

my companions and met Captain Slade advancing to meet us.

“Well, have you had a pleasant walk?” he asked; “you must have found it terribly hot.”

But his question remained unanswered as I cried out—“For God’s sake give me something to drink.”

“Oh! you are thirsty, are you?” he answered. “What will you have?”

“What would I have!” I felt at that moment as if I could have drunk up an entire river; but I only answered, “Anything, anything; only give me something.”

Walkinshaw at this moment came forward with some claret and water. I seized the cup from him, and in another moment my lips were buried in the delicious liquid. Shall I attempt to describe those first moments of exquisite enjoyment? I think not; for the pen would but ill perform its office, and words of greater magnitude and meaning would first of all have to be added to the English language, or indeed any other, before I could do so. But I shall never forget those moments, and the measure of real happiness which they brought.

As soon as Sir Evelyn came up we all lay down on mats under the grateful shade of the kraals

and indulged in lunch. The time so occupied was exceedingly pleasant, and we felt loth to move from the comfortable positions we occupied; but the sun was already on its downward passage, and its position in the heavens warned us that we must be up and stirring, for Tinta's Kraal lay far beyond those blue-lined hills in the distance, and it was back to Tinta's Kraal and the White Umvolosi that we must return that day.

So the order to saddle up was given; the horses were promptly driven in and secured; the luncheon panniers packed up and committed to the faithful Walkinshaw; cordial farewells were exchanged with the hospitable Zulus; and within twenty minutes of the order being given we had turned our backs on the Inhlobane, and bearing away from the Zuinge Nek, had our horses' heads well pointed for home.

With the shadows of evening falling quickly and the silver mists rising from the low-lying marshes of the White Umvolosi, we returned to our camp; at the fireside the cook was busily engaged; a savoury odour pervaded the atmosphere, and we retired to our different tents to get ready for dinner, with the pleasant consciousness that there was something good in store. Our

expectations were not disappointed : our surmises proved correct, and probably no better dinner or more appreciative guests had ever before assembled together on the banks of the great Umvolosi.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DISAPPOINTED HOPES—A GOOD SHOT—A ZULU AUDIENCE—A SCENE OF BITTER MEMORY—A RAY OF GOLD—THE SIMPLE SAVAGE—DRENCHING RAIN—AN UNPLEASANT NIGHT—A SCENE OF DEATH AND DESOLATION—THE RAPE OF THE BREAD BAG—THE LAST EFFORT OF EXPIRING ANGER—THE INHSLAZATYE.

A HEAVY mist, so dense as to obscure any object at a distance of twenty yards, was the order of the following morning ; that bright African sun, which had been so busy with our complexions for so long, seemed to have vanished altogether and left in its place the tears of a long farewell. Packing and loading up was rendered exceedingly unpleasant by the dampness of everything, and we found ourselves wishing that Sir Evelyn would rescind the order for departure. But our hopes were disappointed. Booted and spurred, the General quickly made his appearance, and banished thereby any lingering indecision—in which we had been inclined to indulge—in the task of packing up. Matters were hurried for-

ward; waggons were hastily loaded up; and amidst a scene of scurry and some confusion a start was commenced. For a long time anything beyond a snail's pace was out of the question; but towards eight o'clock the sun suddenly burst through the mist and sent it flying before the lance-like thrusts of its darting gleams. Then the mule-waggons broke into a merry trot; we urged our horses into a more genial pace; distances were quickly performed; and a glorious day filled us with buoyant and exulting spirits.

A foolish pow, attracted by our voices and laughter, in an unwary moment poked its head from out some long grass and peered curiously at the motley group, which, doubtless, it regarded as strange visitors. But its curiosity proved fatal on this occasion. A general cry of "Pow!" resounded on all sides, and Sir Evelyn's voice was heard calling for his rifle. This Walkinshaw had already unslung from his shoulder, and the General, dismounting, cautiously approached the bird until a distance of only eighty yards or so intervened between it and himself; then he bent his knee and brought his rifle to his shoulder, the bird all the while continuing to gaze at him in astonishment. We held our breath and awaited the report, which came sooner than we expected.

It was greeted with a shout of triumph as the bird was seen to fall. Galloping forward, we clustered round the successful sportsman and his game; it was a noble bird, and immensely heavy, and roast pow was spoken of in anticipation by the greedy throng. The bullet had cut through its windpipe, causing instant death; and the shot was pronounced a decidedly good one—as it undoubtedly was.

On the banks of a little murmuring rivulet we halted for breakfast; and while it was preparing several ardent sportsmen, fired by the General's success, started off with guns and rifles in search of game. There was not a bird that flew in South Africa that they were not going to stalk and lay low, and the bag in prospect was enormous. They were absent some time, and returned to indulge in a cold breakfast; and we, unwilling to appear curious, forebore for a time to question them as to their success. We put their silence down to modesty, and pictured to ourselves the large heap of game which, as the moments flew by, we expected to hear them allude to and ask for a waggon to fetch; but, as time passed away, our curiosity and impatience got the better of us, and, as their modesty seemed prolonged to a verge of inconsistency, one or two of us ventured to suggest

that an empty waggon should be despatched to bring home the spoil. "The spoil! what spoil?" inquired those whom up till now we had been glorifying with inappropriate attributes.

"Why, the game you have shot, to be sure," we replied; "to judge by the numerous reports, there must be a tidy heap piled up somewhere."

They did not answer; but one or two sighs brought the patent truth more forcibly and quickly to our understanding.

"It can't be that you've killed nothing?" I exclaimed; feeling at the same time that this was, alas! but too true a fact.

"No; we got nothing," was the reply, reluctantly extorted, and which was greeted with a shout of derision and not a little disappointment.

They bore our chaff quietly enough, though we did not spare them at the time. Probably an old lesson sank deep into their hearts and became rooted there in the proverbial advice of "Count not your chickens before they are hatched."

At breakfast several Zulus appeared on the scene. They hailed from a village of kraals hard by; and one, a young man, who seemed to be the most intelligent of the party, was questioned in conversation as to the appreciation he felt for Sir Garnet Wolseley's settlement of the country.

Judging by his replies, he did not entertain a very high opinion of it,—the only blessing which he seemed to derive therefrom being the possession of a plurality of wives. Turning to Mr. Rudolf,—who, I forgot to mention, accompanied Sir Evelyn in the capacity of interpreter to the expedition,—I asked him to inquire of the young Zulu whether he would be glad or sorry were he to hear that Cetshwayo was to be restored ; but the question was disallowed, and his sentiments were therefore unrecorded. This little incident, however, strengthened my determination not to leave Zululand until, by every available means, I had satisfied myself as to the wishes of its people in this matter ; and my subsequent efforts in that direction left no doubt in my mind that, with very few exceptions, the great body of this gallant nation is as loyal and devoted as ever to their captive monarch ; that their ever-recurring prayer and cry is for his freedom ; and that, while hope remains, they are ever expecting and longing for his return.

