

SOUTH AFRICA No. 5

(Gold Mining)

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When I arrived in South Africa one of my first questions was "How can I get to the Witwatersrand?" As a youngster I had lived in a famous gold mining camp in Colorado. There I had worked with gold miners who told me stories of their experiences in South Africa, in the Transvaal, on what they called "The Rand". In later years I heard much more about this from a fabulous American, John Hays Hammond. You may remember him as the incredible mining engineer who at one time received the largest salary in the world, a million dollars a year. And that was before present day heavy taxes!

As a one-time gold miner I wanted to see the largest gold bearing area on this planet. And, I have just come in from this sentimental jaunt, this day "on the Rand", 50 miles west of Johannesburg.

My companion, a young South African, took me to what mining men here say will soon be the largest gold mine in the world. The name of it is

"Western Deep Levels." And to call it deep is an understatement. Just to get it started, to open up its shafts, - seven cages in each shaft - to put up the mill, install the heavy equipment, provide housing for the thousands of employees, and so on, all this has cost the company a preliminary \$150,000,000. So they must have known what they were doing before they tackled it. They already are down to a depth of more than 6,000 feet, and expect to go on to 13,000 feet, deeper than any other mine. It takes bold men with a barrel of dough to take on such gigantic projects, especially when the continent of Africa is in the midst of political and social storms.

Right next door to it is the present largest gold mine called the West Driefontein, where the profit each month is about four million dollars. At the great depth to which they sink these mines on the Rand they find enormous quantities of water, and at the one I visited today they pump at the rate of forty million gallons a day.

The mine they expect will be active for some 70 years and will yield a total profit of around

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three billion dollars. Like to own a gold mine on
the Witwatersrand, Dick? So Long.

CIVIL RIGHTS

A major item of President Kennedy's civil rights legislation today received the approval of the Senate Commerce Committee - but it was in a weakened condition. As okayed by the Committee, the public accommodations bill - aimed at outlawing racial discrimination - specifically excludes the so-called Mrs. Murphy boarding house, and it would not extend to shops or stores that primarily serve neighborhood trade and do no business with interstate travelers. Senate leaders also served notice today that they'll wait until the civil rights measure gets through the House before they tackle it. They're hoping - apparently - to delay the showdown with hostile Southern democrats and the inevitable filibuster.

HURRICANE

Hurricane Flora caused a great amount of damage in Cuba, but for all its destruction, it brought hope to some Cuban exile leaders. The opinion among those exiles in Miami today is that the hurricane may accomplish what anti-Castro saboteurs had been risking their lives to do - ruin Cuba's principal crops and thus devastate her economy. The exiles feel this form of destruction will do more harm to the Castro regime than anything else. As one activist group leader put it - it's a pity we're not prepared to take advantage of this occasion on a larger scale. With such severe damage to the Cuban economy, the exiles hope the people in Cuba will give a lot of thought to whether Castro is still worth their backing.

Despite the great need, Cuba's Ambassador to the U.N. told this reporter today that Cuba will not accept help from the American Red Cross, or from any

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*other official or semi official U.S. agency - However,
he said Cuba will welcome help from American citizens.*

QUINTUPLETS

In Aberdeen, South Dakota - the Fischer quintuplets are reported doing very well these days - still in St. Luke's Hospital waiting to hit that five-and-a-half pounds before they can go home. Citizens of that prairie town have adopted a live-and-let-live attitude for the Fischers and their new children - it's the visitors who drive past the Fischer farm two miles outside town, to try to get into the well-guarded hospital nursery to see the babies. Aberdeen residents will admit that the increased business - drawn by the quints - is tempting - but generally they do not want it at the expense of the welfare and privacy of the new babies. There is also no pressure on the Fischer parents to make up their minds about how and where they want to build their new 100-thousand dollar home. Obviously a town - as the song says - of kind hearts and gentle people.