must still be old records, books, newspaper cuttings, souvenirs and other relevant data in our store-rooms. Please let us have whatever there is. Leave the judging as to their value as historical relics to our experts who will know how to use them in the "Story of East London".

## Afrikaans ook.

Afrikaanse lesers en ander wat in ons geskiedenis belangstel word vriendelik uitgenooi om bydraes vir ons blad te lewer. As u nie 'n historiese bydraw het nie, kan u 'n kort briefie skryf oor hoe u dink ons die bewaar van ons erfenis moet aanpak. Alle bydrae wat raak aan ons onderwerp, word verwelkom.

D.J.J.P.