Our Zulu audience over, the journey was resumed, and we arrived on the banks of the Insangeni River just in time to catch sight of the last waggon of the column disappearing over a distant incline. A halt being called, the question

was debated whether we should ride on and rejoin the column, or, pitching our camp on the Insangeni bank, retrace our steps a short way, and then branch off for the Ityotyotsi on a visit to the spot where the Prince Imperial fell. The ayes being unanimous in support of the latter plan, the waggons were drawn up into line ; a site for the tents was selected ; and the horses we had been riding were unsaddled and turned loose to graze, being replaced by fresh ones. In less than a quarter of an hour we were mounted once more ; and, turning our backs on the departing column, we recrossed the Insangeni,—almost immediately bearing away from the waggon-track on to the broad and undefined Veldt ; and, leaving the Inyanyeni Hill—a remarkable and distinct feature which arose in the middle of a great plain on our right—our horses' heads were fairly pointed for the Ityotyotsi.

Heavy clouds now commenced to mass their forces together, and before long the sky was completely covered with their array. A misty drizzle, which gradually increased to small rain, began to fall, and it was easy to see that we were in for a wetting. We, however, treated the advent of the rain with becoming contempt,—this contempt being especially noticeable in those who had come provided with Macintoshes. I was not

one of this number, not being in possession of so useful an article, though I am bound to say that it was not from want of offers or pressing invitations to appropriate one from out the collection ; yet, nevertheless, I proved for a time impervious to the drizzle,—which fact was attributed to my Scotch origin.

Proceeding at a smart canter, we soon made mince-meat of the ten miles before us, and at twelve o'clock we were close on the Ityotyotsi. A gradually inclining plain now stretched away in front of us ; and at its base, and between a quarter and half mile distant from where we were riding, we could perceive the white marble cross erected on the spot where the Prince fell. It was from thence and up this gentle incline that Lieutenant Carey headed that helter-skelter, panic-stricken, and *sauve qui peut* flight. How utter that pell-mell flight must have been becomes evident to the visitor who for the first time stands upon this scene of bitter memory to England. Had the panic-stricken creatures—I will not call them men—who fled that day but turned in their saddles, they could not have failed to see the gallant boy surrounded—alone and forsaken—defending his life against unequal odds. Did any of those terror-stricken flyers so turn, they must have perceived the scene de-

scribed, and were therefore cowards not to draw rein and return to his assistance ; did they on the other hand continue their flight without looking round, I still assert them cowards ; for who, mounted—in the confident superiority of safety against an unmounted foe—would not glance round at any rate to give that foe a parting look, unless their hearts were filled with an insane terror? Truly, it seems almost doubtful as to whether they are to be most blamed, or most pitied with a contemptuous pity ; but in recording the feelings which rushed to my mind with a hot glow as I looked across that gently-rising plain whose face has been scarred for ever by this cruel deed, the words rose involuntarily to my lips, and in them the pain and sorrow of the moment were expressed : “ Oh ! better, far better, to have died a hundred times—to be bleaching there even at this moment—than to live on and carry for ever that hateful stain.”

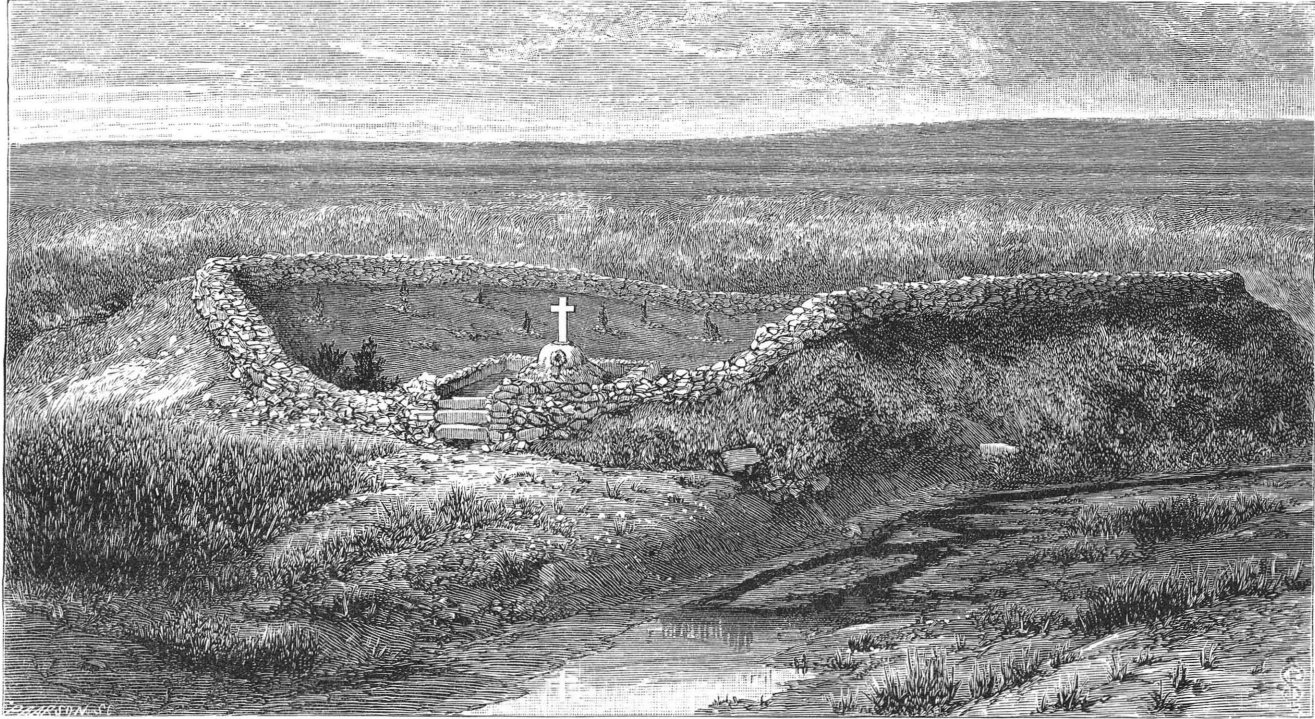
Slowly and sadly we rode across the intervening space which separated us from the Memorial Cross. Few there were present who had not known the young Prince, and even those might almost have been said to know him by the stainless reputation, the fair bright fame, which had followed him throughout an all too brief

existence, and now burnt its pure bright flame upon the grave. Even as we approached the cross a break in the clouds let forth a few bright rays from the hidden sun ; and they, as though allured to that spot, hallowed by the memory of courage and gallantry, seemed to play about the marble, and caress that ground sacred to the memory of him who thereon had fallen. As we approached, several Zulus rose from the ground close to the cross, where they had been seated. They were recognised as the inhabitants of a village of kraals hard by, and two of them proved to belong to that party who had killed the Prince. By them his memory is recalled with veneration and regret ; to use their own words, “the courageous young lion with whom they fought is not, and never will be, forgotten ;” for the noble savage can appreciate courage as well as, ay and better than, the white man of civilisation, and these men in their description of past events knew well how to evince admiration and respect for the gallant life that struggled so valiantly that day,—even as, in the same breath, they condemned with scorn and contempt the cowards who fled and deserted it.

