



THE
RUIN OF ZULULAND.

VOL. I.

BISHOP COLENZO.



“Sobantu,” 1882.

“It has been terrible to see this great wave of wickedness rolling on, and to be powerless to help it—to be debarred all possibility of showing the injustice of the war until it was too late—too late to prevent the shedding of innocent blood, and the ravaging of a whole country—too late to save the lives of 2000 of our own soldiers and natives, and of 10,000 patriotic Zulus—too late to prevent the name of Englishman from becoming, in the Native mind, the synonym for duplicity, treachery, and violence, instead of, as in the days gone by, for truth and justice and righteousness.”

Bishop Colenso.

THE
RUIN OF ZULULAND:

AN ACCOUNT OF
BRITISH DOINGS IN ZULULAND SINCE
THE INVASION OF 1879.

BY
FRANCES ELLEN COLENZO.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BEING A SEQUEL TO
THE HISTORY OF THE ZULU WAR,

BY
FRANCES ELLEN COLENZO
AND
LIEUT.-COLONEL EDWARD DURNFORD.

VOLUME I.
(WITH PORTRAIT OF BISHOP COLENZO.)

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P R E F A C E .

IN continuation of such attempts as I have made to tell the English world a little of the truth concerning England's dealings, through her representatives, with the inhabitants of these far-away lands of ours in South Africa, I now put together and record the various events that have taken place since the termination of the Zulu war, having been in a position to learn the facts of the case as gathered by the persistent, conscientious, and disinterested labours of my father, and of my elder sister, who has been closely associated with him in all his labours.

The suggestion that I should undertake the present work was made to me by my father upon the last occasion on which we talked together, on this or any other topic; for I was away from home when he fell ill, a fortnight after, and although I returned at once, it was just too late to see him again.

I have since heard that not only had he spoken, during my absence, with pleased expectancy of my doing this work as he wished it to be done, but that, during the last night of his life, when for a while he was murmuring his thoughts without full consciousness of his surroundings, he had spoken repeatedly of certain papers which he fancied that

he had at hand, saying, "Take them up to Frances; she will do that work;" evidently alluding to what he had given me to do.

My first thought now is to fulfil that wish, the last expressed by him to me. I had already begun to write, according to his desire; and now, although I must finish my task without his help and supervision, it shall not be delayed through fault of mine.

The subject is one, perhaps, to attract but languid attention in England, where so many nearer interests absorb the minds of thinking persons. Yet to those who truly care for England's honour, her character for truth and justice, it should make but little difference whether her name be dragged in the dust by doings at home or abroad. The disgrace, the danger, is the same. Were it a question only of inaugurating a benevolent course of action towards the native races of South Africa, many a good man in England might be found to say, "While such misery exists at home, amongst our own poor, and the kindred race of the sister isle, we should do wrong to expend time, and thought, and care upon distant, alien nations." And, so that the speaker be truly spending himself, and doing his utmost in the good work at home, no one could gainsay him, though even the dogs may eat of the crumbs which fall from the children's table. But the South African question presents no such simple aspect. *Here England has already interfered*, not only unwisely and mistakenly, but cruelly and falsely: she has sowed the wind, and will herself some day

most grievously reap the whirlwind. Hence it is amongst the first duties of every loyal, patriotic English man, ay, and woman too, to learn the truth about these matters, in the hope that, even now, the worst consequences of our misdeeds may be averted from our victims, and the full punishment from ourselves.

My father's interest in the Zulu question, however, sprang from higher motives than even patriotism, and a regard for his country's name and honour. His mission in the world was to follow in the steps of his Master, and to labour for the truth, and for humanity, wherever he saw the need arise. Circumstances only made him the special champion of the African races; wherever it had pleased Providence to place him, there he would have fought the same good fight—there he would have laboured and would have died, as truly he now has died, for the truth against all falsehood, for justice against tyranny, for pity and mercy against cruelty and revenge.

Nor will his work die with him. Our Captain has been summoned home, and God has bidden him rest, but we, and every other member of the little band that has fought with him in the good cause, have yet to earn that sweet repose, and there is more than ever need that we should struggle on, until we, too, like him, shall have done our work.

FRANCES ELLEN COLENSO.

BISHOPSTOWE, NATAL,
June 1884.

CORRIGENDA ET ADDENDA.

