



*THE ZULUS*



THE ZULUS  
AND  
THE BRITISH FRONTIERS.

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## PREFACE.

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ENCOURAGED by the favourable reception already accorded to my late publication, "Camp Life and Sport in South Africa," I have ventured once more to add my quota of information to the common stock, in the hope that some additional light may be thrown upon the many complicated questions inseparable from our position as colonists in South Africa. A distinguished authority, Colonel Mure, M.P., who has had considerable experience of Kaffir warfare, in an interesting letter published in the *Daily News* of March 31st, has drawn a comparison between the forces at our disposal at the present crisis, and those employed by us for the subjugation of the Gaikas and Galekas in the war terminated last year.

Having served with my regiment, the Cape Mounted Rifles, in the campaign of 1851-53, I have thought in a similar manner that it might not be un-

interesting to draw a parallel between the Zulu War now going on, and former Kaffir wars, hoping that valuable suggestions may be deduced from this study. I would, at the same time, here endeavour to offer a few practical suggestions with regard to the future defence of our South African colonies, more especially as the ultimate withdrawal of the Imperial troops will relegate to the colonists themselves, in the future, the anxious duty of defending our enormously extended boundaries.

The great object to be arrived at therefore would be the institution of a defence force complete in itself, and sufficiently powerful and useful to answer all the requirements of colonial warfare, irrespective of Imperial troops; in other words a permanent colonial force, equal to all emergencies. In former days, the Colony was defended from the probable incursion of the savage Gaika and Galeka tribes by a chain of forts, placed at convenient intervals on the frontier line, and held by a mounted as well as infantry force. The cavalry force was represented by that useful corps, the Cape Mounted Rifles; and the infantry was supplied by the different regiments which happened to be available. So I think in the

present instance that a corps answering to the Cape Mounted Rifles, and similarly organised and appointed, consisting of ten or twelve troops, might be advantageously employed to defend our frontier boundaries to the north-east. These troops would be distributed over a number of different posts, communication being kept up between them by continual patrols of small parties, carrying the mails and despatches. The garrisons at these posts might be supplemented with small parties of infantry or militia (dismounted) if necessary. In this way, a constant surveillance would be exercised over the frontier line, without interfering in any way with the susceptibilities of the Zulus, or actually crossing the boundary line. They would convey intelligence of any hostile movement among the natives, and would be always available to recapture cattle stolen or carried over the border, which, being mounted, they could easily achieve; their presence would give confidence to the settlers living upon outlying farms, and would be an adequate protection. This regiment should not consist of less than eight or nine hundred men; it would possibly do away with any necessity for the employment of infantry at all, and would be the

most economical in the end. The Zulus have shown themselves incapable of successfully attacking intrenched camps, even of a very slight improvised construction. The forts, therefore, would not be very formidable or expensive, but mere earthworks. Such a force, being mounted, could easily be withdrawn, if occasion required, and concentrated upon its base, which with an infantry force would be difficult, in case of these posts being surrounded as at Etchowe. This mounted force should be as lightly equipped as possible, armed with short double-barrelled smooth-bore carbines, slung as at present seen in the Mounted Police. The saddles should be plain, with moveable holsters to carry a brace of revolvers. The horses should be bought by Government, allowing the men the right of purchase at a certain moderate price, and the arms supplied on the same terms, to be properly inspected and passed to ensure efficiency.

In addition to this mounted force, all the able-bodied population of the towns should be enrolled, and liable to serve up to a certain age, if necessity required; this at all events should be the rule until security of frontier is attained. This militia should be properly armed and equipped, and subjected to

inspection from time to time periodically, being instructed to defend intrenchments, and made altogether efficient as a defensive force in case of extremity.

The patrolling force should have power to seize arms carried over the boundary for sale to the natives. Such sale of arms ought to be made a military offence, and treated summarily by court-martial.