Beneath the Memorial Cross,—the gift of Queen Victoria,—lay also the faded wreath sent likewise by her Majesty. Close to it a little

casket from the Prince and Princess of Wales rested on the mound; while wreaths from other donors were there in profusion. The enclosure was neatly kept by the Zulus already mentioned: flowers, ferns, and young trees were flourishing around, and garlands of ivy, creeping along the wall which formed the enclosure, produced a very pretty effect.

Not fifty yards away could be distinguished the mealie garden in which the surprise took place; while behind it flowed the river Tombokala,—along whose bed the Zulus had crept silently and unobserved. Thither we repaired to inspect the position,—one, alas! all too well adapted to court surprise,—a situation of extreme peril whereon to off-saddle in an enemy's country. From the mealie garden we rode across the Tombokala and up to the village of kraals already mentioned, where a small luncheon-basket which we had brought with us was unpacked, and its contents attacked. The natives clustered round us, and we kept them in a state of exceeding merriment. At first they were a little puzzled as to who and what I was. The year before they had seen the Empress and Lady Wood; but, recalling their faces, they were able to understand that I was neither of them. A satisfactory



ITYOTYOTSI.

Memorial Cross erected on the spot where the Prince Imperial fell.

explanation was, however, given them by Mr. Rudolf, who assured them that I was a great personage,—at which their demeanour became more marked and respectful, and they treated me with a good deal of deference. Over Captain Slade's watch they waxed exceeding curious. Pressing his thumb on the spring, he at the same time blew upon the silver face of the watch, which at once flew open; he then removed his thumb from the spring, and, closing the face, held it out to a powerful Zulu to be blown upon by him. At first the man blew gently; but the face remaining closed, he repeated the experiment,—only harder. In vain! the face would not fly open. One by one the whole group of men and women essayed, by blowing upon the watch, to make it open; but their attempts all proved equally abortive. At last Captain Slade, replacing his thumb on the spring, held out the watch towards a little child. A murmur of derision ran through the group; if *their* efforts had failed, how would those of a tiny child succeed? But the murmur turned to exclamations of wonder as the face of the watch was seen to fly open; and henceforth that child would have been revered as a wizard amongst them, had not the fraud been duly explained. A year

previous,—and during the visit of the Empress Eugenie to the Ityotyotsi,—Captain Slade had presented the old chief of this kraal with a small hand looking-glass, by which the man set great store. Captain Slade expressing a wish to have a look at it again, the chief regretted his inability to grant the request, inasmuch as he had lent it to one of his sons, who had gone a-courting a Zulu lassie over the water. It was considered that the looking-glass would act as a powerful magnet towards attracting the affections of the young lady in question,—a young man, the possessor of a looking-glass, being no mean *parti*, nor one to be disdained. Evidently thinking that Captain Slade attached as much importance to the article as he did himself, the old chief set himself vigorously to assure the donor that it was carefully wrapped up in a skin hide, and was guarded with the utmost tenderness and solicitude by his son. We were therefore, as became the occasion, duly impressed as to the safety of this little sixpenny toy.

The remainder of our visit to the kraals was spent in endeavouring to induce some of the Zulu intombes, or girls, to mount into my saddle. The proposal was greeted with shrieks of laughter; but no bribes, threats, or promises

could prevail upon them to do so. As I mounted, exclamations of wonder broke from them, which became considerably heightened as, bidding them all adieu, we prepared to take our departure.

Recrossing the Tombokala, and skirting the mealie garden and enclosure around the Memorial Cross, we got over the donga, which ran down from the latter spot, at a lower point than before. Once more the rain, which had held up during our visit, began to fall, and we pressed homewards at no mean pace. On reaching the Insangeni, it came down in torrents, and we hastened to take refuge in the mess tent; while the servants unsaddled and blanketed the horses, and tethered them to their respective lines. All that evening it poured, and all through the night likewise,—a chill, cold, drenching rain which penetrated through canvas and everything. Our tents were in a sop, and the quagmire around them terrible. That round my tent was especially bad, being caused by several wretched oxen who had been left behind by the column to die, and who, by instinct as it were, had selected the very tent against which to seek refuge, from which they knew they would not be driven. One poor beast had lain down at the entrance and

established his head inside ; I fed him with oats and mealies, which he seemed to appreciate, but my efforts to restore him were unavailing, as, before we left the Insangeni, he, as well as his companions in misfortune, had passed to a better world. To be surrounded in one's tent by dead beasts is by no means pleasant. I was destined, however, in our next encampment to become comparatively accustomed to such scenes, and to regard them, if not with indifference, at least with less repugnance.

The morning brought no break in the skies,—still the same merciless, pitiless, drenching rain. Horses, mules, and men were all more or less soaked and miserable ; and there was no possibility of moving. We obtained tidings of the column, which we learnt was encamped some six or seven miles distant, likewise unable to proceed ; and this forced inactivity was exceedingly trying. The day was spent in the mess tent, where, by writing and other occupations, we managed to while away the time. The meal hours became important items in the day's proceedings ; and when bed-time came none of us were sorry. As far as regarded myself, sleep was an exile. I had lain down on the outside of my rugs, making no attempt to undress. The top-boots that I

wore were soaked through ; another pair I possessed not, and of trees I had none ; to have taken them off would have meant the impossibility of ever getting them on again, so that there was no alternative but to stick to them and ignore the consequences. These, however, quickly made themselves felt ; a deathly, freezing cold seemed to have taken possession of the atmosphere ; my feet became like blocks of ice ; the whole of my body chilled ; and the night so spent was the reverse of pleasant.

On coming outside next morning we found the hills all round covered with snow ; rain was still steadily descending, and the clouds were darkly ominous. At breakfast Sir Evelyn decided to strike camp and proceed if it did not clear up by twelve o'clock ; and this decision was hailed with satisfaction, for we were weary of our present quarters. The morning meal over, we superintended the departure of Mr. Osborne, the British Resident of Zululand, and his son, who had joined us in camp the day before. They were hurrying forward to the Inhlazatye in advance of the troops, in order to arrange matters for the proposed meeting. At twelve o'clock, there being no signs of a break in the sky, the General gave the order to strike camp. By one

o'clock our little convoy was under weigh ; but after proceeding for about a mile, the broad flooded expanse of the Umvolosi River brought it to a standstill. First of all the horses crossed, and as we did so we congratulated ourselves on having come just in time : the river was rapidly rising, and in another two hours would have been quite impassable. As it was, the mules had to swim in several places ; happily for them and the waggons, this was only for very short distances ; but even on getting across the greatest difficulty was experienced in getting the waggons up the inclining track, which rose in a short but steep hill from the water's edge, and which had become so slippery that the mules found it almost impossible to keep their footing. However, patience and perseverance carried the day and the passage was safely effected ; we proceeded on our way, and in about an hour's time joined the column, which was encamped beneath a slippery and forbidding-looking hill. General Wood deciding to pursue his journey for another five or six miles, we separated from the party and remained with the troops, as I was anxious to obtain a change of things from our waggon and get into a more comfortable guise ; but I speedily found any attempt of this sort ineffectual, for our tent,

