

or three of his favourite regiments, when, after conversing with Retief and some of his leading men in the most friendly manner, he pressed them to sit down a little longer, offering them their "stirrup cup," in some "chuallah," or maize beer, which the Kafirs enjoy as a favourite beverage. This was handed round to the whole party, who partook freely thereof, and while a number of them were thus sitting down, with the bowls in their hands, Dingaan suddenly exclaimed, "Bulala matagati," or "Kill the wizards," and in an instant 3000 or 4000 Zoolahs assailed them with their knobkerries; and although many of the farmers, instantly drawing their clasp knives (which they usually carry by them and use in cutting up the game they kill or the viands they eat), made a determined resistance, and took the lives of several of their assailants, yet they soon fell, one after the other, under the overwhelming pressure of the thousands by whom they were charged and beaten down; and after a desperate struggle of half an hour's duration their expiring and mangled corpses were dragged out of the kraal to an adjoining hillock, marked and infamous as the "Aceldama," or rather the "Golgotha," where the bones of all victims to the fury of this despot were hoarded up and became a prey to the wolves and vultures.

Dingaan, following the precept of Cæsar, who deemed nothing done so long as anything remained undone, ordered instantly ten of his regiments to march into this territory to attack all the emigrant

farmers (who, in perfect security, were spread all over the district, awaiting the return of their friends) and exterminate them, root and branch. It certainly is remarkable that the doubts which the majority had entertained as to the good faith of Dingaan vanished so soon after the departure of Retief and his party: the young men were enjoying the pleasures of the chase, and supplying their friends with the game that abounded, and the women, seemingly also unsuspecting, were only awaiting the return of their husbands, sons, and relatives, when the Zoolah army, having divided itself into several small detachments, fell, at break of day, on the foremost parties of emigrants near the Blue Krans River, and close to the present township of Weenen, which has obtained its name (meaning wailing or weeping) from the sad events of that day. Men, women, and children were at once surrounded and barbarously murdered, with horrors which I should be sorry to dwell upon and detail; other detachments of Zoolahs surprised in other places similar small parties, who were likewise scattered all over the Klip River Division, and who all fell under the Zoolah assegai; but from one or two waggons a solitary young man escaped, who, hastening to the parties whom he knew to be in the rear, at length succeeded in spreading the alarm among them, so that as the Zoolahs advanced further into the district two or three parties of farmers had been able hastily to collect a few waggons and arrange them into a "laager," or en-

campment, where they made their preparations to secure their families just in time before they were also attacked, and they thus succeeded in repelling the most daring attacks made upon them, not one of these "laagers" having been forced or penetrated by the Zoolahs. The latter, however, advanced still further southward, until they met a still stronger party of emigrants on the farm now called "Vecht Laager" (afterwards the property of Mr. Ogle), on the Bushman's River, where they sustained a very serious engagement, which lasted throughout the whole day, but where, when the farmers' ammunition was nearly exhausted, luckily their last shots from a three-pounder, which had been rigged to the back of one of their waggon, struck down some of the leading Zoolah chiefs, and forced them to a precipitate retreat.

The moment these attacks were thus repulsed the emigrant farmers sallied out from their "laagers" to rescue (if possible) any of their friends who had been in advance, and to ascertain the havoc which had been caused among them, when, upon reaching the stations which those had occupied, a scene of horror and misery was unfolded which no pen can describe. All the waggons had been demolished, the iron parts wrenched from them, and by their ruins lay the mangled corpses of men, women, and children, thrown on heaps and abandoned to the beasts of prey. Amongst these heaps, at the Blue Krans River, they found literally amongst the dead corpses

the bodies of two young females, about ten or twelve years of age, which still appeared to show some signs of vitality. The one was found pierced with nineteen, and the other with twenty-one stabs of the assegai, leaving every part of their little frames completely perforated, and every muscle or fibre lacerated. The one was named Johanna van der Merwe and the other Catharina Margaretha Prinslo; they were taken up and tended with the utmost care and (strange to say) lived for many years, the sole survivors of the immediate branches of those families; but they always remained perfect cripples, although one of them (still more strange to say) married, and was the mother of one or two children. But, with these solitary exceptions, all these small parties which had not been able to combine and concentrate themselves in "laagers" were utterly destroyed, and in one week, after the murder of Retief and his party, 600 more victims were thus immolated by the fury and treachery of Dingaan and his army.

The survivors in this fearful catastrophe, after recovering from the panic in which they had been thrown, resolved to avenge themselves for this dreadful loss.

The whole clan of Uys, which, from some little feeling of jealousy of Retief, had lagged behind on the Draaksberg (and had thus escaped this onslaught), on hearing of this destruction, came down into the Klip River with many other smaller parties

of farmers who were advancing towards this district, and their precarious situation was soon made known to the English party resident at the bay, when the latter determined upon a movement on Dingaan to support the cause of the emigrant farmers; but they being few in numbers took with them a body of 700 Zoolahs, 400 of whom were armed with guns, having learnt to use them in their hunts of the elephant and buffalo. This party, which placed itself under the command of Mr. R. Biggar, crossed the Tugela at its mouth, and advanced a few miles across that river, when they attacked and destroyed the town of Tatabasooke, while the Zulu forces hid themselves in the Matikoola and Imsimdoosa rivers: but advancing a little further they were suddenly surrounded, and attacked at break of day by three divisions of the Zoolah army. After a desperate and murderous engagement almost every European or man of colour belonging to the party here lost his life; a fearful number of the Zoolahs were also killed, but of the English population of the bay, R. Biggar, Blankenberg, Cane, Stubbs, Richard Wood, William Wood, Henry Batt, John Campbell, Thomas Campbell, and Thomas Carden successively fell, and only one or two Europeans succeeded in fighting their way through these masses to convey to the small party who had remained at the bay the sad result of this engagement. That portion of Dingaan's army followed up (as usual) their success, and advanced as far as the bay, but the

few English who had survived took refuge on board of the *Comet*, Captain Hadden, then luckily lying at anchor in the bay, when after sweeping away all the cattle this detachment of Dingaan's army retired again into the Zulu country.

Dingaan himself, with his principal forces, was, however, at this time still watching the Dutch emigrant farmers, who, having now collected about 400 fighting men in the Klip River Division, placed themselves under the command of Piet Uys and of Hendrik Potgieter, and advanced about the same time (in April, 1838) towards Umkongloof, Dingaan's capital, intent upon destroying it, and expelling Dingaan from the country.

This wily chieftain allowed the emigrant farmers to advance to within a few miles of his capital, where the approach to the town is closed in between two hills, and there the Zoolah forces first showed themselves, but gradually retiring, drew the emigrant farmers still further into this hollow way, when another division of the Zoolah forces emerging from behind one of these hills and cutting off all retreat, a desperate hand-to-hand fight ensued, the farmers being so hemmed in that they could not fire, then fall back rapidly on horseback, and again load and charge, as was their usual and efficient mode of warfare. They accordingly, as by one consent, directed all their fire on one mass of the Zoolahs, where their fatal aim having cleared a path by bringing down hundreds in this volley, they rushed

through and thus escaped, but their chief (and unquestionably most gallant commander), Piet Uys, having taken a somewhat different course in a country but little known to them, found himself surrounded with a small party of about twenty faithful followers and his favourite son, a young lad of twelve years of age, before a ravine, which their horses could not get over or clear.