Page 62, *in notis*.—After “forgiven” add “although condoned.”
The words quoted on page 158 are from an article by the Rev.
P. H. Wicksteed.
The photograph of the Bishop was taken at Durban, Natal, in
1882, by Mr. B. Kisch.

INTRODUCTION.



WHEN this book was commenced it was thought certain that early in the Session of Parliament which is now drawing to a close, attention would be vigorously directed to the miserable circumstances of the Zulu people and of their King. Cetshwayo was still alive; but the success of the well-trained bands of Zibebu, disciplined, armed, and led by Europeans, had left the National party, deprived at a stroke of many leading chiefs and warriors, hampered by the tyranny in the Reserve and by the displeasure of the Natal Government, little to hope from their own efforts.

So at least it appeared even to those who knew of the gallant stand made by Mnyamana, and were aware of the widespread loyalty to the National cause in Zululand—a loyalty which showed itself even among the most passive of the Zulus of the Reserve. It was felt then that a stringent and independent inquiry into the truth of the representations upon which the Colonial Office and local officials had based their conduct was urgently needed if the country was to be saved from utter ruin, and its government placed upon a healthy footing.

Circumstances which could not be controlled have

prevented the more rapid completion of this book, and in publishing a first volume only it is desirable to say that while the history of the last year of strife in Zululand must necessarily supply some of the data upon which any decision affecting the future of the country can be based, the following pages will afford a clue for unravelling the whole of the disastrous policy of which the late King and the flower of his nation have been the victims. Or at least, if no definite conclusions can be formed from the evidence here presented, it will appear that the strongest possible case has been established for the appointment of the much-needed Commission of Inquiry.

The main point to be borne in mind is that, in each case of South African disaster connected with Natal, the evil has been wrought by the same means, and that the same persons (or class of persons) are responsible for them. Hasty or arbitrary action on the part of Government officials, assisted by the land-hunger and contempt for the coloured races of a certain noisy faction amongst the colonists, has invariably been the first agent. The evil passions thereby engendered have then wrought up all concerned into a state of mind in which nothing but the absolute submission of the black race seems endurable. At this point were Natal able to govern herself, and strong enough to make her own wars, much high-handed injustice and some ruthless deeds would occur, but an enormous amount of official duplicity and pages

of official fiction would be spared.* England does not choose that the colonies over which she has still some control should manage their affairs after the old-fashioned manner of some of the early settlers in the New World, with whom might was the only right, and to whom the coloured inhabitants of the lands around them were wild beasts to be hunted down, or tamed into household drudges if possible. The English nation demands, whatever her alternate Governments may do, that any war with the aborigines in which she spends her treasure and her blood shall be a righteous war, necessary for the protection of her colonies, and *necessary* in the strict sense of the word—not merely “expedient” according to the modern use of the expression, which is in its nature unchristian and unholy. Therefore when a British colony and her officials desire to rob or wrong their coloured neighbours or subjects, they must first make out a good case against their intended victims for the Colonial Office at home to give to the British public; and this necessity is the origin of the most curious mass of misstatements, imaginary premises, and false deductions, ever laid upon the table of the Houses of Parliament. A small case of wrong takes but a few pages to make it sound right, a greater one may take volumes; but the means in every case are the same. It is a black national catalogue as far back as it has been

* This is not intended as an argument in favour of responsible government.

traced in this portion of South Africa, and the list may be made out as follows :—

1. *Matshana*, 1858.—A native chief enticed by Natal Government officials to a friendly interview, and then treacherously attacked, and many of his unarmed followers slain, though the attempt to seize the chief himself failed. This little transaction was so adjusted in the official reports that for sixteen years the real facts were concealed, though they elicited very severe reproof from Lord Carnarvon in 1875.

2. *Langalibalele*, 1873.—War declared, and H.M.'s troops sent out, against this chief on false pretences. Manipulated despatches might have successfully smoothed this matter over, had not the late Bishop of Natal by this time obtained an insight into the native policy of Natal, and added his true words to those of official fiction. The expedition and subsequent iniquitous proceedings were condemned in England, but the innocent tribe was already dispersed, many members of it killed, and the chief condemned to lifelong banishment at Capetown, where, after eleven years, he still remains a broken-hearted captive, in spite of many promises held out for his release.

3. *Putini Tribe*, 1873.—This tribe was attacked at the same time as that of Langalibalele, and their cause championed by the Bishop. In this case the late Colonel Durnford, R.E., also interfered with official fiction. Whereas there was no real charge against Langalibalele, there was not, as Lord Carnarvon satisfied himself, the shadow of a charge against the Putini tribe, and in this case, through

Colonel Durnford's influence, the Natal officials were obliged by England *partially* to undo their work*—the only case on record.

4. *Annexation of the Transvaal*.—Whether or no the Boers are fit to rule themselves or, which matters more, to rule others, there can be no doubt that we temporarily obtained possession of that white elephant, their country, in a very dishonest fashion. Official fiction in this instance was such as could hardly be surpassed. But, the Boers being able to make their case known for themselves, England acted towards them as no doubt she would towards the natives were they able to speak for themselves; and in this case official fiction finally lost the day, though not without great loss to us, and untold misery to the natives.

5. *Sikukuni's Country*.—Here official romance has had its full swing almost unmolested. The land is too far away: "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." But we know this much, at all events, that one of our excuses for annexing the Transvaal was the war between the Boers and Sikukuni's people, and our (supposed) wish to save the latter. And we know that we then prosecuted that war ourselves; that Sir Garnet Wolseley blew up as many of Sikukuni's men, women, and children as the 50 or 70 lbs. of gun-cotton at his disposal could reach; that our Swazi

* *A small proportion* of the value of the possessions of which they had been stripped, *without even a shadow of a reason*, was ordered to be restored to them. By no means the whole of that have they ever received.

auxiliaries butchered a great many more; and that the remainder, with their country, were handed over to—the Boers!

6. *The Disputed Territory* (between Boers and Zulus).—Here official truth, represented by Colonel Durnford, R.E., stepped to the front,* and for once a threatening matter was quietly and justly settled without the loss of a drop of blood, or the oppression of a single human being. But this was an innovation which was not to become a rule, and there followed fast upon it, sweeping away its results at a stroke—

7. *The Zulu War*.—This important incident may be divided into three periods, the first of which is that treated of in a previous work, ‘The History of the Zulu War.’† Here official fiction, under the able management of Sir Bartle Frere, wrought up a situation—peaceful as far as the Zulus were concerned, though complicated by our strained relations with the Boers—into the appearance of urgent necessity for an army of defence. This, being granted by England, was speedily employed for offence, and

* Three Commissioners decided this matter, of whom Colonel Durnford was one. He alone is mentioned as representing the official truth, because of the other two, one (Mr. J. Shepstone) is the man chiefly concerned in case No. 1, and convicted by Sir G. Colley of treacherous conduct towards Matshana; and the other, Mr. Galwey, himself confessed, in the Natal Legislative Council of December 1880, that the “Ultimatum” which caused the Zulu war was “the joint production of himself and Sir Bartle Frere.”

† By Frances Ellen Colenso and Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Durnford.

brought about one of the most needless and disastrous campaigns that ever disgraced our British arms—a campaign in which honour was reaped, with very few exceptions, only by the dead, though *honours* have, in modern fashion, been sprinkled far and wide amongst survivors. This period, as far as Zululand is concerned, belongs to the history of the past. There are few now beyond the personal supporters of those who brought about the Zulu war, and some few of the “noisy faction” amongst the colonists already mentioned, who will maintain that the British invasion of Zululand in 1879 was either just, necessary, or “expedient,” even in the modern sense of the word. And for those few whom published facts have not convinced already, further information would be in vain.

Passing on we come to the second period, of which this volume treats, and during which persistent efforts have been made to prevent the restoration of Cetshwayo, and to justify, to a certain extent, the authors of our invasion of 1879. Whether sufficient proof has been given of the action of official fiction in it, our readers must determine for themselves.

There remains only the third period, the year 1883, in which the same means have been used to make it appear that the restoration of Cetshwayo was an error, that the exposers of official fiction during the second period were in the wrong, the Zulu King's slanderers and ill-wishers in the right, and the Zulu people unfriendly to his rule.

It will be our task in the ensuing volume to show

that official fiction, as before, has produced this wretched state of things, and that it is not even yet too late to take a new departure, to find out the real feelings and wishes of the Zulu people, and to act upon the discovery with justice, mercy, and success. Had the restoration of Cetshwayo been carried out in the kind and honest spirit in which it was conceived, long ere this the misery of Zululand would have been over, and England would have been saved a great addition to the terrible responsibilities and disgrace which have burdened her concerning it since the beginning of 1879.

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