I would thus have the whole population, capable of bearing arms, enrolled for mutual defence, with other proper positions and stations assigned, and prepared at a moment's notice to take up the different points for that purpose, if required ; and I think that this attitude would be the best preventive of any outbreak on the part of the natives.

At the same time, I would appoint residents or magistrates, where practicable, among the native Zulus, to maintain order and see that justice is done, should favourable circumstances arise for that purpose, such as the decline of Ketchwhy's power, or in the event of his death or deposition. The authority of these residents or magistrates should be supported by a large body of native police. The friendly natives would be no doubt available for this purpose. My belief is that, if security to life and property could be secured to the



natives of Zulu Land by this system, which has been already successfully carried out in other parts of Kaffir Land, the force of public opinion on the part of the natives of Zulu Land would soon interpose a barrier to the excesses of despotism like that of their present King, and would be the most effectual method of initiating a new order of things in that region of South Africa.

I have been assisted by my friend, Mr. R. Acton, who has contributed the account of political transactions in Natal and the Transvaal, and of the disputes preceding the recent declaration of war. He desires to be alone responsible for the statements and comments upon those parts of the subject.

T. J. L.

45, BLENHEIM CRESCENT,  
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# CONTENTS.



## CHAPTER I.

### EASTERN SOUTH AFRICA : COUNTRY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Geographical position.—Physical features.—The whole region divided between the elevated inland plains and the parallel ranges, or descending terraces, falling towards the sea.—The Transvaal.—Territory of Natal.—Zulu Land.—The mountains.—The rivers.—Animals of this region of South Africa . . .	PAGE 1
---	-----------

## CHAPTER II.

### THE KAFFIRS.

Natives of Eastern South Africa, a branch of the great Bantu race.—“Kaffirs,” origin of that name.—Ama-Zulu and Ama-Xosa.—Clanship, and kindred of tribes.—Galeka headship of Amaxosa.—Overthrow of Kreli, and suppression of the Pondo tribe ; recent disturbing events in Kaffirdom.—Sketch of Kaffir history in South Africa.—Law of succession.—Limited power of chiefs.—Difficulty of securing observance of treaties.—Early Dutch colonization.—Transfer of the Cape to Great Britain.—Border troubles with the Kaffirs.—Thefts of cattle.—Disputed right to the land.—Final subjection of Kaffraria by last year’s war . . . . .	18
---	----

## CHAPTER III.

### THE ZULUS, UNDER CHAKA AND DINGAAN.

Origin of the Zulu Nation, and its growth by conquests.—The South African “Celestials,” or “Heaven-born.”—Chaka, their Founder.—His birth and education.—Resolves to be an African

	PAGE
Napoleon Buonaparte.—Conceives an Imperial policy.— Creates an army.—Conquers his world.—Indulges his pride and cruelty.—Invades British Kaffraria.—Fails in expedition to Delagoa Bay.—Is put to death.—Despotism tempered by fratricide.—Tyranny of Dingaan.—Dealings with the British at Durban.—With the Dutch settlers in Natal.—That terri- tory then vacant.—Pieter Retief at the Zulu King's Court.— The stolen cattle regained.—Second Dutch embassy.—Dingaan's murderous treachery.—Slaughter of his visitors.—The Rev. Mr. Owen.—Massacre of the Dutch at Weenen, the "Place of Weeping."—Gert Maritz.—Pietermaritzburg.—Dutch and English fighting against Dingaan.—His overthrow, by the aid of Panda.—Revolution in Zulu Land . . . . .	28

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### ZULU TACTICS AND MILITARY ORGANIZATION COMPARED WITH OTHER KAFFIR WARFARE.