Finding himself wounded, he called to his followers "to fight their way out," as he could not follow; all obeyed his command except his loving son, who remained by his father until both fell pierced with wounds. The remainder of their party, and the great majority of the emigrant farmers, having ultimately succeeded in thus fighting their way out of this trap which had so ably been laid for them, effected a retreat out of the country without any further great loss of life, leaving, however, the "prestige" of victory with the Zoolah chieftain, to whom the loss of several hundreds of his best warriors was always considered but of little moment, imparting only an exciting interest to his fiendish propensities and habits.

The emigrant farmers were, however, so disheartened by the result of their attack, and that of the English settlers from the bay upon Dingaan's forces, that they gave up all hope of resuming hostilities for the present. They had been taught a lesson of prudence by the talent and daring displayed by the Zoolah armies, and they accordingly

kept a watchful eye upon their northern frontier, and sent messengers out in various directions imploring further accession to their numbers, both from the Cape and the present Sovereignty. Many parties, upon hearing of their distressed state, came to join them, but this at the moment only increased their misery and wants, as their cattle and herds having been swept away (these being still in the hands of the Zoolahs), and having been prevented from cultivating any lands, they were exposed not only to the greatest want, but were actually in a state of famine, when some liberal-minded countrymen of theirs at the Cape, hearing of their distressed condition, sent them supplies of food, medicine, and other necessaries of life, which helped them through the miseries of the winter of 1838, during which season want, disease, and famine stalked over the land, making fearful ravages among them.

Dingaan, ever watchful when to attack his foe with advantage, being fully informed of their wretched condition, made another attack upon them in August, 1838, but on this occasion the emigrant farmers (having their scouts always out to give them timely intimation of his advance) were everywhere prepared to give him a warm reception, and at every laager the Zoolah forces were driven back and defeated with great loss, only two or three lives having been lost among the emigrants during several successive engagements. But although Dingaan was thus defeated, the emigrant farmers were still con-

tending up to the close of that year with the greatest difficulties. Small parties were pouring in to join them, but bringing little effectual support, until the beginning of December, the season appearing propitious, and a number of young men having come in by the Sovereignty, 460 fighting and mounted men put themselves under the command of Andries Pretorius, who had also recently joined the emigrants, among whom (having formerly been a field-cornet in the Graaff-Reinet district) he had made himself extremely popular.

They were powerfully aided by the brave and sterling Carel Landman, who also joined them with all those emigrants who had already commenced settling themselves down near the bay, and these combined forces, profiting from the experience of the past, advanced with great caution, securing their position every evening, so that when they had nearly reached the Umslatoos River they were fully prepared, as on the earliest dawn of day on Sunday, the 16th December, 1838, the whole of Dingaan's forces, about 10,000 or 12,000 strong, attacked their position with a fury far exceeding all their former attacks. For three hours they continued rushing upon them, endeavouring to tear open all their defences and force the emigrant camp, until Pretorius, finding the Zoolah forces concentrating all their efforts upon one side of the camp, and their own ammunition nearly failing, he ordered 200 mounted men to sally forth out of one of the gates

at the rear of the line which the Zoolahs were attacking, and these mounted warriors, charging both flanks and pouring their deadly volleys upon the immense masses which were gathered together within a small space, at length beat them off with a fearful loss. The emigrants assert that nearly 3000 Zoolahs licked the dust before they retreated; and their defeat must have been complete, as Dingaan fled quite panic-stricken, set fire to the whole of his town of Umkongloof, and hid himself with the remnant of his force for a considerable time in the woods skirting the Umvaloos River.

The emigrants having had only three or four men killed and as many wounded in this decisive engagement (among the latter of whom was Pretorius himself), advanced upon the town of Umkongloof, which they still found partially burning, and on the awful hillock out of the town they beheld on one vast pile the bones and remains of Retief and his one hundred companions in arms, who, ten months before, had fallen victims to Dingaan's treachery, but whose deaths they were then in fact avenging. Many of the straps or riems by which they had been dragged to this place of slaughter were still found adhering to the bones of the legs and arms by which they had been drawn thither. The skulls were frightfully broken, exhibiting marks of the knobkerries and stones with which they had been fractured, and, singular to relate, the skeleton of their ill-fated leader, Retief, was recognised by a leathern

pouch or bandolier, which he had suspended from his shoulders, and in which he had deposited the deed or writing formally ceding this territory to the emigrant farmers, as written out by the Rev. Mr. Owen on the day previous to his massacre, and signed with the mark of Dingaan, by which he declared "to resign to Retief and his countrymen the place called Port Natal, together with all the land annexed, that is to say, from the Tugela to the Umzimvooboo River, and from the sea to the north, as far as the land may be useful and in my possession."

These are the very words of the original document, which was found still perfectly legible, and was delivered over to me by the Volksraad in the year 1843, and is now (or ought to be) among the archives of the Colonial Office here.

After decently interring the remains of their unfortunate countrymen, the emigrant farmers found that their horses and ammunition were ill-calculated to continue a harassing warfare upon Dingaan in his fastnesses, and they therefore resolved gradually to fall back, which they did with little loss, taking with them some 5000 head of cattle, which they distributed among themselves as the lawful and hard-earned trophies of this campaign.

On their return from this successful inroad they were not a little surprised to find that Sir George Napier (who had succeeded Sir Benjamin D'Urban in the government of the Cape Colony) had sent a

small detachment of Highlanders, under the command of Major Charters, to take possession of the Bay of Natal. This measure had been evidently taken, and in fact was acknowledged in a proclamation of the 14th November, 1838, to have emanated from a desire to "put an end to the unwarranted occupation of parts of the territories belonging to the natives by certain emigrants from the Cape Colony, being subjects of His Majesty," and that proclamation gave the officer commanding these forces the further power to "search for, seize, and retain in military possession all arms and munitions of war which, at the time of the seizure of Port Natal, shall be found in the possession of any of the inhabitants."

