

PP 1002 / I / N. 52

DÉPARTEMENT MISSIONNAIRE  
DES ÉGLISES PROTESTANTES  
5, CHEMIN DES CÈDRES  
1000 - LAUSANNE 9

Ernest Creux.

1845 - 1929.





7w. 7074

Taken from "Le Relais" Dec. 1971  
On Cover.

An old photo of the "Moulin Creux"  
where Ernest was born.

Below can be seen "Le Lazaret",  
where infectious cases were nursed  
from 1875 to 1890. These buildings were  
on the left bank of the river Flon.



VALDEZIA in 1875 from a sketch  
done by Mrs. Creux.



ELIM - 1883 from a sketch  
done by Mrs. Creux.

fière de sortie à la fin

Valdezia

Wh  
small ho  
village  
it by th  
the farm  
Watt, fo  
the dist  
was occu  
who came  
Limpopo  
who, in  
up in hi  
governme  
new habi  
all the  
and sad,  
A brick  
divided  
nor ceil  
high, wa  
chewed u  
The two  
The thre  
were the  
had hurr  
wagon, us

The  
room.  
Setloumou  
distance  
bottom of  
to irriga  
apricot t  
the West  
afterward  
outhouses

The  
the river  
from whic  
which als  
This first  
without e  
our Shang

Mr. and Mr

Mr.  
It was in  
Bridei, w  
great inf  
studied T  
Vaud and  
actively  
the youth



Valdezia in 1875

(by E.Creux)

What memories are attached to this little group of huts and small houses! We came to this hill that overlooks this little village on the 9th July 1875 and had established ourselves below it by the following month, after having concluded the purchase of the farm and its few buildings from the owner, a Scotsman named Watt, for the sum of Fr.7500. The farm, called Klipfontein, in the district of Spelonken, on which we built the mission station, was occupied by a large population of Shangaan or Tsonga refugees who came from the districts which were occupied by the Zulus on the Limpopo and the Zambesi. These natives had to obey their chiefs, who, in their turn, owed obedience to Albasini, a Portuguese brought up in his childhood by the Shangaan people, although nominally government was in the hands of the Boers. The day we occupied our new habitations, having spent four months in our wagons, a fire destroyed all the dry veld which surrounded our dwellings. Everything was black and sad, but what comfort it was to have a roof over our heads at last! A brick house covered by galvanised iron 25ft. long and about 6ft. wide, divided into three rooms, was allocated to me. It had neither floors nor ceilings and the heat caused by this roof, which was only 8 or 9 ft. high, was intolerable. The white ants made frightening ravages and chewed up doors and windows and even right up to the beams. The two huts on the right were the kitchen and Bethuel's living quarters. The three huts in the middle, joined by passages of galvanised iron, were the first living quarters of Mr. and Mrs. P. Berthoud. Mr. Berthoud had hurriedly built himself the small house which we see behind the wagon, using bricks which we found ready made.

The hut, which was already there, was our first church and school room. It was there that we baptised our first converts, Lydia Setloumoula and Moses Mapakoa. The mountain which is drawn in the distance is the Zoutpansberg. A river, the Levubu, flowed at the bottom of the valley and water was brought from the river in a furrow to irrigate the garden, in which oranges, lemons, quinces, peaches and apricot trees produced delicious fruit. The dwellings of Eliakim to the West and a Christian village to the East of our houses were built afterwards; then a church, which the termites destroyed, and various outhouses, occupied the available space left by the kraals and the bushes.

The climate of the old Valdezia was not healthy as it was too near the river and was exposed to the damp; all of us suffered from fever, from which Mrs. P. Berthoud died. So it was abandoned for a higher site which also had a beautiful view, and it was named Upper Valdezia. This first station, the nursery of our mission, which I cannot think of without emotion, was the means of spiritual birth for a great number of our Shangaan Christians.

---

Mr. and Mrs. E. Creux.

Mr. Ernest Creux was born on the 9th November 1845 in Lausanne. It was in that town that he took catechism classes under Pastor Louis Bridel, who had a lively interest in missionary work, and who had a great influence on the future of this young man. Ernest Creux studied Theology at the faculty of the Free Church in the canton of Vaud and finished his studies in 1869. At the same time he was actively engaged in Sunday School work and in Christian Unions for the youth.



It was then, in conjunction with his friend Mr. Paul Berthoud, that he asked the synod of his church to found a mission in which they would be the first workers. At that time the church had not felt it possible to branch out in that direction.

Mr. Creux went to Edinburgh to study English and medicine. Returning from Scotland, he went to Paris as a male nurse in the 11th Ambulance Corps of the Evangelical Union and was sent to the Sedan.

Immediately afterwards he was sent to Bavaria as evangelist to the French prisoners; here he stayed till Christmas 1870. On returning to Switzerland he had to put on his uniform to go with his battalion to receive the unhappy Boubaki soldiers, at Rippe near Crassier. The Vaudois Free Church sent him to the canton of Saint Gall to help the French internees. Here he stayed till the end of the war. From there he went to Savigny, near Lausanne, where he served as an evangelist until the time of his departure for Africa.

This departure was the result of a letter from Mr. Mabile, a Lesotho missionary who had called urgently for help.

By agreement with the Committee of Paris, Mr. Creux was sent by the Vaudois Free Church as an auxiliary missionary at the service of the conference of Lesotho.

It was in 1869 that the Commission of Missions was instituted by the United synod of St. Croix. (In June, 1883 the Vaudois Mission was changed to the Swiss Romande mission of Free Churches, and the Vaudois Commission of Missions, while it kept its individual existence, joined with the delegates from Neuchatel and Geneva. This new body adopted the name "Council of the Romande Mission"). At the Morges synod, on the 2nd November 1871, the convention was ratified and Mr. Creux and Mr. Berthoud were sent directly to the service of the Paris Missionary Society.

Mr. Creux was consecrated at Lausanne on the 21st January, 1872, as the first missionary of his church; Professor C. O. Viguet delivered the sermon and pronounced the consecration.

On the 25th January, 1872 the marriage was celebrated between Mr. Creux and Miss Mathilda Ansell, an Englishwoman (Born on the 1st April, 1849) in the chapel at Morges. The missionary and his wife left Europe on the 26th February, 1872 on the "Norseman" and disembarked at the Cape on the 31st March.

Elim in 1883 by E. Creux.

This drawing done by Mrs. Creux, shows the mission station after the first buildings were finished. The church-school, built without enough foresight, had become too small, and was demolished and replaced by the chapel which is shown in other pictures. A shop constructed by Mr. Jaques, the small cottage built by Mr. Ed. Constancon and Mr. Thomas Mingard's house, the workshop, the mill, all these nestled against a hill covered with beautiful trees, and today has the appearance of a lovely village. The distance between Elim and Valdezia is about 20km. The road is pleasant and easy for about 2 hours after which the road descends into a deep valley, at the bottom of which flows the Mtsuireti stream, which rises at the foot of the Rebola, central high point of the Spelonken. Before arriving at the Mtsuireti, the road branches off to the Zoutpansberg, at the base of which is the farm and old fortress of the Portuguese Albasini, whose son succeeded as a Commissioner of the Government to the native tribes of the district. Numbers of travellers passed Elim on their way towards Valdezia. This is the main route to the Spelonken and to the Berlin mission stations of Techakoma, Sibasa, Makouareli.



Before arriving at the mission station from the West, a deep valley in which flows the Magouloule, must be crossed. This pretty name has always seemed to me a happy onomatopoeia- This stream flows from the mountains on a bed of pebbles and has many cascades. It is this stream, diverted from its course, that waters the mission station and turns the mill wheel.

### Lower Valdezia (Valdezia-dessous)

Lower Valdezia is the nursery of our mission in the Transvaal. Mr. Creux and Mr. Berthoud were preceded by a year by Eliakim, a Basotho evangelist. The latter had accompanied Mr. P. Berthoud in a journey of exploration in 1874, and had stayed in the Spelonken to learn the language as he evangelised. At the time of their arrival in the district the pioneers of our work found a favourable place to establish themselves, bought the farm from an English merchant, used the existing buildings and built others. They called the farm Valdezia.

It was there that our first missionaries began their work amongst the Shangeans, and were to tell of great difficulties. It was also there that they were unjustly taken as prisoners, in 1876, to Marabastad, leaving their wives and children for five weeks protected only by a few converted natives at the Mission Station while war was being fought all round them.

After a few years of working together, Mr. Creux and Mr. Berthoud separated, the first going to establish a mission station at Elin, the second staying at Valdezia. In 1880, Mr. Berthoud, after a time of great trial, left in his turn, and returned to Europe, and for many months Valdezia remained without a missionary. Eliakim managed the school, presided at the services and Mr. Creux went at odd times to supervise.

In December, 1882 Mr. and Mrs. H. Berthoud took over the supervision of the work and lived in Mr. P. Berthoud's house- Mr. Creux's house had become the school room and the venue for services, and it was used as such right up to the time of the inauguration of the church at Upper Valdezia - (Christmas 1887)

In the foreground of the picture, which shows a part of the first Valdezia, can be seen a vast lawn, divided by a pathway; to the right of which can be seen Mr. P. Berthoud's horse browsing. The portion of a tree that can be seen was a syringa planted by the founders of Valdezia. The middle building was the living quarters of the missionaries. Shading the main front are some syringes and mulberry trees. A little to the rear, and to the right, can be seen a smaller house, which served as a pantry. Standing between the principal building and the hut is Mr. Ducret. The black boys are seated round their fire, taking their meal. The trees behind the houses, to the right, are mulberries, a blue gum to the centre, bananas and lemon trees, and to the left, some indigenous bushes. In the background can be seen part of the Zoutpansberg range.

all the children that returned to the mill which was not too far from the town to prevent them from going to school there. What a joy it was to rediscover the mill, the woods of Valdezia, the stream, the beautiful water race. During the holidays I worked in the orchard of the country, in the potato fields, at the harvest, in the garden, or I replaced a worker absent from the mill.



Ernest Creux and Paul Berthoud

The founders of the Swiss Mission in South Africa.

It is no exaggeration to say that the careers of these two men constitute a rare, perhaps unique, story in the annals of Christian missions. Here we have two young men, in whose hearts was the irresistible call to be missionaries. They applied to the church to which they belonged and asked to be sent to work among the heathen. Their conviction and enthusiasm were such that the church, hesitant at first, acceded to their request. They were to found a new mission. A little known heathen tribe was discovered by them in the Northern Transvaal. They deciphered its language and began to learn it. For more than fifty years they laboured among these people and they had the satisfaction of seeing their plans carried out little by little. Their work increased and spread and grew in depth. A native church was born and developed. Evangelists and ministers were trained - The Christian influence penetrated the whole tribe. At the same time these two sons of the Vaudois Free Church had the joy of seeing other churches joining with them in the work which they had begun. The Mission became an agent of unification, of union between churches which for too long a time were indifferent to each other. At the end of their career in Africa, they were amazed, these two fighters, to see that their missionary endeavours had brought such a tremendous blessing. In fact, there was in the destiny of these two men, whose only wish was to obey the will of God, something magnificent and unique.

Ernest Creux

Ernest's call was not a sudden one, unexpected, like a thunderbolt, as is Ernest Creux was born on the 9th November 1845. The Creux family had come from France at the time of the religious persecutions. This was also the case of the Labarthe family to which his mother belonged. His father, who was a miller, built a mill near Lausanne, on the banks of the Flon, in a place full of charm. There he brought his young wife and it was there that Ernest's three brothers and his two sisters and he himself, were born - he being the youngest. Ernest wrote letters to his friends in which he tells of his childhood. This is what he says about his earliest memories:-  
"Could I ever describe the charm of our corner of the world; with its beautiful grassy slopes covered by fruit trees, with a stream flowing in cascades on a bed of pebbles. My first childhood memories were of a walk, when I was about 2½ years old, across these lovely green slopes, bright in the beautiful June sun". When the older ones were big enough to have to go to school, his mother went to settle them in Lausanne, taking with her young Ernest, who began his school career under Mr. Peyrollax. But in 1858, at the age of 13, he had the misfortune to lose his mother, an outstanding Christian, who had a deep religious influence on him. She loved missions and tried to interest her youngest son by giving him books and brochures to read about them. It was to her that Ernest attributed the first steps towards his vocation.

All the children then returned to the mill which was not too far from the town to prevent them from going to school there. What a joy it was to rediscover the mill, the woods of Sauvabelin, the Flon, the beautiful winter snow... During the holidays I worked in the depth of the country, in the potato fields, at the harvest, in the gardens, or I replaced a worker missing from the mill. I learned to mow and to work in the country and this was very useful to me later on in my missionary life.



It was then that Ernest Creux met a man, who was to be the decisive influence in his life. Pastor Bridel was not only a powerful preacher but also a master well loved by the young. He had a great missionary interest. He held services for children in the church at Terreaux, which attracted many adults. The first Sunday of every month was devoted to missionary subjects - "I would not have missed those services for anything in the world", writes Ernest, "It was there that I learnt to know and to love missionary work". But Louis Bridel must have had a still deeper influence on this young boy, who had become his catechumen. He brought him to a personal faith. Ernest tells how he experienced, after a conversation with him, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and it was for him the turning point in his spiritual life. After that experience, he decided to apply for admission to the Church. To understand more fully how Ernest was led to this missionary vocation we can refer to a survey made by Arthur Grandjean in 1922. This is how Ernest replied from Pretoria to a questionnaire which was sent to him and others. After having recalled the two influences which gave birth to the idea of dedicating himself to mission work, that of his mother and that of Louis Bridel, he added, "My vocation became clearer little by little. It was an act of obedience to the will of God. I resisted the call until I understood that a mission to the heathen was the main work asked of the Church. Once I recognised this, I was obliged to ask myself why I should not become a missionary, and if I would not be committing an act of disobedience if I resisted this call. Once I had had contact with the missionary life, I had not a single doubt about the absolute necessity of this work".

One can note two things about these interesting statements: Ernest's call was not a sudden one, unexpected, like a thunderbolt, as is sometimes the case, but it was little by little that he became conscious of it, and he gave it deep thought. It was because the mission was the first duty of the Church that he felt obliged to dedicate himself to it. This was in accordance with the predominant preoccupation of young Christians at that time.

After his religious instruction, Ernest became a faithful member of the Christian Union for the young, for which he always had a great affection. He used to meet with a score of his companions of the Galliard College and hold prayer meetings with them (his friends Bernus, Perillard, Vautier, Mercier attended). A wind of awakening blew on the Free Church at Lausanne. "These were good times for the Church; the Terreaux chapel and then the one at Marterrey became too small, especially when Louis Bridel preached. His death in 1866 was a great loss to Lausanne". From the age of sixteen Ernest assisted at the Sunday School at Romanel then he went to Mont to lead the singing at the Sunday School of his friend Bernus. He was then enrolled as a teacher in the Sunday School of Marterrey, and later as superintendent of one in Rolle until 1869. He was then a student of Theology, but his evangelical temperament led him into practical activities. He studied at the Faculty of the Free Church with success, but did not seem to be concerned with problems of criticism or dogma. Other questions preoccupied his mind. He had met a friend, who like himself, had received the call - How, under what conditions could they realise their dream? The friend was Paul Berthoud.

In preparation for their future work, the two friends went to Edinburgh, to study medicine and English. Paul Berthoud stayed a year longer than Ernest Creux, devoting himself to his medical studies, as the acquisition of precise and positive knowledge appealed to his nature. He realised how valuable it would be to his career, as a missionary. He continued his studies in Paris during the winter of 1871-1872, only returning to Switzerland after the Creux's had left.



Thus ended the first part of their preparation, - in Europe. It only remains to record the happy event of their marriages. Ernest Creux had met a young English lady in Morges, Miss. Mathilda Ansell. She had lost her parents and came to Switzerland and stayed with the Constancon-Taylor family, who kept her on as governess to their children. It was she who became the wonderful wife who shared his work for 57 years, and everyone who entered her house felt the radiance and kindness and serenity of her personality.

Paul Berthoud married a Vaudoise, Miss. Eugenie Exchaquet, daughter of a man of property near Aubonne.

Ernest Creux left on the 1st February, 1872. He embarked with his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Preen, who were sent by the Paris Committee. The ship, the "Norseman" was the smallest of the company's ships and decidedly lacked comfort. "Yesterday I saw our cabins", he wrote from Southampton. "I have difficulty in seeing how we can live in these boxes for 38 days - a nauseous smell, the same as one smells in hospitals, a poor light, which comes through a round porthole hardly as big as the base of my hat! We are crowded by the other passengers, nearly all of whom are diamond seekers, and whose company is not very desirable".

However they arrived safely at the Cape at the end of 26 days, and a week later were at Port Elizabeth, where they had the good fortune to obtain a wagon and 6 mules. The mules were in good condition but the drivers were not up to much and they had great trouble getting going. At last Fritz, the main driver, seized his whip, 20-30 feet long, cracked it on the mules' backs.....and they were on their way.

"But with what horror we were seized on seeing all our baggage which we had thought so well tied, bouncing about in the wagon".

The mattresses fell on the backs of the Preens, who were behind us; hat-boxes became detached and landed on our heads; everything was being thrown about in a frightening way; our kitchen utensils made an infernal noise. So we had to stop quite soon to subdue all our belongings. There is an art in knowing how to pack a wagon so that nothing is lost or spoilt. We had already had some painful experiences which were to be useful in the future".

It is interesting to see how the young missionaries reacted when they first met the blacks. On the road from Port Elizabeth to Grahamstown, they passed a native village of about 8-10 huts: "Men, women and children, all quite naked, were warming themselves in the sun in front of their miserable dwellings. Most of them had unfriendly expressions. I could easily understand the embarrassment of the first missionaries who had to speak to these tribes about spiritual things. How to begin?....How to choose the words which would convey the ideas they wished them to understand? It would need nothing less than a miracle of grace to transform these degraded beings in to self respecting Christians".

At Grahamstown the travellers were present at an examination at a black school where they heard black choirs for the first time. "They have very true and loud voices, but they lack the modulation and flexibility which is the charm of European choirs, their sound is silvery and clear. But what a pleasure it was for us to see these Sunday Schools composed of blacks, big and small, wide awake, intelligent, brown skinned with big black eyes and such very white teeth. All of them were properly dressed and appeared to be so happy, that it was a pleasure to see them".



It is clear that the impression made by the blacks was steadily improving. It became excellent when the travellers arrived in Lesotho. After crossing the Cape Colony from the south to the north they arrived at Aliwal North and had the joy of meeting several colleagues from Lesotho; Mr. and Mrs. Dyke, Dr. Casalis and A. Mabile, who took them in their wagons to Hermon, the first mission station in Lesotho.

"Imagine our joy on arriving in Lesotho and being received by black Christians, dressed in their Sunday best, who had come out to meet us singing hymns and national songs. Our arrival was a real festival for the country. I was unable to restrain my tears when this assembly of five or six hundred people thanked God for having brought us there safe and sound and because they were still being remembered in Europe. "On entering Lesotho", Ernest Creux writes, "it seemed to us that we were on holy ground where the grace and power of the Lord was to be seen in the conversion of numbers of sinners. And what prayers rose to heaven for this corner of the earth! What tears and what sweat had watered this small land! To how many hearts is this name of Lesotho dear! How often has this land been in my thoughts since I heard the talk about Mr. Casalis' work! Would I spend my days here, or was this only the first step? What joy and pain awaited me? Dear Lord, all I ask for my dear wife and myself is that we should be doing your will".