pitched on the wet ground, soon became a Slough of Despond within. A hundred oxen had died the previous night, and this number was trebled by the following morning. In every direction dead and dying animals lay scattered over the plain, and the sight was exceedingly dreary and desolate. Another day of rain found the column still a prisoner; but this inactivity being dreadful to me, we decided to inspan and proceed forward to rejoin the Generals. Colonel Luck, taking advantage of a short interval of fine weather, got a good many of the waggons to the top of the hill, and made preparations to start on the following morning, rain or no rain. As for ourselves, we reached the two Generals' encampment late in the afternoon, where, pitching our tents close to Sir Evelyn's, we walked across to those of General Buller to dine. Next morning the column rejoined us, and having outspanned for a couple of hours, prepared to go forward once more, pitching its final camp within eight or ten miles of the Inhslazatye,—the road thence being too rugged to permit of a farther advance being made. Sir Evelyn, however, proceeded with his mule waggons to the place of meeting, General Buller remaining with the troops, with whom for that night we likewise halted.

That night a span of the General's mules got loose, and, wandering about in search of plunder, pitched upon my tent whereon to commence their attacks. A loose mule is the most troublesome night visitor imaginable. Woe to the bag of corn, bread, or eatables of any sort on which he can lay his snout; it will either be torn to pieces, or the contents demolished, or carried bodily away to be dissected and digested at leisure. Mules had been my bugbear through the whole of my camp life in South Africa. A hundred of these animals might be trampling, fighting, and stealing around the tents for all the servants ever heard of them. Placidly on through the *melee* they would snore, undisturbed and unawakened. Beside me, at night, and close to hand, lay always a thick stick; and sometimes, infuriated almost to madness, I would rush from my tent and lay about me right and left. Away would scamper these night robbers; but no sooner had I crept into my blanket again, and was beginning to get warm once more, than the shuffling snorting sound outside informed me that my enemies had returned. On the night in question, the moonlight suddenly streaming into the tent awoke me from a heavy slumber. I started up, when—oh! horror, could I believe my eyes?—a mule was



THE RAPE OF THE BREAD BAG.

half-way into the tent, calmly and quietly proceeding to lay hold of the bread bag, which, for safety, as I thought, I had placed within the tent. To spring up was the matter of a moment; but my stick had been mislaid. I, however, snatched up a huge knobkerrie, and aimed a blow at the intruder. He cleverly parried the stroke, then with an effrontery unparalleled, he seized the bag between his teeth and made off. Away in hot pursuit went I, forgetting boots and stockings in my hurry, but taking the precaution to slip on an ulster as I ran. Away in front of me scudded ten mules, the delinquent with the bag in his mouth leading in triumph. Away went they; but aided by the wings of fury and vengeance, I followed swiftly in their wake. Never while I had breath left in me, I vowed, should those mules be permitted to indulge in their ill-gotten gains. "Who goes there?" comes from the voice of an astonished sentry; and in a panting voice I reply, while still pressing on, "Friend." He did not attempt to question further, and I left him to his thoughts, for the mules were still in front of me. Suddenly, he who bore the bag stumbled and fell; with an exclamation of delight, I flew to its rescue, and, before he could rise, had dealt him a blow which very nearly prevented him from ever

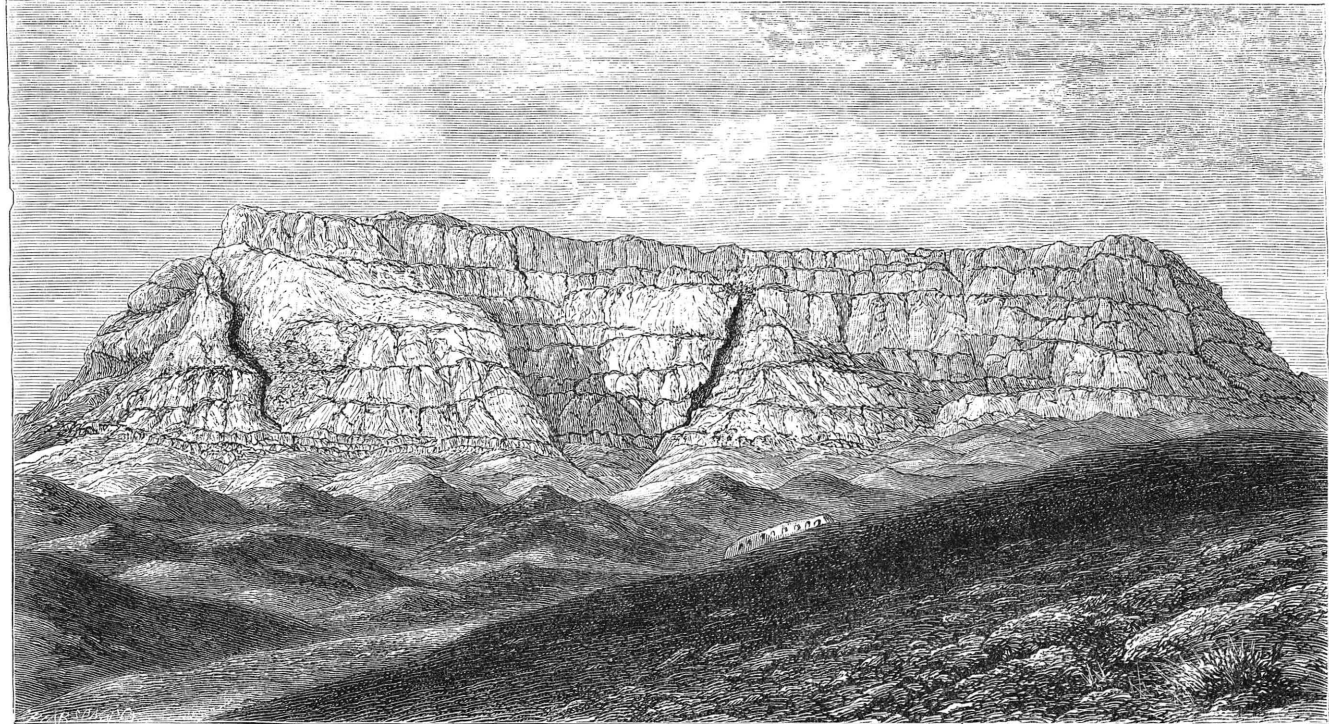
rising again. When he did, however, I drove him and his companions quite a quarter of a mile into the open Veldt, and then prepared to return in triumph with my bread bag. The rough ground had not been sparing to my feet, which felt very tender and painful now that my vanishing anger permitted my mind to wander to such trifles. Back to my tent I limped, and was preparing to enter, when a shuffling noise at no great distance away made me look round. A dark, compact mass was moving towards me. "What can it be," said I to myself, "not more mules I hope?" But even as the words were uttered, my worst fears became realised; the black mass of a surety consisted of mules, and, what is more, they proved to be the very ones I had fervently hoped and imagined to be effectually driven off.