Composition of the Zulu army.—Equipment and weapons.—Mode of fighting, different from that of Frontier Kaffirs.—Tactics and manoeuvres.—Kaffir stratagems, feints and decoys.—Zulu final rush and close combat.—How the Boers and Griquas deal with them.—The Boers' waggon laager.—Incumbrance of cattle.—"The Snob of all Wars." . . . . .	53
---	----

#### CHAPTER V.

##### THE FRONTIER DEFENCE SERVICE. THE CAPE MOUNTED RIFLES.

Progressive changes.—The Boers' Commando.—Fingo Auxiliaries. —Colonial mixed levies.—An unsoldierly rabble.—Lakeman's Leather Legion.—Armstrong's Horse.—The Cape Mounted Rifles.—Organization of that Regiment.—Dapper little Hotten- tots.—Arms and uniform.—Their horses.—Cavalry and In- fantry in one corps.—Our Cavalry Colonel.—Our Infantry Colonel.—Sharp-sighted "Totties."—Abolition of the Regi- ment.—The Armed and Mounted Police.—The Frontier Forts. —New Defence Corps established last year . . . . .	73
---	----

## CHAPTER VI.

## AN EPISODE IN KAFFIR WARFARE.

	PAGE
Sir Harry Smith.—His triumph over Macomo.—His standard of peace.—His Excellency shut up in Fort Cox.—The Kaffir messenger.—Ingenious stratagem.—Relief expedition from Fort Hare.—Stopped by the enemy.—Lieutenant Squirrel's service.—Burying the fallen.—Our expedition from King William's Town.—The besieged fort is relieved.—The governor extricated.—Return to head-quarters.—My personal adventures . . . . .	98

## CHAPTER VII.

## ZULU LAND UNDER KING PANDA.

A milder reign.—System of civil administration.—Prosecutions for witchcraft.—Laws concerning marriage.—Condition of women.—Military towns or kraals.—Zulu houses and domestic habits.—Judicial procedure.—Fondness for controversy.—Intellectual subtlety.—Language highly organized and refined.—Individual nicknames.—Sobantu and Somtseu.—Prohibited words.—Grammatical forms.—Clicks of pronunciation.—Polite phrases.—Court rhapsodists.—State religion.—Worship of Cæsars.—Ceremonial and ritual.—African heathenism . . . . .	108
--	-----

## CHAPTER VIII.

## NATAL AND ZULUS UNDER BRITISH RULE.

Vast influx of Zulus into Natal, to escape their marriage laws.—No increase of European population.—Dangerous disproportion of the races.—History of British Government in Natal.—Departure of the Dutch.—Their grievances.—Principles of Natal administration since 1848.—A nursery of Kaffir laws, manners, and customs, under British rule.—His Excellency the Supreme Chief of Zulu tribes.—Mr. Theophilus Shepstone, Native Affairs Secretary.—A Protectorate of natives, but not a Colony . . . . .	130
---	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

## LANGALIBALELE AND BISHOP COLENZO.

	PAGE
Personal.—“Native Law” in the colony.—The Amahlubi and Putili tribes.—Langalibalele.—Kaffirs buying guns.—Registration of guns.—The chief disobeys a summons.—Attempted secession of his tribe.—Accidental conflict and homicide.—Surrender of Langalibalele.—Severe treatment of the people.—Trial of Langalibalele and others.—Irregularity of procedure.—Bishop Colenso takes up the case.—And obtains an alteration of the sentence . . .	153

## CHAPTER X.

## SIR GARNET WOLSELEY IN NATAL.

The Langalibalele controversy.—The new Administrator.—Remission of punishments.—Sad fate of the Putili tribe.—Re-settlement of people.—Waste of their property.—No accounts of sales.—Court-martial on the Natal Volunteers.—Lord Carnarvon’s proposed reforms.—The Legislative Council.—Existing laws.—Regulated polygamy.—“Sad and degraded lot” of women.—Lieutenant-Governor Sir Henry Bulwer. . . .	180
--	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