Major Charters returned immediately to the Cape, when the command of the detachment devolved on Captain Jarvis, of the 72nd Regiment, and from the vague and ill-defined nature of his instructions some serious difference, if not conflict, might have arisen between him and the emigrant farmers in regard to the authority and orders he had received to seize upon their gunpowder and ammunition; but the good sense and good feeling of that officer soon smoothed away every difficulty between them, and he delivered them up their gunpowder, which he had provisionally seized, upon their engaging not to use it in aggressive hostilities against the natives. The necessity of keeping and maintaining the detachment led to some regular demand for supplies,

which kept up a mutual interchange of wants, and the most friendly intercourse was ever afterwards maintained between them. In the meanwhile the emigrant farmers laid out this township of Pietermaritzburg and what is now called the town of D'Urban. Landdrosts were appointed to both townships; they established a more regular system of government, and with the able assistance of Mr. Boshof (the present Registrar of the Court), who about that time arrived in this district with his entire clan, various laws and regulations were framed, which gradually redeemed them from the state of anarchy into which they were fast falling. While the winter of 1839 was thus taken up by these duties and labours, Dingaan, somewhat recovering from the effects of his late defeat, commenced sending in some special messengers, first delivering up 316 horses, which he at various times had captured, and thereafter professing every disposition to enter into amicable arrangements with the emigrants. Their answer was plain and manly, that they would not enter into any treaty of peace with him unless ample restitution had been made of all their cattle and sheep, and until the value of their property taken or destroyed by him and the Zoolahs had been paid for. This led to frequent embassies, promises of restitution, and fixing places where some at least of the cattle and some guns were promised to be delivered; but the farmers soon discovered that these messages and promises were mere pretex-

to keep up a constant and regular "espionage" upon them, as one of these pretended messengers or spies being caught, admitted that he had been sent to report to Dingaan whether the farmers were gradually returning to their farms or whether they still kept near to their laagers, thus clearly showing that he only waited the opportunity to attempt another *razia* upon them. This naturally paralysed all their agricultural pursuits and prevented them from spreading themselves about to carry on their farming operations, as they were kept constantly on the alert; when, in the inscrutable decrees of Providence, one of those events was brought about for which they were quite unprepared, in which they were not even the chief agents, but which led to their undisputed possession of the whole territory of Natal.

There were only at that time two brothers remaining alive of Chaka and Dingaan: the elder Panda or Umpanda (as he is called by his subjects), and a young lad, Clu Clu, who was afterwards murdered by Panda (in the year 1843), on which occasion their "Aunt" Mawa, with a great number of Chaka's and Dingaan's old followers, fled into this country; and subsequently settled in this district, chiefly in the Umvooti and Inanda locations. Umpanda had just reached manhood, but brought up in the midst of debauchery and sensuality he was only known for his unwarlike habits, and became an object of derision to the warriors and of contempt to

Dingaan, who seemed for a time to give him full scope for the indulgence of his passions as most conducive to his own personal safety, while Dingaan's appetite for war was so insatiable that notwithstanding his signal defeat by the emigrant farmers in December last he had again mustered a strong army, with which he attacked Sapusa, but in which he was defeated with fearful loss.

It was, therefore, not unnatural that, even among the Zoolahs, a party was forming deprecating these murderous wars and apparently inclined to support Panda, with a view to bring about peace with the emigrants and the surrounding nations. From that moment Dingaan determined to watch the opportunity of murdering his brother ; but it appears that, a hint of his intentions to this effect having transpired, Panda at once fled with a number of followers, and crossing the Tugela near its mouth, took possession of some lands near the Umvotee, and sent messengers requesting the support and protection of the emigrants. Some suspicion was at first entertained that this was but a deep-laid plot between him and Dingaan to inveigle them into the Zoolah country ; but after repeated conferences, which were managed with great tact and ability by the Landdrost Roos of D'Urban, by G. Kemp, Moolman, Morewood, Breda, and several others, a formal treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was concluded with him, by the terms of which the emigrant farmers pledged themselves to support and defend Panda, while he, on the

other hand, promised to support them in any attack upon Dingaan.

The beginning of the year 1840 being considered the best season for commencing offensive operations, the emigrant farmers again mustered a force of 400 mounted warriors, who, under the chief command of Andries Pretorius, joined Panda's army, about 4000 strong, and this combined force, in January, again entered the Zoolah country by the Sunday's River and Biggar's Mountain; but with proper caution the emigrants kept themselves at some distance from Panda's army, which, under the able guidance of Nonklass (who continued for many years to be Panda's chief counsellor and captain), seemed quite intent upon coming into action.

While this commando was preparing and mustering their forces in this town of Pietermaritzburg, one of Dingaan's principal messengers, Tamboosa, arrived at Pietermaritzburg with one of those specious messages and offers of peace. He was, however, seized, with his attendant Combizana, and, upon being rigidly questioned, frankly admitted that he had also been sent with a view of reporting to Dingaan the state of the combined army of emigrants and Zoolahs under Panda. The latter, evidently embittered against this person (one of Dingaan's principal counsellors), charged him with having been the chief cause of the murder of Retief and his party; that he had plotted and advised his (Panda's) death; and, in short, brought such a series of charges

against him that (contrary to every usage of civilised life) he was taken along with the army as a prisoner, until they reached the banks of the Buffalo or Umzimjaatee River, where a court-martial was formed, which, under the excited feelings of the occasion, soon passed a sentence of death upon the unfortunate prisoners, and which was carried into execution within a few hours after; Tamboosa not only nobly upbraiding his executioners with the violation of all usage towards messengers, even amongst savages, but, expressing his perfect readiness to die, he only implored (but in vain) mercy on behalf of his young attendant, who was only a camp follower, and had thus been but doing his duty in following his master.

This may be said to have been the only blot which seriously reflected upon the conduct of the emigrant farmers in their several engagements with the Zoolahs, for they otherwise constantly endeavoured to spare the women and children from massacre, and uniformly conducted their wars with as much discretion and prudence as bravery.

A few days after this sad execution the Zoolah army under Panda encountered that commanded by Dingaan, whereupon a desperate engagement ensued, in the course of which one or two of Dingaan's regiments went over in a body to Panda. This decided the fate of the day: two of Dingaan's regiments who fought bravely for him being totally destroyed, the battle ended in his total defeat and

flight. The emigrant farmers, not having been engaged in this action, followed up this success (as soon as they heard of it) with great vigour; they drove Dingaan over the Black Umvolos, and from thence still further to the banks of the Pongola, where, deserted by almost all his followers, he endeavoured with about 100 followers to find shelter amongst a small tribe living near Delagoa Bay, named the Amasuree, but who, it is supposed (for I believe there is no actually authentic account of his death), murdered him to ensure their own safety from his constant and fearful forays upon them and the adjacent tribes.

As, however, no doubt as to his death and the dispersion of all his army existed, the emigrant farmers assembled in great state on the banks of the Umvolos on the 14th February, 1840, and there, under the discharge of their guns, Andries Pretorius proclaimed Umpanda the sole and acknowledged king of the Zulus; and by a proclamation issued by him, and attested by the other commandants, they declared their sovereignty to extend from the Umvolos Umfana, or the Black Umvolos, and the St. Lucia Bay, to the Umzimvooboo, or St. John's River; and in fact, by their proceedings of that day, assumed a certain authority, or sovereignty, over Umpanda himself, from whom they received, as their indemnity, 36,000 head of cattle, 14,000 of which were delivered to those farmers who, residing beyond the Draaksberg, had

only come in as allies to their friends, and the remaining 22,000 (or rather the sad remains of them, for very many were lost or embezzled on the way) were brought to the foot of the Zwart Kop, near Pietermaritzberg, where, at a spot still named the Deel Kraal,* they were distributed among such farmers as belonged to this district, and had claims for losses sustained in the previous wars and engagements.