Peace being out of the question as long as they remained at large, I managed with an infinity of trouble to get my black driver and forelouper to arise; and, having seen them well on their way towards the General's camp with the mules in front of them, I re-entered my tent. It was decidedly provoking to hear a sleepy voice coming out of the darkest corner of the tent, where my husband lay, asking "What was the matter?"

“It is my belief that if every Zulu in Zululand were in this tent all assegaing you at once, you would sleep through it all,” answered I, rather peevishly, forgetting the inconsistency of the speech with common reason. Certainly, the tent would have been a miraculous one to have held several hundred thousand men; while the unfortunate victim of so many assegaies would undoubtedly have slept on with a vengeance! The inconsistent speech being, however, a remnant of that anger which the invading mules had aroused, must be excused by the reader; and, in palliation, I may remark that the outburst in question was its final effort.

Next morning, in a dense mist, we started on an unknown track to rejoin Sir Evelyn. The marks left by his waggons were our only guide, so that we took great pains not to lose sight of them by any chance. The first part of the way was exceedingly rough travelling; but at length reaching smoother ground, our road became more manageable. A couple of hours' ride brought us to our destination, as, threading some long, wet, reedy grass, the tents loomed through the mist. We found Captain Slade shaving, and in the distance some one was performing a ditty with evident satisfaction to himself; for no sooner was

it ended than it was struck up again with renewed relish. It was not very musical. In half an hour we were all assembled at breakfast, discussing the probability of the mist clearing off. The great meeting of chiefs had been fixed for this date; but as yet no sign of any could be seen, and the General therefore postponed it to the morrow. About twelve o'clock the mist began to lift its silver veil from off the hills and valleys of Zululand; and then, as if by magic, a scene totally different to that around the lower camp became disclosed. How shall I describe it? Far below stretched a valley, green as emerald, in which were grazing some small herds of tiny Zulu cattle; and all around it, rising higher and higher, waving hills stretched away in interminable ranges, until the distant horizon received and nursed them in its golden-tinted folds. On the soft flower-carpeted slopes innumerable kraals arose; and with the outburst of the sun, their inhabitants could be distinguished coming forth to greet their morning god's first rays. But the most striking feature in the whole of that vast panorama was the giant massive form that rose not a quarter of a mile away from the General's tents. Bathed in a flood of trembling golden mist, I first beheld it; swept with the glowing tints of opal, it ap-



THE INHSLAZATYE OR EVERGREEN MOUNTAIN.

peared one enormous living gem. I had never seen it before ; but it needed no words to tell me that, in that beautiful structure of Nature's own forming, I saw before me the Evergreen Mountain,—the Inhslazatye itself.

With the disappearance of the mist, crowds of natives began to put in an appearance, and the day was spent mixing with the crowd, bartering, buying of them, and, by the aid of interpreters, entering into conversation with them. Many a wholesome truth I learnt that day from the lips of chiefs, indunas, and common men. From those lips the English method of viewing a Zulu received in my mind its greatest shock. It seemed strange to hear these men's voices deploring the loss of a dearly-loved king, longing for his return, and living on in the sweetness of such a hope. Where was the fear, the hate, and the terror for this tyrant, this despotic savage, this man-slaying machine of Sir Bartle Frere's, which we in England had been taught and encouraged to believe existed ? Where, indeed ? The question may indeed be asked, and the lie we have been told hurled back in the teeth of its authors. Never was loyalty so apparent,—never was love so inextinguishable as that which exists in the Zulu nation for its unjustly

invaded, unjustly treated, maligned, and captive king.

I will not here attempt to describe the effects of sunset that evening on the stately Inhsłazátýe. To attempt to do so would be but to court failure; let me, however, say this much, that, in its infinite beauty,—unlike anything of the sort I had ever seen before in far-extended wanderings,—it produced in my mind a pleasure which a great king would once have given all his treasures to possess—a new sensation.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE INHSLAZATYE MEETING—GOD SAVE THE QUEEN—PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED—THE TRUTH ABOUT ZULULAND—HELD IN BONDAGE—SEPARATION—A PEEP AT JOHN DUNN'S HAREM—A MID-DAY OFF-SADDLE—MOURNFUL MEMORIES—LAST DAY WITH THE TROOPS.

BRIGHT and clear broke the morning which heralded in the day of the great InhsLATATYE meeting. At an early hour small bands of far-travelled Zulus might have been seen making their way over hill and dale towards the little camp, whose position was rendered distinguishable by the great Union Jack which waved on a very high pole just in front of General Wood's tent. By nine o'clock a goodly throng had assembled; but the number was much smaller than we had expected. The truth of the matter was, as we afterwards learnt, that the terrible weather of the past few days having rendered travelling impossible, many of the Zulus, hastening to the meeting, were at that time still far off; and

they did not arrive upon the spot until several days after it was all over.

Breakfast finished, Sir Evelyn departed to his tent to array himself in full pontificals, and shortly after returned so covered with medals as to be almost indistinguishable. The next General to light upon the scene was General Buller, who, with Captain Browne, his aide-de-camp, was very soberly dressed; and then from their tents came Captain Slade, Major Fraser, and Mr. Hamilton, all looking very smart indeed. Soon the distant strains of music, wafted across the Zulu hills, struck upon our ears, and gave us warning of the approach of the troops. A far off glitter bespoke their whereabouts as they came forward at a smart pace along a high straight ridge to the left of the camp. Then all became bustle and activity; horses were ordered up; every one quickly mounted and followed General Buller at a gallop as he advanced to meet the troops. It was a stirring scene,—the sun lighting up the uniforms of the military, and burnishing the coats of the horses until they shone and shone again in the reflection of their own brilliancy, while the gay music from the band of the Inniskillings raised the spirits of every one, horses included, the proud frettings of the latter tending to show them off to much advantage.

A long line of about 200 mounted Basutos were drawn up to receive the squadrons as they marched in; and the camp reached, the National Anthem was at once struck up. Far and wide through the bright fresh air these strains of loyalty and devotion were wafted; over the valleys and mountains of Zululand they wandered; against the massive rocks of the Inshlazatye they struck, and echoed and re-echoed again and again in the ears of their listeners. Thousands of miles away from the land of his birth, was there an Englishman present to whom these strains did not bring back the memory of the old country so far away; and was there a heart in all that throng that did not warm with loyalty and devotion to the sovereign in whose honour those strains were emitted? I think not.