Ernest Creux then went to Morija, the principal mission station, in May 1872. He immediately began to study Sesotho and to dispense medicine, and he gave lessons in English, singing, drawing and Geography at the catechist's school. Thus passed his first year in Africa.

---

Paul Berthoud left Switzerland with his wife, in 1872, nine months after his friend. They had an excellent voyage to Port Elizabeth. Their ship, the "Courland" had to anchor a considerable distance from the shore, and passengers were transported by small boats. It was impossible to lower the gangway completely, so one had to judge a favourable time when the boat rose on a wave, to jump quickly, because the next moment the boat would be 10 feet lower. They journeyed from Port Elizabeth to Grahamstown in a sort of bus - very uncomfortable and bone shaking. At Grahamstown they found ox-wagons sent from Lesotho, which had enormous wheels and were solid and well made.

On the 18th March, 1873 they arrived at Morija where they found their Creux friends, in the house which they would have to share for some time. There was no lack of work for the new arrivals. Paul Berthoud was pleased he had studied medicine and was able to deal with the sick and perform operations. This meant that he was able to do more than just learn the language and do odd jobs.

The time that the two men spent in Lesotho proved very useful, not only because they learnt the native language, and learnt to adapt themselves to life in Africa, where they had to be proficient in all kinds of trades, but above all because of the opportunity it gave them to study the management and function of a well run mission. The Lesotho mission had just passed through a terrible crisis during 1865-1869. Fighting between the Boers and the Basotho, under Mosheh, had brought the tribe, and also the mission, to within a hairbreadth of ruin. But the proclamation of Lesotho as an English protectorate in 1869 had saved both, and when the missionaries arrived at Morija, the mission had got into its stride again.



Adolph Mabile had always wanted to extend mission work to the tribes of Sotho origin on the left bank of the Zambezi and to the Bapedi who had established themselves in the Northern Transvaal. But the war with the Boers had made this impossible.

On the 12th May, 1873, a conference of the Lesotho missionaries was held in Morija for the express purpose of arranging an expedition to the Bapedi. It was decided that Mabile would be in charge and that he would be accompanied by one of the new arrivals.

Ernest Creux had had one year in Lesotho and had mastered enough of the language to take control of a mission station; whereas Paul Berthoud had just arrived. And then the Creux family had just been blessed by the birth of their first son, Etienne, and it would have been imprudent to expose him to the rigours of this journey. Also Berthoud's medical knowledge would be of great service to such an expedition. So it was decided that Berthoud would go and the caravan left on the 23rd May, 1873.

The caravan was made up of the Mabile and Berthoud families and three evangelists whom Mabile took with him, with the firm intention of placing them somewhere in the North. Josias was originally from the land of the Bapedi, the two others, Eliakim and Asser, were born in Lesotho. They were valiant men, full of desire to spread the gospel. Six drivers had the care of the two wagons which were drawn by twelve oxen each, and a cart to which six other oxen were inspanned. There was also a small boy, who had to drive another two horses and four oxen. They went North over the Caledon and Vaal rivers to Pretoria.

Here is Eugenie Berthoud's description of this town which was to become the capital of the Union of South Africa. "Pretoria looks like all the other towns in this country; small white and grey houses, small gardens without flowers, fruit trees, blue gums and willows, a few shops which appeared to contain everything, but never just what one was looking for, grass or a foot of dust in the roads; horses, oxen, dogs and goats, sheep and some antelope wandered freely. Some young Englishmen and Boers looking at us as if we had fallen from the sky! -"

From Pretoria they went east to the Bapedi country. The Bapedi, broadly speaking, are the main tribes of the Transvaal located in the North, whose language is similar to Sesotho. But it applied specifically to a tribe which lived north-west of Lydenburg, under the chief Sekukuni. Politically speaking, in 1873, they were independent. Sekukuni's father, Sekuati, had made peace with the Boers. He had been an excellent chief, well liked by his subjects and well disposed towards the whites. Before 1860 he had allowed the Berlin missionaries to establish themselves there. But his successor, Sekukuni, was a different person. He was not the legitimate son and he had usurped the power at the death of Sekuati, and had put to death his rivals. His reign was a reign of terror, and he decided to break all relations with the whites. He drove out the Berlin missionary, Merensky, and persecuted those of his subjects who had embraced Christianity. Merensky then founded a mission near Middelburg, out of Sekukuni's territory.

The prospect of founding a mission among such savages was not very encouraging but Mabile counted on the fact that the French missionaries, were accepted by the great chief Moshesh who retained diplomatic relations with the Bapedi. He visited Merensky to ask his advice but the latter did not hide his doubts whether /



All in all, Paul Berthoud was convinced that it was here /whether such a project would be successful. Sekukuni lived in a natural fortress at Thaba-Mosego in the mountains. They had to leave their wagons and travel for two days, the men on foot, the ladies on horseback, surrounded by a curious crowd painted in ochre and grease, who gave them no peace. When they arrived at his kraal, they were told that the chief would receive them, but as they started to go there, Sekukuni's son appeared and told them that his father did not wish to see them and ordered them to depart immediately. "You are nothing better than dogs! You have come to steal the chief's subjects". And the missionaries had no choice but to retire, followed by the insults of the young people. So they left the Bapedi country which remained closed to the gospel until the death of this savage potentate in 1882.

The expedition continued on its journey north, occasionally meeting some Christians. Josias, left them to work amongst the Molepo tribe, from which he had originated. At the western end of the Zoutpansberg range they found the mission station of Goedgedacht run by a Dutch missionary, Hofmeyer. He received the travellers with open arms, as Eugenie Berthoud wrote, "in his humble mud-covered hut which had neither floors nor ceilings, and had cloth window coverings. However, joy and peace reigned in this dwelling, and there was nothing to discourage the people from visiting their missionary. We were very pleased to see this simplicity, for this was how we pictured our work at its beginnings".

Mr. Hofmeyer was able to help them tremendously. He told them of a people living in the east in a part known as the Spelonken, called "Knobkneusen" by the Boers, because their faces and noses were tattooed. The Bapedi called them "Makoapa" and had nothing good to say about them. The Basotho said they were immoral, doubtless because their sexual morality was so different from their own. The young Basotho girls were strictly guarded, but their married women were quite free, exactly the opposite to the Makoapas. There was nothing to choose between them as both fell far beneath the ideal. But the elders of Mr. Hofmeyer's church added that they were thieves and liars and were deceitful, that their language was very difficult and almost impossible to learn. They advised the missionaries not to have anything to do with them. To this Mabile answered, "These are just the men we are looking for - Did not Jesus come to look for and to save the lost?"

They went on in a single wagon, leaving the others at Goedgedacht, to find out the truth about this tribe. The country was pleasant, a large well watered plain, surrounded by mountains and seeming to have a healthy climate. Right in the middle of the plain was a curious looking settlement which resembled a fortress. This belonged to a Portuguese, Joao Albasini, a Portuguese Vice-consul and a Justice of the Peace appointed by the Transvaal Government. Having established himself in the country in 1841, he had become a kind of chief of the Makoapi (who called themselves Gwambas, now known as Shangaan) They had come from Portuguese territory and were refugees in the Spelonken after political troubles.

Albasini received the missionaries very cordially and urged them to stay. The blacks themselves listened attentively to the gospel and urged them not to abandon them. Their language was not Sesotho, but they could understand it. The European colonists received them well and wanted them to settle amongst them. A Scotsman, Watt, offered to sell them his farm at a very reasonable figure.



All in all, Paul Berthoud was convinced that it was here that God wanted them to work, and he was tempted to get to work at once. But as this was only an exploratory journey, he resigned himself to returning to Lesotho; though Mabile decided to leave Eliakim and Asser there; while arrangements were being made to buy Watt's farm. They also decided not to travel further North and to cross the Limpopo. The oxen and the men were tired and in any case, in their eyes the problem had been solved, and they would found the new mission in the Spelonken. They returned to Lesotho having been away five months.

The Lesotho missionaries met in an extraordinary session soon after their return to deliberate on and listen to their report. They felt strongly that it was the will of God, but wondered if they had the means and the workers to start a mission in the Northern Transvaal and extend the work. They referred the matter to the committees in Paris and Lausanne.

Ernest Creux had already learnt the language (Sesotho) and his colleagues had been able to leave him in charge of a mission station. Paul Berthoud had enough knowledge of the language to enable him to alternate with Mabile in taking morning prayers and on his return he looked after the mission station of Thaba-Bosigo for three months. Thus they were better equipped to start new work than many new missionaries.

The Comité de Paris (Committee of Paris) decided it did not have the resources to be associated with the new project. The way was clear for the Free Church to deal with the matter on its own and this was done by a synod at Yverdon at the end of April, 1874. The Synod unanimously approved a proposal by Creux and Berthoud to found a mission under the sole control of the Vaudoise Church, in the Northern Transvaal or in the neighbouring districts.

A year and a half had elapsed between the return of the travellers and the Yverdon Synod's decision: However, Ernest Creux had important work as head of the Massitissi station and could not leave at a moment's notice. Paul Berthoud had been asked to replace M. Jousse at Thaba-Bosigo for three months at the beginning of 1874, then he returned to Morija where he taught at the Normal College (His first child, Emile was born in 1874, and in 1875 the Creux's second child, Jeanne, was born) Paul Berthoud's medical knowledge was very useful wherever he was stationed.

Eventually, on the 16th April, 1875, they left Morija, with mixed feelings. At their departure they expressed gratitude to all their colleagues with whom they had worked so well and happily, and a decision was made to pray for each other. Ernest Creux writes, "To see with my own eyes the pagan blacks, -drunkards, adulterers, without natural affection or thought of eternity, turning to God and becoming men with whom it was a pleasure to associate, intelligent and loving fathers, this was something which was always a cause of wonder. Each conversion was a real miracle."

In spite of the regret that they felt at leaving this beautiful Lesotho mission, our friends were filled with a great joy that their dream was to be fulfilled. Wrote E. Creux, "God grant that this new step will be for the good of all and for the Church itself. It will be if we do His will and not our own, if we never yield to self interest..... Be sure that, as concerns my dear colleagues and myself we will never put the church to any unnecessary expense, and if necessary we will be quite content to live in a reed house, plastered with mud, like the home of Mr. Hofmeyr at Goedgedacht".



The caravan which left Lesotho for the Transvaal was considerably bigger than the one which had gone north two years before.

Paul Berthoud describes it thus, "We were two missionary families, the families of three black catechists, and fourteen men, to attend to the five wagons and cattle, about twenty-five people in all. There were two or three cows which together produced scarcely a bottle of milk a day, which was needed for our small children, several horses, a few spare oxen, the catechist's cattle, two or three goats destined for the kitchen, two sheep and our teams of oxen (ten to sixteen oxen per wagon) in all about one hundred animals, not counting the dogs and fowls. In the evening when the wagons were placed in rows in the veld, when the tent was put up and the fires lit, one was reminded of the patriarchal encampment of a nomadic people"...

The road was often appalling and they had to transport 3,000 lbs. of grain and flour, mainly as provisions for the road; also the accidents and incidents with the wagons were innumerable. In due course they arrived in Pretoria where they remained for almost a month, during which they had to see the Boer government. The latter when presented with the subject of founding a new mission, had replied that they would not authorise a French mission in the country, probably because the Berlin mission had a number of stations at the time and Franco-German relations were not cordial. This was one of the reasons why the Committee of Paris was not able to extend its work.

They arranged for Creux and Berthoud to go and see the authorities and obtain their permission. Ernest Creux wrote; "In the absence of Mr. Burgers, the President, we had an appointment with his deputy, Mr. Joubert. I asked one of the members of the Volksraad to introduce us and to serve as an interpreter - When it was realized that we were Swiss and sent by a Swiss Church, he declared that we had no need of authorisation to establish ourselves, and that he, personally, was glad that we had come to the Transvaal, to work for the education of the black race. He wished us every success in our mission". "Joubert's favourable attitude caused us no surprise. He had been the head of the Liberal party of the Boers in the Transvaal for a number of years". Paul Berthoud adds, "Mr. Joubert received us, on the pavement, (with such kindness) as he was returning to a sitting of the Volksraad.... We asked him what we should do in regard to Government regulations. He replied that when we arrived at the Spelonken, we were to give our names to the nearest veldcornet, and we would become citizens of the Transvaal. "Would we then have the right to evangelise as we wished?" "Yes, certainly". "Is there no law, no regulation that could prevent our work?" "No, none. There are a few regulations governing the political state of the native, and you can get these from the State secretary".

So it was not difficulties with the Government which delayed the travellers, but troubles with the oxen and the wagons. The black driver from Lesotho, who had agreed to transport Paul Berthoud's baggage, took fright when he saw that the cattle sickness (peri-pneumonia) raged in the Transvaal and he cleared out without warning, with all the drivers and shepherds.- The Berlin missionary in Pretoria called on his black parishioners to supply men and oxen, which they did at considerable cost.

The caravan could then proceed, but the journey from Pretoria to the Spelonken was very difficult. The oxen had great difficulty in getting feed, because grass was scarce.



Certain regions were infested with lions and it was not possible to allow the cattle to graze during the night. The country was picturesque, large plains covered by thorny mimosa, with hills resembling masses of huge rocks. One day Ernest Creux met a Boer who spoke to him in Hollands, and then seeing he could not understand him very well, spoke in Sesotho. "He was most cordial, gave us some butter and some meat, and assured us of his pleasure that we were going to spread the gospel to the lost nations. It appeared that this man who was called Du Freez, was descended from the French refugees during the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, just as I was. Was it not strange that two descendants of the French Huguenots should meet in the wilds of Africa and speak to each other in Sesotho? Most Boers seemed to think we were taking a lot of trouble for nothing".

Another meeting, which gave them even greater pleasure, was with the evangelists who had been left in the Northern Transvaal, two years previously, and who came to meet and help them. They brought good news from the Spelonken.

At last they arrived at the Spelonken - The caravan descended into the great plain, surrounded by mountains - Paul Berthoud writes, "When we were confronted by this magnificent wooded range of the Zoutpansberg, at the foot of which spread the Spelonken, valleys, well watered, running in every direction, and we saw numbers of picturesque villages situated on the hills and slopes, often hidden in the foliage. We could not help hoping that the Lord would allow us to do His work in so beautiful a land which resembled our beautiful canton of Vaud more than anything we had yet seen".

The wagons were outspanned near Eliakim's small house. Althea, his wife, had been brought by the travellers from Lesotho and you can imagine her joy at rejoining her husband and finding a home of her own.

"We all joined in giving thanks to God for having allowed us to accomplish this difficult journey and for looking after us to the end. We also needed to ask for His blessing on the work to which he had called us". It was there that we founded the first mission station of the Free Church of Vaud - The obvious and immediate work which we saw ahead was considerable. We knew, however, that God would not ask us to do it in our own strength".

It might be appropriate to pause here and summarise the missionary career of the two pioneers.

1. Their first stay in the Spelonken lasted nine years for Ernest Creux (1875-1884) but only five years for Paul Berthoud (1875-1880) because the tremendous trials during which he lost all the members of his family, forced him to return prematurely to his home.
2. Paul Berthoud had a second spell in the Spelonken but was not long in leaving the Transvaal to found and take charge of the mission in Mozambique (1884-1894)
3. Ernest Creux after a stay of five years in Switzerland returned to the Spelonken where for ten years he managed the Elia Station (1889-1899)
4. Returning for a short period to Switzerland Paul Berthoud returned for his third term at Lourenco Marques, where he worked/



/worked till his retirement in 1905, and returned to Switzerland.

5. It was also in a town that Ernest Creux ended his career. He was in charge of the Swiss Mission in Pretoria (capital of the Transvaal) from 1902-1910.
6. In their old age the two veterans, having decided not to end their days in their homeland, dedicated their last strength to their beloved work until God called them to Him, Ernest Creux on the 17th July, 1929, and Paul Berthoud on the 26th February, 1930.

The story of these two men blends completely with that of the Swiss Mission in South Africa, above all in the beginning when they were the only workers. The aim of this small souvenir is, however, not to describe the development of the work, but to make these two men, so sympathetic, so popular among the Swiss Romande converts, live again. We remember them as a great blessing and inspiration to the Church.

---

To be able to preach and organize a permanent missionary work, it is necessary to have a roof to shelter under, especially if one has a wife and children.

The Scotsman, Watt, having sold his farm to the newcomers, naturally left his houses for them. Mrs. Creux and Mrs. Berthoud each made a sketch of those dwellings. What Mrs. Berthoud called the "big house" was a room covered by corrugated iron, which Watt had used as a shop. It was divided into three parts and it was there that the Creux's and their two children lived. This iron roof made it extremely hot in the day, but it had the great advantage of being weatherproof. The Berthoud's lived in three rondavels nearby. One served as a dining room, another as a bedroom and the third was used to lock up provisions. When the rainy season began, these huts were virtually uninhabitable, so Paul Berthoud built a brick cabin. It was in fact eight months after their arrival on 9th July, 1875, that the Berthoud family were able to move into the first brick room. The house was not completed till November, 1876 and one wonders how they did not suffer more from the total lack of comfort. In this regard their dwelling was not in any way better than that of their Dutch colleague Hofmeyr, who had frightened them a bit with the austerity of his quarters. However, it would be wrong to think that these trials had no effect on their health. X  
Paul Berthoud wrote, "At last we are in this small house. This is the first night we have spent in a room for four months. It was high time, because the cold north-east wind penetrated our huts and Eugenie was crippled with Sciatica, and I had developed an inflammation which still troubles me. It has been a long time since we had glass windows, and it was very enjoyable to be able to see the light without being exposed to the wind and cold".

In spite of these difficulties, they were not down-hearted in the rondavels and iron barracks of Valdezia. Goodwill reigned and relationships were most fraternal. Ernest Creux invited the Berthoud's to spend an evening under their iron roof on his birthday, and he wrote: "We spoke about old times, of our parents, and our friends. We sang hymns, read and prayed together. What a joy it is not to be alone and to be able to communicate with dear friends". These lines are written with special pleasure, knowing how easily misunderstandings could arise in Africa, when people are perforce living very near each other. The presence of such dear friends was particularly precious to Ernest and Mathilda when they had the great sorrow of losing their charming little Jeanne, who died of terrible/



/terrible croup on the 5th December, 1875. It was Paul Berthoud who made the small coffin and his wife lined it. She was not a year old.

There was great joy and interest in the growing work which the two missionaries and their wives had tackled vigorously, - in spite of all the time taken in settling down.

