

Majesty, which alone had existence in his fertile invention. The eve of going to war was with him always the period of brutal and inhuman murders, in which he seemed to indulge with the savage delight of the tiger over its prey. A muster being taken prior to his troops moving, those warriors who on any previous occasion had not in his estimation properly acquitted themselves of their duty, or were suspected of being cowards, were singled out and publicly impaled. Once determined upon a sanguinary display of his power nothing could curb his ferocity. His twinkling eye evinced the pleasure that worked within. His iron heart exulted, and his whole frame seemed as though knit with a joyous impulse at beholding the blood of the innocent flowing at his feet! Grasping his herculean limbs, his muscular hands exhibited by their motion a desire to aid in the execution of the victims of his barbarity. He seemed, in short, a being in human form endowed with more than the physical capabilities of man; a giant without reason; a monster created with more than ordinary power and disposition for doing mischief, from whose withering glance man recoiled as from the serpent's hiss or the lion's growl.

Tshaka constantly exercised a perfect system of *espionage*, which served to keep him minutely acquainted with the condition and strength of the tribes, whether independent or tributary, by which he was surrounded; his scouts being also enjoined to make such observations regarding the country as might enable them to lead his troops to the scene of action with the least chance of discovery or surprise. Three months before he meditated an attack he discoursed freely on war, and talked with confidence of routing his enemies—being withal exceedingly wary, and using every precaution to conceal, even from his generals and chiefs, the real power with which he designed to contend; precluding by this crafty discretion the possibility of his enemies being in readiness for the march. Should he not lead an army in person his plans were confided to a general-in-chief, who, however, was never selected for command on a second occasion. It was his invariable policy also to harangue his warriors at their departure, in language calculated to raise their expectations, and elate

them in the hour of battle ; but in order to prevent any treacherous communication with the enemy, the true object of the expedition was still studiously concealed, and the soldiers induced to believe that they were about to attack any but the devoted tribe. Achieving a signal triumph, the spoils were liberally divided amongst them as a stimulus to further exertions ; but defeat under any circumstances was the watchword for a scene of woe and lamentation, and for a massacre of no measured description—hundreds of brave men being hurried off upon the fiat of their ruthless and unappeasable master, to be impaled as a warning beacon to future expeditions.

In all civilised countries cowardice in the army is very properly punished with death, the testimony of guilt having been first fully established ; but Tshaka was neither remarkable for his nice discrimination, nor for his minute investigation of a charge preferred. On one occasion, in particular, a whole regiment was indiscriminately butchered, together with the wives and families of the veteran warriors that composed it, and who, although they had fought with signal bravery, had been overpowered by superior numbers, and thus compelled to retreat. The scene of this revolting tragedy was designated "Umbulalio," or the "place of slaughter," in order to perpetuate its recollection in the minds of the people. But defeat was of rare occurrence. The predictions of the monarch were speedily verified by the success that attended his arms, and the fame of his troops spread rapidly over the whole country. Every tribe they encountered became an easy conquest, and no quarter being given, the inhabitants at once abandoned their villages and property to the greed and rapacity of their insatiable invaders. Thus did Tshaka spread devastation and terror throughout the whole country, from the Maputa River that runs into Delagoa Bay right down to the Umzimvubu or St. John's River. Tribe after tribe was invaded, routed, and mercilessly butchered ; their huts were fired over their devoted heads, and the few that escaped of the ruined inmates were driven to seek shelter in the depth of the forest, either to perish from hunger and want, to become a prey to wild beasts, or to be ultimately hunted down by the relentless and sanguinary

Zulus. Such a martial name did Tshaka make for himself that the Natal Kafirs to this day (1888) swear by him more than by any other king.

Death ever reigned without a rival over the extensive dominions of Tshaka, alike during the intervals of peace as in the time of war ; the unexampled cruelties practised by the despot, and the plausible reasons assigned for their perpetration, being withal the surest means of governing his oppressed and wondering subjects.

Having completed the re-organisation of the army, elected rulers, abolished old laws, and enacted new ones, Tshaka finally succeeded in establishing that which may with strict propriety be termed a *Zulucritical* form of government. It is one that defies description or detail, and which neither can be comprehended nor digested ; that affords protection to no living creature and places the trembling subject at the mercy of a despotic monarch whose nod may consign him, innocent or guilty, to a lingering or an instant death. One that may compel the agonised father to butcher his unoffending child, brother to execute brother, the husband to impale his wife, and the son to become the inhuman mutilator of her who gave him birth ! And yet, strange to say, amiable enthusiasts well known as humane and benevolent philanthropists strenuously opposed Sir Bartle Frere, and, in effect, sought to countenance such a monstrous system. The ties of consanguinity availed nothing with this inhuman tyrant. A sign given by the fatal pointing of his blood-stained finger, or the terrible declination of his head, must be promptly obeyed ; and if, after the perpetration of the revolting deed, the feelings of outraged nature should predominate and manifest themselves to this fiend in human form, the luckless wretch was ordered for instant despatch, either by impalement, by having the neck twisted, or by being stoned or beaten to death with sticks. The kith and kin of the wretched victim likewise shared his fate, his property being also seized and distributed amongst the warriors. Neither was any reason assigned for the murderous decree until it was too late to recall the fiat of execution, the devoted subject frequently thanking his savage monarch whilst he was undergoing the sentence that had been thus iniquitously passed upon him. To this

unenviable state of things there succeeded a dreadful lull, which may fitly be compared to that which intervenes between the shocks of an earthquake, when all are in consternation, fearing that the next moment they may be swallowed during the devastating convulsion. This pause from war and sanguinary executions was devoted to the superstitious ceremony of appeasing the *manes* of the departed and quieting the apprehensions of the living by sacrifices of oxen and by a distribution of property of the murdered amongst the executioners.

Amongst the barbarous tribes it is a common custom superstitiously to contend that their chiefs cannot die naturally, that they are destined to live until they fall in battle, and that death proceeding either from age or disease is occasioned by the "working of the wizard." This sanguinary superstition was carried to the fullest extent by Tshaka, who uniformly on the death of a chief endeavoured to discover those who possessed the charm by the test of their being unable to shed tears. On these occasions numbers were put to death for not weeping, the forcing of large quantities of snuff up the nostrils in order to bring about a copious flood, and the vigorous application of a root similar to the onion, sometimes failing to have the desired effect. Mr. Fynn used to say that on the death of the mother of Tshaka, a public mourning was held which lasted for the space of two days, the people being assembled at the kraal of the chief to the number of 60,000 or 80,000 souls. Mr. Fynn, who was present, describes the scene as the most terrific which it is possible for the human mind to conceive, the immense multitude all engaged in reuding the air with the most doleful shrieks and discordant cries and lamentations, whilst in the event of their ceasing to utter them they were instantly butchered as guilty of a crime against the reigning tyrant. It is said that not less than 6,000 or 7,000 persons were destroyed on this occasion, charged with no other offence than that of exhausted nature in the performance of this horrid rite, their brains being mercilessly dashed out amidst the surrounding throng. As a suitable *finale* to this dreadful tragedy, ten young girls were actually buried alive with the royal corpse to act as handmaidens to it in the Zulu Hades, whilst all who witnessed the funeral were obliged to remain on the spot for a whole year.

As an example for his followers to imitate and admire, Tshaka married no queen, although at each of his palaces he possessed from three to five hundred girls who were termed servants or sisters. A damsel becoming pregnant was immediately put to death upon some imaginary crime, the sturdy executioner laying one hand upon the crown of the head, placing the other under the chin, and dislocating the delicate neck by a sudden wrench. The body was then dragged outside the kraal, and left to be devoured by hyænas and carnivorous birds that were ever in attendance about the habitation of the destroyer, whose whole country had become a sepulchre white with the bones of his murdered subjects! Early one morning Tshaka took his seat as usual, and having, with great earnestness, enjoined his audience to secrecy, informed them that he had had a dream which greatly concerned him. The spirit of Umbia, an old and favourite chief, had appeared, warning him of the designs of his people, and telling him that whilst he (Tshaka) had been teaching songs to some of his warriors the preceding evening, others had been debauching his women and polluting the imperial seraglio! This offence he declared himself determined to punish with rigour, and the courtiers applauding his resolution, he held a consultation with them as to the best mode of securing the whole of the people in the kraal. The place having been suddenly surrounded, the diabolical tyrant entered at the head of a party of warriors, and having first beaten his aged and infirm mother with inconceivable cruelty (for not taking proper care of the girls), he caused one hundred and seventy persons of both sexes to be driven into the cattle enclosure, selecting several to be put to death with truly monstrous refinement by the hands of their own relatives, and leaving the remainder to be afterwards indiscriminately butchered. Upon the completion of this infernal work, his Majesty announced his intention of consulting Umbia "in order that he might find out the rest of the delinquents," adding that on the morrow he contemplated putting to death all who had offended since the commencement of his reign, in order that nothing might be wanting to complete his own happiness and that of his people.

Shortly after the perpetration of this Satanic deed, the

aforesaid queen mother died, and other eye witnesses beside Mr. Fynn say that men, women, and children, having been first cruelly tortured, were roasted alive in the flames, this unprecedented act of barbarity being followed by a general massacre throughout the realm, the tide of blood flowing for a whole fortnight, and reeking of cruelties too revolting to narrate.

But with this horrible and fiendish slaughter terminated the unexampled reign of the bloody-minded Tshaka. He had now subdued all the tribes and left the whole country as far south as St. John's River a howling wilderness, and had begun to contemplate an attack on some of the Cape frontier tribes. Death, however, arrested his ambitious and merciless career. He fell, as he deserved, by the hands of his own subjects, and by none was his fate mourned.

The assassination of Tshaka had long been meditated by his brother Dingaan, and the diabolical massacre just alluded to hastened the execution of his design. The tyrant was sitting one evening after sunset (near the Umhali River, in Natal), with one or two of his principal chiefs, admiring the vast droves of sleek cattle returning to the kraal from pasture, when he was startled by the audacity and unwonted demeanor of Bopa, his principal attendant, who approached him with a spear used for slaughtering cattle, and in an authoritative tone demanded of the old chieftains, who were humiliating themselves in the Royal presence, "what they meant by pestering the king with falsehoods and accusations?" An effort was immediately made on the part of the exasperated warriors to secure the traitor; and at that moment Ums'ungani and Dingaan, the two elder brothers of the despot, stealing unperceived behind him, buried their assegais in his back. Tshaka was enveloped in a blanket, which he instantly cast off, making an ineffectual attempt to escape that death to which his odious decrees had consigned so many of his loyal subjects. Being overtaken in his flight by his pursuers, Bopa, the domestic, transfixed him with his assegai, and the assassins then left him in order to execute a similar deed upon the chiefs who were with him, and who had also attempted to escape, but were arrested in their flight, and shared the fate of their ferocious master. One of these was an old grey-headed warrior,

who had only a short time before put to death his seven concubines, together with their children, for having neglected to mourn for the queen mother. Returning to the prostrate body of their oppressor, the regicides then danced and howled around it, as round the body of a vanquished panther, an animal they greatly dread. The inhabitants of the kraal fled in consternation, and during the confusion that ensued Dingaan ascended the throne.

So fell Tshaka. And of him it cannot even be said, as of Nero, the scourge of Rome, that

"Some hand unseen strewed flowers on his tomb."

To his savage propensities he added no redeeming quality. In war an insatiable and exterminating fiend, in peace an unrelenting and sanguinary despot, he kept his people in awe by his monstrous executions, and was unrestrained in his vicious career because they were ignorant of their power. Ever thirsting for the blood of his subjects, the cruel tyrant could stand unmoved, and blandly smile, while he feasted on the execution of his atrocious decrees. The world has been scourged by monsters. Rome had her Nero, the Huns their Attila, and Syracuse her Dionysius, but Tshaka immeasurably eclipsed them all. In sanguinary executions and in refined cruelties he outstripped all who have gone before him in any country in the world. He was a monster, a compound of vice and ferocity, without one virtue, except that of valor, to redeem his name from the infamy to which history has consigned it.\*

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\* I have been obliged to paint the character of Tshaka as his white and black contemporaries have described it; but it would be unfair to omit a touching incident told of him. He had condemned an old comrade in arms to death, but told him he might gratify his last wishes. Tshaka was clad in a blanket, and the condemned at once said his last wishes were to feast his eyes on the naked form of his adored chief, and to take leave of his little boy—indicating the size of the tiny toddler by his hands. Tshaka simply said to the attendants "Let the man go."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

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### THE BATTLE ON THE TUGELA, FEB., 1839.

AFTER the occurrence of the matters related above Dingaan, Tshaka's brother, immediately mounted the throne of the Zulus without opposition, and became the rightful king over the Natal settlers. His first great work was to cut off all the Captains and people who had been favorable to his late brother, so as to remove those at once who might in any way endanger the safety and perpetuity of his reign. This proceeding, as we shall see, placed the Natal settlers in circumstances of delicacy and difficulty.

It was at first thought that the new rule would be more peaceful than the former, but there was not much difference. On various pretexts Dingaan sent "impis" or armies into Natal, who making some of their wondrous rapid marches had slaughtered half the men of a place and taken away all the cattle before the other half knew that the Zulu devils were upon them.

Afterwards matters still continued unquiet, for the year 1838 broke upon Natal and Zululand with storms of blood and death, and civilization and barbarism were again brought into close and deadly contact.

In the early part of February of that year, Retief, with seventy picked farmers and thirty Hottentots, went to Dingaan's "great place" to negotiate the cession of Natal to the Boers, in which he was assisted by the Reverend Mr. Owen, of the Church Missionary Society. But when the treaty had been drawn up and regularly signed, that treacherous despot had the whole party cut off, as more fully detailed hereafter. Immediately after this the Zulus invaded Natal, and butchered about six hundred Dutch Boers, including women and children, in the division of Weenen—or "weeping," so named because of the lamentation. Upon this a stalwart Boer, Piet Uys, and his clans, with as many farmers as they could muster, went into Zululand to avenge the death of their friends and families who had been so wantonly cut off at Dingaan's kraal and in the Weenen



county. Uys there met with a tragical end, and his devoted young son fell at his side by the Zulu assegai.

In the early part of this same year, 1838, John Cane, Robert Biggar, and several others, thinking that the losses caused to them by the Zulus had not been retrieved, determined upon another campaign against Dingaan, and collected a large force to carry it out. Their army consisted of about 18 English settlers, 30 Hottentots, and three thousand Kaffirs; 400 being armed with rifles and all ranged under their respective leaders, the numbers of whose companies were apportioned to their rank. Many of these leaders were men of dauntless courage and desperate character. This warlike party was designated "The grand army of Natal," and great demonstrations of joy and triumph were made; whilst all were equipped in the best manner which their circumstances allowed—and thus equipped started upon their perilous enterprise. Having crossed the Tugela River, the force belonging to a chief under them encountered some Zulu spies and fired upon them, thus opening the ball. Ascending the opposite hill they came upon the kraal of "Endouda Kusuka," that is, "tardy in starting" and surrounded it before daylight. A detachment of Dingaan's army was lying here, upon whom they opened fire with their guns; when the inmates of the huts, finding the firing directed low, took hold on the tops of the huts, holding by the sticks which formed the wattle work. This plan was, however, quickly detected, on account of the huts sinking with the pressure, when the settlers directed their fire higher up, and the people fell wounded or dead. The whole kraal was destroyed, the people being killed and the huts burnt. As the morning of this awful day dawned, many of those who were attacked lying dead and others being in the pangs of death, one man said "You may do with me as you please and kill me; but you will soon see and feel the great Elephant," meaning Dingaan's army. The "Elephant" soon appeared and crushed them to death under his ponderous feet. The land was very hilly, the hills stretching out something like the fingers of a man's hand when extended, rising to ridges in the centre, and descending to deep ravines on each side; the kraal being near the top of one of these ridges and

reaching down the slopes on each side. It was at a short distance from this kraal that the "great Elephant" presented himself and uttered his piercing cry and terrific scream, which coming from thousands of infuriated savages, wrought to the highest pitch of phrensy, must have had an appalling effect, being enough to make the stoutest heart quail.

Dingaan did not appear in person in this notable battle, nor were the old warriors allowed to fight, the young men being destined to win the highest honours and take the weapons of their foes as trophies to perpetuate the memory of their conquest.

The Zulu captains commanding were Umahlebe, Zulu, and Nongalazi. These, with the old warriors, took their stand on the hill, from whence they could see all that passed, and issue their commands accordingly. Seven Zulu regiments, making about 10,000 men (each regiment containing about 1,500 men), were brought into the field of action. They were flushed with three successive victories—first, the cutting off of Retief and his party at the "great place;" second, the slaughter of the Boers in the Weenen district; and third, the defeat of Uys and the dispersion of his people. Besides they were full of rage at the loss of their cattle, women, and children, at Utunjambeli, and the destruction of the kraal before their eyes, for which they were burning to be revengeed. These circumstances led them to fight with a fury which could only be quenched in death. When they were shot down, if they could crawl, they would take an assegai and try to inflict a fatal stab on one of their bitter foes, rendering it needful to fire upon them again and again until dead.

The Natal army had therefore to fight with the vigor of men whose lives were in a fearful balance, and who were made desperate by the greatness of the impending danger. They were drawn up near the kraal in question, the English and Hottentots with muskets in front, and the native aids with assegais in the rear. The first division of the Zulu army came on with a fearful rush, but were met by the steady fire and deadly shots of their foes, which cut them down like grass. They were checked, broken, driven back, and defeated, many lying dead and dying at the feet

of the settlers. Robert Joyce, or, as he was called, "Bob Joyce," a deserter from the 72nd Regt., had ten men under him with guns, besides Kafirs; and such fearful execution did they do that they cut a pathway through the Zulu regiment as they approached until the Zulu commanders ordered a change in the mode of attack.

This first division, however, only retreated to make way for the Zulu forces to come from different points favored by the formation of the hill. Cane sent Ogle's Kafirs to attack the Zulus on the south-west, whilst he, with the main body of the Natal army, took the north-east. When Ogle's Kafirs had dispersed these, they were to come round and take the Zulus in the flank: instead of which, the hour of revenge being come for some affront which they received at Cane's hands, when they had dispersed the Zulus they fled to the drift (ford), on which the Zulu chiefs exclaimed, "O ganti baka balegane," that is, "They can run, can they?" The sight of them running inspired fresh courage into the Zulus, who now closed in from all quarters upon the diminished Natal army, coming down as an overwhelming flood, the mighty masses of which it was impossible to resist. The strife was deadly in the extreme. The Zulus lost thousands of their people; they were cut down until they formed banks over which those who were advancing had to climb, as well as over the wounded, crawling and stabbing, tenacious of life, and selling it dearly.

Cane fought hard and died of his wounds. A fine old Kafir who was present gave me a description of his death. He was questioned about other matters, but as soon as he came to this his eyes appeared to flash with excitement, and his hands moved in all forms to express the firing of the guns and the stabbing with the assegai. He took a stick and held one point to his breast to show where the assegai entered Cane's chest. He then gave his companion another stick to show how a second assegai was buried between Cane's shoulders, whose gun was lying on his left arm, his pipe in his mouth, his head nodding until he fell from his horse and died. His horse was killed close by. The last deed of this man was tragical. One of his own people who had thrown away his badge was coming to snatch the assegai from his back, when

Cane supposing him to be a Zulu shot him at once over his shoulder. Stubbs, another of the leaders, was stabbed by a boy, and when he felt it was his death wound exclaimed, "Am I to be killed by a boy like you?" Biggar fell close by. The Natal army being surrounded and cut up, heaps of slain lay dead upon the field to be devoured by beasts of prey, their bones being left to bleach under many summer suns. Many years ago the ground was white in parts with them.\*

The work of destruction was, however, not yet complete. No sooner had the leaders fallen than the Natal Kafirs threw away their badges and shields and seized the shields of the Zulus in order to favor their escape, whilst the swiftness with which they could run was their best defence. But in making their escape the Zulus knew their ground and that the river must be crossed, and they therefore so surrounded them as to compel them to take one only course. In flight then these wretched beings had no alternative but to take a path at the bottom of which there is a descent of 100 feet perpendicular to the river, having deep water at the bottom; and so numerous were the bodies heaped upon each other in this great grave that at length, instead of leaping they walked over the bodies of those who filled the chasm. One of those who made the leap was Upepe, who was stabbed as he went under water by a Zulu, who cursed him and said—"I have finished you;" but the death wound was not given, for the man escaped.

In order to complete the dire destruction of this day of blood and death a division of Zulus were sent round to cut off those who might escape by the river. These men were to be seen up to the arm pits in the stream, stabbing any who might be in danger of escaping; and very few gained the opposite bank and lived. It was here that another leader, Blankeuburg, was killed. Of the few who escaped some swam, some dived, and some floated along, feigning to be dead. One Goha crossed the river four times and was saved at last. Petrus Roetzie,

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\* In 1854, in crossing a deep and sequestered ravine near the scene of this battle, I came upon a perfect skeleton lying stretched out on its back. The body had evidently decayed undisturbed by bird or beast.

or "Piet Elias" as better known by many, entered the river lower than most of the others and got into the long reeds of the opposite bank, where the Zulus searched for him in vain.

In this terrible battle fell John Cane, Robert Biggar, John Stubbs, Thomas Carden, John Russell, — Blankenburg, Richard Wood, William Wood, Henry Batt, John Campbell, — Lovedale and Thomas Campbell with two or three other white men, leaving not a dozen to return and tell the tale of woe. Of the Hottentots three or four returned; and of the Kafirs very few except Ogle's. The few who escaped arrived at home singly, many of them having been pursued nearly to the Bay of Durban and owing their deliverance to the shelter of the bush and the darkness of night. Most of the particulars herein recorded I can vouch for as being correct, having conversed with several who were engaged in the transaction, and others who were residing in Natal at the time.

The honour of this victory was claimed by Panda (the father of the late king Cetywayo), who was at that time Dingaan's chief "Induna," and on whom it devolved to call the army and direct the various preparations, including the incantations of the doctors by which the warriors were made strong for battle and success obtained!