Mounting his horse, Sir Evelyn, attended by Captain Slade, Major Fraser, and Mr. Hamilton, came forward to meet us; then turning, we all rode together towards the spot where a dense black horse-shoe of human beings betokened the place of meeting. In the centre of the half circle, squatting on mats, were five of the reigning chiefs and several representatives of others who were unable to attend; while on a chair close to them was seated John Dunn. On either side.

of the chiefs two deep lines of indunas and great men were clustered together; and behind these again was a long row of petty chiefs and men of rank and importance. Around these ran a horse-shoe circle, in lines ten or twelve deep, of Zulus, who were all arranged in complete order and at a respectful distance from their superiors. The names of the chiefs present, in addition to John Dunn, were Zibebu, Umgojana, Siwunguza, Hlubi, and Ntshingwayo; those represented by indunas being Seketwayo, Oham, and Faku; while Mgitswa, Somkele, Mlandela, and Mfanawendhlela were not represented. Amongst the great personages present, those most prominently distinguishable were the Prince Dinuzulu, the only son and heir-apparent of Cetshwayo; Mnyamana, the late Prime Minister of Zululand; Ziwetu, Ndabuko, and Mtonga, brothers of Cetshwayo. There also were the great chiefs Dabulumanzi, Somhlolo Umsingulu of Umquetuas country, the chiefs Umquandi, Simoyi, and many others. Opposite the chiefs were placed a row of chairs and benches, Sir Evelyn occupying the centre, having on his right Mr. Osborne, the British Resident of Zululand, and two interpreters,—one being Mr. Rudolf; while on his left I was seated. Behind us stood the aides-de-camp,

military and private secretaries, and a large group of officers and men—General Buller being seated on my left. Behind us the troops were drawn up in line; and as the three squadrons simultaneously unsheathed their swords, there was a momentary movement of panic amongst the horse-shoe circle, which, however, quickly subsided. Proceedings were commenced by the reading of a long address by Major Fraser, who spoke in a loud and distinct voice, his words being interpreted by Mr. Osborne's interpreter. It contained a long explanation of our past proceedings in, and our policy with regard to, the Transvaal, which, I am bound to admit, was not very attentively listened to by any of the chiefs with the exception of Zibebu, who got up a show of interest, which before long, however, evaporated in a yawn.

This explanation finished, Major Fraser next commenced another address, which was graphically translated by Mr. Rudolph. It consisted of a series of suggestions made to the chiefs,—which they were at liberty to adopt or not as they pleased,—and related chiefly to taxation, border police guards, industrial schools, and matters of equal non-importance, and uninteresting to those to whom they were proposed. Several of them were adopted by the kinglets; but I could

not see any great eagerness evinced to do so ; while, as to sub-residents and the establishment of industrial schools, the idea was unanimously rejected by all,—with the exception of Zibebu, who agreed to the first of the two, provided he was allowed to select his own sub-resident in the person of a ruffianly-looking white man who went by the name of Johan Colenbrander. This Zibebu is one of the few chiefs who do not advocate the king's restoration. Aided by Johan Colenbrander, and regardless of the Resident's feeble remonstrances, he subjects by force the brothers and relatives of Cetshwayo to a system of pillage and spoliation, taking from them their cattle and possessions, because they still cling to the memory of the captive monarch in his exile.

The propositions at an end, several cases of dispute were heard and decided by Sir Evelyn, the account of which I here give from the mouth of Mfutshane, an induna, who was present at the meeting, and which may prove interesting as coming from Zulu lips.

At the meeting the white chiefs first spoke of the affairs of the Basutos and of the Boers. Then they said, "And you, people of Zululand, we say must pay [money] a tax to the thirteen appointed chiefs, and the chiefs must divide the money and send some of it to the Resident, and also pay policemen with it,—the chiefs away from the border giving it to those near

the border,—who shall look out for evil-doers between the Boers and the Zulus, that it may be clearly seen in future whether it is a Zulu or a Boer who is the aggressor. And roads must be made”—the white chiefs did not point out where the roads were to be made—“and when a man leaves the territory of one chief, and goes to that of another, he shall pay money.”

“Do you wish for white advisers (*abameleli*) to live with you and help you?”

But the assembly was silent, excepting only Zibebu, who suggested Johan Colenbrander for his whiteman. The white chiefs rejected him at first, and then said, “Well, we will see about it,” and then agreed to him for the present, saying, “It does not matter, we will see about it again afterwards.”

Then Mgojana answered the question of the white chiefs, saying, “As for me, Sirs, my land has been eaten up between Zibebu and Hamu,—I have no country left. So what should I want with an ‘Adviser,’ since I am pinched in between these two? Am I to be eaten up like this, when the white chiefs had allotted to me a large district?”

And Siwunguza answered, “I have no district, Sirs, since much of the land belonging to my tribe is across the Umhlatuze and is given to John Dunn.”

And Dilikana said, “O Zulus! is it possible that you are wasting the time thus over your separate affairs? Why do you not speak for the King’s family? Have they offended you in any way that you do not speak for them in their distress? And your King? I thought that your intention in coming here was to pray for him? What wrong has he ever done?”

Then said the white chiefs, “You, Maduna, Ziweddu, and Dinuzulu, we give you to John Dunn. As for your cattle, if Zibebu has eaten up thirty, he shall give you back ten, or if forty, he shall give you twenty, and keep twenty in any case. But this is only on condition that you go to John Dunn; if you do not go to live under John Dunn, Zibebu shall return to you none.” They asked leave to answer, but the white

chiefs refused, saying, "What should you answer? We turn you out, Maduna, and Dinuzulu, and Ziweddu, because you are always saying you want the bone of that scoundrel (*ishinga*) whom we have done away with. You are always saying that you are going to [pray] the authorities about that. We forbid you that road. What business have you there?" They said, "That is just the point on which we wish to speak." But the white chiefs forbade it, and they were allowed no reply. And the white chiefs said, "As for you Mnyamana, you have no voice here [cannot speak here]. You refused a chieftainship; we then told you to go to Hamu; you refused that also. Now we say that of your cattle, which Hamu has eaten up, he shall give you back 700, and he shall keep 600." And when Mnyamana asked leave to reply, it was said, "We don't wish you to answer; we are laying down the law to you; how should you answer [object]?" And this is just what was said to Maduna and to Ziweddu, "We will not have you answer."

These judgments having been given, the General arose; the National Anthem once more struck up; the chiefs and people were told to salute; and the meeting was at an end. The troops formed up and marched away, and the slopes of the Inhlazatyé re-echoed for the last time with a triumphal march which seemed to exult in a victory whose gain could produce no good result. Amidst that native crowd murmurs of discontent waxed loud. Was it for this that many had come long and weary distances? was it for this that absent chiefs had sent representatives, and the present crowd assembled? Does

England wish or care to know the truth? because, if so, in the name of the Zulu nation and the majority of their chiefs, I will answer *No*. What to them were the propositions advanced? what did *they* care about industrial schools, border police, sub-residents, and such like? For the purpose of laying before Lukuni (Sir Evelyn Wood) the present discontent of Zululand,—for the purpose of showing the utter failure of Sir Garnet Wolseley's settlement of the country,—and for the purpose of praying for the return and restoration of their unforgotten captive king, under whose rule they were a prosperous nation in past days,—these Zulus had assembled together. But speaking was prohibited; and though an attempt was made by Mnyamana, who stood up during the hearing of the disputes and reminded the people of the purpose for which they had come together, his words were abruptly stopped, and the order not to speak but to listen was reiterated.