We mention another activity which they undertook on their arrival and which testified to the overflowing evangelical zeal with which they were filled. There were in the Spelonken about a dozen European families, Boers and English, whose spiritual condition caused the missionaries much concern. Our friends saw it as their duty to organise fortnightly prayer meetings for them. On the 17th October, 1875 Ernest Creux writes, "It was not without emotion that I went to spread the word of God to my fellow whites of the Spelonken. It took me three-quarters of an hour, on horseback, to get to the veldcornet's (Mr. Grieve) house. This worthy magistrate was an Englishman interested in many activities, dominated on occasions by a passion for brandy, but nevertheless very friendly towards us. After I left him I challenged an itinerant merchant whom I saw on the road, and who was profaning the Lord's day selling blankets and glassware to the natives..... This young man, called Ash, had received a good education but the passion for strong drink had been his downfall. I exhorted him to repent and to be converted. I handed him some English tracts, and continued on my way. Descending a steep slope, I crossed a limpid stream to climb a hill, covered by trees and indigenous bush, in the midst which towered a large euphorbia, and reached the house of Mr. Celliers, a Boer citizen, descended from a French refugee. The big dining room, whitened with clay, without ceilings or floors, had, however, a comfortable appearance. There were in all twelve people. The subject which came to me was "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice". I was listened to with great attention and I felt myself strongly supported by the Lord. We sang in Dutch.

Either my colleague or I went every fortnight to our little flock of whites. The first result of these services was to break down prejudices about ourselves. The youngest Celliers daughter said naively to my wife, "Missionaries are not liked round here, and we do not like what they teach the blacks, but as for me, I would very much like to live with you. I cannot see why we should not like you".

A very cordial relationship existed between our missionaries and those of the Berlin mission. Just before the Swiss missionaries arrived, Mr. Schwelms and Mr. Beuster had established missions at the foot of the Zoutpansberg, Tchakoma and Shivasa. They came at once to visit them and invite them to stay with them. This made a welcome change from the difficulties and troubles at the mission station.

The Swiss missionaries were thus becoming popular with the whites; the medical services rendered by Paul Berthoud could but add to their esteem and gratitude.

It is thus impossible to understand why the Government of the Transvaal told them to cease their missionary activities, issued a warrant for their arrest and held them for one month as prisoners far from their families.



Even before the exploratory journey in 1873, the Lesotho conference had asked the Transvaal authorities to authorise them to found a mission. The reply was negative. In the light of agreements already made with the missionary societies at work in the Republic, the Government declared it was impossible to allow the Society of Paris to start a new work. In 1874 Mabille had written a new request, this time on behalf of the Swiss missionaries, and the reply, for which they were kept waiting till the end of the year, contained a definite refusal as concerned the French mission and said that, as far as the Swiss mission was concerned, the Government awaited a direct application before they would consider the matter.

That is why when the pioneers had passed through Pretoria they had wanted to see President Burgers, and, in his absence, they had had an interview with Mr. Joubert, who was most friendly and had given them full authority to establish themselves and evangelise. It is true that the interview was not very formal, because it was held in the road, on the pavement; a written permission would have been of greater value, but they had spoken to Mr. Joubert, and asked if it was necessary, and the missionaries had no option but to accept his word. They understood very soon that their position was seen to be irregular, and they received letters from the Government which told them that they should not have considered themselves authorised until they had the result of a direct application to Parliament. This was in December 1875.

In March, 1876 the application was sent to Pretoria and in June they were notified that their application to found a mission in the Spelonken was refused. An explanatory letter accompanied the formal notification in which it was stated, amongst other things, that the members of the Berlin Society had opposed the Swiss application, it seemed that this prohibition was meant to leave the field clear to the Berlin missionaries. Now the latter had received their Vaudois colleagues with the greatest cordiality, and as soon as they learnt of this letter from the Government they protested to Mr. Burgers against the paragraph in which it referred to their Society. They attested to the reality and sincerity of their brotherly relations with their colleagues and asked that they should have permission to continue their work among the Shangaan. It appears that the true cause of their hostility was the fact that they had come from Lesotho and that they had evangelists who were natives of that country. The Boers detested the Lesotho mission because of its intervention in the war between the Boers of the Orange Free State and the Basotho under Moshesh.

At the time our missionaries were attempting to solve their problems, the Government stopped an expedition, conducted by Mr. Dieterlen, at Pretoria. He was going to found a long planned project among the Nyais. The caravan which came from Lesotho, was only going to cross the Transvaal, but that was enough. The Basotho evangelists were put into prison and Mr. Dieterlen escaped imprisonment by the grace of the Berlin missionaries who stood security for him for Fr. 7500. Another reason for these severe measures was that the political situation was extremely threatening. The Boers were having much trouble with Sekukuni, the chief of the Bapedi, and they suspected that our missionaries might side with them. This was absurd, of course. Whatever the reasons, the authorities did not delay in carrying out the decision.



On the 15th July, Ernest Creux was giving an English lesson to a young Boer, when two men arrived on horseback, at Valdezia. One was the veldcornet, Mr. Grieve, and the other Mr. Ash, (the one who had sold his goods on Sundays)

"I have received an order to arrest you", the Government representative said abruptly. He showed them the papers with the orders he had received, stating that the two missionaries had to present themselves immediately at Marabastad, the seat of the prefecture of the Koutpansberg, to await subsequent orders.

"And now, gentlemen", he added, "I hope that you will submit to these orders without delay, or my instructions are to use force." After a moment of silence, Paul Berthoud cried, "And it is you, Mr. Grieve, who bring us such orders and who want to execute them! Are you not afraid of becoming an instrument of oppression and injustice?"

"Sir, I am but a Government servant, and I am not here to either criticise or disapprove of its orders. I wash my hands of the whole affair. If you do not go willingly to Marabastad, matters will become very serious".

"We are ready, Mr. Grieve," said the missionaries, "When we took leave of our families in Switzerland, it was not that we were unhappy or in embarrassed circumstances, it was to do the Lord's will. Today we find no reason to change our attitude. We are prepared, we and our wives, to suffer tribulations in the name of the Master who loves us....."

"You must, however, give me your answer, so that I can act accordingly".

"Well then, you will have to take us by force".

"If I have to arrest you, do you consider resisting?"

"Do not be afraid, we will not use our guns. We only know the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God".

The veld-cornet spent a whole day combing the district to find whites to help him to take the missionaries into custody. All felt that the Government was to blame, that it acted with contempt of the law and the rights of men, and declared they would not lift a finger to help him. Mr. Grieve even asked a Minor Shangaan chief, Mamanuker, to help him. "For what reason must I arrest them, what wrong have they done?". "I don't know anything", said the magistrate. "In that case", replied Mamanuker, "take them yourself. I wouldn't go and attack them without good cause, and, anyway, I would not want to lay a hand on whites".

Mr. Grieve wrote to the Government saying he was unable to execute its orders. In any case they had been sent to him in the form of instructions, and he asked that, if they were confirmed, they should take the form of a warrant of arrest.

Thus a few days of peace was enjoyed at the Mission station, and, just then, as if to bring His servants the greatest encouragement, the Lord gave them the joy of seeing four Shangaans come to confess their sins and to be asked to be admitted to the little band. But it was just a respite.

On the 1st of August the warrant of arrest came from Pretoria. "It was far from being in good order" writes Paul Berthoud, but the Government was making so many threats against the veldcornet that he hurried to arrest the missionaries. But he offered them his services to help them to the best of his ability, in a personal capacity. He would come and take them in the Government Police wagon, but their wives and the Sotho evangelists could stay at home. This was done.

In the afternoon, Brother Creux, gathered the whites to read them a sermon of Moody's..... Some sick people needed to be

Tuesday 31st August

Yesterday our morning was spent at the office of the



"On Wednesday, 2nd August, at midday, we were separated from our dear wives, from our evangelists, our Shangaans, from all that we loved, to be taken to we knew not where. It is not necessary to say how emotional everyone was..... We exhorted these children who were our brothers, to depend on our Heavenly Father, on Jesus who never abandons those who love Him. The catechists were particularly moved - Calvin Mapopi told of the memory he had of that day. "That day, it seems I can see it now. It was a day of great suffering, when the wagon which took them arrived. The gathering of the new converts was plunged into gloom. The remarkable thing was that the missionary, Mr. Hofmeyr, happened to be at Valdezia, on a visit, and he stood up to exhort them. "Do not cry, these missionaries will come again to teach you because the Lion of Judah has conquered".

A Berlin missionary and Mr. Hofmeyr witnessed this arrest and were very indignant.

Notes by the prisoner:-

3rd August. Our wagon is not covered nor has it food or blankets to protect us from the cold nights. It is still winter and we are going to "Siberia". Fortunately our wives have provided some food and some blankets. Also the farmer who saw us and at whose place we are at now, had given us the usual hospitality. But we now had to go across a wilderness bigger than the canton of Vaud, not a drop of water, not a living soul..... All the whites we saw were surprised by the behaviour of the Government and tendered their sympathy.....

Friday 4th August

We travelled through the night with many stopping places. About midnight our guard, (an inoffensive Portuguese that the veldcornet had summoned as guard and who received twenty francs a day to guard the somewhat docile prisoners), gave us a slice of bread and a cup of thick black coffee - Prayed in Sesotho - We sang hymns - While Creux tried to sleep, I walked a short distance ahead of the wagon. That evening we arrived at Rhenosterpoort where we spent the night. It seemed to us more and more likely that the Government was afraid that we were stirring up the blacks politically, although we had shown and said often enough that we had never even thought of this.

Saturday 5th August

This morning we were able to send a few words to our dear wives, by a Shangaan who was going back home. We asked the Lord to strengthen their hearts and to sustain them so that they would not be anxious. That was our greatest worry.

Marabastad Sunday 6th August

We arrived at 3 a.m. This really is like Siberia - We are very tired - The landdrost, Mr. Mare, came to see us. He made many protestations of friendship, as in the past. He was a missionary at heart, he said, since his childhood. How could he then have ordered us to stop all evangelical work, and then arrested and taken us as prisoners? What crime had we committed? - He owned he did not know of any -

Our poor policeman was suffering. He had felt the cold and also the fatigue of the journey. He had been the only one in the Spelonken who had consented to lay a hand on us -

That evening.

In spite of our being prisoners we are allowed a great deal of freedom. We took advantage of it to take services for the blacks. In the afternoon, Brother Creux, gathered the whites to read them a sermon of Moody's..... Some sick people needed my care.

Tuesday 8th August

Yesterday our morning was spent at the office of the landdrost, where our policeman had delivered his prisoners.



The magistrate read us the letters from the Government. He had to keep us at Marabastad until he received new instructions about us - He reiterated that there was no accusation against us, not even a suspicion. However, if we tried to go home again he would be forced to send horsemen to fetch us back. As for our prison it was not very gloomy. The landdrost gave us a room in his house. Yesterday evening we were joking with him, as he was showing us, with a great deal of trouble, how to open the outside door..... Our diet is not very appetising, I don't know how long we shall be able to take it....It is possible that we shall be here for a few weeks separated by the wilderness from our families - God will provide" -

They did not deceive themselves. The captivity was prolonged, and it was a great trial for the imprisoned missionaries. For three weeks they had no news of Valdezia. The Government did not seem to worry about them. But they were not inactive. They wrote to inform the South African public about the injustice done to them, and about the violation of religious liberty that they were suffering. One of the papers of the Republic, the Transvaal Advocate, undertook their cause courageously. It began by publishing a strong protest by the farmers and merchants of the Spelenken, and accompanied it by excellent commentaries. Then they published two letters from Paul Berthoud, which were sent to Natal. Craux wrote to the "Christian Express", the paper of the big school at Lovedale, in the Cape Colony, which had kept the religious public informed of the inconsiderate and unjustifiable action of the Transvaal Government. The Government was adding to its troubles by losing the sympathy of these good people.

It found itself, in fact, in this month of August, 1876, in grave embarrassment. It wanted to subdue Sekukuni, the Bapedi chief. President Burgers had gathered an army of 2,000 whites and 1,000 blacks for this purpose. They had arrived at the famous mountain which served the enemy as a fortress. On the 2nd of August, the same day as the missionaries were arrested, they had made an assault on the mountain, but were repulsed.

As the Boers had no more provisions, many were dissatisfied and they started to hold protest meetings in their camp. In spite of a proclamation that those who did not do their duty would be fined £50 or sentenced to hard labour, many had inspanned their wagons and had decamped. The President then hurried to Pretoria and summoned the Volksraad to an extraordinary session.

Was it because of these reverses that the Pretoria Government took such a time to send instructions concerning the two missionaries who were kept in captivity? On the 30th August, the landdrost still had no instruction. That day, as the prisoners watched the road along which the man who would bring the post from Pretoria should come, they saw an unexpected messenger with two saddle horses. He brought a letter for Paul Berthoud and one for the magistrate. This man was sent by Commandant B. Vorster, a man of importance, who had a great deal of influence in the country, and who was a friend of Mr. Mare. He asked the medical missionary to come to the aid of his wife, who was very ill, even dying.

"Well, what do you say to that, Mr. Mare?" asked Paul Berthoud of his jailer.

"I think you'll have to go", he replied.



Now the Vorster family lived near Valdegia.  
 "If I can go and see Mrs. Vorster", said Paul Berthoud,  
 "I will see my family, also find the medicines and instruments  
 which might be necessary for me. Now I could certainly not  
 turn up suddenly without being accompanied by Mr. Creux.  
 Also, if I can go and see a sick person I do not know,  
 Mr. Creux must go and see his wife who is ill at this time".  
 "No, no, I could not allow that", exclaimed our host-jailer.  
 "We will wait for the post". This meant waiting a day, but it  
 arrived on Tuesday at 11 a.m. The post-bag was opened in the  
 office. We waited patiently while the landdrost opened and  
 read the letters, with the official seals, turning them over and  
 over.....At last we understood that there was not a word about  
 us. I left in haste, ordered a boy to saddle my horse, while  
 I went to pack my things. When all was ready Mr. Mare arrived.  
 "What are these horses for?", he asked. "I am going to see  
 Mrs. Vorster and I will take Mr. Creux to the Spelonken. We will  
 come back next week".

"No, I do not allow it", replied the magistrate.  
 "You will be responsible for the consequences".  
 "Certainly", we replied.

When he went away, we tied our coats in front of the  
 saddles. Mr. Creux was the first one to mount his horse.

All at once a man arrived running and shouting. It was the  
 bailiff whom the landdrost had sent to arrest us. Pale with fury,  
 he untied the straps, began to throw my parcels on the ground,  
 unsaddled the horse, took off the bridle, chased the animals  
 away and carried the saddle to the magistrate's office.  
 A Hollander and an Englishman were witness to this scene.  
 They entered the office, with a respectful manner, which did not  
 cloak their feelings, and offered to stand security for us for  
 the sum of £500 each, in order that we could go and see our  
 families, on the understanding that we would be back in Marabastad  
 on a fixed date.

"No", said the magistrate in anger.

After this incident, Berthoud said, it was quite definite  
 that he and his friend were kept as prisoners, even though their  
 host pretended they were not, and he added, "If we had wanted to  
 escape, nothing on earth would have been easier than to jump on  
 to Mr. Vorster's horses, and to go at night, with great speed,  
 by moonlight. But I told myself it would not do us any good to  
 escape. Our lives were not endangered, and we had not been  
 imprisoned for very long, even though it seemed a long time.  
 Besides would it not be a lack of faith not to accept the  
 hardships God had decided upon? If God asks our dear wives to  
 suffer in His name, should we seek to take away that honour?  
 Were not our vows made for them too?"

What was happening to the wives during these long weeks?  
 Life was hard, but they stood up to their troubles valiantly.

But suddenly the position of the two ladies became very  
 serious. In the early days of September war had broken out in  
 the Spelonken between two Shangaan brothers. One of them sought  
 the assistance of the great chief of the Vendas, Makhatu.  
 Encouraged, no doubt, by the fact that the white Government was  
 unable to intervene after its defeat by Sekukuni, he agreed to take  
 up arms and hostilities developed. The field of battle was in  
 the proximity of the Spelonken, on the other side of the Levubu,  
 at the foot of the mountains. Eugenie Berthoud describes the  
 events which happened on Wednesday, 6th September.



"Last Wednesday, the most violent day of the battle, our poor people completely lost their heads in terror. At sunrise we could see about thirty villages in flames. We saw long files of old people, on all the paths women and children who were fleeing, carrying with them all their bits and pieces. But gradually the terror and fatigue became too much and we saw them throwing away their meagre belongings along the road, and saving themselves by running. Poor people! The soldiers, (if one could give this name to the black warriors) came running from every side for the battle. We heard the noise of gun-fire and the cries of pain and fear".

As soon as they arrived home the missionaries sent the message "Our good old evangelist was so frightened that he came running twenty times during that long morning to tell me, 'It is time for you to escape, madam! What are we doing? If the danger comes nearer, our men will run away'". Landdrost wrote to Paul Berthoud that His Honour the President agreed to his request. We had a bad moment, because all the responsibility rested on our shoulders. Mr. Grieve, the Police chief, sent to tell us three times in two hours, to go at once to Watt's farm, where all the whites had gathered, to defend their lives. But it seemed to me a lack of faith to entrust ourselves to these men, instead of the promises of the Lord. I had the feeling that He alone would suffice, that He was with us, and would protect us from all harm, and that He would not allow our beloved Valdegia to be burnt by those in whose cause we had been sent. And now I am very glad that we did not leave, as no one had thought of attacking us.... As we had decided to stay alone, our kind Heavenly Father, had brought to us two missionaries, Schwellnus and Beuster, who, seeing our difficult position, decided not to leave us and stayed until the following day, although their journey was urgent"..... The Government were moved. The public debt rose to £1,000,000 and the farmers refused to pay their tax. Now, that same Wednesday, the 6th September, was the day when the husbands of these ladies, who had heard vaguely about the war in the Spelonken, and had a quite understandable feeling of anxiety, at last received a few instructions from Pretoria. The Council of State let them know that the Landdrost could allow them to found their mission when they had the Government permit which would be issued on the receipt of certain papers, namely their documents of ordination and their passports. If this was not honourable amends at least it was proof that their trials had come to an end and that the Mission would not be destroyed. lengthily dealt upon, it was because these events brought to light the fact that this time Mr. Mare did not oppose their leaving. He gave them a carriage drawn by mules to take them to Rhenosterpoort to their friends the Du Preez's, where Mr. Hofmeyr's whole congregation was assembled. became blessings. Daily a Dutch missionary wrote, "I think that your arrest, far from harming your work". Creux writes, "How can we express the joy that all these good people showed on seeing us free again, en route to our station. They soon seated us at table, and served us, found the horses and provided us with more provisions than we could have eaten in a week. It was wonderful to find ourselves again in the midst of a living church, to see all those cheerful faces, radiant with divine joy, to be able to listen to their songs, the prayers, the mutual exhortation, to see the emotion shown by these Boers who were usually so stiff and starched". "It's fortunate that you came today", said my young friend, Barend Vorster, "because we decided to go to Marabastad next Monday, to free you. My father gave me the order. The Government had no right to keep our doctors and our missionaries in prison without cause and without laying a charge". and his party.



From Khenosterpoort, a seventeen hour journey on horseback, counting the stops, brought our friends to the doors of their houses. They had only had one meal in the preceding twenty-four hours.

"Can you imagine what a wonderful surprise!", writes Eugenie Berthoud, "when that Saturday at sunset, all of a sudden we saw our husbands nearing the house. Oh! it was beautiful and sweet to see one another again. I think I have never experienced more pleasure in all my life!"

As soon as they arrived home the missionaries sent the required documents. Unfortunately Ernest Creux had left his document of ordination in Switzerland, never thinking he would need it in Africa. So he sent only his passport. The Government's reply was not long in coming. The Landdrost wrote to Paul Berthoud that His Honour the President agreed to his request to be recognised as a missionary. As for Creux, he could get the same permission as soon as he sent the licence given by his Church. They also told them that they must conform to the recent decision of the Volksraad, that no missionary would be recognised as such, before taking an oath of loyalty to the Republic.

Berthoud left, therefore, for Marabastad in January, 1877, with his family in his wagon this time, evangelising along the route. The oath was read in Dutch, and the clerk translated it into abominable French.

Ernest Creux's ordination papers arrived only on the 16th February. At this time the Republic was in a sad state. The financial and political situation of the Government worsened. The public debt rose to £400,000 and the burgers refused to pay their taxes. It was felt more and more that the safety of the country lay in annexation by England, and this was proclaimed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone on the 12th April, 1878. This audacious act has been and still is condemned but it seemed that this was the only way for the Transvaal to get out of its difficulties. In any case, the missionaries welcomed with joy the change of government. "We blessed God", writes Creux, "that he had thus delivered the Transvaal, which was determined to ruin itself, and give us the most precious of all good gifts, religious liberty". If the arrest and captivity of our friends has been somewhat lengthily dwelt upon, it was because these events brought to light the best qualities in their characters. They never lost their dignity in the midst of the humiliating circumstances of which they were the victims, and were greatly sustained by their religious faith. Also, their trials became blessings. Geni<sup>re</sup>, a Dutch missionary wrote, "I think that your arrest, far from harming your work, was to its advantage and you will have gained the sympathy of many people who were indifferent to it".

The consequences of the unhappy affair was thus not unfavourable except in one respect, however. The anxiety of the separation and the shock of war had a serious effect on the health of the two ladies, particularly on Eugenie Berthoud, who needed special care at that time. She recovered, however, during the following months and on the 25th December she gave birth to a daughter, Adèle, under favourable conditions. How much the strain of these terrible days told on her health, cannot be judged.

The great event in 1877 was the visit to Valdesia by Francois Coillard and his party.



President Burger's regime was replaced by a more liberal government, so nothing hindered the fulfilment of a plan, conceived so long ago by the Lesotho missionaries, to establish a mission among the Nyasas. It was hoped that Coillard would do this. He stopped for a few days in Pretoria where his arrival could not but cause a sensation. On the 17th July he wrote, "All those we met spoke with indignation about Burger and his government - and of the way in which first Dieterlen, and then our Swiss friends were treated".

"We were very excited", writes E. Creux, "by the news that the long awaited travellers, were about to arrive. Soon three wagons appeared on the heights. We changed with haste into suitable clothes, and went to meet them. You can understand our feelings at seeing these well-known and loved people, about to undertake this expedition to a far away country".

Brother Coillard is very gifted spiritually and intellectually. It did us good to talk to him. The Valdezia missionaries took the opportunity of organising a big church celebration, where seven adults and ten children were baptised. New hymns were sung in Shangaan, and Paul Berthoud (also in Shangaan) applied the parable of the Prodigal Son to the new converts. Coillard said he could follow part of the sermon, thanks to his knowledge of Zulu. That evening at a communion service, Swiss, French, German, Shangaan, Bapedi and Sesotho joined together round the Lord's table. "He was there, himself, and it was wonderful to feel His Presence".

Coillard wrote:- "We spent ten days with our brothers, ten full days, very blessed, but which passed too soon - We left them feeling rested, refreshed and encouraged. Valdezia is for us the Eliza of our journey. The work of our friends is interesting, the blessing of God rests on them. I say nothing of their goodness to us, because I could not know where to start. They put everything at our disposal, even provisions acquired with such difficulty. They did not wait for our arrival to buy several oxen, and to choose the best of their own, to exchange with our tired and sick oxen. We belonged to the same "family" and it would not have been possible to feel more united. Our friends' influence extended not only to the blacks, but also to the whites. The Lord made them even more popular than before, because of their captivity at Marabastad. Berthoud is the doctor, and his success in this sphere gave him a great deal of influence amongst the whites, as with the blacks.

Creux excels in evangelising, his complete knowledge of English opened many doors. He preached to the farmers in this language, visited them, speaking to them about the evils of drink, which was the curse of the district".

For this great day of the 8th July, 1877, the church had been repaired and arranged to accommodate one hundred and seventy people. The service was announced to all the countryside by a bell which was inaugurated that day. This bell had arrived in error at Valdezia, with two others, in a huge case, without having been ordered. The three bells were part of a carillon on the notes, ray, me and fsh. They must have been destined for an important church in Natal or the Transvaal. As it was too costly to return them, Berthoud, came to an understanding with the dealers to sell them there. One remained at Valdezia, the German missionaries took the second.



"In the end," says our missionary bell merchant, "Going up the scale, Brother Coillard took away the 'fab' to the Nyai's to inaugurate the French mission. It is said that bells have a language. Would it not be that these three bells which came from the same cradle, different in tone of voice, announced the Good News to people so different from each other. They proclaimed the glory of the same Saviour in their different tongues, filling the air with their harmonious melodies. Could they perhaps epitomise our Swiss, French and German missions, who under different names, pursued a common cause".

Creux accompanied his friend to Mr. Hofmeyr's station, and Coillard then penetrated the unknown wilderness to the Ba-Nyai, which was the destination dreamed of by the Lesotho missionaries. They little thought that a few weeks later these savages would plot to throw down a rock, onto his dear friend, and to kill all those in his party. With indomitable courage and an admirable faith, this great missionary journeyed under dangerous conditions for two years, falling back on Mangwato, under the protection of Khama, then going to the North to offer his services to the chief of the Barotsi, preparing thus the foundation of the Zambezi Mission - We find him again at Valdezia two years later.

The birth and rapid growth of an indigenous congregation imposed new tasks on the missionaries. They laboured to put books at their disposal and to compose hymns. New books in a new language! It was first thought that the rich Sesotho literature could be used as it was for the Valdezia converts. But the majority of these, as we saw, were Shangaans, and, if for a time they could be taught in Sesotho, this could only be temporary. Besides, the stations which had been founded for the Bapedi were given to the Berlin mission. This was in accordance with an agreement officially made by the two missions. The Vaudois (wiss) mission was thus solely for the Shangaan, and a literature had to be created. It was not easy, and it was sometime before they had sufficient knowledge of the new idiom.

In February, 1877, Ernest Creux wrote, "I have been able to put more time into the study of Shangaan. It is very difficult to learn this language as one has to work out the grammar for oneself. It would be a far greater task if we did not know Sesotho. Nevertheless this work is very interesting". It seems that a few months later the two missionaries mastered this language, as, when Coillard was visiting them, Berthoud had preached in Shangaan, and hymns composed by Creux were sung. Different systems of orthography were practised by the various South African missions, which produced real confusion. Our pioneers adopted a system used by the German Lepsuis, and which their Berlin colleagues used with success. We can but congratulate them for having made this decision, as they gave the Shangaan language (or rather Tsonga) a phonetic orthography which considerably simplified transcription of complicated sounds. Their successors did not have to change much because of the excellent basis they had laid down.

Once they had the instrument of the alphabet, the missionaries set out to translate the Bible, and they published, a few years later, a work of 230 pages which was called Boukou (Book). This contained the first chapters of Genesis, the ten commandments, an amalgam of the Gospels, followed by a selection of fifty-seven hymns, three quarters of which were written by Creux.



Because a church must sing! Singing has a special importance in missions, especially in Africa, where the blacks have a very pronounced taste for music. It is interesting to note what Creux wrote about this at the end of 1878:

"One of my favourite pastimes is to compose Shangaan hymns, which are learnt immediately and sung in the church. Some of them travel very far. I have heard them sometimes where no evangelist has set foot. Sometimes I regret that I did not cultivate poetry earlier, and was content to enjoy that of others. It would have been much easier today to create sacred and other poetry for the Shangaans. I am sure that the heathen would be better attracted to and charmed by the truth, if we could give them popular hymns telling of the life of Jesus and the principal events of biblical history, with music of appropriate national character. I think of this often, but where would I find the necessary time for this? - Often I find a tune which I think suitable, only to find I am mistaken. Is it not remarkable that the Sankey tunes, so popular in England and America, are also the most popular here? I have translated or rather composed some hymns using the selected tunes of our Free Church, but they are never popular because of their solemnity - even our "Te Deum". We need songs that go well, not only in a church but in the open, in the temple of God, where our young men go to evangelise in the villages. Later, perhaps, when the Church will have had more experience, the expression of pain, of sorrow, will demand a gentler tempo - But one should hear the songs of the heathen. They have solos, responses, and choirs. Their mourning songs really are expressions of despair. The wedding songs are not all happy, but all are impassioned. The battle songs stir one to the depths of one's being - they fill one with horror! Certainly their music has remarkable depth. I never listen to it without admiring it".

Hymns expressing pain and resignation, especially hope in the time of mourning, also others of a serious nature, were added to the collection later, mainly by Berthoud, who composed them after his great bereavement.

To call into being a new society in the midst of a Bantu tribe, and to bring about progress in their spiritual life, the missionaries saw that there were great problems which had to be resolved. There was the difficult question of "lobolo", that is the purchase of the bride. In the church there was a number of young men who wished to get married; but no young girls, so that they could not get a wife, without paying the price of a bride. The practice in Lesotho was to forbid all marriages by payment, although the Berlin missionaries were not so strict. They considered that one should forbid a Christian father to claim payment when he gave his daughter in marriage. On the other hand, if the father was a heathen, he could not be expected to renounce that which he considered his due. They had no jurisdiction over him.

Our missionaries could not ignore the fact that they did not yet have Christian fathers in their congregation who could give their daughters without "lobolo".

In matters affecting customs and belief, the Government viewpoint had to be understood. What would be its native policy? They consulted Sir Theophilus Shepstone, who himself was the son of a missionary. He had a deep understanding of the blacks, but as the letters which our friends wrote to him on this subject, were/



/were left unanswered, they decided to go to Pretoria. As they could not both leave the mission, it was Paul Berthoud who made the trip. He had two other objects in undertaking this journey, which lasted from July to October, 1878, and for which the Commission of Missions granted him special leave. He wished first to visit his friend, Mr. Gonin, who was stationed at the Dutch mission of Saul's Poort, in the district of Waterberg, between the Spelonken and Pretoria, to the West. He also wanted a little relaxation for his wife, from her duties as housewife, made more difficult by her unsatisfactory state of health. This expedition was very successful.

After a stay of three weeks with the Gonins, they went to the capital, accompanied by Mr. Gonin. Eugenie Berthoud benefited by the rest. "My wife has regained some of her strength", wrote her husband, "She can walk for some minutes with care. However, it would not be right to weaken herself again, and to make her suffer".

The interview with the authorities was very satisfactory. The Government even sent a written official reply to their request for information. "The Government proposes to discredit polygamy in a general sense, and to do all that a Government can legitimately do on behalf of civilization and Christianity. But the way to do this has not been thought out or studied". But the Government did not have time to consider and study these matters. Even then it was doubtful whether England wanted or was able to preserve its sovereignty over the Transvaal. The Boers, we know, recovered their independence in March 1881.

#### 1879-1880 The years of mourning.

From the beginning, the health of the settlement of Valdezia was not good. The physical resistance of both families had deteriorated for three reasons - the climate, the living conditions and excessive work.

1. First, the climate. The humid heat, that caused everything to be covered in mould, was very trying. They made acquaintance with all kinds of microbes peculiar to that region, amongst others, those causing ophthalmia, which made them suffer greatly, transforming the Berthoud house into an asylum for the blind for a time.
2. Then, the living conditions. The huts had collapsed and were replaced by a second cabin built by Paul Berthoud, but this lacked comfort, and at length living conditions became altogether too difficult, mainly because the situation was unfavourable. They were too near the river, and the cold draughts had given both ladies very painful Sciatica and rheumatism. It was felt that that place would have to be left sooner or later, and that a new place on the higher part of the farm should be established. Several years were to pass before this transfer could take place.

It was this conviction that a change should be made, that led Creux to request the Commission of Missions to buy another farm, with a little river and a waterfall, which gave the farm the name "Waterval".

This would in any case be a prudent step, because the missionaries foresaw that they would have need of ground to house their Christian people, if the blacks were expelled from certain regions, as was feared.



During the year 1879, Creux began to move to Waterval, which was to become the Elim Mission station. He could not settle there finally till the beginning of 1880. He breathed a sigh of relief when he could leave Valdezia, because he feared that they would all lose their health.

Life was decidedly too hard, especially for the ladies, and became more difficult as the families increased. Not for a day was there any relief - The little black servants were not much help - The mistress of the house had to be behind them all the time. The only escape meant a journey by wagon, and they were too exhausted to get real or sufficient rest.

It was recognised in Switzerland that the work was too heavy for Mrs. Creux and Mrs. Berthoud, and a lady, Miss. Wuithier, volunteered to go to their help. She left in the first months of 1879, and was awaited with impatience at Valdezia.

At the beginning of 1879, hope was revived. Rain had fallen abundantly, the country looked magnificent, the veld was well covered by grass "What a joy to see the poor cattle restored", writes Creux on the 29th January, "and to see good milk on our table, which will bring back the bright colour to our dear children's cheeks".  
He did not have enough strength. When Mathilda was on her feet again Alas! he did not know that the angel of death was at the door!

In March, 1879, there were two families, each with three children, Ernest and Mathilda Creux had Etienne, aged 7, Jean, (2) and Valdo a baby of three months. Paul and Eugenie Berthoud had Emile (5), Adèle (3), and Anna who was born on the 6th March, that year. But thirteen months later, one of the mothers and five children lay buried in the African soil. The angel of death reaped twice, first the mother of the new born baby, then, later the children - the four little flower buds who had given so much charm to the Valdezia huts.

The facts are heartrending - but they show the reaction of the pioneers to this time of mourning - that they were able to see, through faith, the dispensation of their Heavenly Father, dispensation mysterious and painful, yet dispensation of love.

It was at the end of the rainy season, in Autumn (March to May) that malaria fever was most dangerous. That year (1879) the fever appeared to be most virulent in the Transvaal. Our friends had, without doubt, quinine to fight against this terrible visitor, but at that time the true nature of the illness was not yet understood. It was not known at what time quinine should be administered to kill the parasite left by the anopheles mosquito. That was, without doubt, why the effects of malaria were so terrible.

The story began on the 10th March, four days after the birth of little Anna Berthoud, when her mother was convalescing. Creux wrote these notes:-

10th March Adèle, whose nursemaid had left her in the cold, lightly dressed, fell ill - fever.

12th March Emile fell ill - fever.

13th March Emile and Adèle are very ill. Delirious during the night - Emile cries out dreadfully.



14th March Mathilda is in bed, very ill-Headache and pains in her body.

15th March Mathilda is very bad. Baby Valdo is beginning to sicken. During the night Smile has a high fever. He sees rats, fish and ants which bite him. He fights so much that I have trouble holding him. Paul is too weak to carry him.... This delirious state continued all the night and more or less during Sunday (16th) and the next night. Paul is in bed. Eugenie is sick and worried.

17th March Baby Valdo is really sick. He also has a burning head, is delirious, has sudden terrors and sees strange things. I am the only one up, with Jean. Oh! what days and nights! Going from one to the other, trying to encourage, soothe and to give medicine - In spite of all this, little Anna although deprived, is a rosebud".

From the 19th March, the children got better - But then it was Eugenie who began to show alarming symptoms. Paul felt he had not been able to look after her properly. He did not have enough strength. When Mathilda was on her feet again she went to look after her and give her the care she needed.

At that time the Coillard caravan outspanned behind the hills of the Spelonken and came to Valdezia, having been away for two years. The travellers were exhausted, having had some superhuman difficulties to overcome all along the heroic journey. Coillard had hoped that a new mission would be founded in Zambesi. His heart was apparently with the Barotsi, but his colleagues in Lesotho disapproved of the project, because of the distance and the fever. Coillard returned to Valdezia to see if any more suitable field of work might be available in the Northern Transvaal. He had heard of Madjadji, the great Rain Queen, whose tribe was important and as yet had no missionary. He went to the famous queen, whose territory was several days away by wagon, to the south of the Spelonken. The venture had little hope of success. The Berlin mission saw all the Tapedi of those territories as their domain and told Coillard of this in a brotherly way. In any case, the queen refused to see the missionary.

Coming back to Valdezia, Mrs. Coillard offered to act as nurse to Eugenie.

"We accepted with gratitude", wrote Berthoud, "they relegated me to the most distant room and Mrs. Coillard installed herself next to my wife". "Thus I even had the sorrow of not being able to assist her in the last days of her life". Of these last moments, Ernest Creux tells in a very moving letter to the Berthoud family. "Her departure was triumphant - She had worried a great deal as she was not able to feed her baby, Anna. Mrs. Coillard had given her a膏, which had eased her mind. After that her thoughts were fixed on eternity - She contemplated the Holy city and its glory 'Oh! its beautiful! Oh! how beautiful', she cried 'I am so happy, so thankful. I asked God for only one thing and He granted it to me. I asked Him for a膏 for my baby and He sent it. Now I am happy and contented'. Creux continues; "Near morning I was shocked by the ravages that the illness had made on her face. She recognised me at once and tried to smile... I read her a short verse, 'We loved Him because He first loved us' She repeated 'Yes the first - Oh its so/



/so beautiful and I am so happy and so thankful. Then she repeated a verse from the hymn - "like a child in the arms of his mother". I was continually interrupted by her joyful exclamations of happiness, and thankfulness. Her eyes were wide open, her hands joined, and her lips moved in prayer. I cannot remember all I told her, but I shall never forget the rapture on her face. My wife came meanwhile and leant forward to kiss her, but Eugenie did not recognise her. Suddenly she seemed to recognise her and asked, "Where are my children?" My wife gave her news of each one. Then taking both her hands she said, "I am so happy to feel they are with you - quite near". Towards evening it became evident that the end was near. At ten minutes to ten, she fell quietly asleep in the arms of her Saviour".

"And now she is happy", Paul Berthoud adds. "That is my consolation. After the blow of Emile's illness, she could never have had a life without sorrow. She is safe from all ills".

7th April "What a void - what a cold house! not an hour passes without our being aware of it. Poor children - I have suffered for them, no mother - ever! Perhaps they will not realise it.....For the time being they are looked after with love, as much as they could ever be, by this good Mathilde Creux. This dear Mathilde, who had done so much for my beloved, and for us all, by her care, her devotion and her unchangeable goodness. You will never know how much we owe to her. She always cared for my three children as her own".....

We made haste to leave Valdezia, although it was so loved. On the 22nd April, the Coillard expedition and the whole Vaudois colony set off for Pretoria. There were many reasons for this - a change of air, restocking of provisions and to meet Miss. Wuthier, who had been joined by one of Paul's brothers, Samuel, who was to spend some time with him, and who thought of settling in South Africa.

"The journey was excessively trying", writes Creux, "Mathilde had a raging fever and our children had continued bouts of malaria. Little Valde was very sick yesterday. Paul is still very weak, although a little better. For a time I was near to collapse, but Mathilde said "What would become of me if you fell ill? - What would become of us all?", and that thought gave me strength to fight against discouragement and tiredness. But our poor children! When would that terrible malaria stop tormenting them? How painful it is to see them becoming blue with cold, then burning with fever, and with attacks of vomiting and cruel pains in their joints, then when the crisis had passed to see them trembling pale, yellow and miserable!"

They arrived in Pretoria on the 8th May. On the 11th May the reinforcements arrived, and with what joy they were received! But when Samuel asked his brother where Eugenie was, Paul dissolved into tears, which was his only reply.

Coillard continued his journey to Lesotho, after having received, he said, "a very instructive and edifying lesson from his friend Creux, on the subject of dedication, and from his friend Berthoud on Christian resignation". He was taking with him five young Shangaans, who were going to the Morija school to study to become evangelists and instructors, among others, two sons of Mapopi.



In Pretoria the attacks of malaria continued but were reduced by the sanitary conditions. "Swiss condensed milk has really saved my little Valdo and little Anna" writes Ernest, and he adds, "Brother Berthoud has regained his courage. God is with him. His health is better, he yearns to return to Valdezia". Alas, his return was marked by a new loss! On the 20th June, the caravan arrived at Waterval - Little Anna was not at all well and her father gave her to Miss. Wuthier who was very attached to this charming child. He, himself, had to go to bed again, for two days, stricken with malaria. "On Sunday morning, Mrs. Creux sent for me. I hastened to go, trembling on my unsteady legs. What was my surprise and shock, when I saw the imprint of death already marking this little soul. I implored God to shorten the sufferings of this poor child and my own anguish. Praise God, He heard me. I turned back to Valdezia and buried her with her mother".

The following months were very trying - Paul Berthoud forced himself to continue with his work, helped by his brother. Miss. Wuthier looked after the children, but he realized that his health was undermined and his output of work had decreased. The work at Valdezia had increased, but Ernest Creux spent most of his time at the new station of Elin (Waterval) where a house was being built in difficult circumstances.

He, Berthoud, came to the conclusion that a return to Europe was imperative. First he wished it only for his children, but by the end of the year, he realised the necessity of it for himself - The Commission of Missions gave him permission to return to Switzerland. The departure was fixed for March 1886.

In February, of that year, Creux made a quick journey with his family to Marabastad, in his wagon. On the way he saw many children suffering from sore throats, and many parents in mourning. On his return to Waterval, Etienne and Valdo were stricken, and again the angel of death visited the missionaries.

"Valdo, especially, gave us great anxiety during the night. It seemed as if he was suffocating - The crisis passed and the child lived. 'As little Jean is stronger than the others', my dear wife said, 'he is so well'. He had all the strength, the vivacity and the joy of a three year old child. How many times, seeing his little blonde head, his fresh and pure complexion, I said to myself, 'What would I do if God took him?'. He also caught the infection, but the first night passed and he seemed out of danger. Meanwhile Miss. Wuthier arrived with our friends Berthoud's children. He had stayed at Valdezia to make preparations for their journey. On the 29th of March, our child was suddenly very sick, he lost his voice, his breathing became more and more difficult... All at once he sat up, looked at us as if to say "Good-bye", and lifting his eyes to the sky as if he recognised someone there, died quietly. The members of my group helped me to make the coffin, and dug a grave in a little thicket near our garden. Not far from our little grave was a Shangan one. A huge tobacco plant covered it with its shade, a pot, half buried in the soil, was kept filled with kaffir beer. The dead person thus had the means to drink and smoke, in the dark surroundings in which he would find himself. This was all he needed to leave his children in peace. He was below in the bowels of the earth, and one must cry very loudly and very long to make him come, so that he can bring a good harvest to his family.

"The grave of my dear Jean, in contrast, lifted our hearts on high, where our Saviour reigns, there where there will be no"



/no more tears, no crying or torment. How can we not experience a deep pity for those, who are without God, without hope in this world? With the blacks, death is a horrible thing, as soon as one dies, a grave is dug in the night. Those who carry him to it, who bury him, are called "wolves". They claim a goat as payment, and can, by washing their hands in its bile, cleanse themselves from the filth with which they have come into contact. Everything is mournful and horrible in the death scenes of the heathen - no consolation or softening of the blow. It is often the custom to make an opening in the house through which to pass the corpse, so that the threshold of the dwelling will not be soiled.

"What a difference in our house! The child is not dead, he sleeps - these words echoed in my heart and vibrated all the chords of Christian hope. The next day, the church folk accompanied our little coffin, singing hymns". A month later little Valdo succumbed, also to the terrible sickness (which seemed to have been diphtheria). To add to their sorrow, Emile Berthoud took ill on the 2nd April. While his father was making the final preparations for his journey to Europe, he had sent him, with his sister Adèle and Miss. Wuthier to the Creux's while he awaited his passage. There, in those few days, the little boy caught the infection. Creux writes on the 11th April, "On the 5th April at night, we heard the cracking of the whip which announced Berthoud's arrival with his wagon, accompanied by his brother Samuel - But to our surprise he said he was only staying one day. We had thought of keeping him until Emile was well, but he thought the journey would do the invalid good. We need not say what our feelings were to see him depart on such a journey, in poor health and with a sick child. He left Miss. Wuthier for which I was very grateful to our Heavenly Father". Berthoud writes, "I left with a heart full of regrets and an anguished spirit - my little Emile had caught the infection. He suffered greatly during the first five days of the journey, until his spirit left its frail body. On Monday, the 12th, my little child was in the Heavenly Father's arms. His grave is on the farm Upsal, near the one of Mr. Ziervogel the owner, who was the landdrost of this district". (Ed. This farm was later Pietersburg. When I passed there in 1901, I saw the little tombstone. It was going to be destroyed so I obtained help from the military to transport the remains to the cemetery in the town).

Later the only Berthoud child left, Adèle, also died of diphtheria on the 25th April, when they were camped near Pretoria, and she was buried there. The inscription read, "Adèle, my last joy. 28th April, 1880 - Nos enfants sont saints (Cor. VII, 14)"

Paul Berthoud continued his journey towards Natal - intending to embark at Durban. His condition was so critical that his brother Samuel, who looked after him with great devotion, was caused great anguish. He was able to get a passage on the "Trojan", the largest ship on the South African service. He met another bereaved person, the Empress Eugenie, who had made a pilgrimage to the grave of her son, the Prince Imperial, who had been killed the previous year, in the Zulu war, and they were drawn together in their mutual grief.

This magnificent ship, on her maiden voyage, was nearly wrecked on the coast of Brittany. A thick fog had prevented the captain from getting his bearings, when a sudden break in the fog allowed him to see a dangerous shoal, only two kilometres away. Again the life of the missionary was saved and at last he arrived in Switzerland, back to his church which had prayed for him constantly.



The succession of extraordinary trials had caused his personality, which had been so strong, to be badly affected, and he never fully recovered from it. Paul's younger brother, Henri, took his place. The Vaudois mission, weakened and diminished, was to open its wings and begin a new phase. The free churches of Neuchâtel and Geneva decided to unite with their sister church to work for the uplifting of the Shangaan people.

Ernest Creux was left alone, with two mission stations to manage, that of Valdezia - Klipfontein, where the evangelist Eliakim replaced the missionary, and that of Valdezia-Waterval (Elim as it was later called). But he knew and rejoiced that a young colleague was to arrive soon. Unexpectedly, war delayed Henri Berthoud for some months. Leaving Switzerland in September, 1880, he found a wagon at Durban, to take him via Natal to the Transvaal. He was able to get to Colenso, the last town in Natal, but there he was stopped and forced to take refuge in the Orange Free State, as the road had been cut. The Boers were in revolt. English troops were sent in haste to the Transvaal via Natal.

It should be noted that Sir Theophilus Shepstone had been replaced by a governor who did not understand these proud independent burghers. They had chosen the triumvirate of Kruger, Joubert and Pretorius to lead their war of liberation. They inflicted heavy losses on the English army at Laing's Nek and at Amajuba. During this time the Transvaal was entirely isolated from the rest of the world, and the Swiss colony at Elim stayed without any news of its country for 3 months. It suffered certain privations, but less than others, as Creux had already established a garden on a big scale. The Boers came to requisition his produce. He replied, "I have nothing to do with your war, and we will give you nothing. Think of what you are doing - you can take everything here, but be careful not to be found at war with God". This determined attitude saved him, and the Boers left, having shaken his hand!

Fortunately the war was not prolonged. Gladstone resisted the military party, which wanted to undertake a campaign on a grand scale to reduce the Boers to impotence. He returned the Transvaal to these patriotic warriors, and on the 23rd of March, 1881, a treaty was signed by the triumvirate. The country then recovered its complete independence for all internal affairs. The peace convention, however, contained several clauses which related to the native policy. A resident Englishman was charged with protecting the natives and of reporting any bad treatment to the authorities. The missionaries could but rejoice.

Henri Berthoud and his wife did not arrive until the 11th June - Creux went on horseback to meet them. "How can I describe my feelings when the young couple arrived in the Spelonken, where the Lord had manifested His might in our infirmities? How that day brought back to me that day near Aliwal North when I saw our friends Paul and Eugénie arriving - nine years ago -, full of hope, youth and health...The world would ask what good could this loss have been, so much freshness, so much talent, so much strength - but, the vase broken, the perfume shed'. Shed, yes, but at the feet of Jesus".

"These were my thoughts on seeing our friends. But I had others also. At last after nine years, our Churches were sending us reinforcements. Certainly, if any one had told me, when we left, that during nine years, we would not see any one sent by our Churches, I would not have believed it. At last, thanks to God/



/God, there they were! We had been the advance guard, here was the beginning of a great army!"

Spelonken church would finance this work itself. This is how he tells what took place.

After the departure of Paul Berthoud, Ernest Creux spent another four years in the Spelonken. They were rewarding and lovely years. Sickness and worry were not absent, but death at least did not come again to the three children born to the family at Waterval. Life seemed easier than at the beginning. "My mission," writes Creux in 1881, "is becoming a beautiful farm, well watered, covered by fields which present a lovely sight. I make hedges of roses, fig trees, quinces, pomegranates, white mulberries and other indigenous plants. I have also orange plantations, orchards of peaches, apples and bananas which will be in full bearing in a few years. I have also some two year old blue gums which are 20' high. My great dream is a water mill....."

The spiritual work made rapid progress. When he left Elim to return to Switzerland, the mission founded by Creux had 38 baptised adults and 35 catechists.

Two outstanding achievements must be mentioned here.

1. Under Creux's influence the young Spelonken church became missionary minded on its own, and began to evangelise the Portuguese colony.
2. The Elim missionary was asked by the Government of the Transvaal to negotiate peace terms with the heathen Venda chief, Makhatou. It would be worth our while to consider a few details of those two achievements.

In July 1880, at a Church festival, a convert Jozefa Mhalsbale, spoke of a journey which he had made to Delagoa Bay, looking for some members of his family. He had preached the gospel with much success, wherever he had gone. The people all belonged to the Shangaan tribes. On hearing him, Creux conceived the idea of taking him into the mission for a year and preparing him to become the evangelist in these far off regions. Jozefa accepted this proposal with joy. "My most ardent wish", adds Ernest Creux, "is to see a breakthrough in the heathenism which reigns from here to Inhambane and to Delagoa Bay. How wonderful it would be to have a line of stations from here to the sea!"

The next year Jozefa left on a veritable journey of exploration. He was the bearer of a letter to the Portuguese governor at Lourenco Marques, and was commissioned to investigate how the evangelisation of this country could be undertaken. He was received very cordially by the independent chief, Magpude, who lived on the heights where the Komati River enters the coastal plain. He pushed on right to the Portuguese town where the governor received him sympathetically. The population was much addicted to strong drink and consumed enormous quantities of brandy, which was sold to them by Hindu traders.

But Jozefa's message had excited their interest and he returned, much encouraged, bringing back with him his sister and her husband.

The account of his trip, filled the Church with enthusiasm. It is true that the Portuguese governor replied that it was not permissible to found a Protestant mission in the Colony, but in fact, the whites only occupied a restricted area near the sea, and the native chiefs considered themselves independent. The door was thus open.



Creux decided to ordain Jozefa as evangelist and minister of the new mission at Magoude's and he undertook that the Spelonken church would finance this work itself. This is how he tells what took place.

"I said, we have need of shoulders, money and provisions. Thereupon one rose, 'I have no money, but I have shoulders, I will go as a bearer'. Another said, 'I have five shillings', Another, 'I have ten shillings', another, 'I will give a roll of tobacco' and so on. I hope we will get Fr.500. Those who had no money provided mealies and food. Actually we got nearly Fr.1,000 which included Fr.250 given by the missionaries themselves. In April, 1882, Jozefa again left for the coast, with his sister and her husband, who had been converted and baptised".

"They left with flags flying, accompanied by the members of the Elim church singing hymns" (Creux translated a hymn from Sesotho into Tsonga beginning with the words "The cry of the Macedonian has resounded", and ending with the chorus: "They will come from the south, from the north" etc. These words have been excellently translated by Mrs. van Berchpn, and Professor Hahremann has composed a very beautiful tune. It is thus thanks to the Elim church that we have a hymn that is accepted as being one of the most beautiful missionary hymns)

"That Sunday I saw the most wonderful assembly that I have yet seen in this country. The joy and enthusiasm were great".

We must remember that this great project stemmed from the zeal and vision of that ardent evangelist, Ernest Creux.

The post which Jozefa was to establish was called Anticka, in memory of the town in which the primitive church founded the first Christian colony.

The next year, in March 1883, Creux was called to fulfil a very difficult task. The principal Venda chief, Makhatou, who had already caused trouble at the time of the captivity of the missionaries was again in revolt. He refused to pay the Government tax and to accept the boundaries laid down for his territory. He dreamed of chasing the Shangaans out of the Spelonken and of conquering the Boers. The Government had called all the Shangaans to arms. The Christians formed one of the black contingents. In the first affray, the Venda warriors were beaten, and fled, leaving behind 58 of their number. But Makhatou did not see himself as vanquished and it seemed that a serious war would ensue, which could have very grave consequences. The Pretoria Government wanted to avoid war, especially as it could bring complications in its relations with England, by virtue of the Convention. Makhatou was intractable.

Commandant Joubert, cousin of the President of the same name, called Creux, and begged him to go and talk to this rebel chief, and to see whether he really preferred war to peace.

It was a very great honour for the missionary, who could not help remembering how, a few years previously, he had been imprisoned by the same government. But he was prepared to help and did not bear any grudge. He suggested to Joubert that he entrust this task to the Berlin missionaries, who were working among the Venda people, but as they did not come soon enough, he consented to go and find Makhatou in his fortress in the middle of the mountains.



This is the gist of a letter in which he describes the journey:-

Creux took with him his faithful parishioner, Hakamele, who was a past master in the art of negotiation. With the two excellent horses which the Commandant gave them, they quickly crossed the 30 kilometres of plain which separated them from the mountain. Everywhere along their journey natives, armed to the teeth, ran to meet them, anxious to learn the message which had been entrusted to them, and were delighted to see a missionary on the road to their chief's village.

It was obvious that they also did not want war, knowing well that if it broke out, it would mean lost harvests, burnt villages and famine. "For", they said, "one can easily conquer an enemy, but how does one conquer famine?"

Arriving at the end of the plain, the horsemen dismounted, and began to walk up a steep hill, covered by nettles and completely exposed to the murderous sun. They were able to remount their horses at the top and approached the huge rocks, where Mahkatou had built his city. The seriousness of his message did not stop Creux from admiring the flora composed of mint, white, blue and gigantic violets, yellow lilies and huge ferns which covered the hills. At last they came to the capital.

"We came to the middle of a labyrinth of enormous lilac coloured sandstone rocks. The huts were built wherever there was a space.....As we approached we noticed sentinals on the rocks which overhung the village. I recognised Mahkatou himself among them. He called Hakamele, who climbed the rocks and explained the reason of our visit to the chief....We were then conducted to September, one of the chief's favourites, whose guest I would be. Mahkatou was not slow to make his appearance. He was grossly fat, about 30 to 35 years old, with a manner both imperious and indecisive. But it seemed to be impatience and temper which influenced his speech. His whole body trembled and his eyes flashed. In a few words I explained Mr. Joubert's message, that having heard that war had begun, he had come to try to make peace, he wished to see the chief, and talk to him as a father speaks to his child, he told him of a rendezvous where he could be found with fifteen Boers. He hoped that Mahkatou would not be afraid to come with fifty men and his councillors...

"Mahkatou listened incredulously - "I, too," said he, "do not want war, I want peace". "I will pay taxes if the Boers want me to, but I will never consent to go where they call me. They want to assassinate me, like they assassinated my uncle Ramabona" - "But see," I said to him, "these Boers are not the same as before. "Don't you see that they have chosen me, a missionary, your friend, to bring a message of peace. Blood has flowed, but all could be arranged. Do not reject the hand that has been extended to you, have pity on your people. If you are afraid that the Boers will assassinate you, I will remain as a hostage, while you descend the mountain. Give the command before you leave, that my life answers for yours".

"No," replied Mahkatou, "my life is more precious than yours. If the Boers killed you, they would comfort your wife, and would give her a good sum of money. There are many more missionaries in the world, but if I were killed, where would they find another Mahkatou? Why don't the whites come and see me in my village? Why does he who calls <sup>himself</sup> my father not come to see his child? I would then call all my nation to render him homage? If, like you say, he is old and cannot easily come here, look at that tree below, at the foot of the mountain. Tell him to go there. I will go /



/go there. I will go down to see him!"  
 "To our saddles. Goodbye to the mountain with its pure air, goodbye to the mountains proud of their liberty! Everyone said goodbye amicably, and we descended again. Two hours later I arrived at the Boer encampment. They gathered together to hear the result of my mission - "

Mr. Joubert did not hide his satisfaction on hearing that Mahkatou desired peace but his officers doubted the chief's sincerity, maintaining that he wanted to entice them into an ambush - One of them said, "I know the spot. It is chosen expressly for an ambush". In the end they decided that the following message would be sent to Mahkatou.

"Mr. Joubert regrets to see that Mahkatou has no faith in him, but if the chief wants peace let him show it by paying £1,000 as a pledge of his sincerity and as the first instalment due to the Government, and let him send it next Monday. Also, that he will declare that he will not go beyond the boundaries which have been fixed by the English Government until the arrival of a Commission of which the English Resident would be part".

So Creux returned to the fortress, where the chief had gathered a large number of his warriors. He was accompanied by Mr. Beuster, his Berlin colleague, who had arrived at last. Then, in the midst of the great assembly, the word £1,000 was said, illustrated by two open hands, each finger representing £100, the chief made a face in painful astonishment.

"Where will I find £1,000?" he said.  
 It was much worse when the clause relative to the boundaries was explained. Violent invective came from all sides, accusing the Boers of wanting to take the land. Mr. Beuster then tried to bring the crowd to reason.  
 "I plead with you," he said, "to think that if you make war on the whites, all your mealies will be destroyed". At this a frightening tumult arose, "Mealies are of no importance," they screamed, "we would rather perish than be governed by the whites".