This defeat was quickly followed by Dingaan's army coming down to the Port of Natal—an event which hapt a few weeks afterwards—when the English residents took refuge on the island in the middle of the Bay, where they remained through the day, and at night went on board the *Comet*, which was lying at anchor there at the time. Amongst those thus circumstanced was the Rev. D. Lindley of the American Mission, and the Rev. Mr. Owen of the Church Missionary Society, who had just returned from Dingaan's kraal, after the slaughter of Retief and his party. These and many more, had for two weeks and upwards to live exposed to danger and death, and to look on whilst an army of furious savages were destroying their property. The Zulus left not a vestige of any thing remaining, except perhaps the walls of some of the houses. Furniture, clothes, dogs, cats, poultry, and every thing they could seize were utterly destroyed. They advanced

as far as the Umlazi River and threw a firebrand upon the roof of the house of Dr. Adams, but it did not ignite and no damage ensued.

No events of great interest transpired after what has now been related. The occupancy of Natal brought an additional number of English traders, and things began to assume more of the settled character of civilized society. But the English and Dutch did not amalgamate. The Boers were jealous of the English; and it is stated that they shot Biggar, whilst the lives of others were in great danger from the same cause. It was the occasion of great pleasure to the English settlers when they heard that the Home Government were about to take possession of Natal, and that Captain Smith was ordered to move forward from the Umgazi post for this purpose.



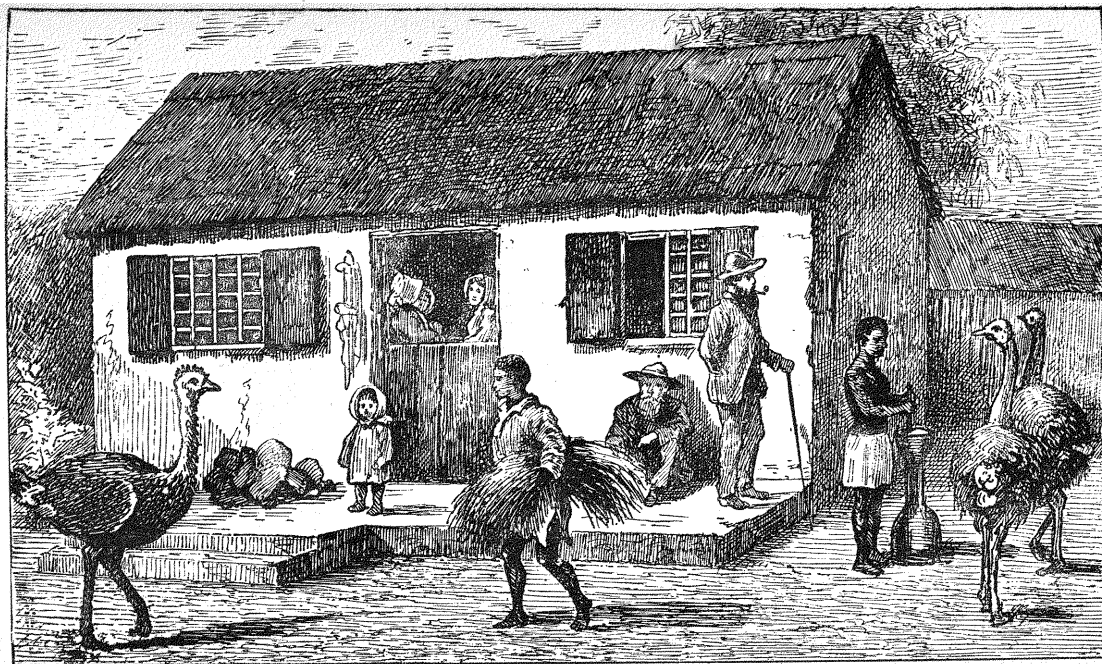
## CHAPTER XXX.

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### THE EMIGRATION OF THE DUTCH BOERS TO NATAL, WITH THE SLAUGHTER OF RETIEF AND HIS PARTY AT DINGAAN'S CAPITAL.

THE Dutch Boers (says Mr. Holden in his History of Natal) now form a very large portion of the white population of South Africa, and are spread over an extensive tract of country, including the Cape and Natal colonies, and what is now called the "Orange River Free State and Transvaal Republic."

Their character and manners are very simple, approaching sometimes to the rude. They are very hospitable, especially among their own class, and also to those whom they know amongst the English population. The families are often large, including many children and grandchildren; but so long as the father lives he is the head of the establishment, and is generally looked up to with considerable veneration, and treated with great respect by the younger members of the family. The children usually marry young, the girls at the age of fifteen years, and the boys about eighteen or twenty. After marriage they often remain under the roof and care of the parents of one of them for a long time, and move off only when they are in circumstances to provide comfortably for themselves. Their habits are mostly inactive. The old lady of the house takes a seat beside the table against the wall upon or near to which the coffee-kettle or teapot is usually found, and when a friend has sat down in a few minutes he is accosted with, "Wil Mynheer een kop koffie drink?" ("Will my lord drink a cup of coffee?") which is no unwelcome question if the visitor has been travelling far in the dust and the heat, and the coffee is found to be a refreshing beverage. A little girl or boy, or a Hottentot, follows with some warm water and a towel, which greatly relieves the skin of the hands and face if they were before burning with heat. The two principal meals are taken about 11 o'clock in the morning and 7 in the evening, and if you go



*Murray & St. Leger.*

**NOTES OF BOER LIFE AND CHARACTER.**

*Cape Town*



three hours or three minutes before they sit down to table, it is all the same, for, as in America, the hours fixed for the meals are strictly adhered to, and you eat no sooner for being half an hour before time. The males are generally stout when the season of youth is past, but the females are, in the fullest sense of the word, fat. It not unfrequently happens in the sleeping arrangements that four or five beds are found in one room, and two or three married couples occupy them. This appears passing strange to a respectable pair of English strangers on their first visit to these domiciles ; but the Dutch usually do not undress, or only partially so, on going to bed.

The men frequently do but little beyond taking the oversight of the cattle, etc., night and morning. A good wagon and a fine "span" of 12 oxen are regarded as an indispensable appendage to the establishment, and with these the farmer finds his home in any part of South Africa. But the Boers cannot endure to be annoyed with wild animals or troublesome natives. Their large flocks of sheep with heavy tails of fat, their extensive herd of cattle with long horns, and their fine troops of horses with sleek skins, must all dwell in peace and safety, or very soon the exclamation from the "grootte heer" (great master) is significantly heard, "Myn vrouw, wy moet trek" (my wife, we must travel).

According to the view of the gentleman above quoted the dissatisfaction which caused the Boers to "trek" from the Cape Colony arose chiefly from the manner in which the English treated the natives:—1st. In connection with the Hottentots leaving the employ of their masters, and going upon mission stations. 2nd. In the liberation of the slaves on the 1st December, 1838, which occurring just in the midst of harvest, and all the slaves leaving on the very day of their liberation, the farmers were left in a very destitute condition, and their agricultural operations were brought to a stand for the time being. 3rd. With regard to the unsatisfactory manner in which the Kaffir question was settled after the war of 1835, when Sir Andreas Stockenström became Lieutenant-Governor of the Eastern Province, and the Glenelg treaties were brought into operation, which worked so unfavourably, and have been succeeded by two other most calamitous wars.

Having at that time heard something of the Natal country, they sent out a party to explore it. This party collected fourteen wagons, and headed by Piet Uys, Cobus Uys, Hans de Lange, Stephanus Maritz, and Gert Rudolph, started from Uitenhage in the beginning of the year 1834. Their arrival at D'Urban, in Natal, pleasantly surprised the English residents, Messrs. Ogle, Toohey, and King, now all passed away. They loitered awhile in Natal shooting the elephants, &c., &c., which at that time abounded, and then hearing of the third Kafir war in the old colony they started home.

At the close of the 1835 Kafir war they were again so dissatisfied at the arrangements made by the English with regard to the Kafirs that they determined on leaving without delay, and seeking in the interior and in Natal freedom from the odious yoke of the British Government. Accordingly in the early part of 1836 Hendrik Potgieter crossed the Orange River, and being quickly followed by many others from the divisions of Albany, Uitenhage, and Graaff-Reinet, spread themselves in different parts of what is now called the Orange Free State, locating chiefly along the Modder, Vet, and the Sand Rivers.

Their numbers were about that time also increased by another large clan, headed by the Venerable Patriarch Jacobus Uys, then about 70 years of age, and his elder son Pieter Uys, who having visited this district before, cherished the idea of settling down here in preference to going further into the interior of the Continent. This party issued a manifesto declaratory of their intention to shape their course towards Natal, and to secede from all those parties who seemed more intent to occupy the banks of the Vaal River, and even to proceed eastward to Delagoa Bay.

This determination of the clans of Uys, and Moolman, and Potgieter seems to have induced Retief also to follow their tracks; and he sent exploring parties from Sand River, who at length succeeded in finding two or three paths across the Drakensberg which might be made passable for wagons; for up to that time every attempt to cross that mountain range by wagons from the Zuurberg to the west up to the Oliviers Pass at the north-east extremity had failed.

Pieter Retief and his party succeeded in crossing at one spot, but finding English residents in Natal, and fearing disputes about land, he determined to go to Zululand to Dingaan's capital, and obtain from him such cession of land as would be sufficient for his party. Upon his arrival there Dingaan readily promised him the cession of what is now the colony of Natal, provided that the Boers would wrest from a neighbouring black potentate a great number of cattle which had been carried off from the Zulus. This service Retief satisfactorily performed. In the meantime, in 1837, nearly a thousand Boer wagons had descended the Drakensberg into Natal, and the Boers spread themselves over the upper portion of Natal, where, as before said, thousands and thousands of old stone kvaals pointed to the relics of a former dense population upon the fertile soil, which population had been annihilated by Tshaka or partly incorporated into his standing army.

Upon Retief's return to the upper part of Natal, and on his way to the Zulu King with the cattle that he had taken from Sikonyella, a sad presentiment of evil seems to have pervaded the minds of some of these stalwart and hardy pioneers of civilization. Gert Maritz proposed that he should, with five or six men, take the cattle to Dingaan, as the insignificance of the force would be its best protection. The present city of "Pieter Maritzburg," in Natal, was named after these two Boers—"Pieter" after Retief, and "Maritz" after that name. "Burg" means town. But Retief appears to have desired to show Dingaan something like a respectable force, and insisted upon taking some forty or fifty of his best horsemen with him, leaving it optional to the rest to go or not. This only induced an additional number of spirited young men to join, and during the last week of January, 1838, Pieter Retief, accompanied by seventy of the most respectable and picked men, with about thirty young Hottentots and servants riding or leading their spare horses, formed an imposing cavalcade with which he crossed the Buffalo River and shortly afterwards arrived at Dingaan's capital, and handed over the captured cattle. The Zulu chief feasted them for two days, and ordered up several of his regiments, which in sham fights afforded a fearful representation of their mode of warfare.

The formal cession of what is now Natal was then

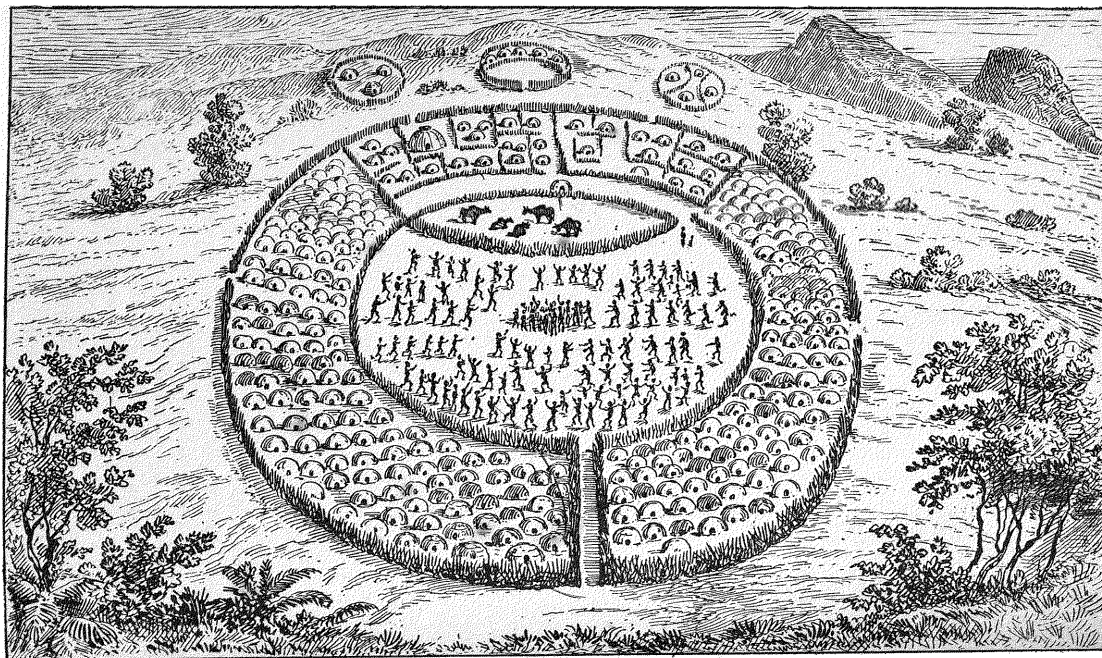
made out by the Rcv. Mr. Owen, who interpreted it to the king, who then signed it with his headmen, and the "isibongi" (crier or praiser) proclaimed to the people present that Natal had been ceded to the Boers and their issue for ever.

The Boer witnesses to this document were M. Oosthuizen, A. C. Greyling, B. J. Liebenberg.

"Manondo" is one of the "Councillor" witnesses.

Retief's business being thus satisfactorily ended he made his arrangements to depart the next morning, when Dingaan invited him to enter his kraal once more to say good-bye—requesting, however, that his party should not enter armed, as this was contrary to their usage; and to this Retief unguardedly assented, leaving all their arms piled up outside the kraal, while they sent their servants to saddle up their horses. Upon approaching Dingaan in his kraal they found him surrounded, as usual, by two or three of his favourite regiments, who after conversing with Retief and some of his leading men in the most friendly manner, he pressed them to sit down a little longer, offering them the "stirrup cup" in some native beer. This was handed round to the whole party, who partook freely thereof, and while a number of them were sitting down with the bowls in their hands, Dingaan suddenly jumped up and exclaimed—"Bulala amatagati" (kill the Wizards), and in an instant three or four thousand Zulus assailed them with their "knobkerries" (something like the waddies of the Australian aborigines, only heavier); and although many of the Boers, instantly drawing their clasp knives, made a determined resistance and took the lives of several of their assailants, yet they soon fell one after the other under the overwhelming pressure of the thousands by whom they were charged and beaten down; and after a desperate struggle of half-an-hour's duration their expiring and mangled corpses were dragged out of the kraal to an adjoining hillock, marked and infamous as the Aceldama, or rather the Golgotha, where the bones of victims to the fury of this despot were hoarded up, and became a prey to the wolves and vultures.

The following is an additional account of the conclusion of this affair:—"Let me speak to the king." Dingaan



Murray & St. Leger.

View of the Kraal, or Capital, of the Kaffir Chief Dingaan, at the moment when Ketrif and Party were Butchered.

(Bird's-eye View.)

Cape Town.

called out repeatedly “kill the wizards.” Halstead then drew his knife, and mortally wounded two of his assailants before he was secured. One of the farmers also succeeded in killing a Zulu, but the others were seized before they could spring to their feet. They were all dragged away to a hill where executions were commonly performed, and were there murdered by having their skulls broken with knobkerries. Mr. Retief was held and forced to witness the death of his companions before he was murdered. His heart and liver were taken out and buried in the path leading from Natal to Umgungunhlovo, but no other mutilation of the bodies took place, nor was their clothing removed.

Some of the servants had been sent for the horses when the farmers went to take their leave. These were surrounded by a party of soldiers, and were also put to death. One of them nearly made good his escape by the fleetness of his feet, but eventually he was run down and killed like the rest. In all there perished on this memorable morning sixty-seven Europeans\* and about thirty Hottentots.

This tragic scene forms the subject of the accompanying birdseye view. Figure 1 shows Retief and his party in the middle of the kraal; 2 represents the Zulu warriors

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\* Their names were Dirk Ankamp, Willem Bawson, Johannes de Beer, Matthys de Beer, Barend van den Berg, Pieter van den Berg, the elder, Pieter van den Berg the younger, Johannes Benkes, Joachim Botha, Gerrit Bothma the elder, Gerrit Bothma the younger, Christian Bredenkamp, Johannes Britz, Pieter Britz the elder, Pieter Britz the younger, Pieter Cilliers, Andrieus van Dyk, Marthinus Esterhuizen, Samuel Esterhuizen, Hermanus Fourie, Abraham Greyling, Ruyter Grobbelaar, Jacobus Hatting, Thomas Holstead, Jacobus Hugo, Jacobus Joos, Pieter Jordaan, Johannes Klassen, Abraham de Klerk, Jacobus de Klerk, Johannes de Klerk, Bal hazar Klopper, Coenraad Klopper, Lukas Klopper, Pieter Klopper, Hendrik Lubaschague, Barend Liebenberg, Daniel Liebenberg, Hercules Mulan, Carel Marais, Johannes van der Merwe, Pieter Meyer, Barend Oosthuizen, Jacobus Oosthuizen, Johannes Oosthuizen, Marthinus Oosthuisen, Jacobus Opperman the elder, Jacobus Opperman the younger, Frederick Pretorius, Johannes Pretorius, Marthinus Pretorius, Matthys Pretorius the elder, Matthys Pretorius the younger, Pieter Retief, Isaac Roberts, Johannes Roberts, Christian van Schalkwyk, Gerrit Scheepers, Johannes Scheepers, Marthinus Scheepers, Stephanus Scheepers, Stephanus Smit, Pieter Taute, Gerrit Visagie, Stephanus van Vuuren, Hendrik de Wet and Johannes de Wet.

with bludgeons. It was a capital crime to carry an assegai into the king's "great place," so that Dingaan, in requesting the Boers to leave their guns outside, was, the Dutch knew, observing a law of his country. Figure 11 at the bottom of the picture denotes the muskets of the Boers, and 2 exhibits the furious onslaught. The person indicated by figure 3 is Dingaan retiring towards his labyrinth, 4 is the sentry's hut at the gateway leading into his labyrinth, 5 shows the labyrinth, 6 the "intunkulu" (great thing), the high abode of the great Zulu King and despot. The king's wives and servants occupy the rest of the houses in the "sigohlo" or labyrinth. No. 7 (outside) represents the "Emposeni" (scraglio) where the king's chief wives dwell, and to enter which is certain death to any man except the sacred person of the king; 8 is the "wamabele" (provision kraal); 9 represents the "tlabankomo" (slaughter house), where the beasts are killed, which supply the royal table and feed the thousands of retainers about the chief. The figures 10-10 are "izinhlu ze nutu" (multitudes of houses), which accommodate about eight thousand soldiers. The figures 12 and 12 exhibit "intuba" and "isango," the entrance into the kraal and huts of the people.\*




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\* The picture is taken from Mr. Holden's book. It will be noticed that the style of the artist is decidedly primitive, but the drawing has, at least, the merit of being faithful.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

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### MURDER OF RETIEF AND PARTY AT UMGUNGNHLOVO, DINGAAN'S KRAAL.

THE following interesting and further account of this melancholy affair is by William Wood, whose father was in the employ of Mr. Collis at the Bay of Natal. He was Dingaan's interpreter for some time. The pamphlet containing this account was published by Collard & Co., of Cape Town, in 1840, two years after the slaughter. After some introductory matter, Wood says :—

There is a small hill called "Iloma Amabutu"\* which is situated very near the king's kraal. It is exceedingly barren, being covered by loose stones, and here and there a few stunted bushes. On this hill criminals were executed; and in consequence of the bodies of all criminals being left there to decay above ground, it was the constant place of resort for vultures, which used to congregate there in great numbers, and were unmolested, as the king threatened death to any person who should kill one. Whenever he perceived that those birds in any considerable number left the hill, it was his constant observation "The birds want food, send for the doctors." When they arrived they were always asked who was the last "umtagati" or wizard, and they immediately fixed upon some one, who was at once taken to Iloma Amabutu, beaten to death with sticks, and left as a repast for the birds of prey.

There were several pathways leading across this hill, and it was the custom of every person who came to a spot where one path crossed another to throw a stone in that place, as they thought an omission of this practice would subject them to bad luck; and it is astonishing to see

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\* In the days when Wood's account was taken down, the missionaries had not fixed the spelling of the Zulu language. As I am well acquainted with it, I have taken the liberty of, here and elsewhere, giving the orthography correctly.



what immense heaps of stones have thus been collected. For several years human bones lay scattered all over the hill, until Dingaan gave orders that they should be gathered into heaps, where they remain to this day.

The huts in which the Rev. Mr. Owen and myself resided were without the kraal, and facing the hill which had been the grave of thousands.

About sixty farmers, at the head of whom was Mr. Pieter Retief, accompanied by forty of their servants, all well armed, with the intention of convincing Dingaan that they meant him no harm, attacked a chief who was the enemy of the king, and defeated him, taking from him about 7,000 head of cattle, which he had captured from him on a former occasion. With these cattle they approached the kraal of Dingaan, to whom they delivered them, and, at the same time, expressed their earnest desire that peace might exist between the king and the emigrant farmers, whom they now represented.

Dingaan gladly received the cattle, but his attention was arrested by sixty horses and eleven guns which the farmers had taken from the enemy, and he told them he must also have them. Retief, however, told him he could not comply with this demand, as the cattle were his property, and not the guns and horses. With this Dingaan appeared satisfied, and shortly afterwards told them that the cattle should likewise be theirs, promising them also a piece of land extending from the Tugela to the Umzimvubu. Retief accepted his offers, and a treaty was signed between Dingaan on the one hand and the Boers on the other.

The farmers had been at Umgungunhlovo about two days, during which time they walked about the kraal unarmed, but had taken the precaution of placing their arms under the protection of their servants, or after-riders, who had taken up their quarters under the two milk trees without the kraal.

On the morning of the Thursday I perceived from Dingaan's manners that he intended some mischief; although from his conversation with his captains I could not perceive that he had given them any orders prejudicial to the farmers. I however, watched my opportunity to warn them to be on their guard. This occurred when some of

the farmers strolled into the kraal, and having come near the place where I was standing, I told them I did not think all was right, and recommended them to be on their guard; upon which they smiled and said "We are sure the king's heart is right with us, and there is no cause for fear."