So ended the great Inhlazatye meeting, one which accomplished no end but to disappoint many a loyal and hopeful heart, which, coming filled with the latter, returned to its home angry and discontented. Had the nation been called together for the purpose of receiving back its

king, a sight unparalleled would have been witnessed. From every part and corner of Zululand dense crowds would have flocked, and the hilly slopes around would have been covered with Zulus; but the right which every sense of justice demands we should restore to the country—the act which every sense of mercy prompts—is left unrestored and undone. Over the woes of another country,¹—equally the result of false appropriation and injustice on the part of England,—this nation is arguing and attempting legislation; and in the importance of the one to English interests, those of a smaller but no less suffering country are forgotten, and will remain forgotten until, goaded to madness, the people arise to assert their rights and cast off their toils,—and this will be termed rebellion.

As the afternoon of the 31st of August wore away, the hour of separation approached. On the morrow, at an early hour, Sir Evelyn, accompanied by Captain Slade, Major Fraser, and Mr. Hamilton, and attended by Mr. Rudolf and Walkinshaw, had arranged his departure for Swaziland, crossing the Lebombo Mountains to Delagoa Bay, whence a gunboat would convey him to Durban. We, remaining behind, had

¹ Ireland.

planned with General Buller an expedition to Ulundi; and as we purposed accomplishing the visit by going and returning in one day, an early start was also deemed necessary. So, at five o'clock next morning, we arose in a dense mist, and, groping about in the darkness, managed to get the horses saddled. At half-past five, Sir Evelyn and those accompanying him bade us good-bye, and started off on their journey; we, following their example, proceeded in an opposite direction. Our party was a large one, swelled by the advent of several officers from the camp below,—amongst whom was my cousin. At the very outset, one of our number,—Mr. Rupert Leigh of the 15th Hussars,—lagging behind, got separated and lost in the mist, and it was not until late that evening that he managed to find his way back to his own camp, after a most wearying and dispiriting day spent without food.

Passing beneath the lofty Inhlazatye, whose evergreen heights were hidden from view, we followed the indistinct tracks of an overgrown road, which, General Buller informed us, had been made during the Zulu War. As, however, this part of the country was unknown to him, and the Basuto who accompanied us as interpreter

was quite as little acquainted with it as the General, the prospect of a straight ride to Ulundi appeared shadowy and doubtful in the extreme. The thick mist was also a terrible drawback, not a landmark of any kind being visible; and it was not until we had been several hours on the way that the sun began to assert its power, and the heavy curtain was lifted. As the dense atmosphere rolled away in massive clouds, a scene of wild and rugged beauty was unfolded; verily one might have been riding through the wildest part of the Scottish Highlands, whose stately grandeur was recalled by these impressive scenes.

Suddenly the road branched off into two distinct paths,—one leading to the right, the other to the left. We chose the former, which eventually turned out to be the wrong one, and took us a good deal out of our way. As, however, it wound through some lovely scenery, we did not grudge the extra distance; though, I daresay, our horses, if they had been consulted, would not have agreed with us. A large winding rocky river, whose banks were rich in vegetation, suddenly obstructed our path, and was the first intimation to us that we were off the right track. Crossing it we came upon some waggons out-

spanned, and a few tents pitched close by. These turned out to be the property of the chief, John Dunn, whose arrival was hourly expected; and, as our interpreter inquired the way to Ulundi, from the folds of one of the tents peered two young Zulu girls, between the ages of sixteen and seventeen, who, we were informed, were the latest additions to that chief's harem. A native was given us to show us the way, and he led us to a deep ford higher up the river, which proved to be our old friend the White Umvolosi. This native escorted us most unwillingly, inasmuch as his companions were at that moment engaged in devouring some nasty-looking half-cooked meat, which composed their breakfast, and he was greatly alarmed lest on his return he would find his portion gone. The General, however, consoled and made him happy in the possession of a shilling; and, the ford reached, he was permitted to retrace his steps, which he did with the greatest alacrity. By a small village of kraals, which we soon after reached, we halted and off-saddled for half an hour; after which, pressing a Zulu into our service as guide, we started again, proceeding in single file along a narrow Kaffir path, which we could distinguish winding upwards to a great height, and which our guide,

on quitting us, informed us we must faithfully adhere to.

Obeying his directions, we eventually found ourselves overlooking a magnificent scene, which embraced far-stretching valleys and hills ; while a glimpse of the White Umvolosi, dashing and foaming along in its rocky bed several miles below, put a finishing touch to this gorgeous panorama. High above us towered frowning crags and perpendicular masses of rocks crowned by a perfect garden of vegetation ; while, as we ascended higher, the shrubs and brushwood assumed such luxuriant growth, that it was with the greatest difficulty we forced our horses along. At length, after a great deal of rough climbing, the summit we had been so long bent on attaining was reached, and the somewhat tropical country we had been riding through was replaced by vast waving plains, from the midst of which, in the far distance, could be distinguished the battlefield of Ulundi. Here, again, the winding course of the Umvolosi greeted us, and on its banks we off-saddled, for the second time that day, to feed the horses and refresh ourselves. The heat was overpowering, and the cool transparent waters of the beautiful river were tantalizing beyond description. Under a shady tree, close to its limpid

stream, I ensconced myself to watch our four horses dispose of their oats and mealies; and, lulled by the pleasant murmur of the water gurgling over the stones, I should speedily have fallen asleep had not the voice of General Buller suddenly awakened me to the reality of the moment by inviting me to join in an attack on some bread, potted meat, and hot coffee which he had been busy preparing. At this place an hour's law only was given, at the expiration of which the journey was renewed. Entering upon the battlefield, we galloped across the plain over which the Lancers charged, and speedily arrived upon the ruins of the great Nodwengu Kraal. Of this not a vestige remained beyond a huge dark circle, showing where the immense town had once stood; while, all over the wide plain, dark rings, —similar to that of Nodwengu,—displayed the spots whereon vast masses of Cetshwayo's people had once lived. In many places large heaps of skeletons told a silent tale of the bravery of a vanquished nation; how for king and country they had hotly disputed possession with the invaders of their own loved capital; and how, rallying together, they had scorned to ask for quarter,—dying as they fell in that wholesale butchery for which we gave ourselves so much glory. Far

and wide the plain was dotted with skeletons ; every bush seemed to shelter the remains of some poor wretch who had crawled beneath it to die ; every snug nook and cranny, every grass-grown valley or donga, bore upon its face the ghastly grinning impress of death ; while around Ulundi the traces of a great struggle still remained.

Where the town itself had stood, masses of shrubs and trees of rapid growth obscured every vestige of the great capital of Cetshwayo so completely that for a long time General Buller was at a loss to discover the place at all, and it was only by the merest chance that the spot was identified.

The battlefield of Ulundi was, at the time of our visit, shooting forth its young verdant coat ; and the emerald tints on the hills by which it is surrounded displayed the first budding of early spring in its newest and freshest guise.