Mahkatou got up, left the assembly in a fury and went into an interior court, where he called the councillors..... He finished by signing everything that had been asked of him. Obviously he had a terrible fear of war.

But Monday came - Not a sign from the chief! On Tuesday he sent a messenger directly to the missionary to tell him:-  
 "Come quickly! I've prepared £300 for the Boers. Come and count it and take it". Creux replied he would not go, the chief had broken his word and he could not have any confidence in him. At the Boer camp, the war party gathered support. Mr. Joubert was very worried.

"Tomorrow," he said in confidence to Creux, "One hundred Boers will arrive with a cannon and ammunition, we must succeed in making peace before their arrival, otherwise all is lost". Actually if war had broken out, the Transvaal Government would have been in the wrong, as the Convention provided that difficulties between the natives and the Boers had to be resolved by a Commission of which the English Resident was part.

"Go to the chief," added Joubert, "and tell him that I will go and see him tomorrow with six Boers from Waterberg, that he must come and see me at the spot he chose, himself". Creux went back, "On my arrival I was received like, an old friend. "Its you who are my mother", said Mahkatou to me, "You are the Saviour of/



/of my people. Ah! why do they not appoint you as magistrate! If they had sent a Boer in your place, war would have broken out long ago'....Creux realised, that the chief feared to give the money to the Boers, thinking that when they had it, they would not hesitate to attack. Makhatou consented, nevertheless, to go in person to take the £300. But on seeing the Boer horsemen arriving at the foot of the mountain, fear seized him and he refused to go to the meeting place.

In disgust Creux left him without shaking hands. Arriving, wet with sweat, at the rendezvous, he announced to Joubert that Makhatou had refused to come. The chief's brother was there. Turning to him Joubert said, "Tell the chief that I will return here tomorrow, and if he does not come, I will go and see him at his place." And all the Boers departed to the plain. Did Joubert intend to return it is doubtful. But the mark of confidence which he gave the recalcitrant and deceitful chief appeared to put an end to his hesitation. He sent £314 which he had gathered plus £20 as a present for Joubert, £10 to two of his officers and £10 to Creux, with these words, "It is you who have put my people to sleep (in other words, brought peace) Send me a blanket so that I can sleep well." Creux adds, "I gave £3 to Makamele to compensate for all the trouble he had taken and placed £7 at the disposal of the Commission of Missions to do what it thought best."

A few days afterwards, Joubert addressed an official letter to Creux, Reuster and Schwellnau thanking them for the good services they had rendered the Republic and asking them to assure Makhatou of his good will, while reminding him of the conditions of the peace. And this is the conclusion our missionary drew from this story.

"All the Shangaan nation recognises that it is to the missionaries that they owe their escape from a war in which they would have found nothing but suffering, privations and losses of all kinds....One should have heard the warriors returning to their homes rejoicing because of the peace, and thanking me for the trouble which I had taken. It was thus that our true character was highlighted, and our title of messengers of peace was better understood, in its spiritual sense, and that our message was heard by those who were still at war with the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords."

This diplomatic success was the highlight of Creux's activities during the first sojourn of 12 years in Africa. There was no regulation fixing the length of the missionary periods of duty in the Transvaal. In 1883 the Commission of Missions realised that his health and that of his valiant wife had been seriously affected by the climate and the heavy load which for too long had weighed upon them, and authorised them to return to Europe as soon as possible. Meanwhile, August Jaques and his wife, who would succeed them, had arrived in 1882.

The Creux family left the Spelonken in January, 1884 with their four children (Etienne, Paul, Lena and Margaret) and Miss Wulther.

There was a moving farewell meeting, attended by three to four hundred people, at which at least fifteen Christians spoke of their gratitude and good wishes.



First, the Sotho evangelist, Eliakim, who was also one of the founders of the Mission. "Today there is a double sorrow amongst us! A father is leaving his children, children are separating from their father. As for us, we feel in our hearts the pain that a child feels who accompanies a beloved father to the cemetery. Ah! how miserable we feel - Look my brothers, he who leaves us today not only laboured for our souls, he has also borne the load of our sorrow. He was hungry with us and he felt the cold with us!"

Hlaici, of Valdezia, added, "How I hated you long ago. You tired me with your, "Do not steal. Do not tell lies. Do not commit adultery. Do not envy, do not covet." I said, "How this man hates me! And now, I have seen these words were life, light and joy. Ah! I gave you much sorrow - I argued with you. How ashamed I am today!, and how my hate has changed to love. My father, my father, you have done me so much good, *but* are leaving! Ah! it is the end! Greet the churches, tell them that Hlaici greets them. Tell them that their envoy has given us a powerful charm (amulet) to conquer evil spirits, and the sorrows of the world!"

On the 24th January, at sunset, the wagon left. "Goodbye, Elin, goodbye the Spelonken hills, goodbye, above all, the little graves of those who we hope to see on the beautiful day of the great reunion of the redeemed with the Saviour."

At Pretoria, Creux had the great joy of meeting his friend, Coillard, who was en route to Zambesi. He also met Major Machado, a distinguished Portuguese, who was building the railway line between Pretoria and Lourenco Marques, and who assured him that complete religious freedom applied in the Portuguese colonies.

At Ladysmith, in Natal, he learned by chance from an open newspaper in a shop, that some Swiss missionaries had landed at the Cape. It was Paul Berthoud and his party. He telegraphed them at Durban, arranging to meet them in Maritzburg, and a few days later the two parties met with tremendous joy.

They spent six days together, whilst preparing for their respective journeys.

The Creux's were to embark on the "Tartar" ('the Tartar Raetic', facetiously said Creux, who was subject to sea sickness!)

March, 1884! One must remember this time as a great occasion in the life of the pioneers. Until 1880 their two careers had followed parallel lines - The lines had separated when Berthoud returned to Europe. At Maritzburg they were rejoined again, but were to be again separated to an even greater extent. Creux had to make a long stay in Switzerland while Berthoud eventually went to the Coast where the Mission had a great future.



Ernest Creux at Elim 1889 - 1899.

When in May 1884, Ernest Creux went back to Switzerland, he did not think that he would remain there for five whole years before returning to his beloved Shangaans. But his health had been more deeply affected than he had thought - Stationed first at Lausanne, he arranged several meetings at the churches. The "Bulletin" of October 1884 describes how the friends of the Mission felt when he appeared in their midst, at the gathering of the missionaries at Bex.

When they saw this missionary, who was not yet forty and who was already a veteran of the Vaudois mission, each one said, "At last we have seen him again, he is there before us, safe and sound, thanks to God".

September, 1885, found him still not in a fit state to depart, but, wishing in spite of that to work for his Master, he provisionally accepted a post as minister to the Free Church of Corsier. It was there that he learned of the persecution which had broken out in Antiocha, and he offered to go to the help of Jozefa and his small congregation, who were in danger. But at that time repeated insomnia showed him that his nervous system was still too weak to undertake this task, and he had to withdraw his offer! He undertook a cure at Bex, but he was not greatly helped and had to even abandon the management of the Corsier Church, to the great grief of his parishioners who were very fond of him. After a time of rest, he accepted a call to the Free Church at Orbe, which he served from the 1st July 1887 to February 15th 1889.

"The sojourn of Mr. Creux, at Orbe," the report of the Commission of Synods said, "was short, but valuable for the church and the cause of temperance. It also helped to strengthen the ties which bound the churches to the beloved African mission. In spite of different climates and circumstances the work was essentially the same, and this was emphasised by the good services that Mr. Creux had rendered to our church since his return to Europe".

At the end of 1888, Creux felt that his strength had returned sufficiently to allow him to return to Africa.

Before he could leave, the Spelonken mission was threatened with destruction by the promulgation of the "Plakkerswet", of which we will soon speak. Happily, the storm passed and his departure was fixed for April 1889.

Before leaving Orbe, Creux received a visit that helped him very much. He tells in a letter to Professor Lucien Gautier that, Mr. Vulliet, famous author of historical books, came to him and said, "I have come to thank you in the name of our country for the good the mission Romande has done and the honour it has brought our country. Your work is a patriotic, as well as a Christian one". This testimony of a man so esteemed gave me a great pleasure and encouragement, at this time of impending separation from part of my family".

The separation - Creux, who had lost three children in Africa, had five in 1889, two boys and three girls. (Etienne, Paul, Léna, Margaret and Luce) He had intended to leave his sons in the country for their studies - but the girls?



The Council of Missions had not counted on paying the fares of the two elder children, on the other hand it was very hard for the parents to leave them behind.... The difficulty was resolved by generous friends, who provided the funds for the passage of the two young girls, and a governess, Miss. Johann, who travelled with them. The journey was made under favourable conditions and on the 16th July, the Creux family arrived at Elin where they were welcomed with enthusiasm by the whole population.

The second sojourn of Ernest Creux at Elin lasted exactly ten years - from July 1889 to June 1899. Health was generally good during these ten years, except in 1893, when the missionary had a series of malaria attacks which necessitated a long holiday in the mountains at Shilovane. A little girl, ~~Volette~~, their last child, came to rejoice our friends on April 4th, 1891. So from this point of view the second sojourn was happier than the first - But from the point of view of their work, the same could not be said. In 1895, there was the anguish of the "Plakkerswet", and later there was much distress in the Spelonken, which ended in 1897-1898 with a wonderful revival.

Ernest Creux wrote in a letter of the 12th September, 1890, about the indifference, the ingratitude, the lack of sincerity, the egotism which affected them. From where did this back-sliding come? The conversion of a heathen is always a miracle of the Holy Spirit. For it to be maintained to produce a true saint, means that the miracle must continue; and that is not possible unless the Christian is vigilant. One sees the phenomenon which is called in natural history, the reversion to type.

To this must be added another drawback. The gold mines in Johannesburg had been discovered in 1886 and thousands of Europeans had rushed to South Africa to get rich quickly. The blacks responded in large numbers to the call of the miners, who had need of their arms and who paid them well. Money flowed into their hands. Until then they had not much, but then greed took possession of the black population. They wanted to live well, as the whites did, enjoy all that civilization could bring them, and spiritual values were depreciated as material pleasures were avidly sought after. Young people who wished to become teachers or evangelists were mocked. The employees of the missionaries were scorned because they only earned five shillings a week. The attraction of the towns became even greater. The Spelonken men usually preferred Pretoria where a large number of them went for prolonged stays, leaving their families, and sometimes did not return.

It is not surprising that the men of the congregation became difficult. "A spirit of revolt manifested itself", says Creux on the 15th May, 1891. "As soon as there is a question of regulation or work of some sort, one must be prepared to discuss it with them for hours, until they are convinced. Because of this trait in their character, I have had more than one fight with the men of my church."

This insubordination even reached the children - the parish. One fine day, eight of the schoolgirls left. They were going to Pretoria, one of them had been punished by a teacher. They had waited for just that to carry out their plan! Great turmoil at Elin! Fathers and big brothers pursued the fugitives and Ernest Creux went on horseback to inform the police. The rebels returned on their own, when hunger forced them to do so, but he concluded from this affair and other signs that there were bad influences at work amongst the youth. The children became impossible to control/



/control and did not even come to school. The schoolteacher was powerless. The situation was discussed with the elders and parents, and all agreed that the delinquents should be beaten, and this was done forthwith by the parents. The guilty ones had to come to the missionary to apologise and make peace. One said, "The beating I got opened my eyes - It seems it is only now that I am beginning to be converted! I was blind!"

These events showed Ernest Creux that it would be advisable for him to supervise the school and to take it under his personal control, for a time. Also, leaving many of his numerous and important activities, he devoted much time to the young, teaching them order, cleanliness and discipline. This was a wise step to take. No missionary who has taken the trouble to do this has regretted it.

There was another sad problem. Intemperate ways had little by little crept into the church. The rule relating to drink had been clearly laid down - Light beer, (boupoutsou) - a kind of soup, with very little alcohol, which served as food as much as drink, was allowed, but strong beer (byala) was forbidden. Taught by their heathen neighbours, the Christians had abandoned the making of "boupoutsou", which they found not strong enough, and were making a new mixture, which although it was not the forbidden "byala", was much too strong. It became a serious addiction.

Ernest Creux was a sworn enemy of alcohol and an apostle of temperance. As soon as he was aware of this evil, he attacked it courageously, and after three weeks of fighting he won over the elders to his way of thinking, and asked all the church to abstain from alcoholic beverages.

"It was a fine day," he wrote in December, 1894. "Like Joshua, I had often prayed and cried to God, asking myself why we seemed to be defeated by paganism. God wished our church to be purified from this sin, which had caused the ruin of so many churches".

The campaign against alcohol was only part of the fight against general slackness in the church. At prayer meetings he preached humiliation, asking God to forgive him for failing to lead his flock in the right paths. The church members responded by confessing their sins, but it was the disasters of which we shall hear later, that restored the spirit of the church.

If the Elim church caused Ernest Creux much concern during these years, it also gave much joy, particularly on the occasion of his silver wedding on the 25th January, 1897. On that day he was awakened with a start by knocking on the verandah. There was the sound of soft, harmonious singing of a Swiss hymn translated into Tsonga. The church members had gathered in front of the verandah, all garlanded in honour of the occasion. The idea had come from their Valdezia colleagues, as one would expect, but the black parishioners had adopted it whole heartedly, and they handed over the money which they had collected amongst themselves, 36 shillings, "the mite of the poor as our people are at the end of their resources". The orator who was chosen to express the good wishes of the parish, the worthy evangelist, Samuel Matouela, said, "Moneri (Rev) we can not say or give you much here, we can but say how grateful we are for the work you have accomplished in this land. You came to hunt our souls. The hunter himself lives in the wilderness, under rough shelters, without comfort, often alone; you also are far from your own people, you will not have a beautiful festival, but your festival is us, your children bought for Jesus by your work". Very moved, Ernest Creux asked the congregation to return that evening and he announced that he would use the money which they had brought to buy a beautiful /



beautiful family Bible, in which he would inscribe, in gold letters, the occasion on which it had been given him and the names of the donors.

On the 24th January, 1895, Ernest Creux received a letter from the Native Commissioner of the Spelonken, which informed him, on orders from the Government, that the "Flakkerswet" had to be enforced, and that he had to send home all the blacks from the Blin farm who did not have the right to live there, as soon as they had reaped their meelies. It was strange that it was only the Swiss mission that was hit. The Berlin mission was not affected. What was this Flakkerswet? It was a law thought up by the Boer government to prevent the agglomeration of blacks outside the reserves which had been allocated to them. These reserves were hopelessly inadequate, and the blacks had stayed in great numbers on the farms of the white people, where they had been for generations. But the law authorized a farm manager to keep only five black families. They received from the farmer enough land for their fields and their cattle, but the occupants had to work for the farmer for three months every year without pay. Thus the Boer farmer obtained gratis all the labour needed for his agriculture and the care of his cattle, etc. The problem of agricultural workers, such a problem in Europe, was solved here by making use of the descendants of Ham, who had been made to serve Shem and above all Japhet! The Flakkerswet is one of the most perfect examples of the exploitation of the black race by the whites. Applied to the Spelonken stations it meant that one hundred and fifty families had to leave their homes and fields, and their missionary, to go to no one knew where.

This law was promulgated in 1888, as we have seen, and the threat of its application had delayed the departure from Switzerland of Ernest Creux - but it had been withdrawn. And here, seven years later, the order came to expel nearly all the Christians from the station - In between, in 1891, foreseeing that the forced removal might be imposed by the authorities, the Conference had instructed H. Berthoud to visit the great chief Gungouniyama, who reigned on the Limpopo plain, fatherland of the Tsongas, to ask him if he would receive these unhappy people, in case of need. Gungouniyama had received the missionary well and had agreed to all he asked. But in 1895, war with the Portuguese had broken out at the coast and Gungouniyama had lost his kingdom.

Creux was sent by his colleagues to Pretoria to see President Paul Kruger, who received him cordially. Paul Kruger, it was known, was a practising Christian, who even preached on occasion. Ernest Creux showed him the gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, translated into Knobkneusens's language, and asked him why it was only the Swiss mission that had been hit by this law. The President was surprised that the Commissioner had made such a distinction, and declared, in any case, if the measure had to be applied, it would apply to all farms. He advised Creux to send a report to the Government. Creux told him that the Swiss consul was also acquainted with his protest, and he had the feeling that the affair would end peaceably. The Conference was reassured by the declarations of the President. However, Ernest Creux felt that he should be prepared for any eventuality and decided to establish a place of refuge outside the Transvaal, in Southern Rhodesia, in Dzombo's country, where Paul Rosset was to go the following year. Later it seemed that the idea of applying the Flakkerswet had been abandoned and the Dzombo station was not established.

In 1895 the Mission had been threatened by the Government. In 1896 it was profoundly tried by a succession of calamities - draught, locusts, famine and the rinderpest.



Creux writes:- "Elim. 12th November, 1896.  
 What a terrible year this is! It could have the distinction  
 in the annals of South Africa as having had the worst succession  
 of plagues of all kinds that the century has ever seen. Drought &  
 this year has dried up numerous springs which I have never seen  
 dry. "Coming after years of insufficient rain, it destroyed all  
 the potato fields, which until now had been a sure source of food,  
 and had saved our people from death. Even the fields planted in  
 the marshes have yielded nothing. We do not know where to send  
 our cattle so that they can find some green grass...."

Then, added to the drought, came the locusts. I thought  
 I knew this plague and I have already described it. Alas! I feel  
 that the only author who could successfully describe their terrible  
 ravages would be the Prophet Joel.... We have read and reread him...  
 The locusts came first in the flying stage, ever more and more dense,  
 devastating our fields of corn, oats, barley and peas, and our  
 bananas. Everyone ran, crying out, arming themselves with branches,  
 white handkerchiefs and bells. Imagine the good this did the crops,  
 which were soon trodden underfoot!

One terrible Sunday, as we came out of the second service,  
 the sky was filled with clouds of locusts, which came in waves  
 without interruption to attack their prey, our green hill, which  
 had been a real oasis in the desert of dryness. On that day our  
 oats and barley went, the wheat was wiped out and the bananas too.  
 During fifteen consecutive days this terrible army ravaged our  
 gardens and our plantations. Everything was covered by a seething  
 mass, which would rise in a thick cloud when one passed by.  
 There was a deafening sound, uninterrupted, produced by their  
 powerful jaws cutting the leaves. In the morning, when the sun  
 warmed them, they began to beat their wings, like children who beat  
 their hands to warm themselves. It was strange to see all the trees  
 transformed as in a fairy scene, covered by a scintillating and  
 noisy mass, saluting the rising sun."

This description is very picturesque and almost amusing.  
 But the result! Famine, a horrible famine! We hear on all sides  
 of people dying of hunger. Everyday starving people pass here  
 looking for work in order to survive. One hears terrible stories  
 of parents getting rid of their children." Soon the station was  
 invaded. "A hundred starving women and children, three families  
 dying of hunger, and a leper and four children....and all this  
 crowd clamouring all day long, coming to every door, every window,  
 imploring us to give them something. The day before yesterday we  
 took our last sack of potatoes. These women fell upon it like  
 tigresses".

The provisions were entirely finished. Creux went, with  
 twelve vehicles, to Pietersburg to buy some mealies. It was very  
 difficult to get any. The consignment which he had counted on  
 was sold. "After much running around and endless argument with  
 the Relief Committee, I decided to buy on my own account £1000  
 (Fr. 10,000) of mealies, to sell at cost price. It was a great  
 responsibility to carry on my weak shoulders! I knew I would lose,  
 because I could not resist the urge to give to the many starving,  
 but I made the sacrifice of this money before God, knowing that, if  
 I put my faith in Heaven, it would not be lost".

(The friends of the mission in Switzerland, were moved with  
 compassion and gave over Fr. 19,000 towards the relief of the starving  
 masses) "On the 1st January, we travelled back to the Spelonken  
 and arrived there on the evening of the 4th. Terrid heat, terrible  
 dust, sunburnt grass, but at last we arrived. For one week, there/



there was a hub-bub, crowds coming begging, buying and borrowing." At the end of January 1897, the famine was even worse, and a sack of flour (90 kg) was sold for £7. "There have been many deaths, caused by the humidity after the heat, and the disgusting things these people eat to cheat their hunger. And now the cattle sickness, Rinderpest, at Valdezia. Cattle are being killed and buried all round us. Can we escape? It seems impossible. I dare not think what would become of us if we had no means of transport, no more milk, no meat other than tinned beef or pork; hens are scarce and sheep are dying of this disease. At this time our people seem to be more crushed than anything else. But how necessary it was for them to have these severe lessons! How often we had predicted the punishment of God for their pride, their love of money, their lack of devotion to the service of the Master. If, as I hope, an awakening will come from these terrible visitations, how we will bless the rod and the One who holds it. Pray with us for a new spiritual Spring. for the pioneer of Elia.

The following Sunday, as he was preparing to go to the out-station, word - The spiritual awakening was not immediate. The rinderpest destroyed all the cattle on the stations. We had to procure a great number of donkeys to replace the trek oxen. Many of the dead animals remained unburied and there was an upsurge of death among the people. A new type of typhoid fever, dysentery and scurvy attacked black and white. The Government proclaimed a day of prayer and humiliation, which our missionaries and their congregations observed willingly" - years I have discouraged my people from believing the gospel, but on the day of the festival, At last the spiritual revival, which was so longed for, appeared. One of the causes was the arrival at Elim of Dr. Liengme (1897) who had had to abandon his station at Goungounyama's after the latter's defeat by the Portuguese. The doctor had retreated to Antioka, then to Shiluvane, where he had shaken up the church, and had provoked many confessions. He was able to do the same work at Elim, and the missionaries, at last, had the joy of seeing many young boys and girls come and confess their sins. The arrival of Dr. Liengme not only proved of great spiritual value but it took off Creux's shoulders the heavy medical burden which he had been forced to carry, day and night, and which seemed to tire him more than anything else. On the 2nd June, 1897, he wrote, "How many times I have said to myself - If only a real doctor could come here to work, how many lives he could save! When I think of the many nights when a knock on my door has caused me to rush to the village to help. They became so frequent that often in my dreams, I would hear these raps, and wake up suddenly! - I'd run to open the door, only to find shadows in the night!" he had turned from the way, had returned to God.

He had the joy of seeing the modest beginnings of the Elim Hospital, which was to develop into so great an institution.

The revival spread through all the stations, so much so that it was with hearts full of hope that on the 17th August, 1898, the missionaries celebrated the anniversary of the arrival at Albasini's twenty-five years before. This chapter on a note of thanksgiving.

After six active and seasonal years, Ernest Creux relinquished his post. The Christians of Elia and Valdezia met at the rendezvous beneath the beautiful fig trees which grew between the two stations. Numerous flags could be seen flying in the wind. Everybody was decorated with cockades of different colours. The heathen were there in large numbers too, and it was estimated that the assembly totalled 2,000 to 3,000 people. Among the heathen was the chief Ndjakandjaka, who lived at Elim, and who was known for his hardness and his hostility to the gospel. He had also wanted to carry a cockade and had asked Mrs. Creux for one.... The missionaries and the elders exhorted the crowd, but what was particularly interesting was /



was to have the Government Commissioner rise and speak. He was not the one who had shown hostility to the mission and who had wanted to apply the "Plakkerswet" only to our mission. The new Commissioner was a Christian and he expressed his sentiments before this great assembly. "The Government is thankful for the work accomplished by the missionaries and will do all it can to help the work of God, which is a great, beautiful and good work. This branch of your mission has produced extraordinary fruits, we would never have thought that we would see what we have seen today... I would like to see all your nation turn to God and learn to know Him. Henceforth you can count on my co-operation."

It can be understood how much satisfaction the missionaries found in words like these, so different from what they were used to hearing.

Another happy surprise was in store for the pioneer of Elim. The following Sunday, as he was preparing to go to the out-station, word came to him. "Stay on the station because the chief Ndjakandjaka has announced to his people that he had given himself to God and that he was going to make his public confession at the church on Sunday." A great assembly met under the mimosa, as the church was too small to accommodate all those present.

Ndjakandjaka rose amid a profound silence and said, "It is I, it is I, Ndjakandjaka, and no one else! I have to speak to you of the marvels of God towards me. For years I have discouraged my people from believing the gospel, but on the day of the festival, my heart was seized, my heart was seized! I listened to the missionary from Valdezia, to the one from Shivase, the one from Tchakoma (Berlin mission) and mine, who called me by name, and they were unanimous in inviting me to be converted. My heart was pierced. On coming home my eyes did not look at the ground but at the sky. When I arrived I said, 'Bring the light, for me it will never be dark again. And all night the lamp burnt. And I felt God's hand on my head. He showed me my sins. God is not vanquished by anything, He has vanquished me. And all night, in thinking of things of the Heavens, my heart leapt, my head leapt-leapt-leapt - Everyone knows I fear nobody - not the Boers nor the Vendas - but that night I was frightened because I am guilty of the sins of my people .... Today I give myself to God.... I come today to ask to be instructed in God's work."

The conversion of this chief caused tremendous joy to Creux, and to all the Church, the more so because as a result of it, Hakamele, one of the first elders at Elim, who had turned from the way, had returned to God.

So Ernest Creux could end his letter:- "We have prayed for a revival in our Church, and here God is giving it to us. The awakening of the heathen, and the return of the sinners is a sign that He had heard us."

We are happy to end this chapter on a note of thanksgiving. After six active and emotional years, Ernest Creux relinquished his responsibilities for a while, and returned with his family to rebuild his physical and spiritual resources in his country (1899).

The work among the Tswana was threefold - pastoral care, evangelisation and education. To keep the young men of the Apostles churches from bad influences in their own areas, they had to be drawn together. On Sunday afternoons there was a meeting where they found one another there, they learnt new things, they bought books and to ask for help. The meetings were often all were followed with affection, and spiritual family. A most valuable factor



Ernest Creux. - Head of the Pretoria Mission 1902-1910.

In 1896, in response to the wishes of all the missionaries, the Council had decided to found a station in the capital of the Transvaal, with the aim of ministering to the Christians who had gone there to work. Mr. N. Jaques had been put in charge of this work, which at once had become of great value. Mr. A. Borel came to help him but, in 1901, the wives of these two missionaries had died, leaving six orphans. Mr. Jaques' furlough had been brought forward so that he could take the six children back to Europe and that was why Ernest Creux was sent to replace him. Did he long for the hills of the Spelonken and the happy Blim farm and church that he had founded? Perhaps, but it was there in Pretoria, that he found a magnificent field, where he could make full use of his outstanding evangelical gifts, and it became the summit of his missionary career.

On 9th April, 1902 he left Switzerland, with his courageous wife and five of his children, Etienne, the eldest, who was going to work in South Africa, the eldest daughter, Lina, who was to work with her father as a lady missionary, and the three younger ones who were left in Wellington, Cape, at the Huguenot Seminary, where they were to finish their schooling.

The Anglo-Boer war was not yet over, but peace was almost concluded by the time they reached Pretoria.

The house which awaited the Creux family was in the west of the town, near the black locations - It was not very comfortable. Half the building housed the missionary and the other half was the church. This was a provisional arrangement. It was understood that as soon as a proper house could be built a dividing wall would be taken down and the church enlarged.

In 1906 this was done, and thereafter it was easier for the family to receive their numerous visitors - Indeed a great many were privileged to come to this house, where there was so much kindness, naturalness and gaiety, and where everyone worked for a common cause. Ernest Creux and his family would not have been able to cope with their task, without the help of these colleagues. First, Arnold Borel, who was there on their arrival and who was specifically occupied with the schools. Then there was Eugene Thomas, and lastly, Mr. Abel de Neuron, who came in 1908, and was to be his replacement when it was time for his retirement.

When the Pretoria station was founded, it was essentially for the Tsongas of the Spelonken, the Christian Tsongas, whom they tried to save from the bad influences of the town - But their work spread to the Tsonga heathen, who were found in great numbers and who had to be evangelised.

This work always remained as the first priority during the eight years that Ernest Creux managed the station. Other fields opened out - the prisons (which his predecessor had already penetrated) and the Leper Asylum to which he was especially attached.

The work among the Tsonga was threefold - pastoral care, evangelisation and education. To keep the young men of the Spelonken churches from bad influences in an urban area, they had to be drawn together. On Sunday afternoons there was a service at the station. They found one another there, they learnt news of 'Kaya' (home), came to buy books and to ask for help. The Creux home was a meeting place where all were welcomed with affection, and were members of a real spiritual family. A most valuable factor in the evangelical/



/evangelical programme was the part played by the schools, which attracted the heathen trying to improve themselves. It was there that conversions took place.

In 1903 Creux wrote that almost each week one of the students decided to become a Christian.

There were three schools - that of the station where Lina taught until her marriage to the Rev. J. B. Watson, a Congregational minister, in 1907. Then her sister Luce took her place with Madame Marie Bourquin. Margaret also helped on occasion, though not on the regular staff of the mission. She left later for the Spelonken where she married Mr. Dawson and where she died six weeks after her marriage, in April 1906. This caused great sorrow to her parents and to all who loved her.

The second school was at the Railway station. More than a thousand black workers were employed by the Railways and lived near the Railway Station. They were housed in miserable self-erected hovels, although the new administration was constructing proper houses. As there were many Tsongas amongst them, Arnold Borel, who was in charge of this school, had a number of pupils. He had formed a Christian Union among them.

The third school was in Sunnyside, to the East of the town.

Everywhere religious teaching went hand in hand with that of reading, writing, arithmetic and English. Also, these schools acted as nurseries for the church. Before Christmas, Ernest Creux gathered many people after work on Saturdays at 4 p.m., to prepare them for baptism, and got great joy from this work. In December, 1905 he baptised fourteen of them.

One of the candidates was called Starch. He rose at one Wednesday evening prayer meeting and said, "My heart is sad. I must tell you of my sin." A few days before one of his friends was counting his money in his bedroom. A gold coin fell into a crack in the floor. When the owner had left he picked it up and those in the room decided to share it amongst themselves. Creux told him the next day that there was only one thing to do - to return it. An hour later he returned with the news that he had persuaded the others to return their share, and brought a half crown which the owner of the money had given him. He had said that it was to God he owed the return of the money so he was sending the half crown in thankfulness.

Creux paid several visits to the Premier Diamond Mine, forty-five kilometres to the east of Pretoria, where a number of Tsongas worked, and there were even more Basothos. It was not until 1911 that an outstation was founded in the large agglomeration of more than 10,000 workers at this mine, which the Blacks called "Small Kimberley".

Ernest Creux also filled the role of official representative of the Mission to the authorities, and rendered services to the country stations. He kept in touch with his Spelonken colleagues, and was present, if possible, at their synods.

In 1908 he attended the Lesotho Mission to celebrate their 75th Jubilee. On this journey he was accompanied by his wife, and they experienced much joy in recalling their experiences there twenty-five years before. He had a very strong feeling of real fellowship with the Lesotho Mission.



In 1901, he succeeded in organising regular meetings for all the Pretoria missionaries (except the Anglican and the Church of Ethiopia). Through this they were able to show the authorities what the missions were doing, morally and socially, for the black people. This association was the nucleus of the Association of Transvaal missionaries, which was founded in 1907, with Ernest Creux as the first President. His aim was twofold:- to defend the blacks against the abuses that they suffered and to maintain good relations between the different missionary societies - which arose from feelings that they encroached on each other's preserves.

As President of the Missionary Association of the Transvaal he was prominent in having permission withdrawn for the sale of alcoholic beverages to the blacks. He also took as great a part as he could in the religious life of the Capital. He collaborated with the evangelist, Gipsy Smith, who held huge public meetings. He ensured the support of the clergymen of Pretoria when Rev. F. B. Meyer undertook his revivalist campaign amongst the ministers of South Africa. The knowledge he had of the English language, his broad mindedness, and the openness of his character contributed to the success of these activities. "after which there were many handshakes and expressions of gratitude."

All those who visited received a prisoner, a leper and a selection of hymns. This meant that all the cells, there were Ernest Creux saw his visits to the prison and the leper asylum as an opportunity to spread the gospel as widely as he could.

He writes of one of his first visits to the prison. "Each Sunday morning, I go to the prison to minister to the Tsonga prisoners. Their number varies from twenty to sixty - on my arrival at the prison, I knock on the door. A little "judas" window is opened and the doorkeeper sees my white tie (which I wear for recognition) and he opens the door. If the Prison Governor is there, I go to pay my respects. He is extremely affable and thanks me for the trouble I take. Then, crossing a courtyard where some white prisoners are warming themselves in the sunshine, I get to the black quarters, accompanied by a warder dressed in khaki.

At the door a black warder received me, takes me to the yard where 45-100 prisoners, all dressed in white blouses and trousers, perfectly clean, are stretched out on the ground, enjoying the gentle heat. We call the Shengans (a name the Gossabas or Tsongas have been given by the whites in the Transvaal) and my congregation goes to their quarters - a simple barrack with a corrugated roof, without ceiling or floorboards. All along the floor are blankets and clothes neatly folded and aligned. The prisoners sit on the ground in front of these small piles of clothes. We kneel to pray, there are amongst them Wesleyans who join in the 'amen' at the end. We sing, not too badly, a hymn which Mr. Jaques had taught them - "Come, come again" and "Come to Jesus, he calls you". I conduct a Sunday School. What joy to speak of higher things to these poor prisoners, who are all ears and eyes, and to whom my visit is a ray of light in their sad lives."

Later the number of prisoners greatly increased, and in 1907, a huge prison was built, which the Director asked Mr. Creux to inaugurate with prayer, because the authorities greatly appreciated the influence which he exerted on the prisoners. In 1910, a big hall was provided for religious gatherings.

This work became ever more important and useful. He discovered many things, in fact, that the Director could not know, not having the occasion nor the direct approach to the prisoners, while he, being their chaplain, knew them by their names and knew their language well - both Tsonga and Sotho.



He soon established that there were many different types. There were depraved men, belonging to the Zulu tribe, who were really vicious. They practised unnatural vice, and forced the others, the newly admitted, to follow their abominable practices. This gave rise to fights, and real battles during the night. Others, on the contrary, were imprisoned for much less serious faults, for example, for having run away from their white masters. They were corrupted by these awful Zulus. For several years there had even been a secret society, composed of thirty-odd members, with two chiefs possessing absolute power, which had as its aim the demoralisation of the young arrivals and the fomenting of revolts and the murder of wardens who displeased them.

But thanks to the mission influence, many of the less guilty were converted and then opposed the depraved Zulus. They denounced twenty-five of the worst, who were put into other cells and were thus stopped from avenging themselves on their accusers, which they would not have failed to do. Ernest Creux encouraged those who fought against the ignominies of Sodomy. "We had some lovely times singing in Sotho, and in Zulu, praying, reading and listening to the word of God," he wrote in February, 1908, "after which there were many handshakes and expressions of gratitude."

All those who wished received a primer, a testament and a selection of hymns. This meant that all the cells, (there were twenty-five in this prison, each containing ten prisoners) were transformed into school rooms from six to nine o'clock. At nine o'clock, one of them prayed, after they had sung, and everyone lay down on his bed of coconut matting. This is the result of the work of several years. Evil was not triumphant and souls were saved. Last Sunday, at the service conducted by Jacobus, there were tearful conversions and prayers."

Here is another example of the type of service that Creux, with his deep knowledge of blacks, could render the administration. One night he noticed that one of the best students at the night school was absent. They told him this boy had been put in prison. He found out that certain black policemen had been discovered making and selling illegal beer, with the connivance of a white police sergeant, and using an illegal truck. They gave evidence that this Christian boy and a few of his companions were the guilty ones, and they were condemned to three months hard labour. Having carefully verified these facts, Creux laid a complaint with the Native Commissioner and gave the whole story to the Resident Magistrate. The authorities were very grateful and promised to release these innocent people from prison and to punish the unprincipled policemen... "For two whole days, I interviewed people and I decided, if necessary, to go to General Botha himself, to obtain justice for our poor Christian people, who had been chosen as scape goats because of their beliefs."

In a letter written on the 15th June, 1908, he said that this prison work was the most trying and difficult of all, but that it was also the most rewarding and encouraging that he had undertaken. He said in another letter that this work was gripping. It was above all, to his work amongst those condemned to death that he referred. It did not seem that juries, composed mainly of uneducated people, really tried very hard to consider any extenuating circumstances. If the accused was known to be guilty of murder, then he must die.

When these condemned men arrived at Pretoria, Ernest Creux's duty was to prepare them for death. His first care was naturally to talk to them of their crime - It was nearly always, what one could have expected - But on closer examination, he arrived, at times at the conclusion, that the death sentence was not justified.



Two men from Pilgrim's Rest had killed a woman because they were convinced that she was a witch that had caused the death of a member of her family. In killing her they thought they were carrying out an act of justice, and were ridding the country of a dangerous criminal - and now the whites wanted to kill them! Creux could not accept this and urged revision of the sentence. These men were not common murderers.

Fourteen blacks had been condemned to death because they had obeyed their chiefs, who had sent them on a mission of vengeance for some quite unjustifiable murders by the Boers, during the last war. Their sentence was commuted to fifteen years hard labour. Creux's conscience rebelled everytime he saw these men in prison, because they had just done their duty in obeying their chief's orders.

For five years he circulated petitions, and cried out against the injustice to the authorities, but in vain. Then he saw General Hertzog himself, head of the Department of Justice and Police, who promised that he would attend to the case of these men. He succeeded in having a number of men pardoned, who had been condemned to death, and they became the best members of his church in prison.

However, for most of these people the death sentence was unavoidable, and then his formidable and difficult task was to bring these brutal souls to accept the grace of God, so that they could die in peace.

Sometimes he only had a fortnight to do this, but there were some wonderful spiritual experiences. After having spoken to them of God, of His holiness, of His justice, of the eternal condemnation which awaits the sinner, he explained the miracle of divine grace, telling them of the Prodigal son and of the conversion of the criminal on the Cross. Then the hearts of many were touched and they joyfully accepted the message of redemption. One of the extracts from a "bulletin" tells of these transformations.

"Little by little, light penetrated, feebly at first, into this obtuse intelligence, into this soul filled with darkness. When we knelt and he tried to pray, one felt a divine ray had penetrated. "Oh, God," he said, "have pity on me, so great a sinner. Save me for the love of Jesus, who died for me. Grant me forgiveness for my sins." In the last days, he said he was ready to die, and feared nothing. This morning I went to the prison and had another ten minutes with him. He was calm and even joyful. He shook hands with everyone and helped the executioner to bind him. Of the executioner he said, "He will kill me, but it doesn't matter." The five warders were moved by his courage. I stood at the foot of the gallows, telling him to look to Jesus on the Cross, like the converted thief...It did not takelong..."

Often during the years 1902 -1910, Ernest Creux was able to witness the final triumph of these criminals, to whom he had taught the way to the house of God, and nothing shows more of the incomparable power of the gospel of the cross. One can understand how the ministry at the prisons was a great strain, but very worth while.

Creux was admirably helped by one of the best evangelists, Jacobus Nachas, a young man, very gifted, who spoke English, Afrikaans, and seven or eight native languages. He interpreted very well, and also exercised much spiritual influence on the prisoners. He left Pretoria to attend a theological school at Morija, to prepare himself for the ministry.



Soon after Creux's arrival in Pretoria he met, by chance, in a Government office, a Dr. Turner, who had visited the Blim Hospital and had admired the work which was done there. He was the head of the Leper Asylum, where he had at that time some real problems. When he saw Creux he invited him to go and visit this establishment. The following Sunday he sent his cart, which took Creux about ten kilometres west, to the rocky hills on which was built the Asylum, two villages for the lepers, one for the whites and one for the blacks. The black lepers congregated quickly at the sound of the bell, and went into the church for the whites.

This was divided into two parts, with a large space, open to the sky, separating the preacher from his congregation, so that there would be a draught to prevent contagion. "But this did not suit me," writes Creux, "I left the pulpit and this space, stepped over the railings, finding myself thus in the same enclosure and on the same level as my poor leper brothers.... Joy shone on their faces when I greeted them in Sotho and Tsonga. I recognised the Tsongas because of their pierced ears - many had come from the coast. I hoped, in telling them of the story of the healing of the lepers, to awake in them a sense of gratitude towards God and his servants. I asked them to sing, and to my great astonishment one or two of the Tsongas took some old hymnbooks out of their pockets, and sang a hymn of consolation."

The preacher had good reason for choosing to preach to these people of gratitude. In a long conversation, Dr. Turner, who was a true Apostle, as well as being specialised in the study of the treatment of leprosy, had told him that the moral situation amongst these unfortunate people was deplorable. Torn from their villages by the police, and interned in the asylum, they made rebellious and bitter prisoners. As there was no hope of a cure for them, why bring them to these arid hills? A kind of "evangelist" who believed more in sorcery than in Jesus Christ, had persuaded them that their leprosy was caused by witchcraft, and so the whites could not have any remedy to help them. Besides, healing could come from God directly, in answer to prayer. So the sick refused the care and medications which were given them by four devoted nurses, and they had even threatened the doctor with death if he went to their quarters.

Dr. Turner, who gave his services free, had assessed the situation correctly. What was needed at the Asylum was the spiritual influence of a servant of God, who would speak to the hearts of these unhappy people, and who would win them over by love. He was not mistaken in Ernest Creux. He took this new task to heart. He regarded the Leper Asylum as an outpost, to which he went every fortnight, and the lepers became an important part of the presbytery of Pretoria.

Of the two hundred and forty black lepers, about half had a smattering of Christianity. Among the Christians was a young man from the Coast named Lucas, an old pupil of the Rikatla school, who became the evangelist of the people. Prizere, school books and Testaments were distributed, and a small school was started. Creux went regularly to the Asylum, by horse and cart. The morale of the colony made rapid progress, to the extent that the following year of baptising the more advanced members of the strange congregation was considered. Creux spent many afternoons examining them. He had personal conversations, close to them, and then there was a question of contagion.

Leprosy is not hereditary, but it is certainly contagious. In 1903, he said, "I will not hide the fact that it is an ordeal to spend these long afternoons so near to these poor people. But as I have always had a weakness for Christian works which no one else wants/



wants to undertake, I feel in my element. No one opposes me. If I only had more time to do better. I take precautions, it goes without saying, not to let myself be infected. I sit on a chair which no leper has touched, I touch as little as possible places where they have put their ulcerated hands. The matron tells me, "Do not go too close to them, to avoid inhaling the infected breath of those whose throats or nostrils are affected." But one must come near to those who have become very deaf, or can be heard with difficulty. Then there are the flies, this African plague, who have a good time in this infected place. One must always tell oneself that danger exists, but if it exists for us like it does for these courageous nurses, who are so much more exposed than we are, surely God will protect us. They say the contagion takes seven years to show itself, I have plenty of time in that case! It goes without saying that I disinfect my hands before eating!"

The result of these examinations was that nine of the fifteen candidates were received, but not one woman! In these long sessions he had learnt many things. Under the old government the lepers had to make their own domestic arrangements and men and women lived together, and engaged in illicit relationships. Children were born, children who were almost always condemned to die.

Dr. Turner, who took his work very seriously, had decreed the separation of the sexes, putting the men on one side and the women and girls on the other. This had caused a serious upset and Creux had much trouble in making them accept what was really very reasonable.

But another complication soon followed. At the end of January 1904, when Creux was at the Asylum for a Holy Communion Service, he noticed expressions of resentment and distress. "Is everything in order? Is there anything that would prevent you from sitting at the Saviour's Table?" he asked. The evangelist replied, "They have told us that they want to take away our children." This was to be foreseen.. The director had resolved to separate the children from their mothers to avoid contagion. Ernest Creux tried to explain that this measure was taken to save the children, but the assembly exploded in fury. The men said, "They have already separated us from our women - and now they want to take our children! - If God meant them to be sick like us, what can we do to save them?" The women screamed in rage, "They want to steal our children. Who will cook for us? Who will carry our water and wash our clothes?" They made such an uproar that Creux told them to go away, but they sat a little distance away and continued to excite each other.

"It was horrible to see skeleton arms, ending in stumps, being waved at me in a menacing way."

Something had to be done! Creux fetched one of the best evangelists, Jonas Napope, who was passing through Pretoria. This time some of them began to cry, and to humiliate themselves, and accepted that their children had to leave them. The children were put into a special building, and, as there were no nurses to spend the night with them, two or three black youths were charged with giving these little ones water, and changing them. Five of them died, and some prominent ladies, who came to visit the asylum, protested against this arrangement. Then Dr. Liengae proposed that these children should be sent to Alim Hospital, and that the newly born be sent to Mrs. Creux, who would send them to Alim later on. The transfer took place in spite of the cries of rage from the parents, but the Alim climate did not agree with the children and the white patients at Alim protested at having the leper children in the hospital. They had to be taken back to Pretoria, but the new-born were still taken to Mrs. Creux. No black woman would consent to look after them, it was Mathilde Creux and her/



her two daughters, who had the full responsibility - When these ladies, tired out, did not hear the babies cry at night, it was Ernest Creux, who went to soothe the babies. Fortunately, Miss Nignot came from Elis to help, and other arrangements could be made at the Pretoria presbytery. This devotion to their children touched the poor lepers, male and female, and won them over.

From the retirement fund of the Mission, allowed him to live with "They wrote no letters, nearly illegible, with their leprosy fingers," he wrote in 1907. "and the refrain was always the same - 'we love you, because you love us.' And later, 'I see and sense their physical hideousness, but Jesus loves them, and we love them with the love with which He loves them. In return their poor, suffering hearts are filled with love and thankfulness.'"

During the years 1907 to 1910 the work amongst the lepers made great progress. In 1909 the government had a well aired spacious building built, comprising a chapel and two school rooms, and eighteen lepers were baptised. Holy Communion was celebrated regularly. Seven elders were chosen to look after the community. Among them were some who still had their hands and feet, and who could help with the distribution of the elements, and so all was done properly. For those who had thick lips and deformed mouths, Creux used a spoon, and this worked very well. "What a joy to be able to give these poor people the pledge of pardon, and to join them to all the communions celebrated in the entire world," he writes in April 1910. "They are, and feel, so isolated that it is a tremendous consolation to know that the Spirit binds them to the Christian world from which they are separated by this awful sickness."

The report of the Missions in 1910 could say "A real church, with its elders, its communion services, its catechism classes, has been built in the Leper Asylum. Many of them could read their Bibles, and those whose hands were too crippled turned the pages with their lips." "These unhappy people enjoyed this beautiful music and after the hymn and short service, they could be seen listening to the voice and sacred places, which had a calming influence on them."

All this work, done humbly and to the glory of God, made Creux very well known in Pretoria. When a gathering of citizens at the Town Hall decided to nominate a committee for an association to help freed prisoners, his name was proposed first, and he accepted this honour, on the condition that coloured people as well as whites would be cared for. Prime Minister Botha's wife headed this committee and Ernest Creux played an active role. He was proposed by the Political Association for Blacks of the Transvaal, as candidate for the South African Senate. "This proposal I could not accept for many reasons," but it was a significant gesture and gave him much pleasure, as it showed that educated Blacks, not only Tsonga, but of all tribes, recognised him as a defender and friend par excellence of all the black race.

His retirement. He kept his interest in the work among the Tsonga, even after he went often to the synods of the Anglican, and had the joy of consecrating the first black minister of the Tsonga church. To retire in accordance with the Mission regulations was going to be hard if it meant abandoning the work to which he was so attached, and leaving the country which had become his second home. Fortunately, this was not the case. He acquired a piece of land next to the Mission and he built a modest house, which he called, "The Retreat". At the end of the service there was a particularly solemn moment. The newly consecrated minister, the missionaries and the assembly, sang a hymn composed by Ernest Creux.



When his successor came to occupy the Mission house, he had but to cross the fence with his family. So, in effect, there were two missionaries in Pretoria.

He conserved his energy for those who were disinherited from life - the prisoners and the lepers. The allowance which the government gave him as Chaplain, plus the money he received from the retirement fund of the Mission, allowed him to live without anxiety, and he never returned to Switzerland. The ties which bound him to Africa had become more powerful than those which called him to his homeland. His love of his country never diminished. He was as keenly interested as ever in what happened in Switzerland, awaiting the postman with impatience each week, and keeping in touch with all that affected the other missionaries. But his family had become South Africans. His eldest daughter had married Rev. J. B. Watson, a missionary who lived nearby, and the two youngest were also soon to be married in the Transvaal. Under these circumstances it was impossible for him and his wife to return to Switzerland and God blessed this period of retirement which became astonishingly fruitful.

The first thing he did was to add a third activity. He wrote in April 1911, "I have added to my responsibilities that of the lunatics, of whom there are 400 in Pretoria, for whom no one does anything, and on whose behalf I have had appeals which I can no longer resist. I hope that the government will give me the authority, and a salary comparable with that of the chaplains to the whites, but salary or not, I am here and here I stay! - and the director, and his assistants are very grateful to seem undertake this difficult work." What a strange ministry that was!

"I could not complain of inattention and indifference and I was not put off by grimaces and laughter from some of these unhappy ones. There were among them some Christians who appreciated and enjoyed these services, and then many of the heathen learnt the word of God." Music was a great help. Creux procured a gramophone, which was a real success. "These unhappy people enjoyed this beautiful music and after the hymn and short service, they could be seen listening to the choirs and sacred pieces, which had a calming influence on them."

The new interest which Ernest Creux found did not mean he neglected the prisoners or lepers - on the contrary.

The work among the prisoners increased in importance, because their numbers increased. There were between seven and eight hundred in 1915.

He gained a colleague in 1911 - a man older than himself, Mr. Webb, who knew Zulu, which was the language spoken by most of the condemned men. At the leper asylum the church grew and there were two hundred communicants. The Anglicans and Catholics also began to work with the lepers, and there was work for them all.

He kept his interest in the work among the Tsongas, even after his retirement. He went often to the synods at the Spelonken, and had the joy of consecrating the first black minister of the Tsonga church, Jonas Mapope, whom he had known thirty years before, at Valdezia, as a small heathen boy, clad or rather not clad, in a few tattered rags and some wildcat tails, thin and scabby! Now, after having been at the school at Morija, he presented himself to the church an eloquent preacher, full of energy, ready to give himself for the salvation of his people. At the end of the service there was a particularly solemn moment. The newly consecrated minister, the missionaries and the assembly, sang a hymn composed by Ernest Creux.



First the assembly sang, "The Lord calls you, He asks you, 'Do you love me?' Jonas Mapope replied, 'Certainly I love you,' and the missionaries sang, 'Love the sheep of Jesus' flock.' And this was repeated three times as in the story of St. Peter (John 21).

In 1911 he also presided at the consecration of Samuel Malale, and in 1917 at that of his dear helper, Jacobus Machas, who, alas, died prematurely in 1929.

As time went on his health deteriorated and rheumatism and lumbago restricted his activities. At the end of 1921, he passed his care of the prisoners to Mr. C. Bourquin because the task was becoming too tiring for him. He kept his work among his beloved lepers for another year, but at Christmas, 1922 he had a stroke which gave his family and his friends anxiety, and he was forced to give up that work.

That left the work among the lunatics, but in 1924 he relinquished this to his successor, happy in the knowledge that he would carry out all these ministries of compassion in the same spirit of self-denial. "I am grateful," he wrote in 1923, "thanks to my little cart and horse, to be able to go to these unhappy people, who are separated from their families and friends, to show them some love and make them feel that they are part of a spiritual family."

On the 12th February, 1922, the Vaudoise Free Church celebrated in Switzerland the 50th anniversary of the departure of Ernest Creux to Africa. He had left on the 12th February, 1872 and Paul Berthoud had followed him on the 4th November, 1872. The Jubilee was also celebrated in Pretoria, and the Synod presented comfortable armchairs to Mr. and Mrs. Creux and Mr. Berthoud, and a beautiful Bible to Mrs. Berthoud. The Spelonken and Coastal missionaries, who had come for the conference, presented Ernest Creux and his faithful wife an illuminated address, with two illustrations, the work of the artist Birel Rosset. One showed their arrival in Africa as young people, alone and in an untamed wilderness, and the other the couple surrounded by their children and grandchildren, fifty years later, in a countryside now beautified by trees.

At the church several of the most distinguished personalities of the religious world in Pretoria, paid tribute.

There were Rev. E. McMillan, Presbyterian minister, the Superintendent of the Berlin mission, representatives of the Dutch church, and the Anglican church. At a reception after the church service the Anglican Bishop of Pretoria, Mr. Moreillon of the Paris mission, the Evangelist, Bishop Baker of Johannesburg, also spoke. In the evening crowds of blacks came and speeches were made in Shangan, Sesotho and Zulu. One of the orators was Nakhatoa, a man who had great influence among his people. He paid tribute to the missionaries, the first Europeans who had treated them like men.

To all this Ernest Creux replied with humility and gave all the glory to God. Paul Berthoud was seriously ill at the time and was unable to attend.

#### The 1925 Jubilee.

But the really great celebrations took place in 1925, fifty years after the work actually started in Valdezia. It had to be a very special occasion to commemorate a work founded by these two men, who had discovered and evangelised a tribe, had formed a Christian/



/Christian Church in their midst, and who were still present fifty years later to celebrate the Jubilee.

The celebrations in Switzerland, in 1925, were on a grand scale!. Nothing was missing. At Saint-Francois and the Lausanne Cathedral, in the Geneva Hall of the Reformation, and other important churches of the country, people gathered - also in small groups in modest churches or in Sunday School halls.

The highlight of the celebrations was the presence of Calvin Mapope, who came from Africa with a message of thankfulness, joy and love from his black compatriots. This he delivered with great distinction, humour and sincerity.

Celebration of the Jubilee was arranged to take place at Valdezia from the 9th to 12th July, to give time for Calvin Mapope and Eugene Terrisse to return from Switzerland to establish the link between the two festivals. Unfortunately, Paul Berthoud, who was ill, was not able to make the long trip from the Coast to the Spelonken. But Ernest Creux and his wife were there. To quote from the official chronicle. "After days of overcast, misty and rainy weather, on the great day the sun shone brightly in a cloudless sky. In this incredible South African wintry brilliance, vehicles of all sorts began to arrive from the early hours of the morning. Trucks, cars, carts, and horses, mule-drawn light wagons, heaving wagons drawn by oxen, saddle horses, all came to discharge their passengers on the grass patch in front of the Mission house. Representatives of the government, local magistrates, delegates from the churches and mission societies, the Rev. E. Terrisse, some black chiefs, followed by their councillors, black ministers, Mr. Calvin Mapope, members of the synod, all were in their places in front of the dais. At the foot of this were two armchairs reserved for Mr. and Mrs. Creux. One estimate of the people present was 2,000, some said 2,500, the Star correspondent said there were 3,000. Ernest Creux stepped onto the dais. His presence among us, his personality, and what he stood for, seized the imagination. Cameras clicked as he began to speak. His voice was weak and could not carry, in the open air, to those at the back of the great assembly. Mr. Bourquin came to his aid, and repeated his words phrase by phrase... Mr. Creux recalled the prophet's farewell recorded in I Samuel, Chapt 12. It was the old servant of God who enumerated the blessings, the warnings and the challenges of the past, and the promises for the future, for the faithful. Jonas Mapope spoke, "We celebrate miracles today, miracles which fill our hearts with such joy, that for my part, I should like to dance in front of you. The great miracle is this, a small stone detached itself from a Swiss mountain, and came to knock and shake the powerful statue of paganism - and this little stone grew and grew, and is still growing."

He climbed down from the dais and stood in front of Mr. and Mrs. Creux to continue his speech. "We are here, members of the Tsonga and Renca churches to show our gratitude... We were a bit shy to bring what we have brought. We would have liked to bring our Swiss father two or three of our fingers, but we bring but one. Here is the gift from the churches to one who brought us the Gospel." He presented Mr. Creux with £108.18s.2d. for the Mission. He also handed over a comfortable chair made at Elin.

And so for the last time, Ernest Creux proclaimed his message to the Tsonga people.



After his return from the Jubilee Ernest Creux was almost always in pain. On the 20th June, 1929, he had a slight stroke from which he seemed to recover, but his colleague, Mr. Bourquin wrote as follows:- "He was ready to go, he who for more than twenty years had guided 400 condemned people to the celestial city. He spoke to God with such simplicity, with so much trust and confidence, and with such peace that I was very moved." "Let me go," he said, on the last day, to his wife and children. He died on the 17th July, 1929.

Although Mr. Bourquin was away from Pretoria, at that time, Mr. P. Bosset and Mr. N. Jaques came from the Spelonken with messages of condolence from the missionaries there. They conducted the funeral service in a crowded church, and Rev. E. McMillan and Samuel Malale paid tribute to Ernest Creux's great life and work. The Bishop of Pretoria pronounced the benediction and the body of this great friend of Africa was buried in African soil.

On the 26th February, 1930, Paul Barthoud died in Lourenco Marques and he was buried 25 kilometres north at Eikatla, next to second wife Helene in accordance with his wishes.

Kathilda Creux died in Pretoria, on the 9th April, 1932 and was buried next to Ernest. On the tombstone is written -

"A FATHER IN GOD TO THE NATIVE PEOPLE."