A few days before the emigrant farmers started on their last and crowning victory over Dingaan and his forces, Sir George Napier, having been ordered to send the 72nd Regiment home, and finding that the Secretary of State for the Colonies still continued little inclined to support his policy of occupying this district, sent a vessel to the bay with orders to Capt. Jarvis to embark with his whole detachment; on which occasion he addressed a letter to the Landdrost Roos, at D'Urban, which, after referring to some complaints of natives as to encroachments on their gardens, contained the following farewell address and peroration:—

“It now only remains for me, on taking my departure, to wish you one and all as a community every happiness, sincerely hoping that, aware of your strength, peace may be the object of your councils; justice, prudence, and moderation be the law of your actions; that your proceedings may

* Anglice, camp for distributing or dividing.

be actuated by motives worthy of you as men and Christians, that hereafter your arrival may be hailed as a benefit; having enlightened ignorance, dispelled superstition, and caused crime, bloodshed, and oppression to cease, and that you may cultivate these beautiful regions in quiet and prosperity, ever regardful of the rights of the inhabitants whose country you have adopted, and whose home you have made your own!"

From these expressions, enunciated by the officer commanding the forces on the eve of his departure, and from the general tenor of the intelligence received by them at the time from the Cape, there can be no doubt that the emigrant farmers became then fully impressed that Her Majesty's Government had determined, by no consideration, to swerve from that line of policy which had already declared that nothing would induce Her Majesty to assert a sovereignty over these territories. They therefore conceived that by this act of abandonment of this territory by Her Majesty's forces, and by their recent conquest and installation of Panda, as a chief set up by themselves, they had become both *de facto* and *de jure* the undisputed rulers of the country. They saw themselves respected and dreaded by all the neighbouring tribes, every farmer now had the opportunity of sitting himself down "under his own vine, and under his own fig tree," none making him afraid; and there is further no doubt that if they (as a body) had possessed suffi-

cient intelligence to feel the exact position in which they were placed, Her Majesty's Government would thereupon have bestowed upon them all the advantages of self-government consistent with a mere acknowledgment of their allegiance to Her Majesty and her heirs.

We may, therefore, here conclude this lecture (which has brought them down to a quiet and undisturbed possession of this territory) by applying to them the lines of the Mantuan bard, where in his *Second Georgic* he says of the peasantry of his country—

“O Fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint,
Agricolas !” etc., etc.

As the whole of this passage is so peculiarly apposite to the position in which these farmers found themselves placed at that time, I shall conclude with applying to them the following lines, as translated by Ring:—

“Blest is the life these rural swains pursue ;
Blest ! ah, too blest ! if all their bliss they knew.
To whom, remote from dangers and alarms,
And from the clashing of discordant arms,
When once their calm and easy toil is o'er,
The bounteous earth pours forth her foodful store.
What though no domes their portals open wide,
To vomit forth a sycophantic tide ?
What though no stately columns they behold ?
Nor sculptured brass, nor garments wrought with gold ?
What though their fleece no Tyrian purple soil,
Nor Cassian odours paint their liquid oil ?

Yet life, to vain delusive joys unknown,
And rest and safety, these are all their own.
And various wealth, a farm, a peaceful cot,
A crystal fountain and a cooling grot ;
The low of oxen in the grassy glades,
And soft repose beneath embowering shades :
Nor open lawns are wanting for the chase,
Nor woods to shelter all the savage race,
Nor hardy youth to cultivate the soil,
Content with little, and inured to toil,
Nor sacred altars of the Powers above,
Nor parents honoured by the sons they love."

In these lectures I have now imparted to you, ladies and gentlemen, a plain unvarnished statement of the chief causes which led to the estrangement of a large portion of our fellow-colonists from the Government, and to their abandonment of the land of their forefathers, to seek a home in the wilds of South Africa, and in this district.

In this statement my aim has been "nought to extenuate, nor to set down aught in malice," but to show that these emigrants (as a body) form a most respectable, powerful, and numerous body of men, who, neither allured by the thirst after gold, nor the desire to exterminate savage tribes, only sought for a country which they endeavoured lawfully to acquire, where they might set themselves down in peace, secure as to their lives and properties.

This object they had fully gained, and if their true position had been well understood by them-

selves, and appreciated by the Government, nothing ought to have occurred subsequently to disturb the friendly harmony between them and a government to whom the golden rule becomes daily more self-evident—

“Salus Populi Suprema Lex!”

LECTURE IV.

THE BOERS IN NATAL

I WAS induced in the year 1852 to deliver a series of lectures containing a succinct, but (in accordance with my pledge) a truthful and impartial account of the causes which led a number of Boers to leave the land of their birth and to wander through the wild wastes of South-Eastern Africa, until they acquired a peaceful and independent settlement in this promising country.

My principal motive for consenting to deliver those lectures was (as announced by me at the time) to dispel the clouds which ignorance and misrepresentation were then but too rapidly accumulating around the British immigrants, who had been previously attracted hither by the delusive scheme of Mr. Byrne, and which were even of a nature to affect the friendly relations which should ever exist, for the good of all, between those races who have now virtually made this country their home.

It is remarkable, that in the very first Blue Book on Natal, published by order of the House of

Commons (a publication to which we generally refer for correct official information), the name of my respected and worthy brother, Colonel (now Sir Josias) Cloete, appears in several places, either through a misprint or misapprehension arising in the Colonial Office itself, as that of the Commissioner appointed to adjust the affairs of this district—a circumstance which has (I know) misled several persons into the belief that he at one time held that office in conjunction with the post of commander of Her Majesty's forces, sent to relieve a detachment which had arrived here under the command of Captain Smith.*

The great and final triumph of the emigrant farmers over the power of Dingaan, his death, and the subsequent installation of Panda as the paramount chief of the Zoolah nation, under their auspices, appeared to me to constitute an appropriate conclusion to that course of lectures, as I was not unmindful of the warning ("not to follow contem-

* At the time of delivering this lecture, I had not seen the Rev. Mr. Holden's recently published work on "Natal," in which (at page 191) I find that the author has fallen precisely into this error, and has adopted the "misprint" of the Blue Book published in 1846, by gravely announcing that "*Colonel Cloete*" had been appointed a "*Special Commissioner*" by Her Majesty, in the year 1843, to adjust the claims to land at Natal (vide pages 191 and 195), although the author seems to have had before him the "reprint" of official papers relating to Natal, edited by Mr. J. C. Chase, in which he would have found (in vol. 2, page 281) the official announcement of the "Hon'ble Henry Cloete, LL.D.," to that office, who is there described to be "an advocate of the Supreme Court, and a member of the Legislative Council of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope."

poraneous history too closely at her heels") left to future historians by Sir Walter Raleigh, who, in his quaint preface to his *History of the World*, accounts for his having confined himself so entirely to ancient history, in the following remarks—

“I know it will be said by many that I might have been more pleasing to the reader if I had written the story of mine own time; having been permitted to draw the water as near the well-head as another. To this I answer, that whosoever, in writing a modern history, shall follow truth too near the heels, it may haply strike out his teeth: there is no mistress or guide that hath led her followers and servants into greater miseries.”

Following this sage advice, I allowed for a time “truth” to find its own way, and gradually to clear up the mists hanging over the modern history of this district; but I have since become more and more sensible of the painful fact that every succeeding day, and every ephemeral publication that has emanated from the press, have only added to the misrepresentations which ignorance or party spirit had originated. It therefore became a duty incumbent on those who were fully conversant with the correct details of affairs at the time, to inform the inhabitants of this district (upon good authority) of the manner in which those events had been gradually developed, terminating in a peaceable and unqualified submission to Her Majesty’s authority, and thus introducing that settled government under

the protection of which we are at present assembled together.

Although these results were chiefly brought about by my own instrumentality, I trust I may now be allowed to refer to them without being justly chargeable with vanity or egotism, since such reference will be made merely for the purpose of vouching for the correctness of facts and occurrences of which I may truly say with the hero of the *Æneid*—

“ Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui.”

I stated in the conclusion of my third and last lecture of the former course that the 14th day of February, 1840, may be set down as the grand epoch whence the undisputed supremacy of the emigrant farmers over this country is to be dated. On that day, after the total defeat of Dingaan, and his flight to the Amazurees' country (where he was subsequently assassinated), Andries Pretorius, the commandant-general of the emigrant forces on the banks of the Umvolosi, formally installed Panda as the paramount king of the adjacent tribes, and (with the concurrence of some of the members of the Volksraad or Council of the People, who had accompanied him) issued the following proclamation:—

“I, Andries Wilhelmus Pretorius, chief commandant of all the burghers of the Right Worshipful Volksraad of the South African Society of Port Natal, and commander-in-chief of the army placed under my command, etc., etc.

“Whereas the Volksraad of the South African Society, on account of the unprovoked war which the Zoolah king or Zoolah nation has commenced against the South African Society, was compelled to incur an expense of Rds. 122,600 for horse and waggon-hire, and other expenses of war; and whereas the Zoolah king, according to all appearance and information, has deserted his territory and crossed the Pongola, etc., I do hereby proclaim and make known, that in the name of the said Volksraad of the South African Society, I seize all the land from the Tugala to the Umvaloos Umjana (the Black Umvaloos); and that our boundary shall in future be from the sea along the Black Umvaloos, where it runs through the Double Mountains, near to where it originates, and so along the Randberg (the Ridges), in the same direction to the Draaksberg (or Quathlamba) Mountains, including the St. Lucia Bay, as also all sea coasts and harbours which have already been discovered, or may hereafter be discovered, between the Umzimvubu and the Black Umvaloos mouths.”

This proclamation was openly read, and its contents explained to Panda, who, with his chief counsellors, was present on the occasion; and under a discharge of twenty-one guns from their little field-piece (for they had but one), Panda was thus installed as chief of the Zoolah and other adjacent tribes, but holding that authority directly from the Emigrant Society, who thus became in fact his dominant and protecting power. Twenty thousand head of cattle were brought into this district as the spoils of that campaign, and the remnant of them (for a great proportion was purloined on the journey by the

dishonesty or negligence of the field-cornets and guard to whom they had been entrusted), was driven to an extensive grassy plateau, situate between the Zwartkop and the Uitspanplaats, Ketelfontein, on the summit of the Town-hill, still called from that circumstance the "Deelkraal" (or coral of distributing or dividing), where upwards of ten thousand were given out to the men engaged in the late expedition; and the inhabitants soon spread themselves about and seriously entered upon their rural and agricultural pursuits, extending themselves from the banks of the Tugela to the Umzimkulu.

By a singular coincidence, the then Governor of the Cape Colony (Sir George Napier) had just then been ordered to send home the 72nd Regiment, of which a detachment had occupied the harbour of Port Natal; and that detachment having been withdrawn, an opinion generally prevailed that the home Government had deliberately relinquished all idea of occupying this territory; so that the few English inhabitants then living at the port had no alternative but to acknowledge the supremacy of a society of farmers, who were soon to solve the problem as to their fitness for self-government.

About the same time my highly esteemed friend, Mr. Jacobus Nicolaas Boshof (subsequently called to the honourable but arduous post of President of the Orange Free State), arrived here with his numerous and influential clan, having determined

to give up the subordinate office he held at Graaff-Reinet, no longer there

“To bear the oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes.”

His merits as a zealous, able, and laborious officer were, however, immediately recognised in this district. He was at once made Landdrost of this division, then comprehending nearly the whole district; to him the inhabitants were indebted for the appointment of a regular Land Board, to inspect the farms and prepare titles to lands; as well as for various excellent local regulations, both at this place and at the port, and D’Urban. To him was also entrusted the preparation of some fundamental regulations in reference to the chief executive and legislative government of the country; but on that point (I have reason to believe) his own sensible and practical views were overruled or made to succumb to the stern republican feeling of the majority of the inhabitants, who appear to have been so inflated with their own ideas as to their power of governing the country collectively, that they (almost unanimously) resisted every proposition of becoming subject to any permanent chief or supreme head; but determined at least to try the experiment, which, I fear, the Transvaal Republic is now again repeating, and which will more than probably, in their case, also lead to the same results as before.

This leads me to give my hearers a succinct account of the kind of government which they introduced. Once every year the field-cornet of every division into which the country had been portioned out, sent in to the Landdrost here a list of the persons whom the inhabitants of that field-cornetcy or ward desired to become their representatives for the ensuing year. The district was divided into twelve such wards, from each of which the names of two persons were thus sent in, forming a council of twenty-four members, in which were vested all the combined supreme, executive, legislative, and judicial powers. This elective Council or "Volksraad" was required to assemble here (at Pietermaritzburg) every three months. At each meeting a chairman was chosen from among the members present to regulate the order of their proceedings; but he had not in any other respect the slightest addition of power or authority over the rest. All the members performed their duties gratuitously; but for the current and indispensable business of government Landdrosts were appointed for this place, D'Urban and Weenen, each of whom exercised a certain limited judicial authority. At Pietermaritzburg also two or three members of the Council, who lived in or near the town, were formed into a Committee of the Council (called the Commissie Raad), and had power to decide upon and carry out any executive or administrative duties requiring immediate despatch; but they were bound at the next general meeting of the

Council to report their proceedings and submit them for the sanction or disapproval of the body by which they were appointed.

Independently of the mode now described of governing "*this*" district, there existed also an ill-defined federal bond of union with the districts of Windburg and of the Modder and Caledon rivers lying beyond the Draaksberg, and now forming the Orange Free State, by virtue of which those districts, upon sending delegates to this place, could join in, and become subject to all laws and regulations made in their "combined" councils; but otherwise those districts were not to be bound by any decisions of the Volksraad here. The existence and character of this connection will have to be borne in mind when we come to the later portions of the history which will be given in these lectures.

From this statement, I believe every one of my hearers possessing any knowledge of history or any practical experience in the affairs of the world will at once perceive that the inhabitants were preparing for themselves a state of anarchy, from which the most deplorable results to themselves must inevitably arise. Without a head to direct or a power to control, they were left entirely to those innate feelings and notions of right and wrong that might be found in such a community. The Landdrost, the only paid functionary (whose salary was but the insignificant sum of £100 per annum) was so constantly thwarted by the ignorant and busy intermeddling

of the Committee Council (Commissie Raad) that Mr. Boshof soon resigned the office, and no entreaties or prayers could induce him to resume it. The Commissie Raad, on making a report of their proceedings to the full Council, were uniformly assailed by or exposed to the most violent attacks from the so-called "Publiek" (the public), the name assumed by those who were opposed to the measures that had been adopted; and in nine cases out of ten their acts, after the most outrageous personal attacks (so that on some occasions the members, as it is now known, came with arms secreted in their bosoms to guard against assaults), were again repudiated by a set of men who, going back to their homesteads the next day, were ill prepared to resist the reproaches and taunts of the selfish and the interested. It is a lamentable fact that upon my arrival here as Commissioner in 1843, I was informed by the then Landdrost that a judgment which he had passed several months before against a respectable inhabitant living only a few miles from this town (ordering him to return some head of cattle which he had illegally withheld from a Hottentot) was still lying in his office a dead letter; as this inhabitant had openly declared he would shoot the first messenger or other functionary who should come on his premises, and the Landdrost therefore could find no one inclined to run the risk of executing his warrant. Several of the most respectable and worthy inhabitants also assured me that it was impossible for them to live any longer

in such a state of anarchy as that into which the country was fast receding.

However, these sad results were not anticipated by the majority of the inhabitants in the year 1840, who were now formed into an independent people, but still felt that the recognition of that independence by Her Majesty's Government was all that was wanting to give stability to their government and institutions. They accordingly addressed His Excellency Sir George Napier on the 4th September, 1840, in the following terms:—

“YOUR EXCELLENCY,—By the blessing of God we have perfectly succeeded in establishing with our numerous surrounding savage enemies an advantageous, but, for the so long oppressed people, a lasting peace, which presents us with the cheering prospect of permanent prosperity, etc.

“This prospect is, however, somewhat darkened by the conviction that between us and our always beloved mother country there does not exist that friendly sympathy in our welfare which we would fain wish to see strongly and lastingly established.

“This general wish has been frequently under the consideration of the Volksraad, who have at their last meeting passed the following resolution, viz. :—

“‘To submit respectfully to your Excellency, as the honoured representative of Her Majesty the Queen of England, that it may graciously please Her Majesty to acknowledge and declare us a free and independent people (a right so dearly purchased with our blood), and to concede to us all those privileges which constitute the boast and greatness of the nation which has the happiness to live under her noble government.’

“And to attain that object the Council have resolved (should your Excellency desire it) that two commissioners shall be sent to the colony of the Cape of Good Hope as our representatives, at such time and to such place as your Excellency shall appoint.”

This letter ended by expressing their readiness to enter into a negotiation “in writing,” if His Excellency should prefer such a course.

To this letter His Excellency, who was then at Graham’s Town, returned a courteous reply, civilly declining the reception of the proposed commissioners, and expressing at once his opinion that he himself could enter into no arrangements which might in any respect be incompatible with the honour of Her Majesty, but also stating “that much time might be gained by their furnishing His Excellency with an explicit statement of the terms on which they were disposed to treat, and which His Excellency hoped might yet lead to an amicable settlement of the future relations between the colony and Natal.”

Although events of a more stirring nature subsequently intervened, to which it will be necessary to direct your attention, I may add here that this letter of His Excellency’s led to another communication from the Volksraad, dated the 14th January, 1841, in which they embodied, in thirteen articles, the terms of their proposed alliance with Her Majesty and her heirs, the chief of which were :—

"1st. That Her Majesty would be pleased to acknowledge their settlement as a free and independent state, under the name of 'The Republic of Port Natal and adjacent countries'; the boundaries whereof could be hereafter defined.

"2nd. That Her Majesty's Government declare itself willing to treat with the Republic, in the relation of an ally.

"3rd. That the said Republic reciprocally declares itself to stand in the closest alliance with the British Government.

"4th. That Her Majesty's Government shall be at liberty, in case of any hostile undertaking against the Republic by sea, by any other power whatsoever, either to interpose itself in a friendly manner or to repel the same by force.

"5th. That in case of war between the British Government and any other power this Republic shall be viewed as *neutral*, and all private commercial vessels lying at anchor in the ports of the Republic shall be left unmolested.

"6th. That the British Government shall have the right to place here an ambassador or representative agent."

The remaining clauses were intended for securing a mutual free trade on the footing of the most favoured nations, and promising to give every encouragement for the spreading of the gospel; to oppose every attempt at establishing a slave trade, and not to make any hostile movement against any of the surrounding native tribes, unless such tribe, by any preceding hostile attack, *should*

give the republicans occasion thereto, so that they, for the maintenance of their rights, or for the security of their property, should be compelled to take up arms against such tribe.

The following circumstances which were then in the course of actual occurrence showed in how far these professions could be relied on. Towards the latter end of the year 1840 some of the farmers who had taken up their residence between the Umkomas and the Umzimkulu rivers came in and complained to the Volksraad that some of their cattle had been carried away by parties of Bushmen who were skulking in the Draaksberg fastnesses, and urged that they should be followed up and attacked in their hiding-places. In the month of December, therefore, a party of armed burghers was embodied, and their approved leader, Andries Pretorius, was again appointed by the Volksraad to the chief command, with express instructions as to the course he was to pursue. After having for some time in vain beat about the sources of the Umzimkulu and Umkomas rivers, some scouts who had been sent out by Pretorius reported that traces of cattle, which they had reason to believe were the property of emigrant farmers, had been followed and led towards some kraals of the Amabaka tribe, under the chief N'Capai. Hereupon it was at once resolved to make an attack upon that chieftain, and the forces under Pretorius accordingly attacked some of his kraals at daybreak, killed several men, captured about 3000 head of cattle and about 250

sheep and goats, and carried off into captivity about seventeen little boys and girls, who were picked up after their parents had either been killed or driven away from the scene of slaughter.

Upon the return of this commando it was soon felt by every respectable member of the Volksraad that Pretorius had grossly departed from the letter of his instructions, and that these proceedings had sadly laid themselves open to the most severe animadversions from the whole of the civilised world.* At the very next meeting of the Volksraad Pretorius was called upon to give an account of his conduct, and one of the members proposed a resolution expressive of the unqualified disapprobation of those proceedings by the Volksraad; but Pretorius, being supported by his powerful clan and a war party, succeeded in getting this resolution withdrawn, so that subsequently to this little was said about these untoward events, at least *within this district*, but upon the intelligence reaching the Cape frontier a general burst of indignation arose against the emigrant farmers on account of this wanton and unprovoked attack, and Sir George Napier, in a letter addressed to me upon the subject (and which I have carefully preserved, as doing credit both to his head and heart), thus

* A memorial had been drawn out and addressed to the Volksraad, by a number of respectable inhabitants residing chiefly at and near D'Urban, strongly protesting against this act of aggression made by Pretorius, contrary to the written instructions which had been delivered to him when he took the command of this expedition.

expresses his feelings in reference to that painful subject :—

“To suppose that yourself, or indeed any man in the colony, with a spark of humanity in his breast, would attempt to palliate such a flagrant act of cruelty and injustice, would be a *libel on my part quite unjustifiable*, as I am well convinced that the moment you read the account it must have made a deep impression of horror and disgust on so sensitive and honourable a mind as I believe yours to be, from the intercourse we have had together, particularly as regards the conduct of your misguided countrymen and fellow-subjects, the emigrant farmers of Natal.”

He informed me in that letter (which bears date at Graham's Town, 25th January, 1841) that Faku and the Amaponda tribes had now become apprehensive of similar unprovoked attacks, and that, in short, this attack of the emigrant farmers upon one of the peaceable tribes around them had greatly altered their position, since previously to this they had (as they professed) only fought for their own safety and in order to prevent the Zoolah chief, Dingaan, from accomplishing by force and treachery their total destruction, whereas they had now, after accomplishing their avowed object and while living in peace, wantonly sent a commando to attack a native chief living at least 200 miles from their country and close to the then existing borders of the Cape Colony.

His Excellency thereupon immediately despatched a force of 250 infantry, with a small detachment of the Cape Corps and two field-pieces, with orders to

march and take up a position on the Umzimvubu; but the difficulties of such a land expedition induced His Excellency so far to modify his arrangements that the troops which were placed under the command of Captain Smith, of the 27th Regiment, ultimately took up a position and remained for several months encamped on the banks of the Umgazi River, awaiting the course of events.*

From that moment, however, the feelings of Sir George Napier towards the emigrant farmers, which had previously been marked by the utmost kindness and sympathy, were considerably altered; and he did not hesitate to express his indignation at their conduct in a letter addressed to them, which led to a reply from themselves, bearing date the 7th of April, 1841, in which (it is but just towards them to observe) they attempt to vindicate their conduct by stating that they had the undeniable proofs that some of their cattle had been traced to the kraals of N'Capai, and that Faku and his people themselves had given the information that N'Capai had then some of their cattle in his possession; but these explanations only led His Excellency to announce to them formally, at once, that he declined any further intercourse with them, unless they dis-

* The Umgazi is a small stream arising in the Umtata or Zuurberg mountains (being a continuation of the Draaksberg or Quathlamba range of mountains, running from the Zoolah country to the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony), and flowing about midway between the Kie (the present eastern boundary of British Kaffraria) and the Umzimvubu or St. John's River.

tinctly acknowledged their full and entire allegiance to their lawful Sovereign, the Queen of England, and further declared their willingness to obey the lawful authority of the British Government.

A few months after this, after a long interval of suspense and anxiety, Sir George Napier received a communication from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the colonies, in answer to his several despatches of the years 1840 and 1841, in which he had brought before the notice of the home Government his correspondence with the Volksraad on the subject of their application to be declared a free and independent state. About that time an influential set of politicians had frequently mooted the question in Parliament, whether our colonial empire was not becoming far too extensive, and rather required to be reduced; and who, by dwelling upon the Kafir wars and the Canada and the New Zealand rebellions, and the expenses thereby incurred, were constantly urging upon Her Majesty's ministers the reduction of the colonial establishments to the lowest scale of efficiency. Under the influence of such a pressure, it appears that the home Government were very reluctant to extend their settlements in South Africa; and His Excellency was therefore left in a great measure to use his own discretion in regard to the matter in question, having merely received an announcement "that Her Majesty could not acknowledge the independence of her own subjects, but that the trade of the emigrant farmers

would be placed on the same footing as that of any other British settlement, upon their receiving a military force to exclude the interference with or possession of the country by any other European power." This resolution His Excellency communicated to the Volksraad, in a letter dated 3rd September, 1841, and there is no doubt that, if this communication had been entertained in the same spirit in which it had originated, the emigrants might even then have secured for themselves all the benefits of self-government, subject only to a mere acknowledgment of their allegiance to Her Majesty's Government, and with the additional advantage of military protection ; but the very announcement that military possession would be taken of the bay was sufficient to impress them with the idea that they were to be subject to military rule ; and under this impression they sent a reply, dated 11th October, 1841, wherein they state that, having asserted and maintained their independence as "Dutch South Africans" ever since they left the Cape Colony, they were fully determined not to surrender this point, and "as Her Majesty has been pleased to reject their very fair proposals, they were inclined to remain on the same footing as theretofore," significantly concluding by saying that

"Your Excellency's proposal to enter into a treaty with us *under the influence* of a military force, and without being acquainted with the terms of agreement, appears to us so unintelligible and undefined, that unless we are further informed, we cannot comprehend the object of it."

His Excellency Sir George Napier thereupon, under the rather indefinite authority contained in the despatches received up to that time from the Secretary of State, issued a proclamation on the 2nd December, 1841, in which he declared—

“That whereas the Council of emigrant farmers now residing at Port Natal and the territory adjacent thereto, had informed His Excellency that they had ceased to be British subjects, and refused to be recognised or treated as such ; and whereas they had recently passed a resolution by which all Kafirs inhabiting Natal were to be removed, *without their consent*, into a country lying between the Umtaphoona and the Umzimvubu, forming part of the territory of the chief Faku, without having obtained the consent of the said Faku ; from which measure warfare and bloodshed were to be apprehended : His Excellency announced his intention of resuming military occupation of Port Natal by sending thither, without delay, a detachment of Her Majesty’s forces.”

And His Excellency further solemnly warned the inhabitants against the consequences of in any way resisting or opposing Her Majesty’s forces or the due exercise of Her Majesty’s authority, and informed those who resided here, not being British subjects, that they would be placed out of the protection of the law and be liable to be dealt with as the interests of the Crown might require.

This proclamation, on reaching Natal, was viewed in the light of an overt declaration of hostilities, and was answered on the 21st February, 1842, in a very

lengthened and elaborate minute addressed to His Excellency, in which the emigrant farmers recapitulated all the grievances which they had suffered from successive governments, ascribing all their miseries to *one* single cause, viz., the absence of a representative government, which had been asked by them during many years past, while still residing in the Cape Colony, but had as often been delayed or refused: with regard to the intention to remove the Kafirs, they declared that the measure proceeded from real practical philanthropy, to avoid that collision of different races which would inevitably result from the continued residence of themselves amongst the natives; and with regard to their intention to remove them to the country between the Umtaphoona and the Umzimvubu, that it had been expressly stipulated by their treaty with Dingaan that their territory was to extend to the latter river, all that country having been previously conquered by Chaka; and Faku having, moreover, formally acknowledged the right of the emigrant farmers to it. This document concluded with a solemn protest against the occupation of any part of their country by Her Majesty's troops; and declared that they thereby held themselves free from all blame from the injurious consequences of that step, before God, their own consciences, and the world!

No doubt can at present exist in any dispassionate and impartial mind, that this important document,

which had been drawn up by Mr. Boshof for the Volksraad, ably answered the proclamation of His Excellency, to which might justly be applied the remark or piece of advice given me by an eminent special pleader of Lincoln's Inn when I took leave of him on my departure for the Cape Colony, and when he, rather prophetically anticipating my future elevation to the bench, said—"Now, Mr. Cloete, you have entered the law, and may possibly one day be elevated to the judicial bench. Allow me, therefore, to give you one friendly advice. Whenever you have to give your judgments, abstain as much as possible from giving your reasons; for your judgments may often be perfectly right, and yet your reasons altogether wrong."

There is no doubt that in this case the hostile attitude assumed by the emigrant farmers left the Governor of the Cape no alternative but either to admit or deny their independence, and the measure of sending a military force became the only one calculated to put that question at once to the test; but perhaps the result of that movement might have been quite different had it not been for an incident in the history of this district, which exerted an overwhelming influence on the minds of the inhabitants generally and of the members of the Volksraad in particular. The very next month after their solemn protest had been transmitted to Sir George Napier, a Dutch vessel, called the *Brasilia*, anchored in the port of Port Natal, and the supercargo,

Mr. Smellekamp, who afterwards resided in the Orange Free State (as it is now called), informed the emigrant farmers upon his first arrival that a number of merchants in Holland had taken a deep interest in their affairs, and had despatched this vessel for the express purpose of opening a direct trade with their country, and supplying them with "notions" of Dutch produce and manufacture: this arrival, and the display of the Dutch flag, aroused in all the emigrant farmers the most extravagant affection for the country and people to which most of them traced their descent. Mr. Smellekamp was received at this place with triumphal honours; public dinners were given him; the Dutch flag became the ensign of the new republic; and Mr. Smellekamp, led away by the enthusiasm with which his arrival had been greeted, gave the inhabitants of Natal the most exaggerated ideas of the power and influence of Holland in the council of nations; moreover, assuring them of the sympathy and support of the King of Holland, and finally entered into a formal treaty with the Volksraad assuring them of the "protection" of Holland, to which he affixed his signature in these terms:—

"Accepted in the name of the King of the Netherlands, subject to His Majesty's formal approval!"

He further gave them the strongest assurances that they would soon be provided with ministers and schoolmasters for the improvement of their moral

condition, and with arms and ammunition to repel any hostile attack with which they might be threatened.

I cannot give a more striking illustration of the manner in which the Volksraad were misled on that occasion, as to the support they expected from the King of Holland, than by relating the following anecdote. Some days after my arrival here in June, 1843, I had an interview with several leading members of the Volksraad, in the course of which I happened to allude to some political measures going on in Europe, and to state that such a measure was under the consideration of the *five* great powers: whereupon I was at once asked by the spokesman, which were these five *great* powers to which I had alluded. I replied that those powers were England, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia. The querist at once exclaimed, "And is Holland not one of them?" This compelled me to enter at some length into the modern history of Europe, and to explain to them how Holland had, since the year 1830, by the rebellion and subsequent formation of Belgium into a separate kingdom, dwindled into a *third-rate* power of Europe; when the spokesman significantly and bitterly replied, "*We were never told that before, but the very reverse!*"

The emigrant farmers were, however, so fully convinced at the time that they had now obtained the countenance of a first-rate European power in support of their independence, that Mr. Smellekamp had

all his travelling expenses paid to enable him to return to Holland direct (as the *Brazilia* was destined for a lengthened cruise to the eastward); and he was, moreover, made the bearer of a number of official and other letters to the Ministers of State of his Majesty the King of Holland, and to many influential persons in that country, claiming the interposition of those persons in support of the independence of Natal; this was the state of feeling which prevailed among all classes and both sexes of the community here, when arrangements were at length completed to enable Captain Smith to break up from the Umgazi camp, and to pursue his course overland to Natal.

I cannot refrain from relating here a remarkable interview I had with His Excellency Sir George Napier on this subject. More than a year before this time His Excellency had disclosed to me (being then a member of the Legislative Council at the Cape), in the most frank and confidential manner, his views with regard to this district, and when his correspondence with the emigrant farmers assumed a somewhat serious aspect (after their attack upon N'Capai), His Excellency even proposed to me to undertake a mission to this country, which he was anxious to confide to me; but I at once respectfully declined the offer, stating that so long as the home Government had not determined upon its final course in regard to this question I could never hope to accomplish anything satisfactory to either party.

His Excellency still continued to communicate to me every step in the correspondence and relations between the two countries, and the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the subject; and in the month of January, 1841, His Excellency had already, in the fullest manner, explained to me his policy in regard to this question. In the month of April, 1842, His Excellency informed me that the necessary arrangements having been now entirely completed, Captain Smith had, by the last post, announced his departure from the Umgazi camp, on his march to Natal. I could not help replying that I deeply regretted to hear this news, as I anticipated the most deplorable results from such a movement. Upon His Excellency pressing me for a further explanation, I at once said that I understood the captain's force to consist of 250 infantry, besides a small party of the Cape Corps and two field-pieces, encumbered, moreover, by a numerous waggon train; that such a force appeared to me just sufficient to show a hostile intention towards the emigrant farmers, without being sufficient to secure success, if hostilities should ensue, as they certainly would; and that if the farmers were to be aware of the march of the troops there was not a kloof or a drift which the latter would have to pass where they might not be cut off without a chance of even making an effectual resistance. Upon His Excellency then asking me what steps I should propose, I stated that if it were intended

to take possession of the port, this should be done from the sea, and the troops landed from vessels which might at once put them on shore. His Excellency, however, replied that he had been informed that the entrance to the bay was defended by field-works, which would render the landing dangerous ; and, in short, that the measure under discussion had already been decisively settled by the troops having passed into the Amaponda country ; but the substance of this interview was forgotten neither by His Excellency nor by myself when the disastrous events which I am about to refer to became known in Cape Town.

Captain Smith was at that time marching his little army along what is termed the lower or coast road. The rivers were still much swollen by recent rains, and as many difficulties were thus to be encountered and overcome, it occupied upwards of six weeks in bringing this force in safety through such a country, through which only a trader's waggon was known previously to have passed ; but so sparse was the population, and so quietly had the march been managed, that the occupants of the picturesque farm of Sea View (the late Mr. Dunn and his family) were suddenly surprised, on the 3rd of May, 1842, by seeing the detachment enter their grounds at the head of the bay of Natal. The following day the troops marched through the hamlet of Congella, and took up their position in the flat nearly on the same spot as that where the camp is at present situated.