A short time after this Dingaan came out of his hut, and having seated himself in front of it in his arm chair, ordered out two regiments; one was the Ischlangu Inhlope, or white shields, and the other the Ischlangu Umnyama, or black shields. The former were his best men, and wore rings on their heads, formed of the bark of a tree and grass, and stitched thro' the scalp; and the latter regiment was composed entirely of young men. These troops he caused to form in a circle, and having placed his two principal captains on his right and left hand respectively, he sent a message to Retief, inviting him to bring his men, and wish the king farewell previous to starting. Retief a short time after this entered the kraal, accompanied by the other farmers, and all their servants, with the exception of one or two who were sent out to fetch the horses; their arms being left unguarded under the two milk trees without the kraal.

On Retief approaching Dingaan, the latter told him to acquaint the farmers at Natal, as soon as he arrived there, of the king's desire that they should soon come and possess the land he had given them. He then wished the party an agreeable journey to Natal, and invited them to sit down and drink some *tywala* with him and his people, which invitation they unfortunately accepted.

Retief sat by the king, but the farmers and their servants sat in a place by themselves, at a short distance from the king and his captains. After drinking beer some time together, Dingaan ordered his troops to amuse the farmers by dancing and singing, which they immediately commenced doing.

The farmers had not been sitting longer than a quarter of an hour, when Dingaan called out, "Seize them!" upon which an overwhelming rush was made upon the party before they could get on their feet. Thomas Holstead then cried out "We are done for!" and added in the Zulu language, "Let me speak to the king!" which

Dingaan heard but motioned them away with his hand. Halstead then drew his knife and ripped up one Zulu, and cut another's throat, before he was secured, and a farmer also succeeded in ripping up another Zulu.

The Boers were then dragged with their feet trailing along the ground, each man being held by as many Zulus as could get to him, from the presence of Dingaan, who still continued sitting and calling out "Bulala abatagati" (kill the wizards). He then said, "Take the heart and the liver of the king of the farmers, and place them in the road of the farmers." When at the road down to the hill "Iloma Amabutu" they commenced the work of death by striking them on the head with knobbed sticks; Retief being held and forced to witness the deaths of his comrades before they despatched him. It was a most awful occurrence, and will never be effaced from my memory. The Rev. Mr. Owen and myself witnessed it, standing at the doors of our huts, which faced the place of execution.

Retief's heart and liver were taken out, wrapped in a piece of cloth, and brought to Dingaan. His two captains Ukhlela and Tambuza then came and sat down by Dingaan, with whom they conversed for some time.

About two hours after the massacre, orders were issued that a large party were to set off with all speed, and attack the wagons that contained the wives and children of the murdered Boers, which were at a considerable distance from Ungunguhlovo as Retief and his party had left them there, not wishing to bring their families into danger.

A large body of men were immediately in readiness, and the captains, previously to starting, approached Dingaan singly, and made a mock attack upon him, thrusting their shields and their spears close to his face, and going thro' a variety of movements, at the same time giving him various titles and praising him, as all his people who approach him must do, and occasionally calling out, "We will go and kill the white dogs." A short time afterwards the party set out with great speed in the direction of the wagons. The result of the attack is well-known. The Boers who were guarding the wagons were taken by surprise, when many of them fell, and some hundreds of

women and children were inhumanly murdered, but not without retribution, as a great number of the enemy were slain, and the remainder obliged to retreat with precipitation.

This additional account of the slaughter of Retief and his party I take from the "Orange Free State Monthly Magazine" for the month of December, 1877. As will be seen, it is a most valuable account by one who accompanied Mr. Owen, and an eyewitness, quite as valuable as Price's, &c., account of the return from the wreck of the *Grosvenor*, both of which, by the courtesy of my friends Mr. C. A. Fairbridge of Cape Town, and Mr. G. M. Theal of the same place, I was fortunately able to secure. They have never appeared in an historical collection before

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF DINGAAN, AND HIS  
MASSACRE OF RETIEF AND HIS PARTY.

(By Jane Bird, *nee* Williams, now (1877) living in the Caledon River District).

I was born in 1801, in the parish of Drymeirchion, near St. Asaph, in Flintshire, North Wales. I accompanied the Rev. Francis Owen in the vessel *Palmyra*, of London, to South Africa. Capt. Gardiuer, who perished at the Falkland Islands many years afterwards, sailed with us. We arrived at Cape Town on the 2nd of March, 1837, and sailing thence, in, I think, the *Ethel*, reached Port Elizabeth on the Good Friday following. We travelled to Port Natal overland, *via* Kafirland, and reached the Port in July or August, intending to proceed to the Kraal of the Zulu chief Dingaan, to form a mission station, under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society. Richard King drove our waggon, and conducted us to the kraal of Dingaan at Umgungunhlovo. Mr. Richard Hulley had joined us at Butterworth as interpreter to the Mission. Dingaan gave us a location something less than a mile distant from his own residence, and provided us with a commodious hut. We remained there about four and a half months.

On Friday, 3rd February, 1838, while Mr. Owen was having prayers, we heard firing, and shortly afterwards found that some Boers had arrived at Dingaan's with a troop of cattle, and we saw them drawn up, exhibiting their mode of fighting with firearms.

Mr. Owen was shortly afterwards called to Dingaan, and a lad who was with us as interpreter, named William Wood, accompanied him. Mr. Hulley had gone to Port Natal for supplies, and only returned on Thursday, after the massacre of Retief and his party. In the evening of Saturday Mr. Retief, with some Boers, came to Mr. Owen: a Mr. Thomas Halstead accompanied them as interpreter. Mr. Owen invited them to come to church service on the following day, and they accepted the invitation. Halstead was, however, immediately after his arrival, called back again by Dingaan. None of Mr. Retief's party came to church on Sunday, and Mr. Owen was very much disappointed.

Sunday passed over quietly. On Monday, towards sundown, a regiment of young Zulus, styled the "Wild Beasts," passed close to Mr. Owen's station, and went on to Dingaan's kraal. This regiment sang a war song on coming out of Dingaan's kraal, after paying its respects to the chief. Beating of shields and dancing accompanied the song. William Wood, who was about eleven or twelve years of age, said to me "You will see that they will kill the Boers to-morrow." I said "Don't say so—you told me the King said a long time ago that he would kill you, because you talked so much." William Wood, however, repeated his assertion.

On Tuesday, early, as the sun rose, I saw three Boers nearing the station, and I told Mr. Owen that visitors were approaching. They came into my hut and told me, through Wood, that they were going for their horses, and were about to return to their wives and children. They said they had no coffee or tea for the road, and I gave them some from my store. They also said that Dingaan had given them the Natal country; that he was a man with a large and good heart, and that they would drive the English into the sea. William Wood said to me in English "You'll see that the Boers will be killed," I do not know whether he said this in Dutch to the Boers.

These Boers left and we went on with our employments. We had just done prayers when a Kafir messenger from Dingaan came running to us, covered with perspiration, and said that we were not to be frightened, that we were King George's children, and that the Boers were

runaways from him. He also said that we would not be hurt. One of the Zulu maid servants said to me, "They are taking the dogs away to kill them!"

We looked out, and saw a great commotion in the chief's kraal, and a struggle going on. We saw that the Zulus dragged the Boers out of the kraal, and took them to the side of a hill, where the usual execution place was situated. If I had understood the Zulu or the Dutch language, I would have understood many of the exclamations which were made at the scene. I had seen executions take place at that spot eight days after we arrived, and at least four or five a week afterwards. I do not think half an hour elapsed between the seizing of the Boers and the end of their slaughter, and the return of the murderous executioners to the kraal of Dingaan.

Scarcely had the Zulus left the place of slaughter when the vultures swooped down on to the bodies of the victims. When the Zulus returned to the kraal they celebrated their victory by leaping and shouting and beating their shields. They then left to attack, as we afterwards heard, the camps of the Emigrant Boers.

A messenger came to us from Dingaan, and Mr. Owen asked him where the Englishman was? The man, who had come to desire us not to be frightened, did not reply. Afterwards a messenger came to tell us that Halstead had gone to Capt. Gardiner with a message from the king. We had several messengers to tell us not to be frightened, or pray, because no one, but king George, was greater than he—Dingaan. Mr. Owen sent answer how we could believe or trust Dingaan when he had already killed our brother white men, and one brother Englishman?

A Zulu told us that Halstead had been killed in the massacre, and another man came asking for a plaster for a man who, he said, had been kicked by a horse, but we learnt from another that the man had been wounded by a knife, by Halstead, in the struggle.

Dingaan continually sent us contradictory messages. First to pack up and go, and then to stop. Our oxen had had the "mouth and tongue sickness," and Mr. Hulley had not yet returned. About this time Mr. Venables, an American Missionary, who had established a station nearer to the coast, came to visit us. He was accompanied by a

Mr. Kirkman, his interpreter. They were horrified to hear of the slaughter of the Boers, and to find us in such a plight.

They left again quickly, to remove Mrs. Venables, and to retire from the country.

On Thursday Mr. Hulley returned, but without the stores he had gone to fetch, as the news of the massacre had spread. Late on Saturday night I heard a Zulu calling to our interpreter, Mr. Hulley, that we must leave early on the following morning, but that we must not let Dingaan know that we had been advised to do so.

On Sunday morning very early we got a message from Dingaan that we must go, and that Mr. Owen and Mr. Hulley must come to him. This messenger told Mr. Hulley where the oxen were to be found. When Mr. Owen, with Mr. Hulley, had gone to visit the Chief, another messenger came to us, saying that he had orders to search, to see if we had stolen anything. This man searched the wagons. I was highly indignant at this. The messenger called to the servants, who at once abandoned us to our own resources.

This messenger, who was an *Induna*, after ransacking the wagons, and shaking everything out, pointed out to us Mr. Owen, and said "There goes your captain, you can go and meet him." We could see Mr. Owen walking with some natives from Dingaan's kraal apparently, *towards the place of execution*, and the *Induna* pointing to that locality told us to go and meet him.

Mrs. Owen threw her arms around me, exclaiming "The rougher the road, the sweeter the glory!" and we then went on together—Mrs. Owen, Miss Owen, William Wood, Mrs. Hulley and her three children, the Hottentot servant girl, and her two children and myself—towards the place of execution, thinking and understanding from the *Induna* that we were to be slaughtered.

We, however, had not gone far when the *Induna* called to us to stop, and that he would not soil his hands in killing women and children. He told us to go back to the country from whence we came, and tell our people that we had come, but that we had not found the Zulus such fools as we expected. We saw Mr. Owen go back to Dingaan's, and then he came to us and we had prayers, and then

“spanned” in our wagon and started. Mr Hulley accompanied us, taking his wagon. We only took with us our bedding ; our clothes which we had on, and a few necessaries. Mr. Owen left the mission wagon behind.

We went on to the “Great Tree,” where Retief had encamped, and where the saddles and guns of the Boers were piled. Mr Owen was from there called to Dingaan. Dingaan told Mr. Owen that his (Owen's) wife had said when the *Induna* came to us that he was going to kill us and Dingaan warned him that he must not speak about him, even when alone, as a honey bird reported our sayings to him. I had said this to Mr. Owen when alone with him, and I could never understand how Dingaan could have heard of it. He may have guessed that we would say so of him.

Mr Owen returned to us, and we were ordered to go on our way. Looking back we saw a strong smoke ascending from the places which we had abandoned. We were joined by an English deserter who called himself Lovedale, and who had fallen into disfavour with Dingaan. In fear of Dingaan he quitted us, however, and went by himself to Port Natal through the bush.

On the Wednesday following three Indunas came after us and told us that Dingaan desired we should give up all needles, pins, thimbles and sewing materials which we might have. Mrs. and Miss Owen gave up all they had. I kept mine. I have some of the knitting needles yet. They also required all plaid and dungaree we had. I had concealed mine in the mattress. This supply alone, by bartering, supplied us with food on the road.

We were about six weeks on the road before we reached the Port of Natal. Dingaan had promised to send some of our things after us. The carriers passed us on the road, intending to convey the things they brought to the mission station of the Rev. Mr. Champion, situated about eight miles on the Zulu side of the Tugela. I saw my Welsh Bible on the head of one of the carriers. And the man had arrayed himself in female clothing belonging to me.

I afterwards got my old cloak, and a print dress, but not my Bible. We found the Tugela swollen, and Mr. Hulley had to construct a kind of boat to assist us in crossing.



From the Tugela, Mr. Joseph Kirkman, who I have mentioned before, and who we now met again, returned with me to the station of Mr. Champion (then already abandoned) in search of stores. We only found a little mealie meal and some tea and sugar. We also secured two barrels, which we took to help float the wagons through the Tugela. We failed to drive two or three cows which Dingaan had given to us on our first arrival—through the river, and so abandoned them. We were attacked by the Zulus at Port Natal, and some of the white's took refuge on board of the *Comet*, and some secreted themselves on the Island. We ultimately left Port Natal in the *Comet*, and went to Delagoa Bay, and after a stay there of sixteen days, we were taken in the same vessel to Port Elizabeth.

(Signed) JANE BIRD,  
*née* WILLIAMS.

Caledon River District,  
6th November, 1877.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

### BLAAUW KRANTZ ATTACK.

DINGAAN, following the precept of Cæsar, who deemed nothing done as long as anything remained undone, at once ordered ten of his regiments to descend into Natal to attack the Boers, who, in perfect security, were spread over the district awaiting the return of their friends who were heaped on the Zulu Golgotha. The young men were enjoying the pleasures of the chase, and the women fondly looking forward to the return of their fathers, husbands, and brothers, when the Zulu army, having divided itself into small detachments, fell, at break of day, on the foremost parties of the emigrant Boers, near the Blaauw Krantz River, and close to the present township of "Weenen," which, as before stated, has obtained its name (wailing) from the sad events of that day. Men, women, and children were at once surrounded and barbarously murdered with horrors which would be sorrowful to dwell upon in detail. Altogether forty-one men,\* fifty-six women, one hundred and eighty-five children, and about two hundred and fifty coloured servants were thus cut off without warning, on that day. Other detachments of Zulus surprised in other places similar small

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\*The names of the men were Christian de Beer, Stephanus de Beer, Zacharias de Beer, Josua van den Berg, Andries Bester, Wynand Bezuidenhout, George Biggar, Johannes Botha the elder and younger, Roelof Botha, Abraham Bothma, Louw Bothma, the elder, Louw Bothma the younger, Jacobus Coetzee, Gerrit Engelbrecht the elder, Gerrit Engelbrecht the younger, Willem Engelbrecht, Laurens Erasmus, Michiel Grobbelaar, Stephanus Grobbelaar, Willem Jacobs, Johannes Joubert, Josua Joubert the elder, J. van Joubert the younger, Laurens Klopper, Frederik Kromhout, Christian Lochenberg, Hendrik Lochenberg the elder, Hendrik Lochenberg the younger, Marthinus van der Merwe, Willem van der Merwe, Joachim Prinsloo, Carel Roos, Johannes Roos the elder, Johannes Roos the younger, Adriaan Ruscouw, David Viljoen, Willem Wagenaar, Pieter de Wet, Frans van Wyk, and Cornelis van Zyl. And the total killed in one week from Retief's death—six hundred.

parties, who all fell under the Zulu assegai. But from one wagon a solitary young man escaped who spread the alarm, and the Boers flying into "laagers" (a hasty fortification formed by drawing up the wagons in a square and weaving boughs, when obtainable, betwixt the open places, and a cannon at each corner) in every instance repelled the impetuous and daring onsets of the redoubtable Zulus. A strong party of Boers had thrown themselves into "laager" at "Vecht Laager" (Fighting Laager) at Bushmans' River, where they sustained a furious engagement which lasted throughout the whole day, but where, when their ammunition was nearly exhausted, luckily their last shot from a three pounder, struck down some of the leading Zulu chiefs, and forced them to a precipitate retreat.

The moment these attacks were thus repulsed, the Boers sallied out of their laagers to rescue, if possible, any of their friends who had been in advance and to ascertain the havoc which had been caused among them, when upon reaching the stations which the latter had occupied, a scene of horror and misery was unfolded which no pen can describe. All the wagons had been demolished, the iron parts had been wrenched from them, and by their ruins lay the mangled corpses of men, women, and children thrown on heaps and abandoned to the beasts of prey. Amongst those heaps at the Blauw Krantz River they found literally amongst the dead corpses the bodies of two young females, about ten or twelve years of age, which appeared to show some signs of vitality. The one was found pierced with nineteen and the other with twenty-one stabs of the assegai, leaving every part of their little frames perforated and every muscle and fibre lacerated. The one was named Johanna Van der Merve, and the other Catherina Margareta Prinsloo. They were taken up and tended with the utmost care, and strange to say, live to this day,\* the sole survivors of the immediate branches of those families; but they are, and will ever remain, perfect cripples, although one of them, still more strange to say, has married and is the mother of two or three children. But with these solitary exceptions all those small

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\* Holden, 1855.

parties which had not been able to combine and concentrate in *laagers* were utterly destroyed, and in one week after the murder of Retief and his party, six hundred more Boer victims were thus immolated by the fury and treachery of Dingaan and his army.

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

The whole clan of Uys, which from some little feeling of jealousy of Retief had lagged behind upon the Drakensberg, and had thus escaped this onslaught, on hearing of this destruction came down into Natal with many other small parties of farmers who were advancing towards Natal, and their precarious position was soon made known to the English party at the Bay, when, as before stated, the latter, under Biggar and Cane, determined to act in concert with the Boers against Dingaan.

Dingaan himself, however, with his principal forces was watching the Dutch Emigrant Farmers, who having collected 400 fighting men in Natal, placed themselves under the command of Piet Uys and of Hendrik Potgieter, and advanced upon Dingaan's capital with the intention of burning it and expelling the king from the country.

This wily chieftain allowed the Boers to advance to within a few miles of his capital, where the approach to the town is closed in between two hills; and there the Zulu forces first showed themselves, but, gradually retiring, drew the Boers still further into this hollow way; when another division of the Zulus emerging from behind one of these hills, and cutting off all retreat, a desperate hand to hand fight ensued, the Boers being so hemmed in that they could not fire, then fall back rapidly on horseback and again load and charge, as was their usual efficient mode of warfare. They accordingly, as by one consent, directed all their fire on one mass of the Zulus, when, their fatal aim having cleared the path by bringing down hundreds in this volley, they rushed through and thus escaped. But their chief and unquestionably most gallant commander, Piet Uys, having taken a somewhat different course, in a country but little known to them, found himself surrounded with a small party of about twenty faithful followers and

his favorite son, a lad of twelve years of age, before a ravine which their horses could not get over or clear.\*

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

The Boers were, however, so disheartened by the result of this attack, and that of the Natal English army from the Bay upon Dingaan's forces, that they gave up all hope of resuming hostilities for the present. They had been taught a lesson of prudence by the talent and daring displayed by the Zulu armies; and they accordingly kept a watchful eye upon their northern frontier, and they sent out messages to all parts imploring accession to their numbers. Many parties, on hearing of their distressed state, came to join them, but this at the moment only increased their misery and wants, as their cattle and herds having been swept away, and having been prevented from cultivating their lands, they were not only exposed to the severest want, but were actually in a state of starvation, when some liberal-minded countryman of theirs at the Cape, hearing of their distressed condition, sent them supplies of food, medicine, and other necessaries of life; which helped them through the miseries of the winter of 1838, during which season want, disease, and famine stalked over the land, making fearful ravages amongst them.

Dingaan, ever watchful when to attack his foe with advantage, being fully informed of their wretched condition, made another attack upon them in August, 1838; but on

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\* Ten men fell here viz., Pieter Lavrus Uys, Dirk Cornelis Uys, Joseph Kruger, Francois Labuschagne, David Malan, Jacobus Malan, Johannes Malan, Louis Nel, Pieter Nel, and Theunis Nel.

this occasion the Boers, having their scouts always out to give them timely information of his advance, were everywhere prepared to give him a warm reception ; and at every *laager* the Zulu forces were driven off and defeated with great loss, only two or three lives having been lost among the Boers during the series of actions.

But although Dingaan was thus defeated, the Boers were still contending with great difficulties. Small parties were pouring in to join them, but bringing little effectual support, until the beginning of December, when the season appearing propitious, and a number of young men having come in from the Free State, 460 fighting and mounted men put themselves under the command of Andreas Pretorius, who had also recently joined the emigrants, among whom he had made himself extremely popular.

They were powerfully aided by the brave and sterling Carl Landman, who joined them with all those Boers who had settled down at the Bay of Natal ; and these combined forces, profiting by the experience of the past, advanced with great caution, securing their position every evening, so that when they had nearly reached the Umslatoos River they were fully prepared, as, at the earliest dawn of day, on Sunday, December the 16th, 1838, the whole of Dingaan's forces, about 12,000 strong, attacked their position with a fury far exceeding all former attacks. For three hours they continued rushing upon them, endeavouring to tear open all their defences, and force their camp, until Pretorius, finding the Zulu forces concentrating all their efforts upon one side of the camp, and their own ammunition nearly failing, ordered 200 mounted men to sally forth out of one of the gates at the rear of the line which the Zulus were attacking ; and these mounted warriors, charging both flanks, and pouring their deadly volleys upon the immense masses which were gathered together within a small space, at length beat them off with fearful loss. The immigrants assert that nearly 3,000 Zulus bit the dust before they retreated ; and their defeat must have been complete, since Dingaan fled quite panic-stricken, set fire to the whole of his town, Umgungnhlovo, and hid himself, with the remainder of his force, for a considerable time in the woods skirting the Umvolosi River.

I here give an account of these affairs by Chaarl Cilliers, the old Voor-trekker.

Chaarl Cilliers was for many years an elder of the Dutch Reformed Church at Pietermaritzburg, which he and others of the primitive Boers erected as a memorial of the gracious Providence which crowned their arms with victory on the occasion of the battle with Dingaan in 1838. Latterly, we believe, he resided near Cronstadt in the Orange Free State, where he made the following declaration, which is given, with other interesting details, in "Hofstede's History of the Free State :"—

I desire, by the aid of a higher hand than my own, to write down the truth ; for our God loves the truth. I shall, therefore, shortly recount the three engagements which we emigrants had with our great enemies the Kafirs, with Motzalikatze, and afterwards with Dingaan.

The first time with Motzalikatze, near the Vaal River, I was on a commission to Zoutpansberg, when it happened that a frightful murder and plunder had taken place ; and when I returned to our laager after an absence of three months, I found it in a most melancholy state. Many had been murdered, most of our cattle had been taken by the enemy, and with deep sorrow I witnessed the agonies of the wounded. My heart was almost broken. We returned then to Rhenoster River. One party went back to Valsch River, and we removed on to Vecht kop above Rhenoster River. On arriving there we received tidings from two Kafirs that the commando of Motzalikatze was coming against us, and that it was already at the Vaal River. We sent the news to those at the Valsch River, so that they could come to our assistance, but on hearing it they fled with all possible haste to Marokko. We sent two spies to ascertain the truth, and one of them discovered the formidable commando. As soon as we received the news of the approach of the commando we had formed our laager, and encircled it with thorn bushes in the best way we could. In the morning early thirty-three of us left the laager to go and meet the Kafirs, and found them about an hour and a half's distance on horse-back from our camp. When they saw us, they quickly assembled and sat down orderly, the one next to the other, and we rode up to within fifty yards of them. I had a

Hottentot who spoke the language well. I told him to speak loudly and distinctly with them, and that he must ask them what harm we had done to them, and why they had come to murder us, and to rob us of our goods. When they heard this they all jumped upon their feet, and cried "Motzalikatze," and only that word. We sprang from our horses, and shot as fast as we could on the enemy. There was great confusion until the third round of fire, when they divided into two parties, so as to surround and close us in. As we had to fight with such a great enemy we had continually to retire, and then fight again before we reached our camp. I fired sixteen shots before coming to the laager; few of the shots missed, and I killed two or three in one shot. Our wives at the laager had made bullets while we were away. The Kafirs separated into three clumps of about two thousand each, at a little distance from us. They gave us time to clean our guns and to put our laager into good order. Then I called all together, and addressed them briefly to this effect,—that we have one Almighty God in heaven and upon earth, and that we must fall down and pray to Ilim. We all kneeled with our wives and children, and I prayed to God in his infinite mercy to look upon us in our great danger, and if it was Ilis will not to forsake us and to give us strength to withstand our enemy; and so on. When this was finished I ordered what was more to be done, and I took the command, for I saw that the men had come with the object of killing us. I said that no woman or child was to be seen or heard, and I had seven wagons drawn in the centre of the laager into which the women and children were to go as soon as the fight commenced. It was also ordered that when the Kafirs approached, all were to wait until I gave the first shot, which was done. Then some one suggested we should tie a white sheet to a whipstick and hoist it up. I approved of it, and as soon as it was hoisted up there was a great commotion in the three clumps of Kafirs, who in one mass advanced and surrounded our small laager so that nothing could pass between. I had two guns, one loaded with slugs, and the other with ball. When they were about thirty feet from us, I shot with the slugs and then took the other gun. It was dreadful the force which the enemy used to wrench out the thorn bushes, but these



were interlaced through the chains, and they only succeeded in dragging the wagons half a foot out of their place. The wagon by which I was had seventy-two assegai holes in the tent-cover when the fight was over. On our side there were two killed and fourteen wounded, of which I was one. Around the camp 430 of the enemy lay dead, and inside were found 1,137 assegais. We also had two horses killed, and one wounded, and the Kafirs took all our cattle away. I had a wife and seven children, and was without corn or mealies, and unable to hunt. It was a bitter trial to me to see my children cry from hunger, and I as well, and nothing to give them. We were obliged to remain fifteen days in the laager, when we got some oxen from Mr. Archbell (the missionary), and our brethren who had been at Marokko, when they heard of our misfortune. Through God's mercy we were again safe; but I forgot something. At Vechtkop all the children that were able to use a gun, helped in the firing. When we came to Marokko's place, the Rev. Mr. Archbell and his wife were very kind to us. They supplied us with Kafir corn and mealies. We then wished to go against the enemy with a large commando, and we asked the assistance of the burghers on this side of the Groot-River, but the British Government forbade it, and said that whoever helped us would be severely punished. It was hard, for necessity compelled us; so we undertook with 107 men to go against the enemy, and our God gave them into our hands, so that we defeated them, and took 6,000 head of cattle from them, and not one of us killed. We went again with 330 men to attack them, and this time the Lord our God made us also victorious. Over 3,000 of them fell, and they left their country, and what was theirs has now become ours.

Now we were wavering between two thoughts, if we should go to Natal or Zoutpansberg. Mr. Retief had gone to Natal to see the country, and find out whether it was under Her Majesty's dominion. He returned and assured us that Natal was free, and that he had been to Dingaan, who had ceded to him the land from the Tugela to the Umzimvubu River, on condition that Retief should capture and return to Dingaan 900 head of cattle which Sinkonyella had stolen from him; then the land would be

ours. We began our march, but one woe was scarcely over before the other happened. When we reached the Tugela at Blaauwkrantz, near the Bosjesman's River, Retief with 100 men went to Sinkonyella, and without a single shot, took from him over 1,100 head of cattle, and gave them according to agreement to Dingaan for the promised land. But, alas! what a dark cloud hung over our heads! As we had heard, during Retief's absence, there was a missionary with Dingaan, who asked him what people we emigrants were, and that he answered that we were deserters from our king, and that Dingaan then asked what he thought he should do with these people. The missionary replied that he ought to know himself what to do with such wanderers. As far as we know, on the arrival of Retief, Dingaan was very friendly to him, gratified all his wishes, and signed the document for the grant of the land. When everything was settled he invited Retief and his followers to come in and eat and drink with him as friends, and then the treason broke out. Everyone was cruelly massacred, but our God saw it, and from His high throne took His own resolve. We were expecting the return of the chosen governor from Dingaan's country, but the first news we received from him was a large commando from Dingaan who committed a terrible and bloodthirsty slaughter among us, so that 500 of our poor emigrants fell. But our God did not entirely forsake us. We knew that the Lord in heaven looked down upon us in mercy, and strengthened us who had survived to take up arms against our enemy; and I can tell you that I fought, and, like Joshua, held my life in my hand. With five men I first saved the laager of Gert Barends, which was on the point of surrendering to the greater strength of the enemy. The laager was on the one side with the wagons drawn up in the form of a crescent. When I neared the laager and saw the danger to which it was exposed, I said to my brethren, "Keep God before your eyes, and be not afraid, and follow me." We spurred our horses on, and I shouted at the top of my voice, for I saw that the Kafirs were quickly coming up to the laager to storm the opening. Yes, had I arrived five minutes later the whole laager would have been a pool of blood; but our great God forbade it, and said to our

enemy, thus far and no farther. Our enemy was surprised and intimidated, and with God's help five men saved the laager. The Boesman's River was full, five men drove them into the stream, and many more were drowned than we were able to shoot. I fired so much that the barrel of my gun became so hot I was afraid when I put in the powder it would burst.

After this fight we passed the laager and attacked another lot of Kafirs, who were still on this side of the river, and we drove them over the mountain with great loss upon their side. Our numbers had increased twelve-fold, and when we got behind the mountain we found the horses belonging to the laager, which the enemy had taken with them. We caught all the horses and sent them back to the laager, and sent them word to come and help us as soon as they could. Then I saw the enemy driving before them some cattle, and I wished to ride along the mountain and retake them, but when I reached the top of the mountain I saw another band of about say six men also driving cattle. We shot at them and at once began a hard fight, eleven being killed at the first fire. We fought so well that numbers fell and the rest were driven to take refuge in a cave. We took all the cattle, and went on our way until we came to a place called Klijne Kop, where the Rensbergers and a number of other persons were surrounded by the Kafirs. Great numbers were scattered all about and a new struggle commenced. At first the Kafirs were hopeful, and when we fired they rushed upon us. We could not dismount, but shot from our horses; my order was that in retiring we were to load our guns as quickly as we could, then turn round and fire again. This was continually repeated, and our hands were strengthened by fresh arrivals, while the enemy grew weaker, ran round the Nek, and fled before us. Again, through God's mercy, we were victorious. We followed the enemy and so completely conquered them that they were driven into a cave in the mountain, and I ordered the cattle to be taken. We went on and came to a place where a number of people who had fled from the Kafirs had been followed and murdered by them; I saw babes lying in their mothers' arms, murdered in cold blood. I cried to my God and said :—

"Oh, my God, shall the blood of the suckling not be avenged." Further on there was more cattle on a mountain whose ascent was dangerous. Our horses were tired, and many a heart was sorrowful at this sad sight, but I said there was no time for mourning and sadness, for the Lord had given the enemy into our hands. We must follow them and retake the cattle. I galloped on and ten men followed me to the foot of the mountain, on the top of which was a large commando. I did not think it wise to go up the mountain with only ten men, and so the enemy remained in possession of a great part of the cattle.

After this a commando set out against Dingaan, but, alas! this time our side was the losing one. Piet Uys, a valiant commandant, fell with ten men. Then another misfortune came: Commandant Potgieter with more than half the people left the mountain; we were very much weakened, and divided into two laagers, the one at Bushman River and the other at Tugela. Dingaan sent again a commando against the laager at Bushman River, who attacked it, but fortunately we did not lose any lives. The majority now wished to leave the country, but I could not think of such a thing. I therefore made an agreement that three of us should go and try and find help, and if we got none then we would leave the country. Those sent were, Frans Hetting, William Pretorius, and myself. We received aid from Andries Pretorius, who came with a lot of people, and also from Piet Jacobs. We thus got together a commando of 400 men, and with this small band in a not very hopeful mood, we marched against the mighty people of Dingaan. We saw that if the good God was not with us we could have little hope of success, so I tried to cheer them up and told them to pray to the Lord to go with us to battle, as he did with Moses and Joshua. I told them that if the Lord were not with us, then we certainly would be lost. Mr. Andries Pretorius was our chosen general in this commando. He spoke to me and I also with him about the promise which the believers had made, and that we should make a promise to the Lord that if He gave us the victory over the enemy we should observe that day every year as a Sabbath. But I noticed that David had said, promise and pay the Lord, it is better not to promise,

than to promise and not to pay. It was then his wish that we should one and all make him a promise. But as a commandant and some of the others were not with us, I said he must postpone it until Cobus Uys was with us. He came to us at the Tugela, and we spoke to him about the subject, and it was his wish, as well as the Field-cornet's, that the promise should be made. We then determined to make the Lord our God a solemn promise that if the Lord went with us and gave the enemy into our hands, that we should dedicate that day every year to the Lord and spend it as a Sabbath-day.

We then went on to Danse Kraal, where the ceremony was to take place, and it was the universal wish that I should do it in the name of all the people. The General ordered that not a single man was to be absent when it took place. It was on the 7th December, 1838, that I, in my weakness, fulfilled the wish of my brethren, and I knew that most of the burghers were also for it. I got upon a cannon wagon, with the 407 men encircling me. I spoke in a simple way, and as solemnly as the Lord gave me the strength, to the following effect :—"My brethren and fellow countrymen, here we are assembled for a few moments before a Holy God of Heaven and earth, to make him a promise, if He go with us and protect us, and give us the victory over our enemy, that we dedicate that day and all succeeding days every year as a day of thanksgiving and spend it as a Sabbath day. We must tell it to our children so that they can help us to celebrate it and transmit it to the following generations. If any one had any scruples to make the promise he was to leave the place, for the honour of his name would be increased thereby for the praise and glory of the success would be given to him alone." I further said we should join in prayer and let it ascend to the throne of the Most High, and so on. I stretched forth my hands, heavenward, in the name of the assembly. Further, each evening, also the following Sabbath, we dedicated to prayer, and every evening special service was held at three different places. The Lord was with us on the 15th, when we marched to the Blood River, which got its name after the battle. A patrol had gone out, and they reported that the commando of Dingaan was in sight. We immediately sped on and

found the commando on a mountain, and a part of it was to be seen at one end where there was a path, but the mountain was surrounded with krantzes, and the path was between two rugged kloofs in each of which was stationed a commando, so that if we had climbed the mountain, we should have been hemmed in by the two commandos. I wished to commence an attack at once, but the general said it was too late, we must wait until the next day. I then proposed to go with fifty men and try and decoy them from the mountain on to the plains, and that the rest should come to meet me. But my plan was not carried out, and I was rather annoyed; but afterwards I saw it was for the best that we had done nothing that day. For the Lord hath said "My counsel shall remain, I will fulfil my desires." That evening we returned to our laager. I must particularly mention how the Lord, in His watchfulness over us, brought us to the place where he had ordained that the battle should be fought. To the west there was a ditch which opened into the Blood River, and the bank on the side of the laager was fourteen feet high, so that no man could get out; then again, in the Blood River, there was a Zekoegat, which was certainly 1,400 feet long, this was on the east side; if I well remember, the Zekoegat and the ditch were at right angles, so that the laager was on both sides, through God's care, entrenched, otherwise it lay upon open ground. On the 16th the Kafirs attacked the laager; four times they tried and each time were repulsed. One could easily see and also hear their captain urge them to storm again but the people would not. When all was quiet at Zekoegat, a great many unable to cross the water had remained behind, and were lying down under cover of their shields, so we left the laager and neared the water within easy distance, and shot at them. When the rest saw their comrades fall they took flight, but not without great loss. Some were still in the ravine, so I called out for the volunteers to attack them, and with eighty men we entered the ditch. It was a wide one, but the Kafirs were so closely packed against one another that they could not see their aims to throw their assegais, only one assegai was aimed, and wounded a man in his leg. On the other side of the ditch was also an opening through which the Kafirs could have

escaped, but the rest of our laager seeing us attacking the enemy came to our assistance, and as the blacks tried to escape they were fired upon with such deadly aim that 400 were left dead in the ditch. The General then ordered the gate to be opened, all the horses were saddled, and we fled out of the laager. So was fulfilled as God hath said, "By one way shall thine enemy come to me, but through the Lord's grace they shall flee from before thy face." A great number, almost half of the commando, had not fought at all, so the General ordered us to fire upon them with the cannon, and when this was done they rushed forward and fell upon the laager. I think 150 men went to meet them; they then divided into two parties of 2,000 each, and being on a level plain they could not resist us any longer—we were to the right and left of them. We were endowed with great courage, and we left the Kafirs lying on the ground as thick almost as pumpkins upon the field that has borne a plentiful crop. Seeing there was no rescue at hand for them, and they were approaching the Zekoegat, one and all jumped into the water and laid among the reeds on the opposite side, but we continued our fire and killed almost every one. I am convinced that the river got its name from this event, for its colour was red like blood; I have told what we all did upon that day, and it is reckoned that more than 3,000 of the enemy fell. Anyone who reads this, will he not be convinced that our great God is the hearer and answerer of prayer; and shall we not praise Him? That evening we had a universal thanksgiving for His help and deliverance shown to us.

Shortly after this we started for Dingaan's Town and arrived at this side of it. A patrol rode to the top of the hill to reconnoitre the town. Commandant Jacobus Uys thoughtlessly shot at a crow, and not ten minutes afterwards the whole town and palace were in flames. In the neighbourhood were two other kraals, where Dingaan's two chief captains lived. These were also quickly set on fire by the inhabitants. Next day we went on to the town, but on reaching it found it empty and totally deserted. On searching about we discovered the shocking scene of the martyrdom of our Governor and sixty-four others who had accompanied to Dingaan, in order to

estore the cattle captured from Sinkonyella. We found the corpses about 1,200 yards from Dingaan's hut, thrown alongside of one another, their hands and feet bound fast with thongs of ox-hide, and their bodies fearfully mutilated, in a manner which tongue cannot name; their clothes were still upon them, and no leasls or birds of prey had touched them. We recognized Retief by his clothing, and a leathern bag which he had across his shoulder containing all his papers, amongst others the document and treaty between him and Dingaan about the land. It was wonderful that the corpses and even the papers were in such a good state of preservation, just as if the latter had been kept in a closed box. I leave it to the imagination of my reader to think what must have been our feelings in witnessing such a sight. One looked upon the corpse of a son, another on that of a father, the third upon a brother, and so on. The General gave orders for a large grave to be dug, and all the bodies were put in and buried there. Evidently the men must all have been dragged from Dingaan's hut to this place, for we saw the whole place strewn with kerries, mostly broken ones. I do think, if they had been collected, they would have filled a wagon. The General ordered a headstone to be placed over the grave, and having found a suitable block we placed it there with the day of the month and year cut out upon it.

Our laager then marched to the south-east of Dingaan's kraal on to a small mountain. Part of our commando, about 317 men, went further east where the ground was very rugged. There we encountered a number of Kafirs, about 600. They were a bait for us, and we attacked them, but soon after took flight, and were very soon surrounded by the Kafirs. Commandant Hans de Lange shouted to us to jump upon our horses and fight our way through, he also ordered us to rush forward abreast of one another. God be praised we fought our way through without any loss on our side, but a continued one among the enemy. We were continually firing and retiring, the Kafirs driving us in the opposite direction from our laager and away from level ground. The fight had already lasted seven hours, we tried to the best of our power to get back to our laager, but there was a river between which



was also full. The Kafirs got there before us, and pushed us hard so that we lost five men in crossing. Biggar had a number of Kafirs from Natal with him. He fell with seventy of them, and we were pursued by the enemy until within a short distance of our laager. The Kafirs lost about 1,000 of their men. We remained over the next day and burnt the three towns to the ground. The third day we went backwards a little and from there on to Nieuwejaars-spruit, which got its name from its being the 1st of January. On the 2nd we rose during the night, and again attacked the enemy ; seventy-two fell upon their side, and we took considerable booty from them. We now returned to our laagers, and on arriving there were very much put out by the receipt of a proclamation from the British Government, in which we were told that if we went to Dingaan's country and took up arms against him, it would assist Dingaan against us. But we were able to thank God, for the war was already over. But another calamity was at hand. Whilst we were fighting Dingaan, Ncapai was continually stealing our cattle, always committing his thefts when the river was swollen and we could not cross to get at him. However, we now made up a commando to go to the Umzimvubu river, thinking it was Ncapai ; but before going we first wished to hear from Faku if he could throw any light upon the matter, and tell us who the robbers were. We went to the west of Ncapai, and the General sent competent persons to Faku, agreeing to wait the return at the Umtowobe. Whenever anything of importance happened, the General always wished me to have a seat in the council of war, and this time it was also his wish that I should be present. The delegates returned, and they were questioned as to what they had learned from Faku. Their answer was that five days before their arrival Faku had been fighting with Ncapai, and taken from him a number of cattle, amongst which were seven oxen which Ncapai had stolen from us, and they knew to whom they belonged. Thereupon the General asked if we thought Ncapai guilty or not, and if we should go and punish him ? I answered the first, he is guilty, and must be punished, for we had seen the seven oxen and knew to whom they belonged. Then all the members of the council echoed my words.

We immediately marched against him and punished him well, and took so many cattle from him that whoever had suffered from his thieving was amply repaid. The day of the battle two native women were taken prisoners and were questioned as to whether they knew if Ncapai had stolen from us. The one seemed to wish to speak the truth, but the other did not, and I said to the General and other members if they agreed to it, I should take the matter into my hands and they gave me leave to do so. I separated the two women, and the one who spoke the truth I examined first. I asked her if she knew that there was a Holy God who lived in heaven, and who saw and knew everything that took place upon the earth, and she said she did not know that there was a God. I told her that it was the Lord who gave the clouds and rain and thunder, that He tells us in His Book we may not lie, and if we lie He will be very angry with us and will kill us with his thunder and lightning. I asked her if she knew that it had killed Kafirs and cattle? She said, yes. I then told her I would put her questions, and she was to tell no lies, for if she did, the great God would strike her dead with His thunder and lightning. So I asked her if she knew that Ncapai had stolen cattle from us, and if she knew nothing about it she was not to say that he had done it. She then swore by the sun that he had stolen our cattle, she knew it for a fact, for in his kraal there was still a span of red oxen. This was a span belonging to one Uys. Seventeen of my cattle were also stolen, and amongst them a milch cow called "Bruijndonker," which several could testify belonged to me, was found amongst the cattle that were captured, and several others belonging to different people.

Again, another calamity was awaiting us. Jarvis came first to disarm us, but we had rather lay down our lives than to submit to it, so he went back. Upon that we were accused of having shed innocent blood at Ncapai's. Captain Smith came and ordered us about with a high hand. Now I leave it to each one to think how we must have felt in our hearts. Believe me, everything came fresh and vividly before my mind, and I looked upon us all as burghers, of whom Paul says he got his citizenship by the payment of a sum of money, although he was born one, so

I thought that when I left my country as a burgher and went to another place, I was guilty of no offence, and that a Civil Government had no longer any control over or upon such a one. Matters went so far that we fought with Captain Smith. It was truly to me like a child who has attained his majority and left his father, and is then so terribly wronged by his parent that he is obliged to go away from him. When we were deliberating with Captain Smith, two vessels arrived with troops to help him, and the Kafirs had murdered a man at the "Umloas," so it was impossible to offer further resistance, and we had to negotiate with him. Commissioner Cloete came soon after, to investigate the case of Ncapai, about the innocent bloodshed, of which we were the cause, and our General was regarded as the great instrument of bloodshed of Ncapai. I came to hear of it and wrote a letter to Her Majesty's Commissioner Cloete, putting before him the whole case of the robberies which had taken place whilst we were fighting with Dingaan, and we, not knowing who had stolen our cattle, could stand it no longer, and raised a commando, but first tried to find out the thief, and had gone to Faku, and our delegates had come back from him with the intelligence that Ncapai was the culprit. Upon this the General assembled his council of war and asked them the question, Is Ncapai guilty? Shall we punish him or leave him alone? And that I was the first to say he is guilty, and we must punish him. I gave the names of all who sat in the council. I also wrote about the confession of the native woman, and further about my cow and the other cattle and oxen we had found in his possession. I also wrote in my letter to the Commissioner, that if the General was found guilty in this affair, and even if he were sentenced to be hanged, then I, first, and after me the other members must be condemned, and then the General. Upon the receipt and reading of this letter, the Commissioner pardoned our General and said that we were innocent of the last mentioned event.

Again another woe befel us, namely, the battle of Governor Smith at Boomplaats, when all who had fought in commando against the Governor, and caused the expense of the war were heavily fined.

It is impossible for me any longer to write down all the

reasons why I left my mother-country. First I was dissatisfied with the Bastardland which we had bartered with the Boesjesmans, and after that the Bastards came and killed the Boesjesmans, and took possession of our property, and we lost it. Secondly, we had sent a commission of 100 men to the Vet, Sand, and Valsch Rivers who found that tract of country waste and uninhabited. We memorialized the Governor of the Cape. Seventy-two persons signed the memorial, all family men who had no land; and it was refused to us. Thirdly, the freedom of the slaves. Government promised that two agents would be sent, and after being valued the money would be paid out. I possessed slaves, valued at rds. 2,888, and I only received about rds. 500 worth of goods in return. But I will remain quiet. What I have written, He who knows all things knows this, that I would not deliberately write down an untruth.

(Signed) C. A. CILLIERS, Elder.

By God's forbearance I have reached the age of sixty-nine years.

A true copy—W. S. VAN RIJNEVELD.

After decently interring the remains of their unfortunate countrymen, the Boers found that their horses and their ammunition were ill-calculated to continue a harassing warfare upon Dingaan in his fastnesses, and they therefore resolved gradually to fall back, which they did with little loss, taking with them some 5,000 head of cattle, which they distributed among themselves, as the lawful and hardy-earned trophies of this campaign.

After the interment of the remains, a camp was formed some miles further on, and then Mr. Pretorius sent a patrol of two hundred and eighty horsemen in pursuit of Dingaan. A Zulu army was found in an extensive and broken valley having rocky and precipitous sides, and here for nearly a whole day the farmers were skirmishing. Towards evening they found that another body of Zulus was closing them in from behind, when they resolved to turn at once and cut their way out. In doing so they were obliged to cross a swollen rivulet, and here the enemy got among them and killed Mr. Alexander Biggar, five Emigrants, named Gerrit van Staden, Barend Bester,

Nicholas le Roux, Marthinus Goosen, and Johannes Oosthuizen, and five of the Natal natives. The others got away in safety.

The commando then commenced its return march. When it reached the Buffalo River a patrol was sent out, which was fortunate enough to fall in with a herd of four or five thousand cattle guarded by only a hundred men. The guards were shot and the cattle seized.

During the absence of this commando, a military detachment arrived from Port Elizabeth and took possession of the Bay of Natal. It consisted of a company of the 72nd Highlanders and a few gunners, altogether about a hundred men, and was under command of Major Samuel Charteris of the Royal Artillery. Mr. (now Sir) Theophilus Shepstone accompanied it in the capacity of Kaffir interpreter. After landing the troops, on the 4th of December Major Charters proclaimed that he had taken military possession of all the ground surrounding the Bay within two miles of high water mark, and declared martial law in force within these bounds. There was standing near the Point a substantial stone building, recently erected as a store for Mr. Maynard, with a small wooden building close by belonging to Mr. John Owen Smith of Port Elizabeth. These were obtained from their occupants, and were converted into storehouses for provisions, magazines for arms, &c. Three guns were landed and mounted on neighbouring sandhills which commanded an extensive range. The troops were provided with tents, which they occupied until wattle and daub barracks could be erected. The whole encampment was enclosed as soon as possible with stockades cut in the mangrove thickets, and it then received the name of Fort Victoria.

On their return from this successful inroad they were not a little surprised to find that Sir George Napier (who succeeded Sir Benjamin D'Urban in the Government of the Cape Colony) had sent a small detachment of Highlanders, under the command of Major Charteris, to take possession of the Bay of Natal. This measure had been evidently taken, and in fact was acknowledged in a proclamation of the 14th of November, 1838, to have emanated from a desire to put an end to "the unwarrantable occupation of parts of the territories belong-

ing to the natives by certain emigrants from the Cape Colony, *being subjects of His Majesty*," and that proclamation gave the officer commanding these forces the further power to "search for, seize and retain in military possession all arms and munitions of war, which at the time of the seizure of Port Natal, shall be found in the possession of any of the inhabitants."

Major Charteris returned immediately to the Cape, when the command of the detachment devolved on Capt. Jarvis of the 72nd Regiment; and from the vague and ill-defined nature of his instructions, some serious difference, if not conflict, might have risen between him and the Boers in regard to the authority and orders he had received to seize upon their gunpowder and ammunition; but the good sense and good feeling of that officer soon smoothed away every difficulty between them, and he delivered them up their gunpowder, which he had previously seized, upon their engaging not to use it in aggressive hostilities against the natives. The necessity for keeping and maintaining the detachment led to some regular demand for supplies, which kept up a mutual interchange of wants, and the most friendly intercourse was afterwards maintained between them. In the mean time the main party of the Boers, some fifty miles up country, laid out the town of "Pietermaritzburg" (named, as we have said, after Pieter Retief and Gert Maritz), and also what is now called the seaport town of "D'Urban" after Sir Benjamin D'Urban—Landdrosts or Magistrates were appointed to both townships. They established a more regular system of government; and with the able assistance of Mr. Boshoff, who about this time arrived in the district with his entire clan, various laws and regulations were framed which gradually redeemed them from the state of anarchy into which they were fast falling.

While the winter of 1839 was thus taken up by these duties and labors, Dingaan, somewhat recovering from the effects of his late defeat, commenced sending in some special messengers, first delivering up 316 horses which he at various times had captured, and thereafter professing every disposition to enter into amicable relations with the Boers. Their answer was plain and manly—that they

would not enter into any treaty of peace with him unless ample restitution had been made of all their cattle and sheep, and until the value of their property, taken or destroyed by him and the Zulus, had been paid for. This led to frequent embassies, promises of restitution, and fixing places where, at least, some of the cattle and some guns were promised to be delivered. But the Boers soon saw that these messages and promises were mere pretexts to keep up a system of espionage upon them, as when one of these pretended messengers or spies being caught admitted that he had been sent by Dingaan to see whether the Boers were returning to their farms or were in laager, evidently contemplating another raid upon them. This naturally paralysed all their agricultural enterprises, and prevented them from spreading themselves about to carry on their farming pursuits, being thus kept constantly on the alert; when, in the inscrutable decrees of Providence, one of those events was brought about for which they were quite unprepared, and in which they were not even the chief agents, but which led to their undisputed possession of the whole colony of Natal.

There were at that time remaining alive only two brothers of Tshaka and Dingaan; the elder, Um Pande, (the "Um" being a prefix corresponding to a kind of "Mr.") and a young man Klookloo. Pande had just reached manhood, but brought up in the midst of debauchery and sensuality, he was only known for his unwarlike habits, and became an object of derision with the warriors, and of contempt with Dingaan, and he seemed for a time to give full scope to the indulgence of his passions, as most conducive to his own personal safety; whilst Dingaan's appetite for war was so burning and insatiable that notwithstanding his signal defeat by the Boers in the previous December he again mustered a strong army, and furiously attacked Sapusa, the Amazwazi King, but was again defeated with fearful slaughter.

It was therefore not unnatural that even among the Zulus, a party was forming, deprecating these murderous wars, and apparently inclined to support Um Pande, with a view to bring about peace with the Boers and the surrounding natives. From that moment Dingaan determined to watch the opportunity of murdering his brother, but it

appears that a hint of his intentions to this effect had transpired. Pande at once fled, with a number of followers, and crossing the Tugela near its mouth, and near where Fort Pearson now stands, took possession of some lands near the Umvoti, and sent messengers to the Boers asking their support and protection. Some suspicion was at first entertained that this was a deep laid plot between the black brothers to inveigle them into Zululand, but after repeated conferences, which were managed with great tact and ability by the Landdrost Roos, of D'Urban, G. Kemp, Moolman, Morewood, Breda, and several others, a formal treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was concluded with him by the terms of which the Boers pledged themselves to support and defend Pande, while he on the other hand promised to support them in any attack upon Dingaan.

The beginning of the year 1840 being considered the best season for commencing offensive operations, the Boers again mustered a force of 400 mounted warriors, who, under the chief command of Andreas Pretorius, joined Pande's army, which was about 4,000 strong, and this combined force, in January, again entered Zululand by the Sunday River and Biggar's Mountains, but, with proper caution, the Boers kept themselves at some distance from Pande's army, which, under the able guidance of Nonkalaas (still alive and with Cetywayo), seemed quite intent upon coming into action.

Whilst this "commando" was mustering its forces, one of Dingaan's principal messengers, Tamboosa, arrived with a specious message and offer of peace. He was, however, with his assistant, seized, and upon being rigidly questioned, frankly admitted that he had been sent to report upon the affairs of the combined army under "Pande" (as the Zulus pronounce it—"Panda," the name is usually pronounced by whites).

The latter, evidently embittered against this person (Dingaan's principal counsellor) charged him with having been the chief cause of the murder of Retief and his party, and that he had plotted and advised his (Pande's) death, and, in short, brought such a series of charges against him that, contrary to every usage of civilised life, he was taken along with the army as a prisoner until they reached the



banks of the Buffalo River (about eleven miles from where the 1-24th were annihilated by Cetywayo's Zulus at Isandhlwane), where a court martial was formed which, under the excited feelings of the occasion, soon passed sentence of death upon the unfortunate prisoners, which was carried into execution a few hours afterwards. Tamboosa not only nobly upbraided his executioners with the violation of all usages towards messengers, but expressed his perfect readiness to die. The Boers did not want to shoot his attendant named Kombazana, but the man, faithful to his master, declared that if they shot his master they must shoot him, separated they should not be. Both accordingly fell under one volley.

This may be said to be the only blot which seriously reflected on the conduct of the Dutch Boers in their engagements with the Zulus, for they otherwise constantly endeavoured to spare the women and children from massacre, and have uniformly conducted their wars with as much discretion and prudence as bravery.

A few days after this sad execution, the Zulu army, under Um Pande, encountered that commanded by Dingaan, whereupon a bloody and desperate engagement ensued, in the course of which, and in a critical moment, one or two of Dingaan's regiments went over in a body to Pande, upon which two of Dingaan's best regiments, who were fighting bravely for him, were totally destroyed to a man, and the battle ended in his utter defeat and flight. The Boers, not having been engaged in this action, followed up this success as soon as they heard of it with great vigor. They drove Dingaan over the Black Umvolosi, and from thence still further to the banks of the Pongolo, where, deserted by almost all his followers, he endeavored with about 100 warriors to find shelter amongst a small tribe living near Delagoa Bay, named the Amasuree, but who, it is supposed, murdered him to insure their own safety from his constant and fearful forays upon them and the adjacent tribes.

There existing, however, no doubt as to his death, and the dispersion of all his army, the Boers assembled in great state on the banks of the Umvolosi on February 14th, 1840, and there, under the discharge of their guns, Andreas Pretorius proclaimed Um Pande the sole and the

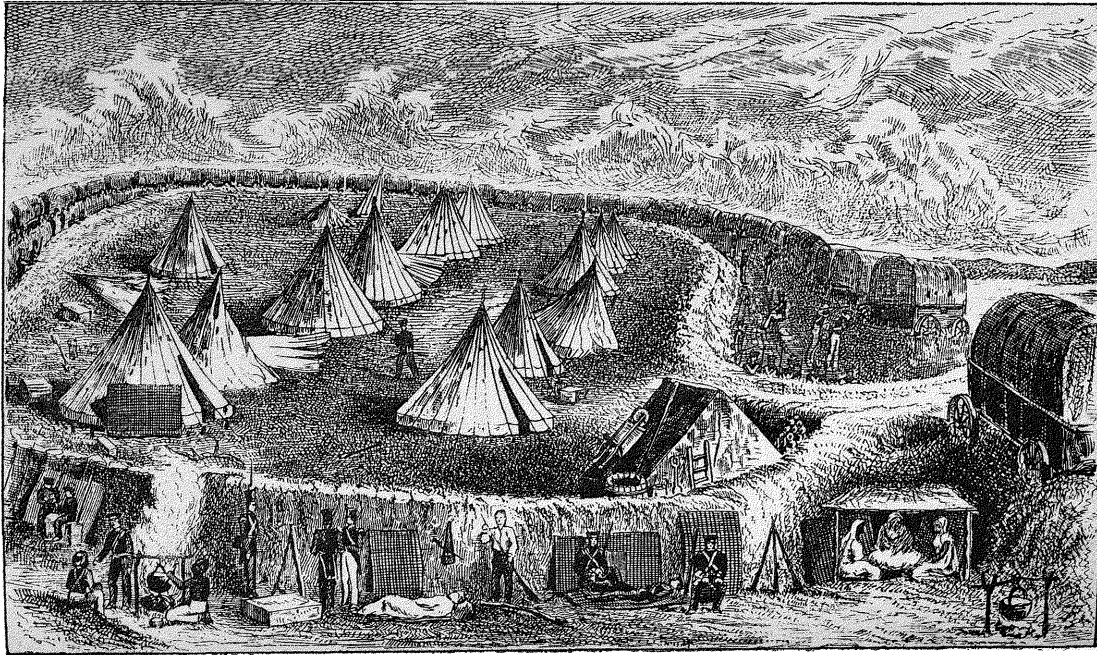
acknowledged king of the Amazulus; and by a proclamation issued by him, and attested by the other commandants, they declared their sovereignty to extend from the Umvolosi Umnyama, or the Black Umvolosi, and the St. Lucia Bay, to the Umzimvubu, or St. John's River, and, in fact, by their proceedings of that day, assumed a certain authority over Um Pande himself, from whom they received, as their indemnity, 36,000 head of cattle, 14,000 of which were delivered to those farmers who resided beyond the Drakensberg, and had only come in as allies to their friends; and the remaining 22,000 (or rather the sad remains of them, for many were lost and embezzled on the way) were brought to the foot of the Zwatkop, near the town of Pietermaritzburg, where, at a spot still named the *Deel Laager*, they were distributed among such farmers as belonged to the Natal district, and had claims for losses sustained in the previous wars and engagements.

A few days before the emigrant farmers started on their last and crowning victory over Dingaan and his forces (it may be here said that when in the sanguinary conflict above described, Pande's chiefs called out, "The Boers are coming!" his own Kafirs were elated in a degree corresponding to the dejection of Dingaan's warriors), Sir George Napier having been ordered to send the 72nd Regt. home, and finding that the Secretary of State for the Colonies still continued little inclined to support his policy of occupying the Natal district, sent a vessel to the Bay, with orders to Captain Jervis to embark with his whole detachment, on which occasion he addressed a letter to Landdrost Roos, at D'Urban, which, after referring to some complaints of natives as to encroachment on their gardens, contained the following farewell address and peroration:—"It now only remains for me on taking my departure, to wish you, one and all, as a community, every happiness, sincerely hoping that, aware of your strength, peace may be the object of your counsels; justice, prudence, and moderation be the law of your actions; that your proceedings may be actuated by motives worthy of you as men and Christians; that hereafter your arrival may be hailed as a benefit, having enlightened ignorance, dispelled superstition, and caused crime, bloodshed and

oppression to cease ; and that you cultivate these beautiful regions in quietness and prosperity, ever regardful of the rights of the inhabitants, whose country you have adopted, and whose home you have made your own."

From these expressions, enunciated by the officer commanding the forces on the eve of his departure, and from the general tenour of the intelligence received by them at the time from the Cape, there can be no doubt that the Boers became then fully impressed that Her Majesty's Government had determined, by no consideration, to swerve from that line of policy which had already declared that nothing would induce Her Majesty to assert a sovereignty over these territories. They therefore conceived that by this act of abandonment, and by their conquest and installation of Pande, as a chief set up by themselves, they had become both *de facto* and *de jure* the undisputed rulers of the country. They saw themselves respected and dreaded by all the neighbouring tribes ; every farmer had now for himself the opportunity of sitting down under his own vine and fig tree, none making him afraid ; and there is further no doubt that if they, as a body, had possessed sufficient intelligence to feel the exact position in which they were *then* placed, Her Majesty's Government would have bestowed upon them all the advantages of self-government, consistent with a mere acknowledgment of their allegiance to Her Majesty and her heirs.





*Murray & Shi. L.A. sc.*

**CAMP ON THE ITAFA AMALINDE PORT NATAL JUNE, 1842.**

*Cape Town.*

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

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NATAL TAKEN BY THE ENGLISH FROM THE DUTCH.  
A.D. 1842.

THIS, by far the most eventful year in the annals of Natal, was ushered in by the appointment of the officer commanding the Umgazi Post, Captain, now Major Smith, of the 27th Regt., as Commandant of Natal :—

*Head Quarters, Cape Town, Jan. 14, 1842.*

1.—His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has been pleased to appoint Capt. J. C. Smith, 27th Regt., Commandant of Port Natal; and all detachments of Troops stationed in Faku's country, the territories of Natal and its dependencies, are placed under his immediate orders.

2.—Captain Smith, on being relieved at the Umgazi Camp, will march with his Detachment to Port Natal according to such Instructions as he shall receive.

(Signed) A. J. CLOETE, Lieut.-Colonel,  
Deputy-Qr.-M.-General.

In closing the last chapter we left the Dutch in quiet and happy possession of Natal; Dingaan, the immolator of Retief and his party, was no more. Um Paude was a king of their own making, holding his position between the Umvoti and Umlhali by their permission, so that now, after their many wanderings and great privations and sufferings, they fondly hoped that a long course of repose and prosperity lay before them, in which they might frame their own laws, establish their own institutions, consolidate their power, bring up their families, secure their own possessions, and, as soon as possible, obtain their own ministers, worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences. A church and minister's house at Pietermaritzburg were amongst the first buildings to be erected.

But how soon were these hopes to be blighted and a dark cloud cover the horizon! How soon was their bright sunshine to be succeeded by shadows, darkness, and death!

The English Government had once or twice informed them that although military occupation of Natal had ceased, yet the Boers were still considered as British subjects, and they would not be allowed to establish a Republican Government of their own, and to precipitate matters the Boers attacked the Baca Chief 'Ncapai, thus disturbing matters on the Cape frontiers.

Attempts at an amicable arrangement were tried, but these failing, recourse was had to force, and Captain Smith, of the 27th Regiment, being appointed military commander of Natal, was directed to march from the Umgazi post to Natal with the ridiculously small force of 200 men and two field pieces. Captain Smith left the Umgazi on the 31st March, 1842, and arrived at Natal on the 12th of May following. The Umgazi military post had been established the year before to protect Faku, the Pondo Chief.

An account of the march of the expedition to Natal—its extreme difficulties and danger—its exhausted state on its arrival there on the 4th of May, are graphically described in the following letter of an eye-witness and fellow sufferer, one of the troops, who thus describes the journey :—

12th May, 1842.

I received your epistle on the south bank of the Umzimkulu River. It was after travelling 18 miles, and the whole day raining on us, and then had to mount guard the same night. I promised to send you all the particulars relating to our march, but I am sorry to state that opportunity will not allow me at present, in consequence of our sad situation.

Our march was *long* and *fatiguing*, and we had a great many delays at rivers, and *bad weather* was the cause of detaining us likewise. I will just mention a few particulars on the occasion, and draw to a close unto Natal, as you will be somewhat surprised to hear how we came on since we came here. On the 1st of April we left the Umzimvubu River, after taking leave of Faku's king-

dom, and all its inhabitants, singing the song "We fight to conquer," chorused by the men and officers as we marched along. We were three days marching through Faku's territory. \* \* \* The same night Mrs. Giligan was delivered of a son, and the next day the Commissariat Issuer's wife was delivered of a beautiful daughter. On the morning of the 9th we arrived on the sea-coast, where we took breakfast, and every man had a good swim in the salt water, and had great eating of oysters and many other varieties of shell fish. On leaving this place Fisher was nearly killed in crossing a river; he was jumping up on the gun to pass over dry and save himself the trouble of stripping, but he fell under the gun wheel and it went over his left shoulder, and only for one of the artillery being so expert in drawing him from under the wheels, it would have gone over his head and killed him on the spot; the doctor had great work to bring him to, and he complained for three or four days after of having a great pain in his chest and breast, but now he is quite recovered. You must understand that the three buglers were divided every day into three divisions, one with the artillery, and one with the division, and one with the rear guard. Our march chiefly was along the S.E. coast the whole way, until within a few days of Natal. We came across many pieces of wrecks belonging to unfortunate vessels, and skeletons of whales, and many curious shells, and many other things were picked up by the men and officers as we went along. The men caught three brown bucks and gave them to the officers; we saw a great many sea cows, and came across the spoor of lions and elephants in the woody parts along the coast. *We suffered much from marching in the sand, it got into our boots and cut our feet to pieces, and the sun reflecting the sand burned our faces. In like manner the men had many fatigues in repairing the roads every four or five miles they went along.* Mr. Archbell, the Wesleyan Missionary, and family, were in company with us the whole way. We never saw a sail the whole time on the water, until the 29th morning we beheld a small brig sailing from Natal harbour. We marched from the sea-coast the same morning, and continued on the inland the whole day, until we arrived at the east banks of the Umkomanzi River.

I must draw to a close with the remainder of the march, in consequence of having other bread to bake at present. As I mentioned before, and at the same time informing you that *we crossed 122 rivers, and the most of them we had to swim over*; some of them extending across 6 and 700 yards in breadth; they are the largest and greatest rivers ever I saw in my life. We stopped two days and part of the third at the Umkomanzi River, during our stay here we had muster parade, articles of war. The night before James Devitt, of No. 2 company, died, and was buried next evening with the usual martial ceremonies. Poor fellow! *His death was occasioned from the fatigues of the march, and it is a wonderful mercy of Providence, that a great many more did not share the same fate.* The next day we departed from this river, and when the guns went over, they loaded with grape, and every company according as they reached the other side all loaded with ball, and every soldier on the expedition, for the captain did not know the moment the enemy might approach him, and due precaution was taken every night in pitching the camp; the guns and infantry were ordered to be kept loaded until further orders. The next day's march we came within 25 miles of Natal, and that evening there came four Englishmen out to meet us, all armed with swords, pistols, and double-barrelled guns.

You may depend it alarmed us very much to see them so well armed, but you would not believe how much they were overjoyed to see us. They stated to the captain that they were obliged to fly for refuge; the Boers threatened to hang them, and a good many more that stopped in the town. The next day's march we met the whole of the Englishmen coming out to meet us, all armed in the same manner as the first two. When they came up to us they all shouted unanimously together, "Welcome, welcome, boys, you are the brightest sight we saw this many a day; our lives are in danger this month past—since they heard of the troops coming up, and we were all obliged to make our escape from the band of ruffians, who said they would hang us all if we would not go in arms against the troops that were coming up, but we never would consent, and we had to fly, leaving our property and houses behind us to get some protection from you, and thanks be to the Almighty



you are at hand." Now they told us many yarns about the Dutch barbarians, the ill treatment they gave them, and how they made them pay heavy revenue and duties upon all kind of goods they purchased out of different vessels. But to draw to Natal—the last day's march being the 4th May, as we drew within 12 miles of the town, it was surely handsome to see all the pretty cottages and handsome villages belonging to the peaceable Dutch farmers. The captain received word outside of the town about the enemy abandoning the town and port. We arrived in Natal about 4 o'clock in the evening, and pitched our camp on a projecting hill, about the distance of six miles from the town and harbour, for the captain thought the enemy might give him a visit that night, and all preparation was accordingly made in placing the guns and wagons all round the camp. The English Agent paid us a visit before we were long arrived; his name is Mr. Dunn.\* He has a magnificent house and premises, and a splendid garden here on this hill. *He wondered very much to see such a small force going to face the enemy as we were, and he asked the captain if there was not a force coming by sea, but the captain told him there was not, and that he was not the least afraid to meet as many more. The Agent smiled to think he would face 1,500 men armed in the manner they were, with swords, pistols, and double-barrelled guns—the best armed men in the colony.* They purchased all these arms since they came up here out of different shipping that came into the harbour. The evening we came in here we saw the haughty Dutch banner was displayed on the fort at the harbour as large as life. But the next morning the captain and the engineer officer, with all the Cape Corps, and a few of the Artillery, went down to the port, and *hauled down the rebellious flag, and hoisted the British Union of old England, and spiked their gun alongside of it—a six-pounder.* In the meantime the captain and engineer officer† planned out a place for our camp, alongside of the town, but in an open plain. The captain and the remainder of them arrived at the camp about 4 o'clock in the evening.

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\* Father of chief, John Dunn, Zululand.

† Lieut: Gibb.

During our arrival here for those two days the enemy made no appearance about the town, but their chiefs sent in a great many letters to our captain, but when he found out that they were from the impetuous chief he would not read them, and desired no person to attempt to take any letters from any of his followers, for he said he wanted to see him himself, and not his letters. All this time the Boers were encamp'd about 20 miles from the town, at a place called Long Kloof. The next day we marched to our camp, where we were destined to remain, with fixed bayonets, and the officers with their swords drawn, and in full uniform. We passed through a small village belonging to the Dutch, called Kongela, but there seem'd to be very few inhabitants in it, as they were all out in the country. We marched through the town and came to our camp-ground at 11 o'clock; but such a place for *bad water* I never saw in my life; *it is as black as ink and full of different insects, and stinks in the bargain. I am very much afraid it will make away with the whole of us before long.* But for Natal I think it is one of the handsomest places ever I saw in my life.

Ever since our arrival in Natal the whole of the men are obliged to wear their accoutrements the whole night and keep their arms alongside of them, lying on top of their blankets and great coats ready at a moment's warning to turn out, and the artillery in like manner, lying alongside their guns. *The duty is very hard here: the men have only two nights in bed.* We give 36 men and two officers and a bugler every night for outline picket, and an advance picket of the Cape Corps. No person of our camp is permitted to go to town ever since we came here; we are *locked up the same as if we were in a French prison.* A great number of the Kafirs came here to our camp, and showed us by their backs the manner the Dutch so unmercifully flogged them; they are almost afraid to speak to a white man. On the night of the 8th we were alarmed to hear wagons going the whole night through the woods northward of our camp towards the Dutch village. But news soon came to the captain next morning of all the Boers being assembled in town, and this day being Sunday, the captain made all preparations for action that night. The captain sent word to

the Dutch chief next morning to come himself in person and he would let him know the general's mission, but he refused coming. But the captain was determined to fetch him, accordingly he ordered out all the Cape Corps, one gun with six rockets and a hundred infantry. I and Blake were the two buglers, with them we marched away from the camp at 10 o'clock, leaving all in the camp under arms during our absence, and to be ready the first gun they heard fired to proceed and reinforce us. We proceeded towards the village, and during our march we saw multitudes of armed parties galloping through the woods towards the village, and drawing near the village we could see the Boers all in the utmost confusion, running here and there, and we could hear their women and children roaring and crying, and the men exclaiming violently, they were sure we were going to have at them at once. When we drew nigh to the village we saw the valiant chief coming out and two more to meet us. When the captain saw him coming he halted us, and made us order arms and stand at ease. When he came up to the captain he made a low bow and took off his hat. We had a fine view of him for the first time, during the time he was speaking to the captain. He is about six feet high and has a belly on him like the bass drum. The captain stated all the General's orders to him, but he seemed to decline them, and told the captain he did not want to meddle with the troops, but he nor his men never were to come under the English laws and be subjects of England, and said he would trade to the harbor; but the captain told him this would not do, he must come to a resolution at once, and he gave him fifteen days to think about it. He parted with the captain here and we marched home to our camp. They were peaceable now for two days, but the third morning they were seen brigading about the town in large parties as before, but the captain was rather vigilant for them, and ordered out a forlorn hope party, the same number as before, and came down to the town, and sent word to the chief, if he did not soon disperse his men he would burn, murder, and destroy all their property, and set fire to the village; they all dispersed in about an hour's time, and the troops marched home again. Nothing extra has happened since, only they are all in camp at the

village within a gun shot of our camp, with all their wagons round the camp, the same as ourselves, but we expect some bloodshed at the end of the fifteen days the captain gave them to come to a treaty to become subjects of England. I forgot to mention that the Boers bought up all the provisions in the town before we came up—flour and meal. Their foolish idea led them so think they could starve us by so doing.

To draw to a close with my small narrative, I wish to mention that the Boers *were not far astray of us being starved, for our provisions are out these four days, and we are living on one handful of rice*, but thanks be to God, a small brig arrived in harbour this day with plenty of provisions, viz. biscuit, salt beef and pork, and plenty of rum. She brought two long 18-pounders with her for to put upon our battery; there came also nine settlers in her (Englishmen) to stop here from Cape Town, and a canteen man for the troops, but the captain would not allow him to sell any liquor to the troops until all is settled; as the town at present is under martial law, all the Englishmen are doing their duty the same as our men—mounting guard over their property day and night, and relieving their sentries correctly, and having a trumpet to sound any time they require him; the Boers are all mounted men and have beautiful horses.

I conclude now, and I hope you will excuse my hurried epistle, as my time is short, and I am so much fatigued, for I can assure you that I and many men of our expedition have not closed our eyes to sleep since we came here, and this is the ninth day since our arrival, and I am just the same as usual.

JOSEPH BROWN, Bugler, 27th Regt.

Things remained in this state until fourteen out of the fifteen days given to the Boers for consideration had elapsed, when the officer commanding the expedition determined to strike, what he appears to have considered would have been, a decisive blow, the disastrous result of which will be seen by his own statement of the "*untoward*" affair. The following account of the previous proceedings will serve to connect the narrative:—

"On the 4th instant the troops arrived here after a long,

tedious, and arduous journey. *A month was occupied in marching from the Umzimvubu.* They entered the Natal country without the least opposition.

"Capt. Smith" (the commander of the expedition "took up a temporary position on the mound, upon which stands the residence of Mr. Dunn, but after due inspection of the ground around, he removed to the flat immediately in front of the town, and distant from it about a mile. The day after this movement a few farmers, about twenty in number, under the command of Pretorius, came to the old Dutch encampment, or Laager, on the Kongella, about three miles distant from the English camp, and took up their quarters there. During the night the number was somewhat increased, and it continued to increase by dribblets until the 12th, when their number might amount to 150 or 200 men. This I believe is the utmost that he had to that date been able by any means to persuade to join him.

The day after Pretorius' arrival at the Kongella (Laager), Capt. Smith, at the head of about 100 men, and a six-pounder, marched down upon them with the design of dispersing them, and which seemed the more desirable in this embryo state of their proceedings, as their numbers were gradually augmenting, and as it had been reported that two cannon had been sent down from Pietermaritzburg.

On the sudden appearance of the troops the Boers were thrown into great commotion, and each ran to his gun and horse, though, had they intended to maintain their position, the latter would have been useless, as they could not have used them against an enemy on the ground. In a moment, however, two men were dispatched to meet Captain Smith, and to desire him to stand back. The reply to this was a message that he would talk with their leader in his camp. Finding that he continued his march, and was so determined, C. Landman and de Jagers, both men of the best spirit, and desirous to adopt pacific measures, galloped forward, and meeting Capt. Smith, entreated him to suspend his march, as *there were women and children in the camp.* To the entreaty of these men Capt. Smith at once listened, but demanded an interview with Pretorius, who, after making many objections, was

at length induced to come to a parley, which he evidently would, if possible, have avoided. On meeting Capt. Smith his eye glanced at the carbines of his escort, and observing the hammer at half-cock, he requested that it might be let down upon the nipple, or otherwise they might shoot him. Capt. Smith, in the course of the conference, gave him some very plain advice, and upon understanding that it was his intention to disperse his followers, he marched back the troops to the camp.

“The following day, instead of dispersing, the Dutch camp received some reinforcement, and on the 11th, Pretorius, at the head of about 100 armed men, came towards the camp, on the plea, as he said, of visiting his friend, Jan Meyers. This movement brought out the English forces. They were drawn up in line directly before them, and the guns at the camp pointed accordingly. Observing this, Pretorius sent forward two men to explain to Capt. Smith that his intentions were not hostile. Capt. S. would scarce hear them, but, enraged at the evident duplicity of Pretorius, and his breach of faith, told them that he thought he had said enough to him on the former occasion, but if he had not he would tell him something more, in language too intelligible to be misunderstood. He concluded by ordering them immediately to disperse, telling the messengers that if any more of their number were sent to him he would make them prisoners, and treat them according to martial law. They made no reply to this, asked for no further explanation, but at once retired.”

The day before the arrival of the troops Mr. J. N. Boshoff left for the colony, in company with the supercargo of the Dutch vessel, which recently put in here, and which visit has done incalculable mischief. The master, Capt. Reus, gave the Boers to understand that the Dutch Government would espouse their cause, and advised them not to offer actual resistance to the English, but to avoid collision, and, by an evasive line of policy which should determine nothing, keep them in play till his return.

In accordance with this advice they drew up a protest against the occupation of the country by the English, but which Captain Smith refused to receive. In this document they declare allegiance to what they term the Dutch Government, and the King of Belgium !

This display of turbulence on the part of the Boers is the result of two causes. The first is the evil interference of the Dutch skipper, Reus, by whose advice they are obstinately guided—and secondly *by the weakness of the military force sent from the colony.*

“My last gave you an account of our affairs to the 17th (May), and little did I then think I should have had to inform you so soon of actual collision between the farmers and the troops, that is between the latter and that portion of the farmers who are known to be men of desperate fortunes, and who are capable of anything. They had assembled in a force of about 300 men, and this, had Capt. Smith not have been bound down to suffer anything rather than proceed to extremities, he might easily have crushed in its rise or embryo form; for it was 15 days in collecting; but being tied down by his instructions, he was obliged to submit to observe an enemy raising a force before his eyes, and encamping within shot of the 18-pounders in the camp.”

This forbearance was construed by the Boers into fear, and this idea, added to the evil influence of the Dutch Captain, Reus, brought matters to a most painful issue. On Monday, the 23rd, the first aggressive act was committed by the Boers. They commenced by seizing about sixty oxen and then moved down upon the camp. On this Capt. Smith opened a fire upon them with one 18-pounder, which he had just got mounted, and had not been on its carriage more than three hours.

### CAPTAIN SMITH'S DESPATCH.

#### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISEMENT.

His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to direct the publication of the Despatch from the Officer commanding Her Majesty's Troops at Port Natal for public information.

Colonial Office, Cape of Good Hope, 15th June, 1842.

By Command of His Excellency the Governor,  
(Signed) J. MOORE CRAIG,  
Acting Secretary to Government.

SIR,—It is with feelings of deep regret I have the honour to communicate to you the disastrous result of an

attack made by the force under my command on the Emigrant Farmers, congregated at the Congella Camp at this place.

In my last Despatch I detailed the various steps taken by the Farmers to annoy the troops, and my determination to abstain, if possible, from hostilities, if it could be done without detriment to the honour of the service, in the vain hope of conciliating these misguided people, and smoothing the way to a quiet settlement of their long-disturbed position as regards the Government of the Cape. But the receipt of an insolent letter, demanding that the force I commanded should instantly quit Natal, followed up by the removal, by armed men, of a quantity of cattle belonging to the troops, rendered it absolutely necessary that some steps should be taken in order to prevent a repetition of such outrages.

I therefore determined, after mature consideration, to march a force and attack their Camp at the Congella (a place about 3 miles from our position, where they have been for some time collecting), and set apart the *night* of the 23rd instant to effect that object. As the road leading to the Congella from the post the troops now occupy lies for the most part through thick bush, I thought it best to cross the sands at low water, as by this means I could avoid annoyance from the Farmers until within a short distance of their station. Fitting a howitzer, therefore, into a boat, under the superintendence of Lieut. Wyatt, of the Royal Artillery, and leaving it under charge of a sergeant of the same corps, I gave him directions to drop down the Channel to within 500 yards of Congella, and await the troops, in *order that they might form under cover of its fire*, aided by that of two six-pounders, which accompanied the force I took with me. This consisted of 1 Subaltern, and 17 Privates Royal Artillery ; 1 Subaltern, 1 Sergeant, and 7 Privates Royal Sappers ; 2 Captains, 2 Subalterns, 5 Sergeants, and 100 Rank and File, 27th Regt. ; and 2 Mounted Orderlies of the Cape Rifles.

Having previously sent a piquet out to feel the skirts of the wood in front of our position, in order to prevent our movements being discovered, I put the whole party in motion at 11 p.m. (it being a bright moonlight) and arrived without molestation within nearly 800 yards of the place



I proposed to attack. To my great mortification *I found that the boat had not dropped down the channel* according to my instructions ; but, as I considered it imprudent to await the chance of her arrival, I was forced to make the attack without the valuable assistance a discharge of shells and shot from the howitzer would have afforded me. Giving the order to advance, therefore, the troops had just moved to where the termination of a range of mangrove bush opened to a level space in front of the Congella, when a heavy and well directed fire from the bush was poured on them ; upon which they immediately formed, and commenced a fire in return, while the two six-pounders were loading. Unfortunately, one of the draught oxen being shot caused some interruption ; but this being soon got over, a destructive fire from the guns silenced for a while our opponents ; but several more of the oxen becoming wounded, and escaping out of their trektouws, rushed among the troops, upsetting the limbers, which caused much delay in re-loading, and some confusion in the ranks. This circumstance, added to the partial and at length total silence of the guns, being taken advantage of by the Boers, they again opened a heavy fire (their long pieces carrying much farther than an ordinary musket), a severe loss resulting to the troops in consequence. Finding, therefore, I was not likely to accomplish the purpose for which I had put the detachment in motion, and that the men were falling fast, I thought it expedient to retire, effecting this object after some delay, the partial rising of the tide rendering the road difficult. The troops, however, reached the camp about two o'clock in tolerable order, leaving behind them, I regret to say, the guns, which the death of the oxen rendered it impossible to remove.

Thinking it probable this partial success of the farmers might induce them to make an immediate attack on the Camp, I made such preparations as I thought necessary, and found my suspicions realized shortly afterwards, a large body of them opening a heavy fire on three sides of it. This was met by a spirited resistance on our part, but they did not finally retire until about an hour before day-break.

Such, I regret to inform you, has been the result of this

attack, and the consequent loss, has been severe, the total in both skirmishes being as detailed in the Return enclosed. One great cause of failure I attribute to the mismanagement of the boat, in which I had placed the howitzer, with the shells of which I had hoped the farmers might have been thrown into confusion, but she dropped down too late to be of any use, and even then took up a position too distant for her fire to produce much effect.\*

Among the many matters connected with the subject of this report, and awakening the deepest regret, is the death of Lieutenant Wyatt, of the Royal Artillery, who, for the two previous days, had exerted himself much in making the necessary arrangements. He was killed early in the action. Of the zealous services of Capt. Lousdale and Lient. Tunnard, of the 27th Regt., I was also deprived, both these officers being severely wounded. In fact, under the trying circumstances in which the detachment was placed, I have only to regret that, with such willingness to perform the duty assigned them, the result should have been so unfortunate.

The loss on the part of the Boers it is difficult to estimate, but I am told it has been severe. The whole of this day they have made no movement, but I have to give them the credit of treating such of the wounded as fell into their hands with great humanity. These, with the bodies of those who fell, they sent to the Camp, in the course of this afternoon, and to-morrow the sad duty of interring our departed comrades will take place.

What steps the Farmers may subsequently take, I cannot at this moment surmise with any degree of certainty, though I think it probable they will again demand that I should quit the Territory they call their own within a specific time. I shall of course do what I can to maintain myself in my present position; but, considering the number of the disaffected, and the means they possess of molesting the troops, I beg to urge the necessity of a speedy reinforcement, as I scarcely consider

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\* There is no doubt that the gallant Captain miscalculated the tide. The late Commissary Palmer, who was on board the boat, told me that she grounded too far off for effect. When the tide rose it was, of course, too late.

the troops at present stationed here sufficient for the performance of the duty to which they have been assigned.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) J. C. SMITH,  
Captain 27th Regt., Commanding.

His Honor Col. HARE, C.B. and K.H.,  
Lieut. Governor, &c. &c.

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On the following day, 26th, the North-Eastern point of the Bay, on which the provisions and two 18-pounders, landed from the *Pilot*, had been stored, fell into the hands of the Boers, when two persons were killed, two wounded, and several of the old English resident at the Port, who had joined the troops, made prisoners.

A large grave with an upright stone slab in the burial ground of the seaport town of D'Urban still records the names of the thirty-four gallant fellows killed in this action. An old Boer told the writer of these lines that he should never forget taking two wounded young officers out of the water as they, unable to move, were drowning in the rising tide. He and his mate tended them, but they did not survive the night.\* Another Boer showed me an enormous elephant gun, throwing about four balls to the pound, with which he had shot an unfortunate sentry from amongst the brushwood near the camp. He had crept close up to him, and the enormous bullet silenced the poor fellow for ever.

It might perhaps be interesting to mention that the 27th Regiment mentioned below is at the present moment (February, 1888) stationed here (Cape Town). Whilst enjoying a short time ago the hospitality of Col. Taylor and the officers of this gallant regiment at mess, I observed a

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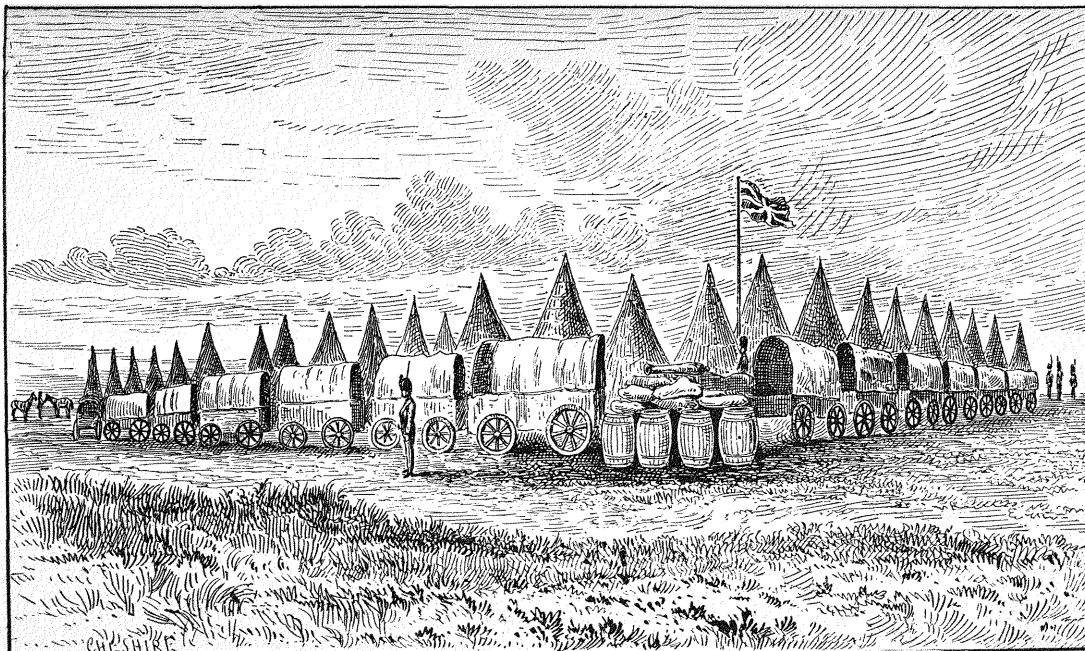
\* Alluding evidently to petty officers, as the only officer killed, Lieut. Wyatt was shot dead right through the band of his cap on the forehead.

picture of the *interior* of Capt. Smith's camp on the D'Urban flats, hanging on the wall. By the courtesy of my hosts I was enabled to have a photograph taken of this picture, which appears in its proper place in addition to one of the *exterior* of Capt. Smith's camp.

On the morning of the 26th about 150 Boers attacked and took the "Point," as also the two vessels in the Bay, the *Mazeppa* and the *Pilot*. Both were ransacked and the goods therein, and all the Boers could find in the town they appropriated to their use. The following persons were taken prisoners:—A sergeant and guard, Messrs. G. C. Cato, Beningfield, Ogle, Toohey, Douglas, Armstrong, Hogg, and McCabe. They were sent to Maritzburg and put in chains in the night and the stocks in the day time.

Capt. Smith and his devoted little band were now cooped up in the camp, with prospects as poor and hopes as forlorn as ever fell to the lot of mortals, but there is a courage and power of endurance in British soldiers which is truly astonishing, as will be seen in the sequel, when these determined fellows were reduced to horse flesh, crows, and stirrup leathers, and yet were determined to hold out. In this dire extremity Capt. Smith applied to Mr. Cato, who had managed to procure his freedom, to provide him with means of forwarding to the Cape, overland, his despatches for relief. On this difficult but urgent mission *Mr. Richard King at once volunteered to go*, and was conveyed across the Bluff Channel, with two horses, in two boats, by Mr. Cato at midnight, in order to escape the notice of the Boers by taking the path along the shore of the Bluff. There were six hundred miles to be traversed through the heart of Kafirland, two hundred rivers to be crossed, and tribes of hostile savages to be passed through, the journey being enough to damp the courage and break the heart of any one but a hero.

This herculean task was successfully performed in ten days. Many of the rivers had to be swam from bank to bank, so that taking the whole journey into account, it was one of the most wonderful performances ever recorded in the pages of history, reminding one of the determined deeds of daring done in the olden times. Mr. King travelled the whole distance alone, and so prompt were



*Murray & St. Leger.*

**THE BRITISH CAMP, HASTILY FORMED "IN LAAGER" NEAR KONGELLA, NATAL.**

*Cape Town.*

the measures taken by the Governor of the Cape, that in thirty-one days succour arrived for the almost famished little force. But before it did arrive Capt. Smith had his hands full. The Boers on the 31st made a desperate attack upon the camp, throwing into it during the course of the day 122 round shot, besides keeping up an incessant fire of musketry. On the second day they threw in about 124 round shot, and on the second opened fire with the eighteen-pounder, which they had contrived to get up from the *Point*, and they still continued their discharges of musketry. Our practice from the camp was excellent, a shot from the eighteen-pounder having dismounted one of the six-pounders of the enemy, besides wounding several attached to it. Capt. Smith says in his despatch to the Governor :—

Natal Camp, June 30, 1842.

SIR,— I have the honour to lay before you the following particulars respecting the position of the force under my command, from the date of my last despatch until the period of their being relieved on the 26th of this month by the troops sent for that purpose from the Colony.

Various reports having been brought to me on the 25th May respecting the intention of the farmers to make a combined attack on the camp that night, I kept the troops under arms, but nothing transpired until a short time previous to day-break on the following morning, when volleys of musketry, accompanied by the fire of large guns, was heard at the *Point*, which post, I regret to say, the Boers carried after a desperate resistance on the part of the detachment stationed there. By this untoward event, an eighteen-pounder, which there had not been time to remove, fell into their hands, as well as the greater portion of the Government provisions landed from the *Pilot*. Fortunately all the powder, with the exception of a small portion for the eighteen-pounder, had been brought to the camp, in which I had caused a field magazine to be constructed. The engineer stores were also saved, but there being no place at this post wherein the provisions could be protected from the weather, I had been obliged to leave the greater portion at the *Point*, merely bringing up a few wagon loads from time to time as required.

Finding myself thus cut off from my supplies, I

resolved to concentrate the remainder of my force in the camp, and there await the reinforcement which I made no doubt would be sent from the Colony on the receipt of the despatch forwarded by me overland on the evening of the 25th May, and entrusted to the care of Mr. King.

The Farmers having desired the Captains of the *Pilot* and *Mazeppa* to write and express to me their willingness to enter into arrangements for the removal of the troops, which letter reached me the day after the Point fell into their possession,—I accepted their proposal for a truce, being desirous of gaining time to strengthen the post as much as possible. During its continuance, they sent in terms so ridiculously extravagant that, although the quantity of provisions in the camp was extremely limited, I immediately broke off all communication with them, being fully determined, sooner than submit, to endure the extremity of privation. I therefore placed the men upon half allowance, destroyed a small post which I had caused to be erected between the camp and some buildings occupied by the English Residents, and made my position as secure as I possibly could, with a view to holding out to the last.

Their arrangements being completed, the farmers about six a.m. on the 31st, made a desperate attack on the camp, throwing into it during the course of the day 122 round shot, besides keeping up an incessant fire of musketry. On the following day (June 1), they slackened their fire of musketry, but threw in 124 round shot, and on the 2nd opened a fire from the eighteen-pounder which they had contrived to bring from the Point, while they still continued their discharges of musketry. During the course of this day they sent the Rev. Mr. Archbell with a flag of truce, proposing to allow the women to quit the camp, and to send back two wounded men, but this was done merely to gain time to repair some works thrown down by the fire from our batteries. Here I think it right to observe that they were incessantly employed every night in making approaches towards the post, which were constructed with considerable skill; this the nature of the ground enabled them to do with much facility, and from thence a most galling fire was constantly kept up, particularly on the two batteries, wherein I had placed the eighteen-pounder and howitzer.

Finding that a few cattle remaining at the kraal were dying either from wounds or want of sustenance, I directed that they should be killed and made into *biltong*, reducing the issue to half a pound daily. I also had a well dug in the Camp, which gave good water, there being a risk in going to the vley at night, from whence we had hitherto procured it.

In resuming my detail of proceedings, I may state generally that the attacks on the camp were continued from day to day with more or less spirit by the farmers, who, having soon exhausted their iron balls, fired leaden ones from their large guns, in some instances sending them with much precision. Our practice from the camp was excellent, a shot from the 18-pounder having dismounted one of their 6-pounders on the 3rd instant, besides wounding several of those attached to it.

On the night of the 8th I sent out a party to destroy some works in our front, which was accomplished without loss. In a subsequent sortie made on the night of the 18th instant we were less fortunate, although the duty was performed with great gallantry, the Boers being surprised in their trenches, and many bayoneted after a stout resistance. In this attack, which was headed by Lieut. Molesworth, 27th Regiment, I had to regret the loss of Ensign Prior, and two privates of the same Corps, who were killed, besides four others being severely wounded.

Upon inquiring into the state of the provisions this day, I found that only three days issue of meat remained. I therefore directed that such horses as were living might be killed and made into *biltong*. We had hitherto been issuing biscuit dust, alternating with biscuit and rice, at half allowance. The horse flesh, of which there was but little, we commenced using on the 22nd, and by a rigid exactness in the issues, I calculated we might certainly hold out, although without meat, for nearly a month longer, for we had eleven bags of forage corn in store, which I had commenced grinding into meal; and by every one contributing what remained of private into the public stock a tolerable quantity of various articles of sustenance was procured.

On the night of the 24th several rockets, apparently



from a vessel in the bay, assured us that relief was nigh at hand ; these we answered. On the night of the 25th the many rockets from seaward assured us that not only was a vessel in the bay, but that she was communicating with another in the offing, a surmise corroborated on the following day by the landing of the party under Colonel Cloete, and their final relief of the post in gallant style, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon.

To the dry detail of proceedings I have given, I beg to add a few remarks,—and first with respect to our loss. Within the period embraced between the 31st of May and 25th of June, 651 round shot of various sizes had been fired at the Camp, in addition to a continued and watchful fire of musketry ; and yet our loss during this period was but one Sergeant and two Privates of the 27th killed, and three wounded ; one Cape Rifleman and one Civilian killed, and one wounded, exclusive of the loss I have previously noted as occurring during the sortie on the morning of the 18th instant. The damage of the wagons and tents, and private as well as public property was, however, great ; for these it was impossible to secure in such a manner as to preserve them from injury.

Among the serious disadvantages I had to contend with, I may mention that the numerous people attached as leaders and drivers, to the different wagons, many having large families, who required to be fed, hampered me sadly in the trenches, while the vast number of cattle, originally with the wagons, were a very material encumbrance. These, however, were soon driven off, for nearly all the Boers (contrary to the opinion entertained in the Colony) were mounted, and thence enabled to move from point to point with a celerity which baffled nearly every movement that infantry could make against them.

I have thus given a detail of the chief circumstances connected with the command entrusted to me. That it should have been so far unsuccessful I regret ; but the resistance on the part of the farmers since my arrival has been universal ; those few who professed themselves friendly having carefully abstained from giving assistance, in most cases using that profession as a convenient screen for the purpose of hiding their disaffection from observation. All the property of the English residents the Boers

plundered and sent to Pietermaritzburg. They also took out the greater part of the freight of the *Mazepa* (including the whole of my own property) which they sent to the same place. The prisoners taken at the Point, English residents as well as soldiers, have also been marched thither: and the former have, I understand, been treated with great harshness. After being plundered, the *Mazepa* escaped from the harbour on the night of the 10th instant.

In conclusion, I beg to state that nothing could exceed the patience and cheerfulness evinced by the troops under the privations they suffered, and I feel satisfied that, had it been necessary to have held out for a longer period, they would have endured their further continuance without a murmur.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. C. SMITH, Capt. 27th Regt.

His Honour Colonel HARE, C.B. and K.H.  
Lieutenant-Governor.

P.S.—I omitted to mention in its place that a round shot on the 8th instant broke the carriage of the 18-pounder in two places, but we repaired it so as to be perfectly serviceable.

J. C. SMITH.

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Port Natal, 28th June, 1842.

Sir,—On the 27th instant I availed myself of a Kafir messenger to report to your Excellency, in a few words, that Capt. Smith was extricated, and Port Natal in our possession.

It is now my duty to give the details of my proceedings.

Her Majesty's ship *Southampton* arrived and anchored off Port Natal on the night of the 25th inst.

Here was found at anchor the schooner *Couch*, with Captain Durnford, 27th Regt., and a detachment of 100 men, two small howitzers, and some stores, dispatched by Col. Hare, from Algoa Bay, on the 10th inst.

Captain Durnford reported that the insurgent Boers had

refused him all communication with Capt. Smith (vide enclosure No. 1), who was still holding his post; that the headlands at the entrance of the harbour were armed with guns, and that the Boers had collected in force to oppose our landing. Signal guns and rockets were fired from the frigate to intimate our arrival to Capt. Smith, and every arrangement made for carrying the place as soon as the tide served, and the frigate could be placed so as to cover our landing.

At 2 o'clock p.m. on the 26th inst., the *Southampton* was in position, and the troops were embarked in the boats, which, however, could only take eighty-five men. Thirty-five had been previously added to Capt. Durnford's detachment on board the *Conch*. The sea beach being impracticable the previous order of attack was changed, and I directed Capt. Wells, with a detachment of thirty-five men, to land on the first point of the high bluff within the bar, and drive the Boers out of the thick bush, whilst the *Conch*, the launch armed with a carronade, and the barge, were to proceed direct into the harbour, land, and take possession of the port.

A fresh sea breeze fortunately set into the harbour at the very time of our advance. The *Conch*, taking thus the boats in tow, crossed the bar at 3 o'clock. Capt. Wells landed where directed, when a brisk fire was opened on the *Conch* and the boats from both shores—that from the high wooded bluff within twenty yards of the boats; yet in spite of the short range and cross fire, under which the boats had to pass, so quick was our advance, aided by both wind and tide, that but little effect was produced from their fire. When opposite the landing place, from whence the firing still continued, I ordered Major D'Urban to land who immediately jumped on shore, and we rushed to the flagstaff to pull down the colours and give H. M. frigate notice that we were in possession, and to cease firing.

The Boers abandoned their strong ground the instant we landed, yet so thick was the bush and so broken the ground, that though from the smart fire kept up, they must have been in force, yet not half a dozen of them were ever seen; and on the southern bluff, so thick was the wooded covering, that nothing but the smoke from their firelocks was ever seen; I have since learned that the number of

Boers who defended the port amounted to 350 men ; their loss it has been impossible to ascertain. .

Having thus seized the port, and landed the men from the *Conch*, the troops were immediately formed, Capt. Durnford was ordered to enter the bush on the right and drive the Boers before him, whilst I placed myself on a roadway in the centre ; Major D'Urban taking the left along the harbour beach.

In this order we advanced through a bush, the character of which it is difficult to describe, and which might have been held by a handful of resolute men against any assailants.

On reaching the open ground, we found the direction of Captain Smith's entrenched camp by firing of his heavy gun : we marched upon the point. Capt. Smith now threw out a party, and we joined him at 4 o'clock. Having thus executed your Excellency's commands with all military promptitude by extricating the brave detachment of troops under Capt. Smith's command, I strengthened his post by Capt. Durnford's detachment, and directed Major D'Urban to hold Stellar's Farm, returning myself to the Port, to arrange a post of defence with such of the troops as I expected would have been landed.

The gallantry with which Captain Smith defended his Post for a whole month, under no ordinary circumstances of privation, having been reduced to horse-flesh for food, closely hemmed in by a desperate and vigilant foe, with no less than twenty-six wounded within his closely confined camp, is highly creditable to him and his party.

Thus was accomplished within the incredible short space of one month, from the date of Captain Smith's Report of his position, the relief of his party, at a distance of 1,500 miles from Cape Town, whence the relief was despatched, his communication having had to pass through hostile bands and a savage country.

I have now reported to your Excellency the proceedings which have placed me in possession of Port Natal ; and I have kept them distinct from any mention of the Naval co-operation and assistance I received from H.M. ship *Southampton*, feeling it to be due to Captain Ogle, Commanding, to Commander Hill, and the Officers and Seamen of that Frigate, that their services to us should be separately

noticed, whether as to the cheerful good will displayed towards us whilst on board, or subsequently in the more important services performed in covering our landing, by the admirable practice from the ship's heavy battery, and spirited assistance given us by Captain Hill, in command of the boats.

In my order of the day I have inadequately endeavored to express my thanks to those Officers, and I should not be doing them justice without repeating it here in the strongest terms.

If our success be not absolutely indebted to the opportune presence of the *Conch*, to her protection must be mainly ascribed the very small loss we suffered in forcing the entrance.

The troops conducted themselves with the greatest steadiness, and I am much indebted to Major D'Urban, for his prompt landing, and the assistance he has afforded me throughout these operations.

I also received the best support from every Officer under my orders in conducting these operations, and particularly so from Lieut. William Napier, who acted as my Aid, and has been of the utmost service to me, not only by his spirit in our active operations, but equally so by his attention to all details and arrangements so essential on such occasions.

I enclose a return of casualties.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

A. J. CLOETE, Lieut. Colonel,  
Dept. Quart. Mast. Gen. Commanding.

His Excellency Sir GEORGE NAPIER, K.C.B., Governor,  
Commander-in-Chief, &c. &c. &c.

P.S. I also enclose a return of guns and ammunition captured on the 26th.

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[ENCLOSURE No. 1.]

De Generaale Commandant van de uitgewekene Emigranteu van Natal is stellig van meuing hoe ook genaamd geene correspondentie met het lager van Captain Smith toe te laten.

Den 25 Juny, 1842.

(Translation.)

The General Commandant of the Emigrants of Natal has positively determined to allow of no correspondence with Captain Smith's camp.

[ENCLOSURE No. 2.]

H.M.S. *Southampton*, 26th June, 1842.

## MEMORANDUM.

The attack on the Emigrant Farmers' position at Natal will be made in two divisions.

The first under the immediate command of Lieut. Colonel Cloete, who will cross the bar, force the entrance, and seize the sandy point.

The second division, commanded by Major D'Urban, will land, if practicable, on the sea beach, about a mile above the sandy point, spread himself, take insurgents in flank, forming by his left a junction with Colonel Cloete's division, and extend his right towards Captain Smith's camp, with whom he will open a communication.

(Signed) A. J. CLOETE, Lt. Col.  
Dept. Qr. Mast. Gen. Commanding.

[ENCLOSURE No. 3.]

Port Natal, June 27, 1842

## BRIGADE ORDERS.

1. Lieut. Colonel Cloete, commanding the troops a Natal, has to congratulate the detachment Royal Artillery, under Lieut. M'Lean; detachment 25th Regiment, under Major D'Urban; and detachment 27th Regiment, under Capt. Durnford, with the success of the expedition on which they were employed in extricating a detachment of Her Majesty's troops under Captain Smith, closely surrounded by bands of hostile insurgent Boers, against whom they had gallantly maintained their post for a whole month, though reduced to horse-flesh for food.

Lieut. Colonel Cloete has to thank Major D'Urban and the troops for their steady and spirited conduct in the affair of yesterday.

To the able assistance and spirited co-operation of Captain Ogle, commanding, and Captain Hill, and the officers and seamen of H.M.S. *Southampton*, is entirely due the very trifling loss sustained in forcing the entrance into the harbour, in which the troops received the valuable protection of the *Conch*, schooner, commanded by Mr. Bell.

2. Correct returns will be sent immediately to Headquarters of the exact strength of the several detachments composing the forces employed at Natal, with a nominal list of the casualties that occurred yesterday evening.

(Signed) A. J. CLOETE, Lt. Colonel,  
Dep. Qr. Mr. Commanding.

Enclosures Nos. 4 and 5 contain returns of killed and wounded, and of guns and ammunition taken.

2 Killed—4 Wounded

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Port Natal, 3rd July, 1842.

SIR,—The immediate effect of taking Port Natal on the afternoon of the 26th ultimo, as reported in my despatch of the 28th to your Excellency, was that on the same night the Master of the *Pilot*, brig, who had been detained as a prisoner among the Boers, and four other persons, made their escape from Congella during the panic caused by our advance movement on Captain Smith's Camp, and joined me at that place. They reported to me that the Boers had abandoned Congella in the greatest haste, and had taken flight.

On the morning of the 28th, however, we discovered with our spy glasses that there were a number of horses about Congella, and I immediately determined to march upon it, for which purpose I collected from each of the outposts one hundred men, and with this force and a howitzer I took the road to Congella. A small party of the insurgents' scouts were seen a little in advance of the place; on perceiving our approach they retired under the shelter of a bush, and we entered the village, consisting of about fifteen or twenty houses, without any opposition. Here we found some stores, merchandize, spirits in casks,

and their curious establishment for moulding six-pounder leaden shot. I resisted the burning of the place and prevented all plundering; as, however, the troops were still without any of the provisions to be landed from the *Southampton*, and with only two days' provisions in hand, I directed such articles of consumption as were necessary for the use of the troops to be put into a wagon, which we found there, and conveyed these supplies to the Camp.

Four persons, inhabitants of Congella, gave themselves up to me; one Gueinzius, a German Naturalist, another Scholts practising as a doctor, and two others; I availed myself of these people to convey to the misguided Boers, the merciful intentions of Government; placing in their hands a copy of a Public Notice, which I affixed to one of the houses at Congella, and having liberated these people I returned to the out-posts with the troops. I regretted my force did not permit me to leave a guard for the protection of the property, the more so as I felt every apprehension that the number of Kafirs, who had made their appearance as soon as we got into the place, would plunder it the moment of our leaving it.

I understood the Boers to have retired to one of their camps about twelve miles off, where they were said to be four hundred strong, with four or five guns.

Without any of my provisions or ammunition yet lauded from the *Southampton*, or any means of organizing transport, I did not feel justified in entering upon any forward movement, which would tend only to lead me away from the more important object of strengthening my posts, forming and securing my magazines.

Upon these objects I have since been engaged, and having required of the Kafirs to bring me in as many horses and cattle as they could get, I have no doubt that I shall soon be in a condition to take the offensive with some effect.

The Boers will in the meantime have had ample time to consider their position, and the terms of my notice; upon the subject of which I received, on the 30th ult., a letter from Pretorius, their Military Commandant, asking me if I wished to confer with them, and if so, to appoint a place between Congella and Captain Smith's Camp to meet him. I answered that I could enter into no negotiation with him,



without a previous declaration of submission to Her Majesty's authority. To this I have received no reply.

Several inhabitants, fifteen in number, have come in and taken the oath of allegiance.

On the 28th, 29th, and 30th, the weather had continued so boisterous that, on an attempt being made on the last of those days to send on shore some provisions, the men's packs and our ammunition, the boats struck on the bar, one man of the 25th Regt. was drowned, the whole of the provisions were lost, all the men's packs thrown overboard, and 18,000 rounds of ammunition destroyed. The greater portion of the men's packs were fortunately picked up on the following morning; when we found that the Frigate had been obliged to put out to sea.

I regret to be obliged to close this despatch with a report which reached me last night, that the Kafirs had begun to set upon the Boers, and that three had been killed by them. The enclosures explain the manner in which I have treated this subject, and upon the principles of which I purpose strictly to act; for if England will not put down the Boers on her own legitimate means, it were better to abandon the question altogether, and submit even to the insult we have received, than to adopt the degrading process of enlisting the savage in our cause, or call upon the Zoolah assegais to commit all the atrocities of indiscriminate bloodshed and spoliation.

I have received such aid from Lieut. Maclean, Royal Artillery, and his services will be of such advantage to me in our forward movement, that I have not sent him back in the *Southampton*.

I hope to be able to send the sick and wounded by her.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant,

A. J. CLOETE, Lt. Col.

Dep. Quart. Mast. Gen., Commanding.

His Excellency Major General

SIR GEORGE NAPIER, K.C.B., &c. &c.

P.S. Since writing the above, the *Maid of Mona* has come to anchor, and the *Reform* is in the offing.

A. J. CLOETE.

## [ENCLOSURE No. 1.]—NOTICE.

Congella, Port Natal, 28th June, 1842,

1.—By the authority vested in me, a *free pardon* is hereby granted to all Deserters from her Majesty's army who shall return to their colours at the head quarter of the troops at Port Natal, within *ten days* of this date.

2.—All inhabitants of Natal who shall be peaceably disposed, shall, on making their submission to her Majesty's authority, receive protection and remain unmolested. All those neglecting to do so, will be treated as being in arms against Her Majesty's Government.

(Signed) A. J. CLOETE, Lt.-Colonel,  
Dep. Quart. Mast. Gen., Commanding.

## [ENCLOSURE No. 2.]—NOTICE.

Port Natal, 2nd July, 1842.

A report having been brought in to me that the Kafirs have killed three Boers, (Dirk van Rooyen, Theunis Oosthuizen, and another,—the insurgent Boers are warned of consequences such as these, which it will be impossible to arrest while they continue in arms against Her Majesty's authority; and thus bring all the evils and horrors of Kafir murder and devastation upon themselves, their families, and properties, in spite of every endeavour on the part of Her Majesty's Troops to prevent them.

A. J. CLOETE, Lt.-Colonel,  
Dep. Quart. Mast. Gen. Commanding.

Port Natal, 4th July, 1842.

Sir,—Since writing to your Excellency yesterday, I have received from Pretorius a communication, complaining that the Kafirs were committing fierce outrages upon the Boers,—that we were receiving the cattle plundered from the Boers,—that the destruction of the Kafirs must follow such proceedings—and that anxious as the Boers were to put a stop to all this war and coming bloodshed, that it was impossible for them to accede to the conditions of my notice, which required, as a first step, a declaration of

submission to Her Majesty's authority ; and he ends his letter thus :—

“ I must also acquaint you that we have already made over this country to his Majesty the King of Netherlands, and have called upon that power to protect us, so that we have every right to expect that our cause will be supported in Europe.”

My answer to this letter is enclosed. [See below.]

I have also been informed that Pretorius and his hostile bands have retired from this neighbourhood to within fifteen miles of Maritzburg ; this sudden move I ascribe to the rumour that has just reached me that Panda and the Zoolahs were marching against the Boers.

All this is a melancholy state, but unavoidable, when dealing with such elements.

I have the honour to be, Sir,  
Your most obedient humble Servant,

A. J. CLOETE, Lieut.-Colonel,  
Dep. Qr. Mr. Gen., Commanding.

His Excellency Major General  
Sir GEORGE NAPIER, K.C.B., &c. &c.

P.S.—The detachment by the *Maid of Mona* has been landed.

A. J. C.

Copy.]

Port Natal, 3rd July, 1842.

Sir,—I have received your letter of this day's date, and no one can lament more than myself the melancholy prospect before us of seeing the savage engaged in a murderous onset of extermination against you and your fellow countrymen ; but it is an evil so unavoidably consequent upon the events which you and your unfortunate misguided people have brought about by your acts of determined hostility against Her Majesty's Government and Troops, that it ought not to surprise you ; and in spite of all my efforts to prevent, and my determination to arrest as far as in me lies, these excesses (as you will have seen by my public notices of yesterday which I have sent

to you), you must be perfectly well aware that beyond such positive prohibition, and the having employed persons to explain my determination to the Kafirs, I have no power over these people.

I have certainly required the Kafirs to bring into my cantonments all the horses and cattle they can get, so as to enable me to act with vigour, and put down the state of war and bloodshed which you have spread over these districts; and to expect that I should deprive myself of the only means I possess of equipping myself, and that, too, in the face of your having cut off the whole of Captain Smith's cattle, to the amount of some seven hundred oxen, besides causing the destruction of his horses, and having further seized all the stores of those inhabitants who are peaceably disposed towards Her Majesty's Government, is to suppose me incapable of reasoning and acting.

You have caused the horrors of this state of things, and you must bear the consequences to yourselves, your properties, your wives and your children.

You say you would still be disposed to avert the evils of this coming bloodshed, which you are aware will lead to extermination. If you are sincere in this there can be nothing degrading, in so great a cause to humanity, in your giving in your submission to Her Majesty's authority, as an indispensable and preliminary step to a final adjustment which you may be certain the Government has every disposition to settle with justice and leniency towards the Emigrant Farmers; and in the favourable interpretation to your interests, you will find in myself a friend, rather than one inimical to your unhappy countrymen.

I regret much that you should have allowed yourselves to be so grossly deceived with regard to the intentions of the King of Holland, by a person totally unaccredited, and that you should have been urged to act as you have, upon the vain supposition that any of the European Powers would lend an ear to any question arising between England and her Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, of which you cannot be so ignorant as not to know that Port Natal has always been a dependency.

I shall be happy to lend my best efforts to arrest any general rising, or partial acts of violence of the Zoolahs or

Kafirs ; but I feel my incapacity to do much in this respect, while your people continue in arms against Her Majesty's authority, and thus lead these Tribes to think that whatever injury they do you must be pleasing to the Government.

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
Your most obedient humble Servant,

A. J. CLOETE, Lient. Colonel,  
Dep. Quart. Mast. Gen., Commanding.

To Mr. PRETORIUS.

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#### A BOER'S ACCOUNT OF THE FIGHTING AT NATAL IN 1842.

The following is the Boers' account of the resistance at Natal and the loss they experienced in the affair (seven killed and nine wounded). It is from a letter picked up in the trenches at that place, the day after Colonel Cloete had forced an entrance and relieved Captain Smith, and the force of the emigrants had been driven from the port :—

Round the English Camp, this 19th June, 1842.

SIR AND GOOD FRIEND \* \* \* I hereby give you an account of our proceedings here and what we have been doing, and that through God's mercy I and the man who came with me have still been spared from the murderous balls which by hundreds have been flying around us.

On the 23rd inst. our Commandant took his (Capt. Smith's) oxen, whereupon he commenced a heavy firing upon us, but we did not return a shot. In the same night Capt. Smith crept up to our camp along the sea-shore with two guns and a party of soldiers—but our guards espied them, and, when he had come near upon us, we commenced with barely fifty men to fire, and we repulsed him. About thirty Englishmen were killed, either by our fire or drowned. We took two beautiful guns with their carriages and oxen, and not a single man of ours was wounded. On the same night our Commandant attacked their camp, and kept up firing until all our powder and

shot were expended. In that attack were killed Piet Greyling and his son John ; J. Prinslo, P. Vel, and F. Schuts were wounded, but not mortally.

The day after this two ships arrived, bringing provisions, ammunition, and two immensely large guns for Captain Smith, whereupon he broke open our store on the beach and placed the goods from the ships in it, leaving there one gun and a strong detachment, whereupon our Commandant made an attack on the store on the 30th and took it. Three soldiers were killed and seventeen taken prisoners, whom we took together with their gun, and the English who had lived at Natal, and who are all now in custody as criminals at Pietermaritzburg, as they also fought against us in the beginning, and two of them were killed. We then took possession of all the things of Smith's, as also of the English residents, as well as what we found in their houses as in the ships, and between 70 to 80 wagon loads of those things were taken to Pietermaritzburg, and a quantity of their cattle is also there. The two ships were also taken possession of, but one run away on the 13th inst., and with the latter Archbell\* also made off, who we believe came here with Captain Smith, but he has left two wagons behind, of which we have also taken possession. All this time, Captain Smith began fortifying his position with his wagons and trenches and ditches, having still two cannons in his camp. We therefore could make little impression on him, but we also made trenches all around him, so that not one could show his head without having some balls fired at him—for we also made ditches round his camp from which we fired day and night, and he also returned us the fire. From which between the 6th and 12th inst. were killed, Ths. Marais [the next name is illegible] and B. Kloppers by cannon shot, and on the night of the 17th† the English crept out of their camp quietly and stormed our trenches where a party of ours lay asleep, having two sentries out who were

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\* A respected English Missionary of the Wesleyan persuasion

† This is the night attack mentioned by Capt. Smith in his despatch of the 30th June, headed by Lieut. Molesworth, in which Ensign Prior and two privates were killed, and four others severely wounded.

both killed; their names were Strydom and Hattingh. Six more were wounded, but not mortally. Three English bodies are lying dead on the ground, but we dare not venture to go out of the trenches to see whether there are more lying, as they keep firing upon every one who comes out. We therefore keep in our trenches, and as these advance fire from them at the camp continually, as we can do no more than starve them out, for he has not more in his camp than about 20 horses.

My good friend, \* \* \* I have now to beg of you that you will make this news public throughout your division, so that every one may know the truth, for I fear that many lies go abroad, and particularly tell this to my wife. I now end with kind regards to all, and chiefly to my wife and children, who perhaps I may never see again. Tell the Boers in your division to keep themselves in readiness to relieve us on the first order being given, for it is uncertain how long still this may last."

The deplorable situation of the troops in their entrenchments, their privations, and praiseworthy endurance, are well told by Capt. Lonsdale of the 27th, in a letter to his mother. This is his description of the Boers as an enemy:—"Before proceeding further, I must tell you that the Boers' mode of fighting is much on the same principle as formerly in America—not in a body, but in skirmishing order. They have the very best description of arms, that carry from eight to seventeen balls to the pound. They have almost all of them horses; they will ride within shot, dismount, fire, then mount and retire. They are most excellent shots."

He proceeds—"I was lying in my tent, down with fever, and we were doing all we could to fortify the camp. On the morning of the 21st of May, just before sunrise, we were saluted by a six-pound shot, which passed through the officers' mess tent, knocking their kettles and cooking apparatus in all directions. Every one of course went to his station in the ditch, and the Boers then kept up an incessant fire from four pieces of artillery and small arms, never ceasing for a moment during the whole day till sunset. During the whole day Martha and Jane were lying on the ground in the tent close by me. Many shots, both large and small, passed through the tent close

to us. James was lying in my other tent on the ground, with his legs on the legs of a table, when a six-pound shot cut off the table-legs just above him, and the splinters struck him in the face. When the attack was over all the officers came to our tents, expecting to find us all dead. I said if they attacked us next morning we should all have to go into the trench. Margaret then got up and put on a few things, and assisted me in putting on something. I had scarcely got on my trousers when we were again attacked. Margaret and the children ran immediately to the trench, and I was carried into it, and we all lay down or sat up. The fire continued all day, as on the day before. About the middle of the day the children were getting very hungry. Jane said there was a bone of beef in the tent, and she would go for it, but we did not wish her, as she might have been shot; but before I knew much about it she was back with the bone.

'We all slept in the trench this night. Next morning we were awakened by a shot from one of the great guns passing just over our heads. Shortly after a flag of truce came, and Margaret and the children went under the escort of Boers to board on board the *Mazeppa*, in their possession. They asked Margaret if she was old Capt. Smith's 'vrouw.'

"On the 10th of June the *Mazeppa* slipped her cable and put out to sea, but not before she received a salute from the Boers at the Point, but she did not receive any injury. After the children and she left, and they did so in such a hurry that they had not a change of clothes, the Boers continued the attack, and they made trenches all round us, so that no one could go outside the camp, or into a tent, without having a shot at him. We attacked one of their trenches, surprising them. They fired one round and killed poor Ensign Prior, of our regiment, and two men. Our fellows did not give them time to load again, but rushed into the trench and bayoneted almost all of them. The wounded suffered very much, as the doctor had nothing in the way of medical comforts for the poor fellows. I was lying prostrate in the trench twenty-seven days, hardly able to move, and with not so much as a jacket on."

During the short respite referred to in the preceding



letter, a number of families and individuals embarked on board the *Mazeppa*. It was in May, 1842, that this gallant little vessel left the Bay, under the fire of a four-pounder from the Boers, besides small arms. Fortunately, the only gun likely to do any damage, the eighteen-pounder, could not be brought to bear in time. But it was a hazardous affair—neck or nothing. She was in charge of Mr. Joseph Cato, and his mission was to look for a man-of-war along the eastern coast. He failed in finding one, but on returning to Port Natal found that the *Southampton* had arrived already and relieved Capt. Smith.

Her Majesty's ship the *Southampton*, attended by the *Conch* with the boats in tow, had to cross the formidable bar which is such an obstruction to the entrance of the beautiful and safe Bay of Natal—a difficult thing at all times, but especially so when exposed to the fire of an enemy. The *Conch*, landed a few men on the rocks of the Bluff, but tried in vain to land men upon the "Back Beach." In this position a few Dutch on the Bluff, and a few more at the "Point," might have driven the boats back to the ships with great loss; but fortunately for the English, and fatally for the Boers, the latter had no expectation of such an attack from such a quarter, and therefore were not prepared for it. They had one field piece on the Bluff, but a shell from the *Southampton* silenced it at once, and those who worked it ran away with all convenient speed; and as there were only a few Boers at the "Point," they made little resistance. Under these circumstances, the *Conch*, commanded by Captain Durnford, of the 27th Regt., came on with her line of boats, filled with those who by their courage were to take possession of Natal in the name of Her Britannic Majesty, and who, after landing, at once tore down the Republican flag that was flying at the "Point." The *Conch* was despatched by Colonel Hare from Algoa Bay, and contained a detachment of one hundred men of the 27th Regt., two small howitzers, and stores.

In Colonel Cloete's report, he says:—"Having thus seized the Port, and landed the men from the *Conch*, the troops were immediately formed. Capt. Durnford was

ordered to enter the bush upon the right and drive the Boers before him, whilst I placed myself upon a roadway in the centre, Major D'Urban taking the left along the harbour beach. In this order we advanced through the bush, the character of which it is difficult to describe, and which might have been held by a handful of resolute men against any assailants. On reaching the open ground we found the direction of Capt. Smith's entrenched camp by the firing of his one heavy gun. We marched upon this point. Capt. Smith now threw out a party, and we joined him at four o'clock. Having thus executed your Excellency's commands with all military promptitude, by extricating the brave detachment of troops under Capt. Smith's command, I strengthened his post by Capt. Duriford's detachment, and directed Major D'Urban to a house nearer to the "Point," to arrange a post of defence with such of the troops as I expected would have been landed."

It is stated that the report of the firing was heard as far as Algoa Bay in the south, and Um Pande's kraal in the north.

In another despatch to Sir George Napier, Colonel Cloete says:—"I regret to be obliged to close this despatch with a report that reached me last night that the Kaffirs had begun to set upon the Boers, and that three had been killed by them." The following notice was then posted up:—"A report having been brought in to me that the Kaffirs had killed three Boers, the insurgent Boers are warned of consequences such as these which it will be impossible to arrest, while they continue in arms against Her Majesty's authority, and thus draw all the evils and horrors of Kaffir murder and devastation on themselves, their families and properties, in spite of every endeavour on the part of Her Majesty's troops to prevent them."

The following is the official account of the termination of hostilities:—

"Lient. Colonel Cloete left Port Natal on the 21st on board Her Majesty's ship *Isis*, and has reported to His Excellency the Governor the final cessation of hostilities between Her Majesty's troops and the insurgent Boers, no further hostile demonstration having been shown by them after the troops under Col. Cloete were lauded.

“The Emigrant Farmers having made a solemn declaration of their submission to the Queen, having released the prisoners, whether soldiers or civilians, having given up the cannon captured, as well as those belonging to themselves, and having restored all public as well as private property seized by them, the Lieut. Colonel, acting under the powers vested in him by the Governor, granted a general amnesty or free pardon to all persons who might have been engaged in resistance to Her Majesty’s troops and authority, with the exception of Joachim Priusloo, A. W. Pretorius, J. J. Burgher, Michael von Breda, and Servaas von Breda.

After these things Andreas Pretorius became, after years of trouble, the head and representative of the Vaal River Dutch Republic, now the Transvaal. This man’s head was worth £2,000 in 1848, which amount was offered by Sir Harry Smith ; but in 1852, four years later, he first treats with Her Majesty’s Commissioners *re* the Sovereignty, and concludes with them a treaty, in which the existence and future independence of the Dutch Transvaal Republic are acknowledged, and then, as the representative of that Republic, visits Natal, and many of the gentry of Pietermaritzburg and D’Urban go to meet him on his approach, and escort him with much honor into their respective towns. An account of his death appears elsewhere.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### MR. J. N. WHEELER'S ACCOUNT OF THE TAKING OF PORT NATAL.

IN giving accounts of eye witnesses of events that happened at the time of this fighting in 1842, the narrators are of course responsible for their own tales. One of my informants says (I made these notes in Natal) that on Capt. Smith's arrival at the Bay, "a large party went and pulled down the Boer flag" whereas Mr. Armstrong, who is now in Maritzburg, says that there were just six present, viz. Capt. Smith; an officer of his; and that officer's servant; Cato; Benningfield and himself. Another (Mr. Wolhuter) says that old Kamies van Amsterdam (a respectable coloured old man who still lives (I hope) in Maritzburg) was his servant, when he, Kamies, went with a wagon and loaded up the dead bodies of the soldiers shot by the Boers at Kongella, and took them to Smith's camp; when the latter tore his hair in despair; whereas Mr. Armstrong says old Kamies was, to his certain knowledge, in Maritzburg at the time, and so on,\*

Mr. Wheeler says "Dingaan's kraal was formerly where the Durban Town Hall now is. He found the place unhealthy and removed to over the Umgeni. It was the ambition of the Boers to get a Port. McDonald, who arrived in 1842, was liked by the Boers who did not molest him. I noticed Messrs. Grout, Lindley, Adams, and the Revd. Archbell there at the time, also old Mr. Benningfield, and old Mr. Dunn (father of John Dunn). I met an officer of the 27th Regt., Pringle by name. Capt. Smith posted a notice requiring Boers to clear out from where the late Mr. Kabt's house now is. Morewood was the Harbour Master, and the Boers were levying Customs dues.

"Now arrived the *Pilot* (March 1842), she had been chartered by the Government. She brought two eighteen pounders, ammunition and provisions for Smith, and a few men belonging to the Engineers. Capt. Hughie McDon-

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\* Old Kamies is since dead.

ald was master of the *Pilot* brig. He built the first Royal Hotel in D'Urban. I was supercargo on board, and we landed the guns and the provisions at the Point. Other people I then met in D'Urban were Cato, Frank Armstrong (on *Mazeppa*), Bill Perkins, returned to Algoa Bay; John Hogg, whose son is now (1886) at Dundee; Carl Behrens, in the butchering business then—old Kahts, Cauvin, Botha, of Botha's Hill, who was cast away on the Annabella Bank—he was master of the *Annabella*; Cowie, of Cowie's Hill, who married into the Dutch families of Oudendals and Laas; of Noodsberg, Phil Ferreira, and Wolhuter, now of Maritzburg, who was a prisoner.

"The Germans would not fight, so the Boers made them work. Other men in D'Urban, I remember, were Douglas, McCabe, and Toohey.

Mr. Wheeler says, in speaking about the Kongella affair, that two-thirds of those returned as killed in the action, were simply first disabled and then drowned by the rising tide. His account of the affair, which, he says, he witnessed in the very bright moonlight from the deck of the *Pilot*, is substantially the same that has been given in a former part of this work. It is nowhere stated who was in command of the attacking party. Mr. Wheeler says Capt. Lonsdale was.

"Lieut. Tunnard, of the 27th Regiment, who had been shot through the fleshy part of the thigh, floated down to the Point, and was picked up by the crew of the *Pilot*, and sent to camp next day.\* The camp was in the form of a triangle, with a ditch round it—in one corner an 18-pounder worked by Bombadier Porter (the terror of the Boers). The bulk of troops were taken from the Point to protect the camp. A small force of 18 men under Sergt. Berry, and one 18-pounder and 2 gunners, being left to defend the Point—these gunners were afterwards shot. A neutral day having passed, the Boers marched from their camp at daylight and attacked the Point. The first to be shot was the sentry† at the Flagstaff. The Boers took up

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\* Capt. Smith's

† In the upper districts of Natal the writer saw the gun with which this poor soldier was shot—A flint lock elephant gun, six to the pound.

safe positions, around, in the sandhills and thick bush, and opened fire on the barracks—I was close by at the time. The barracks were afterwards the old Custom House. The gunners were now shot, and the fire was so heavy that the soldiers retreated into the building, when the Boers immediately surrounded it in force. Charlie Adams, a servant of Ogle's, swam off to our brig, the *Pilot*. When he got about half way, the Boers fired at him, and shot him in the back of his head, when he sank to rise no more. The Boers were at that moment under the command of Breda and Spies. Ogle was also afterwards in the Stocks.\*

“After the Battle of Kongella, Cato, Armstrong, Benningfield, and their families, came to the Point, and went on board the *Mazeppa*, schooner, which had arrived soon after the *Pilot*. She belonged to J. Owen Smith of Algoa Bay, and was consigned to Cato. The Boers hailed the *Pilot* under the impression that the civilians who left D'Urban were on board. They asked for a boat to be sent on shore. As I have said, I was witness of the whole affair, at close quarters, and I went ashore in the boat, and was treated well, and was asked to communicate with the soldiers in the building, and tell them that if they would lay down their arms they would be treated kindly, as they—the Boers—had nothing personally against them.

When the Boers were convinced that there were no civilians on board the *Pilot*, they hailed the *Mazeppa*, and demanded the disembarkation of all males, or they would sink the vessel with the 18-pounder they had just captured. They called over the names of the males, but omitted those of John McKenzie, of Umkomanzi, and Joe Cato—the reason of the omission being that when the Boers picked up the dead bodies at Kongella they thought they recognised these amongst the slain.

“Recurring to the neutral day, the dead bodies were picked up by the Boers and sent to the camp under a flag of truce for Christian burial. The names of those killed are still upon the monument near where the camp is at present (1888).†

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\* The quaint and clumsy affairs are now in the Imperial Hotel, Maritzburg.

† Those recorded are given in the appendix.

Reverting to the Point. Upon the landing of the civilians they were taken by the Boers and marched, with the gun, and the soldier prisoners who had surrendered at the barracks, to Kongella, and a day or two afterwards, through behind Pinetown, to Maritzburg, where the soldiers were left at large, but the civilians, Ogle, Beuningfield, Cato, Swiggard, and John Hogg, put in the stocks, and every day exposed outside, for a while, to public ridicule.

“The Boers meanwhile held the Point and cut off all supplies, having bagged all stores, &c. On the neutral day, Dick King was put across the Bluff Channel to carry despatches to Graham's Town (King and Ogle were elephant hunters and traders). The Boers were aware of this, and sent a party to Isipingo, where King's place was, thinking he would call at his home first before starting on his long ride, and that so they might intercept and shoot him. But King (who afterwards told me himself) had a presentiment of this danger, and so galloped off, without stopping, straight along the beach southwards, and never drew rein until he was miles and miles away.

It was the Revd. Mr. Archbell who was sent by the Boers, on the neutral day, to bring what women that would leave the British camp to Kongella, or board the vessels, as the Boers announced their determination to completely invest and bombard the camp. They placed the 18-pounder on the sandhills at the, then, end of West-street, and the field pieces were under the Berea Bush. The 18-pounder at the camp faced the Bay.

The wagons and tents at the British camp were completely riddled, and all hands would have been shot had it not been for the trench, which, fortunately, was dry at this time of the year. The Boers had offered Capt. Smith to send him and his force on board the ships, with provisions, if they would abandon Natal, but the old Irishman scorned the idea.

The Boers now made zig-zags so close to the camp that those within it could hear their pickaxes working, when volunteers were called for to make a sortie, which being made, Lient Prior and several men were shot.

Turning to the Point, the Boers ran short of ammunition and so took the cable from the *Mazeppa*, and coating them

lead, fired it links at the camp. Cato's boat took the cable with some stores on shore. This boat could be seen passing and repassing daily. The late Philip Ferreira was one of the crew. Capt Smith, suspecting what was going on, asked Gunner Porter if he thought he could hit the boat with a shot from his large gun? After firing a shot or two at the Island, Porter got the range and direction, and pointed the gun at a certain opening that the boat daily passed. Ferreira related the story—and he saw Porter let fly. The shot struck the water close on the starboard side of the boat, and ricocheted right over her, wetting the terrified passengers to the skin. That boat never ventured to go up again. We often joked Ferreira on the matter."