## OUR CORONATION OF KETCHWHYO: “SOMTSEU” THE KINGMAKER.

Panda’s pacific reign.—His relations to the Natal Government.—Rivalry of his sons.—Victory of Ketchwhyho in 1856.—He is made heir-apparent and regent.—Mr. Shepstone’s visit to Panda in 1861.—The Englishman “represents Chaka.”—He becomes “father” of Ketchwhyho.—Messages of invitation, 1873.—He is sent as chief witness.—The ceremonial.—The proclamation of good laws.—Questionable political efficacy of these proceedings. . . . .	203
--	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

## OUR ANNEXATION OF THE TRANSVAAL.

	PAGE
Queen Victoria recognized the independence of the Republic in 1852.—Different character of the Lydenberg district.—English at the Gold-fields.—The frontier—Our Foreign Office and our Colonial Office.—The South African Confederation scheme.—Official prejudice and fault-finding.—Secocooni.—President Burgers.—Mismanagement of the war.—Outcry against the Republic.—Lord Carnarvon decrees its downfall.—The Republic finishes its war.—Libels on its foreign soldiers.—Sir Theophilus Shepstone annexes the Transvaal . . . . .	228

## CHAPTER XIII.

## OUR LAST YEAR'S KAFFIR WAR.

The eastern border of the Cape Colony.—The Galekas, and their old feud with the Fingoes.—A casual squabble.—Warfare between the tribes.—Kreli, the Galeka chief, disobeys a summons.—Outbreak of this Kaffir war.—Use of fire-arms by Galekas.—Their boldness.—Commandant C. D. Griffith.—General Sir Arthur Cunynghame.—The Tembus or Tambookies, our allies.—Gangelezwe and his wife.—Campaign in the Trans-Kei.—Flight of Kreli.—Check at Umsitzani.—Reinforcements.—Insurrection of the Gaikas.—Kreli and Sandilli.—Tini Macomo.—Battle of Quintana.—Driven into the Perie Bush.—Concluding operations.—Annexation of Pondo Land.—Sir Bartle Frere goes to Natal. . . . .	263
---	-----

## CHAPTER XIV.

## OUR DISPUTE WITH KING KETCHWHYO.

Long-standing Transvaal disputes with Ketchwhy.—Sir Henry Bulwer disposed to friendly mediation.—He dissuades Ketchwhy from attacking the Swazies.—Rumour of atrocities in Zulu Land.—The King rejects British interference with his	
--	--

	PAGE
laws.—His angry speech.—The Transvaal boundary question.	
—The alleged cession of territory to the Dutch.—The English Commission of Inquiry.—Decision in favour of the Zulus.	
—Sir T. Shepstone now opposes the Zulu claim.—His equivocal position in the Transvaal —Ketchwhy is “sold.”—Border disturbances—Sir Bartle Frere already intent on conquest.	
—His war preparations.—His protracted controversy with the Natal Commissioners of Inquiry, and with Sir H. Bulwer.—The award rendered nugatory by impossible conditions.—The ultimatum of December 11th.—Moral responsibility of this unjust war . . . . .	285

## CHAPTER XV.

### OUR PRESENT ZULU WAR: ISANDHLWANA.

Sir Bartle Frere’s apology for invading Zulu Land.—Lord Chelmsford’s army.—Formation and positions of its five columns.—They cross the frontier, January 11th.—Lord Chelmsford with Colonel Glyn’s column.—Capture of Sirayo’s Kraal.—The camp at Isandhlwana.—The General moves on in advance, January 22nd.—What happened in his absence.—Colonel Durnford and Colonel Pulleine.—The beginning of the conflict.—Colonel Durnford falls back.—Defence of the camp.—Destruction of our troops.—Heroic defence of the post at Rorke’s Drift.—A few remarks . . . . .	327
---	-----

## APPENDIX.

I. KETCHWHYO’S ALLEGED CRIMES . . . . .	361
II. ALLEGED MENACING PREPARATIONS. . . . .	368
III. LATEST FROM THE TRANSVAAL . . . . .	370