To one who, like myself, realised the horrible injustice of the Zulu War, this visit brought nothing but sad thoughts and mournful memories ; the scene was one of a great wreck,—and that wreck, as it was bit by bit disclosed, loaded the mind with shame and sorrow for the deed that had been so wantonly committed. Even as I write this I see it all again,—the verdant basin, the green

emerald hills, the golden sun lighting up the trophies of nature's abundance ; and then, through the dancing gleams of sunlight, I see the vast black circles which show where ruin reigns, and the ghastly grinning emblems of death mocking, as it were, at mercy, justice, and fair-play.

A long ride before us, and the afternoon wearing away, warned us that it was time to think of returning. Full forty miles had we ridden, and an equal distance still separated us from the camp where the troops were quartered. Striking across the broad plain, we pointed our horses' heads for some distant hills, keeping them as straight as possible for the InhsLATATYE. But it was by no means an easy matter to preserve the right line, this rough and rugged manner of travelling obliging us many and many a time to make long detours in order to circumvent some uncrossable gulf or precipitous height. Long before reaching the InhsLATATYE the sun had bidden us adieu, and the moon usurped its place, by whose light we found it no easy matter to make out the right road. Had it not been for the friendly directions given us by a Zulu, it is my firm conviction that we should have been forced to pass the night beneath the slopes of the Evergreen Mountain,

which,—tired, hungry, and thirsty as were ourselves and our horses,—would, I may venture to assert, not have been an acceptable ending to our day's journey.

It was nearly ten o'clock when we reached the camp that night. For seventeen hours, with the exception of the two short off-saddles, the horses had been on the move, and were proportionately weary in consequence. We lazy creatures, who had availed ourselves of their willing services all day, were victims more to hunger and thirst than weariness. Breakfast that morning we had had none, and the lunch had been necessarily restricted; therefore we welcomed the repast laid out in General Buller's tent, which having enjoyed, we retired contented and satisfied to bed, learning, as we proceeded, whither the troops were under orders to march on the morrow.

So the next day the old business was recommenced; it was the last of our sojourn with the squadrons. General Buller pushed forward at a quick rate for Newcastle, and we prepared to separate from the column next day. Our horses were picked and chosen; the few things we needed were packed and laid ready for the pack-horse; Tom received instructions to remain with

the troops until reaching Newcastle, then to hurry down country with our things to Maritzburg; while we girded ourselves for the great ride we had in prospect, which, in pursuance of a plan I had been forming during my sojourn in Zululand, had the object in view of ascertaining the desire of a nation on the subject of its captive king's return. That night we ate our farewell dinner with the 15th; and the next morning, before the troops were on the move, we bade them all good-bye. Needless here to dwell on the hospitality and kindness we had received from every one during our sojourn in South Africa—the pages of this book have amply demonstrated the fact; but looking back on these few brief months during which we had the pleasure to share with them their home on the Veldt, it is with feelings of gratitude that I herein recall the welcome and the hospitality which was tendered us by all.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A NATIONAL DESIRE—OPPRESSION—THE BLOODY HAND—THE MONUMENT OF NATURE—THE LAST OF ZULULAND—UM-SINGA — BLOBBS IN JEOPARDY — SIR EVELYN WOOD IN SWAZILAND—REGRET—VELDT COSTUMES—AN ABIGAIL'S OPINION OF CAPE TOWN.

It is neither my intention, nor is it in the province of this book, to give an account of our journey. The inseparable facts connected with it which would have to be recorded and commented upon are sufficient in themselves to fill the pages of another book. It is enough here to remark that, during this pilgrimage of inquiry, I obtained that information which it has been the work of both resident and Government authorities, and interested parties, to keep concealed from the public. That information consists in an almost universal desire on the part of the Zulu nation for their king's return. This desire is, for the most part, participated in by the reigning chiefs, with the exception of Oham, Zibebu, and Umfanawendhlela, John Dunn being of course included; but the people they govern

are discontented and oppressed, and are united with the rest of the nation in longing for their king's return, under whom they were a prosperous and happy people. By every species of petty tyranny on the part of these chiefs and the authorities, this universal desire is curbed and suppressed. The relations—the son, the brothers, and the wives of the king—are, by theft and confiscation, reduced to beggary. They are told to go and settle in those spots reigned over by their bitterest enemy; and, to enforce this order, their possessions are taken from them. It is vain for the people to protest, for their protestations are unheeded. All this, so far back as last August, I wrote and told the English people; since which day the troubles that I foretold have commenced. Who has not heard of the ruthless treatment by John Dunn in the Stimela and Mlandela affair, and who has not read of the horrible massacre of the Abaqualusi tribe by Oham?—the sole reason for such bloodshed and cruelty being the loyal desire of an oppressed people for the return of their king. By these murders these chiefs have committed a direct breach of the promise they made at their installation, viz. :—“ I will not permit the existence of the Zulu military system, or the existence of

any of the Zulu military organisation whatever, within my territory; I will not make war upon any chief, or chiefs, or people, without the sanction of the British Government." The failure of England to punish these breaches of promise seems to point to the fact that such bloodshed is sanctioned by the British Government; and on it must therefore rest the odium of the bloodthirsty deeds of Zibebu, Oham, and John Dunn.

It was a bright fine morning on which our pilgrimage of inquiry ended. The voice of an aggrieved country had, in fear and secrecy, confided to me its miserable story; and fresh from an interview with Hlubi, who dwells close to Rorke's Drift, we were riding slowly over a rough, rugged, and hilly country to visit the scene of disaster and death which had rewarded the first efforts of England to tear from a noble and unoffending people their dearly-prized liberty, their king, and their country. Isandhlwana—or, as people in England are pleased to term the place, Isandula—was the object of our visit; and from Hlubi's location, accompanied by our interpreter, we were riding slowly in that direction. Gaunt heights rose before us, behind us, and all around; the bright flashing waters of the Buffalo gleamed far below in a silver streak of light; the fords

of Rorke's and Fugitive's Drifts, widely distant from each other, were equally distinct; and above them all, away to the eastward, overlooking one of Zululand's grandest and noblest scenes, towered the lofty peak of Isandhlwana—The Bloody Hand.

A gently-rising slope leads upwards from a small watercourse to the Nek; across which the doomed troops passed ere they pitched their camp on an undulating plain on the other side of the mountain. Here the ranges of the Ngutu and Ndlazayazi Mountains bound on the north and south a far-stretching tract of country, which, connected with other hills, fades away, mystic and indistinct, on the distant horizon. Even now many traces of the terrible struggle remain; and cairns, on some of the most available heights of the crag, show where bands of our dead countrymen were discovered—whither, doubtless, they had retreated, disputing to the last the unequal odds of that fierce and desperate struggle. Who, standing on this spot of bitter memory, cannot picture to himself the terrible sight which greeted the eyes of Lord Chelmsford's returning party, as, amidst a silence—the silence of death—and in the deep twilight of a blood-stained day, they came upon this scene? Worse than this: