

CHAPTER XXXV.

BEING A BACKWARD GLANCE.

BEFORE going on with the thread of my story, I must revert to the troubles of the Boers in Natal after the Retief slaughter in Zululand in 1838.

From the written statement of a young Boer, named Daniel Pieter Bezuidenhout, one of the few who were saved by accident from the midnight massacre of Boers by Zulus near Blaauwkrantz in Natal, and who hastened to warn many others to prepare for defence, I take the accounts, which (collected by John Bird, Esq.,) have not appeared in book form yet, from the columns of the *Times of Natal* :—

We had remained behind with the women and children. We were not in a laager, but in little bivouacs of three or four wagons each, every family separately, along the course of the Blaauwkrantz downwards. We were in tranquil security, for there was peace ; and as Retief had recovered and restored the cattle belonging to Dingaan's people, we could not imagine that things would not go all right. Dingaan knew this, and, in order to come upon us unawares, immediately after the murder of Retief and his sixty men, he sent an army to fall on us at night. Blaauwkrantz is between Ladysmith and Weenen, a little nearer to the sea.

The first assault of the Zulus was on the outspan of Barend Johs. Liebenberg, later in the night on that of Wynand Frederick Bezuidenhout, my father. Each outspan was separate ; the cattle were kept near. There was no "laager."

Of the Liebenbergs, four of the sons came forward, who, together with young Biggar, went to meet the Kafirs. All the other Liebenbergs were murdered at the wagons. . . . The second attack was on Adriaan Rossouw, who was murdered with his wife and four

children. On the following day we found two children badly wounded, but still alive. Elizabeth Rossouw had sixteen wounds, and died the next day. Adriaan had twenty-three spear wounds, but escaped with life. He was my sister's child, and lived on my farm till his eighteenth year. He then died of one of the wounds, which had never completely healed.

The third attack was on my father's outspan, consisting of five wagons and three tents. There were three men there—my father, Rudolph Botha, and myself. It was about an hour after midnight, and there was no moon. Our wagons were on a rough hillock near thoru trees. We had three or four bold savage dogs that would tear a tiger to pieces without difficulty. I heard the dogs fight and bark, and thought there was a tiger. I got up with little clothing on, and went to urge on the dogs; and when I got to a distance of about three hundred yards from the wagons, I heard the whirr of assegais, and the noise of shields; and I perceived that we had to do with Kafirs, and not with tigers. The dogs were attacking the Kafirs. I shouted to my father, "There are Kafirs here, and they are stabbing the dogs." I ran back to the wagons to get my gun, for I was unarmed. But the wagons were already surrounded by three rows of Kafirs. I strove to push them aside, and struggled very hard to make my way through the Kafir ranks to get at my gun; but I found that there were still a number within those ranks closely surrounding the wagons. Whilst I was yet advancing I heard my father cry "O God!" and I knew from the cry that he was suffocating in blood. He had a wound in the gullet above the chest. Rudolph Botha had fired three times, and there lay three Kafirs. Then he too gave a similar death-cry, "O Lord!" I heard nothing after this. I tried to make my way back from the wagons through the three rows of Kafirs. Then I received the first wound from an assegai on the shoulder-joint through the breast and along the ribs. A second assegai struck the bone of my thigh, so that the point of the blade was bent, as I found when I drew it out. The third struck me above the left knee. All the wounds were on my left side. A fourth wound was inflicted above the ankle,

through the sinews under the calf of the leg. Then I found myself among the cattle, and stood a moment listening. I heard no sound of a voice—all were dead. The Kafirs were busy tearing the tents, breaking the wagons, and stabbing to death the dogs and the poultry. They left nothing alive. Of the women and children who were murdered at my father's wagons, there were my mother, my wife, my mother-in-law, my sister (the wife of Rudolph Botha) and her little child, five months old; another sister, the wife of Adrian Bezuidenhout, and also two of my unmarried sisters, a young brother, my little daughter, eleven months old, and another infant daughter, only three days old, also murdered with her mother. On the following day we found my wife, with her bosom mutilated; the dead infant lay at the blood-stained breast. I had another brother, fourteen years old: he slept in my father's tent; and when I shouted "Here are Kafirs," he understood me to say that the sheep were running off. He jumped up, and received only an assegai wound along the skin of the back, and then ran among the thorn-trees. He arrived at Doornkop the next day.* He had known where the horses were running, had made, a bridle of the strips of his braces, had caught and mounted the horse that was most gentle, and drove seven horses, and so escaped. From the outspan, I went up along the Blaauwkrantz River. The first family I came to was that of Tybrand van Dyk; this was at about two o'clock in the morning. There was no moonlight. I had scarcely awakened the women and children and removed them from the wagons when the Kafirs were there. The second family that I roused was that of Scheepers, who had been murdered with Retief. There were only women and children there. The third outspan was that of Hans Roetz, Van Vooren, and Geer. This was the last. Day broke, and then, numbering 196 men, women, and children, we made our way to Doornkop, where the families of Retief and of the Greylings, were. We reached Doornkop

* Mr. George Pigot Moodie, at present of the "Vineyard," Newlands, near Cape Town, for some years, subsequently, owned a plot with the writer, lived upon this fine farm. The remains of an old mud fortification, were still to be seen.

at noon. The people who had their outspans along the Moord Spruit and Bushman's River were all murdered."

This description of one of the scenes of that sad night differs little, in conveying a distinct impression of the atrocity of the massacre, from two other accounts that have a place in annals; and it will be fitly followed by a relation of the efforts made next day to drive off and signally punish the aggressors. The extract is from the writings of Charl (Sarl) Celliers, one of the leaders of the emigrants, and subsequently an elder of their church. The frequent use which, as will be seen, is made by Celliers of the words of scripture, was common among his countrymen. When their ancestors left Holland two centuries before, such reference to Bible texts was in accordance with the spirit of the age, and usual in ordinary conversation. Their descendants in the wilds of Africa had been secluded from intercourse with strangers, and retained the custom, which might induce a suspicion of profanity, if it were not quite certain that the Boers were wholly free from levity in regard to their religion.

Celliers had been at some distance from the wagons on which the attack had been made. With five armed and mounted men he came upon the scene in the morning. He says :—

Mr. Retief, who had been on a commission to Natal for the purpose of ascertaining whether it was under Her Majesty's dominion, had returned and assured us that Natal was still free; and also that he had gone to influence Dingaan; and that they (the Zulus) had ceded the country to us from the Tugela to the Umzimvubu river, on condition that if, Sikonyela having taken 900 head of cattle from Dingaan, Mr. Retief should recover these, then the territory, as I have described it, was to be given over to us. We accordingly directed our course to Natal. But one woe had passed away; another was impending. When we were in the country about the Tugela Blaauwkrantz, and Bushman's River, Retief with a hundred men repaired to Sikonyela's country, and without firing a shot took 1,100 head of cattle, and, having sixty-five men with him, drove them according to agreement to Dingaan, as the price of the district ceded to us

as aforesaid. But alas! how dark a cloud was hanging over us. . . . So far as we have heard Dingaan was very friendly to Retief when he arrived, and complied with his desire very fully as to the recognition of previous negotiation regarding the territory. He signed the agreement, and then invited Retief and his companions to come and eat and drink with him. Then his treachery manifested itself in the death of martyrdom which all our friends were doomed to undergo. But our God too saw it, and from His holy throne directed His counsels.

We were waiting for the return of our chosen ruler from Dingaan's country; but the first intelligence we received was a formidable commando sent by Dingaan, which perpetrated cruel and bloodthirsty murder amongst us, so that 500 of our number were slain. But our God did not forsake us. We acknowledge that our God from His heaven looked down on us in mercy; and He strengthened with His might those of us who remained alive to take up our weapons again, and I can affirm that I strove, and that I, like Jephtha, had my life in my hand. With five men I rescued the camp of Gerrit Barends, which was on the point of being overpowered by the great force of the enemy. This laager was open on one side, the wagons being drawn in a half moon. When we were at some distance and saw the great danger of the disaster about to occur, I said to my brothers: "Have God before your eyes. Let not a hair of your head show fear, and follow me." We gave the reins to our horses, and I shouted as loudly as I could, for I saw that the Kafirs were running swiftly round the laager to rush in at the opening by storm. Yes! had we come five minutes later, the whole laager would have been a bath of blood. But our great God prevented it, and said to our enemy "Thus far and no farther." Our enemies were terrified, and their hands were weakened. Five men liberated the camp with God's assistance. The Bushman's River was rapid. Five men drove the Kafirs into the stream, and more were drowned than we had shot. I had fired so many shots that the barrel of the gun became heated, and to such a degree that I feared in loading least the barrel should ignite. After that we rode at full speed past the laager

in the direction of another body of Kafirs still on the same side of the river. We drove them over the hill with great loss of their numbers. Our force, too, had been increased by about twelve men, and when we got to the other side of the mountain we found the horses that had been taken from the camp by the enemy. These were sent back, and a message was carried to our fellows at the same time, urging them to come to our assistance, to reinforce our party as numerous as possible. I then saw the cattle that had been driven off, and I wished, as the mountain was level on its summit, to ride hard and turn and recapture the cattle, but when we got to the top I saw another party of our men (if I am not mistaken there were six), who were also in pursuit of the enemy, and fired at them from a distance. Very soon we were actively engaged, as we came in contact with them. Eleven lay dead on the spot, and we attacked our opponents so vigorously that numbers fell till we had driven them into a fastness. We then rode in a direction that would enable us to recapture the cattle. In doing so we came upon a place where the family of Rensburg were hemmed in by the enemy on the summit of a small hill. A great multitude were collected round it—and here another battle had to be fought. The Kafirs were still full of courage. As we fired our first shots they rushed with great violence to storm down on us. We were unable to dismount, and fired on horseback. My order was that we would load as fast as we could in retiring. Then each time we turned round and came within a short distance of the enemy. This was done repeatedly, and we were constantly reinforced by others of our men who came up, whilst the strength of the Kafirs was more and more reduced, until they turned and fled before our faces. By God's mercy we had another victory. Then every thing gave way to rage. There was no further resistance. We drove the Kafirs into a confused heap, and overwhelmed them until they were driven by us into the fastnesses of the mountains. I now directed that pursuit should be made for the recovery of the cattle. We came upon a

* Most of the men were absent at a distance in pursuit of large game.

spot where many of our people had been murdered, who whilst flying to others for help had been overtaken by Kafirs. I was an eye-witness to the fact that little infants still in swaddling-clothes lay in their blood murdered in the arms of their mothers. I called on the Lord, and said; 'Oh my God! shall the blood of the sucklings be unavenged.' The cattle were on a high mountain, and the ascent was difficult. Our horses were greatly fatigued. The hearts of many of our men sank at the dreadful sight I have described. I said, however, that that was not a time for mourning, for the Lord had delivered the enemy into our hands, and we must pursue them and rescue the cattle. I spurred on in advance. Only ten men followed me. I reached the foot of the mountain. There was a numerous commando of the enemy on the top. I thought it inadvisable to ascend the mountain with ten men. Our foes remained in possession of large numbers of cattle."

This extract brings to a close one of the histories of that eventful day. As the account, given by Beznidenhout, of the midnight attack referred only to what he had personally witnessed at a single ontspan of four or five wagons, whilst similar havoc and murder were being perpetrated among the occupants of at least a hundred more; so, in looking upon the vivid picture drawn by Celliers of the scenes in which with a few followers he had taken so zealous a part, it must be borne in mind that similar retaliation and destruction were being achieved in every direction by not less than fifteen or twenty other bands of vigorous and infuriated men. The Zulus who fell in the carnage of that day cannot have been fewer than 3,000 or 4,000.

But before daybreak a contingent of the native army had driven far the greater portion of the captured cattle beyond the Tugela. Dingaan regarded the thousands of oxen and cows that were added to his herds not only as very valuable spoils of war, but as an evidence of victory in spite of great loss of life. He was led on to fresh effort. Another attempt to surprise a "laager" was made a few weeks later, when again the Zulus were driven off with severe loss. After a while the Boers sent a force to invade Zululand: but owing to disunion between two of their leaders the expedition failed of success.

In this dangerous position of their affairs it was im-

possible for the emigrants to attempt tillage or any useful occupation. They were obliged to be always on their guard, always on the alert, and it was not until another commando, sent out in November, 1838, had gained a signal victory at Blood River, on Sunday, 16th December, that Dingaan was so far humbled as to sue for peace. His prayer was granted on the condition that he should restore the captured cattle and pay an amend for the cost of the war. In these terms he acquiesced, acknowledging and promising to discharge a debt of not less than 19,000 head of cattle.

Nearly at the same time the Governor of the Cape, disquieted by rumours of these occurrences, sent a detachment of troops to Natal, ostensibly to claim and occupy the harbour, but probably with no other object than that of watching, and perhaps influencing, the course of events. The measure did not attain any very useful result, and the troops were withdrawn at the close of the year 1839.

Meanwhile Dingaan had been in no haste to fulfil his stipulations with the Boers. This delay raised a suspicion in their minds that he was seeking to elude the claim, and possibly was meditating treachery; and although by a friendly message he sought to temporise, and to satisfy them of his good faith, the Volksraad resolved to wait no longer, and to enforce their claim by war.

Of the final campaign that then ensued against Dingaan an account, as before noted, is given by M. Adulphe Délegorgue. The war was bloodless on the side of the emigrants; they left the contest, no longer an equal struggle, to be fought out by the forces of the King's brother Umpande. Alluding to the recall of the English troops first sent to Natal, M. Délegorgue says:—

The Boers, having now been released from a watchfulness that clogged their freedom of action, resolved to take immediate advantage of the favourable circumstances that presented themselves.

Dingaan put off from day to day the payment of the war-debt which he had acknowledged to be due. Panda, in deserting, had drawn to his party a number of influential captains, and a considerable contingent of fighting men. He and they had a common object. It was indispensable that Dingaan should fall. Without doubt that chief

counted many devoted men in his cohorts, but also many who were discontented, and silenced only by the fear of being put to death.

A commando was resolved upon. This is what the Arabs call a "razzia"; no other name suits that kind of warfare, which bears no resemblance to the warlike tactics of Europe. Pande was directed to act with his warriors on one side: the Boers were to advance on the other. With two hostile corps to encounter Dingaan, who could not possibly divide his forces, must infallibly succumb. . . . On the 13th January, 1840, the commando of the Boers was already on its way from Pietermaritzburg towards the Tugela River. . . . On the 18th, after having halted for some time, it was noon when we reached the banks of the Tugela, which were at that time covered by men, wagons and horses. The confused cries of the strong-voiced Boers, the clacking of their wagonwhips, the stamping of the wheels, as they crashed from stone to stone, the noise of the water stemmed in its course by oxen, wagons, horses, and men, all this repeated by echoes from the opposite banks, produced an uproar that would have made one suppose that the river was being crossed by twenty thousand men in the disorganization of defeat. So far from this there were but 308 armed men, and not more than sixty Hottentots, and 400 Kafir servants. There may besides have been 600 horses, 500 oxen, and fifty wagons.

I have to add that there was a commandant of the forces, but as a matter of form only, in whom no right of punishment was recognised, and whose command any one would obey only if he thought fit.

Several hours were spent in the passage of the river, after which we encamped at a distance of a mile further on. At this spot we spent the 19th and 20th of January, awaiting a reinforcement from among the colonists living beyond the Drakensberg. . . . These two days of delay, far from being turned to account in gaining information on which the conduct of the campaign might be based, far from being used for measures of usefulness so as to guard against dangerous risks, that ought to be forecast, were spent in reading the Bible and singing Hymns; while masses of meat, almost smothering the fires of the

bivouac, were being roasted. At intervals of intermission in these more serious occupations the young people, following their wits of little range, gave themselves up to meaningless games, to wrestling without any artistic skill, or seeking to shine by the rudest jokes. Habituated to live in the midst of their isolated families, they looked upon this great concourse of men as a holiday scene, the more so as the meat was excellent, and the daily ration not less than 10lb. . . .

The camp was broken up on the 23rd, and the wagons, one following another, soon after crossed the Klip River, a stony—and even detestably rocky—stream. Decidedly we were travelling in the country of the Zulus; but this was not considered a sufficient reason for adopting a more prudent system of advance. An interval of four miles separated the first wagon from the last. What force would three or four hundred men have represented, even though armed with guns, if spread over a long line, and if it had been attacked in rear and front by fifteen or twenty thousand Kafirs? Very certainly resistance would not have been possible. But the Commandant-General, Mr. Pretorius, had his own system of tactics, and that was to have no tactics at all. On the following day we remained at rest, for some who had not started with us were still to come up; and if we had gone on, the fear of advancing alone might have induced them to turn back. At ten o'clock there was an alarm, which made everyone take up his arms. . . . But it was a false alarm, the absence of reason for it becoming known without delay. About four hundred Kafirs, carrying their bucklers, had been seen by a patrol. But they were visitors, the contingent of Matuwana, who came to offer their services for acting with us against Dingaan. At the request of Mr. Pretorius they drew themselves up in line, and performed the war dance to an accompaniment of war-songs. The effect of the exhibition was picturesque and imposing. Each of the warriors had his head girt with a pad of otterskin, worn to protect the skull against a blow. From this a long single feather of the Numidian crane rose perpendicularly, swaying with the wind. From the neck hung rows of oxtails, a kind of loose vestment forming an upper shelter for the person. From the waist to the knee, following

the curves of the loins and the back, hung the elegant "simba," formed of four hundred strips of wild cat-skin spirally twisted, and sown so as to imitate the tails of monkeys. For ornamental garters there were oxtails, of which the tufts protected the front of the legs against thorns. Similar, but shorter, tails knotted above the ankle, covered the upper part of the foot for the same purpose. The arm bore similar tufts, the play of which as the limb is moved is very graceful. . . . In agreement with all who have seen them, I cannot too much praise the beauty, the grace, the elegance of these vestments, though they would not be a suitable attire for us. . . . The 25th and 26th were passed at the same place in the hope of fair weather, which did not come, and of a reinforcement of some men, who joined us in a state of exhaustion from constant rain.

At length, on the 27th, we travelled four leagues with great difficulty. . . . There we were visited by Kafir runners, sent by Nongalaza, the captain in command of Pande's forces. These men were commissioned to tell their master, who was with us, that the hostile armies were in presence of each other, and must be actually engaged at that very time. . . . On the 21st we left the mountains on our right, . . . and on the same day crossed the Sand River. The next day we passed the Umzimyati, or Buffalo, River. Some of the wagons were overturned, some were broken, but all, nevertheless, reached the side of a mountain near which we stationed ourselves. Here we found a quantity of bleached bones, a number of Kafir skulls scattered in the long grass. That was the place in which the memorable battle of the Sunday had been fought, in which twenty-five regiments of a thousand men each, rushing in turns on a "laager," defended by eight or nine hundred Bcers, had left 3,200 of their own numbers on the field. The attack had not lasted more than an hour and a half. This slaughter had occurred on 15th September, 1838, and the stream running near received from it the name of Blood River. . . . On the 30th, at about five o'clock, a Kafir bearing a white flag came from Nongalaza to inform us that Dingaan's last resource was to effect a junction with Umzilikazi, but that this would oblige him to pass through the country of the

“knob-nosed !” Kafirs who are called Amakazana, from whom he had everything to fear ; that to avoid these, and taking a more eastern direction, he must pass into the country of the Amaswazi, still more implacable enemies, so that on either hand there were dangers so certain that he must infallibly be overwhelmed by them. The messenger added that Dingaan, fearing for his life, had hidden himself in a cave near his town, awaiting an opportunity of escaping to the north.

On the morning of the 31st, a council of war was assembled. It was held in the open air, a sufficient reason for the judges to wear their hats. I speak of judges, because the council was composed only of judges and a reporter. To answer the public prosecutor there was no counsel for defending the accused. There would have been too little political wisdom in furnishing such means of resistance to those whom all desired to see condemned and shot. I have spoken of judges, because those men were in the position of judges, though they bore little resemblance to such high functionaries. If you attach importance to a distinct idea of this council, composed of weak and cruel people, have present to your mind what a revolutionary tribunal was in the days of the Reign of Terror.

Two capital sentences had to be pronounced and to be carried into effect immediately after the rising of the court. There, before these unimposing white men, appeared two human beings manacled to each other, the handcuff linking the left wrist of one to the right of the other. These men were Tambuza and Kombezana. Both had a firm demeanour. Who were these men ? How had they fallen into the hands of the Boers ?

M. Délargogue in answering these questions enters so minutely into a detail of particular occurrences at Pietermaritzburg, that the text would add unduly to the length of a single lecture. A summary of his statements may be given, as follows :—

Tambuza and Kombezana were men of rank in Zululand, and had been sent by Dingaan to the Volksraad (or council of the Boers) at Pietermaritzburg, with a gift of 250 choice oxen, and

with a request that an extension of time might be allowed for payment of the debt which he admitted of a vast number of cattle. The Volksraad believed that the King's message only meant evasion, and that, as a considerable period had already elapsed, and preparations were in progress for a campaign with a view of enforcing their claim, it was not advisable to waste time in hesitation. They resolved to proceed with the commando. Pande, being admitted to the sitting of council, urged them to that course. It was his purpose to hasten, not to postpone, the destruction of his rival brother; and he accused Tambuza of having instigated the assassination of Retief, and the massacre at Blaauwkrantz. He also imputed countless atrocities to Kombezena. At once the two men, although they had come as envoys, and on a peaceful errand, were imprisoned and kept in chains until the military expedition was ready to start. They were then sent in custody to await their trial by a court martial at a convenient juncture.

M. Délegorgue proceeds :—

They walked along under escort. . . . When the rain fell in torrents, and cold set in, the space under the wagon was their shelter. It is true that I myself had no other, but I had woollen clothing. They, poor devils, had only the skin with which the Creator had covered their bones. The wind struck their sides; the shudder, the chatter of their teeth, the stiffness of their limbs, were continual; but great in their martyrdom, they allowed no complaint to escape them.

It was in this condition that they appeared—I will not say to be judged, but—to hear their sentence. I content myself with quoting here the words of Paul Zietsman, who was provisionally the secretary of Pretorius. The latter could not write, and to the former the task of keeping the journal-record of the expedition had been entrusted.

On the 31st January, 1840, it was resolved to decide the fate of Tambuza, ex-councillor of Dingaan, and of an

inferior chief named Kombezana. A council was called before which Pande and other captains were summoned to give their evidence. . . . The chief under arrest being called on to defend himself, acknowledged the truth of all that had been said against him, as also the justice of the fate that awaited him, adding nobly that though he was willing to pay for his numerous crimes by the sacrifice of his life, still Kombezana, his companion in captivity, was innocent and did not deserve death. Pande hastened to reply that Kombezana had been the principal instigator of the atrocities committed by Dingaan. . . .

The Commandant in-chief, by the advice of his court-martial, then resolved upon passing on the prisoners the terrible sentence of death. He impressed upon their minds how much that was dreadful was included in this act, and made them understand that, after having undergone their sentence, they would appear before another judge : but that they might avoid everlasting punishment if they would confess their crimes, and heartily solicit forgiveness.

Some hours after the prisoners were led away to a place in the neighbourhood, and human justice was satisfied.

Having been present and witnessed these debates, I am bound to add that though Tambuza was pressed to make admissions, he was wholly silent in regard to himself ; and only spoke in assertion of his comrade's innocence ; a proof of disregard of self, of admirable disinterestedness, at such a time : and when Pretorius spoke to him of a Supreme Being (Inkosi Pezulu) the master on high, the dispenser of eternal punishment, which he might avoid by a course of conduct till then unknown to him, Tambuza objected that he had but one master, that it was his duty to remain faithful to that one master to the last, and that, after having so acted, the master on high, if there were one, could not fail to approve of his conduct.

When the two prisoners arrived at the place of execution, they were as before linked to each other. Two farmers, who were ordered to shoot them, stood at a distance of about sixty yards. When the shots were fired both fell. Kombezana was killed instantly. Tambuza was only wounded in the body. Calm as before, though suffering, he rose, stood firm, and presented a full front to

the fire, and fell dead, struck by the second bullet. These men know how to die, I thought, and I withdrew full of admiration, but also with a thousand painful feelings, for this act of Boer justice seemed to me an infamy.

On the same day we passed the White Umfolozi, not far from which Dingaan's capital had been built. . . . Our march was resumed on 1st February. It was eleven o'clock in the morning when we received information that a great number of cattle, guarded by Kafirs, had been seen in the neighbourhood. A hundred and fifty horsemen were at once despatched to take possession of them, and the camp was once more formed at the same place. Soon after we heard of the total defeat of Dingaan's forces, of which one regiment had been totally destroyed. Tshlala had been run through the body by an assagai. . . . Nieuwkerk, one of our emissaries, returned to us on the evening of the same day. He had found the enemy's forces separated by a ravine, resting after their exertions, and he had been on the point of entering Tshlala's camp. Though Dingaan's army had not then retired, he was none the less disabled from renewing the struggle with advantage, a thousand of his warriors having fallen on the field. Success had been decisive on the side of Pande's army; but Nieuwkerk had noted not less than 1,200 wounded men in the camp of Nongalaza, whose contingent was reckoned at five thousand armed men.

On the 3rd the Commandant ordered that every man possessing a horse should prepare for a start at seven o'clock. . . . In consequence 210 men started. . . . The spectacle afforded by these men was singular, setting off as they did in the utmost confusion; scaling the hills helter-skelter, bearing their long guns ungracefully on their shoulders. From the commandant to the field-cornet, to the corporal, to the simple mounted man, there was no distinction in bearing, none in carrying out orders, and, indeed, no one was tempted to give any orders, because, as no mode of punishment was regulated for their infraction, no one would care to obey.

After marching an hour, a spy came to inform the Boers of the retreat of a body of Zulus. . . . Luckily for the enemy, whose rapid march had to be overtaken, his movements were masked by a dense fog, which covered the

mountains and the surrounding gorges. This favouring circumstance enabled the Zulus to escape unperceived. . . . The advance was continued for several successive days. On the 8th the party reached the Pongola River. . . . No precise information could be obtained as to Dingaan. It was known, however, that he had passed the river five days previously with some of his wives and cattle-herds, and that his flight beyond his own territory was a matter of certainty. . . . The conviction thus acquired of the dispersion of his forces and adherents, joined to the loss of horses from the prevailing distemper, were two causes influencing the resolution to turn homeward. Leaving to Nongalaza the task of watching the banks of the Pongola, Pretorius made him promise that in the event of his hearing anything of Dingaan he would dispatch two of his swiftest runners, adding that in that case he would make it his own duty to send off a hundred mounted men, in order, if possible, to seize alive the monster whose capture would cause so much joy. . . . On the evening of the 9th they rejoined the camp. It was a Sunday, but by reason of the incessant rains that had set in on the 5th there could be no numerous concourse for divine service. Nevertheless many a tent became a place of prayer, and they thanked the Almighty for the advantages they had gained.

On the 10th Pretorius complimented Pande on his conduct during the expedition; and congratulated him in high terms on the success gained by the valiant Nongalaza. He admitted the claim of Pande to the throne vacated by the flight of Dingaan; and said that in consequence he recognised, and named him as, the King or Chief of the Zulus, being authorised to act thus in the name of the Volksraad, which had its sitting in Pietermaritzburg: that henceforth he should be considered as their principal ally, and his enemies would be treated as those of the Boers. . . . Pande lost no time in accepting these decisions of the council, and replied in suitable terms. . . .

Nongalaza on the following day sent two messengers to report that it was quite impossible to obtain intelligence of Dingaan, and also to acquaint the boers that there were no herds of cattle in the country under his observation. .

On the 14th the commandant in chief, after displaying

the colours of the young republic, caused to be read, in presence of all, the proclamation by which he extended the territory to the North. The portion of the country thus annexed stretched from the Tugela to the Black Umfolozi, the bay of St. Lucia being included in these limits. He sought by all means to give great publicity to this act of taking possession, which after all was nothing more than an empty sound. No one applauded it: on the other hand, no one disputed. . . . The individual employed in keeping the journal took care to reproduce the text of the document, and did not fail to add gravely: After this a salute was fired in honour of the council of the people. Then all the men with one voice cried: "Thanks to the great God, by whose grace victory has been granted to us."

"Bound as I am to recur to facts in explanation of circumstances, I fail to discover any on which to found a claim to a victory worthy of a "Te Deum." I have to admit with humiliation that I bore a part in this war, which was terminated without a single battle in which the whites had taken any share."

The extract from M. Délegorgue's works is concluded with this last scene in the career of Dingaan.

In February, 1840, the Boers were masters of the country, and might have remained so, but they became engaged in hostilities with natives at no great distance from Kaffraria. The Government of the Cape foresaw a risk of disturbance on their frontier. As we have seen, they sent a handful of troops to occupy the country. The Boers protested, resisted, defeated the troops near Congela, and kept them for a month closely besieged in their camp near D'Urban. Reinforcements arriving, further opposition on the part of the Boers became unavailing. In July, 1842, they submitted to British authority. Natal became and remained a British possession as we have also seen. But far the greater number of the emigrants, some at once, others in successive years, withdrew from Natal and settled more permanently in the territory of the Free State and of the South African, or Transvaal, Republic.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CHASE'S NATAL PAPERS.

FROM Chase's "Natal Papers" I glean the following important and interesting facts :—

The first compact party of Dutch emigrants who left the Colony, determined to settle down beyond its limits, was under the guidance of a Louis Trechard, an Albany farmer, shortly after the cessation of the Kafir war. They located themselves in a fertile and uninhabited tract between the 26° and 27° parallel of S. Latitude on the eastern bank of a large and beautiful river. The fate of this unfortunate pioneering expedition was ascertained on a visit of the *Comet*, a vessel which visited Delagoa Bay in June of this year. Extracts from the Journal of one Bronkhorst state :—

" At Delagoa Bay we met with the unhappy remains of Louis Trechard's party, consisting when they left the colony of thirteen families. Only two married men, Trechard and his son, survived the ravages of war and the destructive influence of the climate. Some widows and children remain, but nearly all the party, Trechard and his son excepted, are afflicted with the fever incident to the climate. Many have been carried off by it, and in the short space of three weeks that the *Comet* was in the harbour, three souls passed into eternity. About a week before we arrived, Louis Trechard's wife died, and the son's wife was buried while we were there at her side. We left nearly all sick, without any hope of help from man, and as there is no one at the bay who has any knowledge of medicine. The Portuguese are very kind to them. They sent an escort to conduct them to the town, where houses are freely opened for their reception. About nine families separated from Trechard, and every soul of them was murdered by the savage tribes through which they passed, particularly by that of Sochangan, a chief tributary

to Dingaan. Trechard's party was attacked by the Mantatees and other tribes at five different times, generally in the night, but they escaped without loss. I saw the bow and poisoned arrows of a chief of the Mantatees, whom young Trechard shot, a body of sixty having fallen on them in the night. One would think that surely these dispensations of providence ought to make them look back with deep regret on their unhappy and unadvised pilgrimage. Trechard, the son, was anxious to join his fellow-countrymen, and fight with them. He would have taken his passage to Natal, if the captain had determined to touch there. They have immense flocks and herds; still their condition was truly pitiable; indeed it was almost hopeless, as there is every reason to expect that they will all die, one after another, of the fever.

The few survivors were afterwards removed to Natal by sea.

About the end of May two parties, headed by J. G. S. Bronkhorst and H. Potgieter, left the camp formed by some of the emigrants on the Vet River, one of the tributaries of the Ky Gariep, for the purpose of exploring the country to the N. E., of which journey, and of the first repulse the emigrants met with from the natives under Malzellikatze, the following is Bronkhorst's own relation:—

On the 24th May I departed from the Sand River, accompanied by the Burghers, Roelof Jansen, Laurens Jansen van Vuuren, Charel Cilliers, and Abraham Swane-poel; together with another group, consisting of the Burghers, H. Potgieter, J. Roberts, Adrian de Lange, Daniel Opperman, H. Mieuwenhuisen, and Christian Liebenberg. From the Sand River we travelled through a grass field twelve *schofts** and came to a ridge, which we, on finding the real sugar cane there, called the *Suikerbosch-rand*; fuel was scarce. From thence we proceeded four schofts further, and reached the Oliphant's River; here was no fuel whatever, but abundance of water and grass, the grass being sour, but still good for pasture. Two schofts from there we arrived at the Rhenoster Poort on the Rondberg; here the country is rugged, with sweet

* Schofts, the plural of schoft, a day's journey.

and sour grass, stocked with thorn trees. From thence we travelled two and a half schofts through grass fields, and came to a rugged plain, covered with all kinds of grass, until we came to the Zontpansberg in thirteen schofts, where we found a saltpan. At the Rhenoster Poort we met the first nation, called Mantatees. At the Zontpansberg we met the Burgher Louis Trechard, and company, all in good health. Proceeding on our journey we saw at the distance of two schofts from Trechard, trees, the leaves whereof I cannot describe, as they were blooming and very young; they sprouted from the ground with a thick trunk, and are the size of an oak; the trunk of these trees have many roots; from the tree itself many roots issue, descending downwards, entwining themselves to the body of the tree, as if they were tied to it, until they are again rooted into the ground; the trees bear no fruit,— the bark is white, It is supposed that each branch of the tree produces a sprig, straight or oblique, as it grows.

About three schofts from thence we found another tree, yielding a fruit resembling a cocoanut or gourd, the peel having also a similar appearance; the fruit is hollow inside; the kernel cannot be distinguished from cream of tartar, it being of the same stuff and taste; the tree has a large size; we measured one and found it to be of thirteen fathoms in circumference, and twenty feet high to its crown; the tree had no leaves; the bark and wood had much the appearance of a *Spekboem*. Proceeding further we saw several other trees with and without fruit, and amongst others a tree serving the people of the country for food and drink; it is a large tree resembling an oak, having a green bark like that of a peach tree; the leaf I cannot describe, as it resembles no known one, but had something of a yellow-wood tree; the fruit is like a cherry; we did not taste it, as being unripe; we saw the people chop off branches, from which a liquid issued which they caught in basins; they cook buffalo skins to glue, mix it with the liquid, and it becomes a sort of curdled milk which they use: they also make a sort of beer from it. We also found a tree, much like that of an apricot, its fruit having a great resemblance to a lentil, the stone and pod having a similar appearance, but larger; the stone is soft; it has the true smell of turpentine, and is oily. I must

also mention that we found the banana tree one and a half schofts from Trechard along the river and at other places in abundance ; it is the real banana ; we also found a large grove of bamboo growing in abundance and luxurious ; the above grove is half an hour's ride on horseback in circumference. Nine schofts from Trechard we reached a river of running water, about two feet deep, and 1780 paces broad ; the banks of the river are stocked with trees which I cannot describe ; they are beautiful—they are large ; the lower part of the trunk is smooth until where its branches issue ; under its shade six and seven wagons may be placed ; it has a small green leaf, the fruit resembles an acorn, but was then unripe. One schoft from there we again crossed a large river, and found similar trees ; thence we proceeded six schofts further, and came to the Knopneus (Knob nose) Caffers, being, with the exception of one, the last Caffer Captain ; they pointed to a town about six schofts from there ; we also spoke with the servants of the town inhabitants, who came there to barter elephant's teeth for beads, linen, and other wares ; they also informed us of there being ships waiting for elephants' teeth. The people from that town spoke Portuguese. They said that our approach was known in their town. These men were glad of our arrival, and showed us much respect, fell upon their knees, clapped with the hands on saluting us, and offered us lasting peace. From there we returned, as our horses and oxen began to give up. The Caffers accompanied us a great way, and showed us a road much nearer than the one we came. It is a defenceless and unwarlike people, always flying before their assailants ; many perish from want. They state having been robbed of their cattle by Matselikaze. We likewise met there two sons of Coenraad Buis, named Doris and Karel ; they received their ammunition from that town. The Kafirs called us Dutchmen, in their language, Magoas. The above are, to the best of my knowledge, a few particulars of the country we have travelled through. The climate is rather hot, and little difference between summer and winter, vegetables growing every where spontaneously and luxuriously. We were there in the month of July ; saw all kinds of fruit in full growth and blossom, and got from the gardens sweet

potatoes, millet, and various vegetables. There is abundance of water to irrigate the ground, and one might also say not sufficient land for the number of fountains; a large town might be founded if there were a sufficient number of inhabitants; each erf might have its own supply of water. Everything offers the finest opportunity for a settlement. Timber is abundant, the waste land large and extensive, so that thousands of families might subsist, it being also well adapted for breeding of cattle. We further found among the Mantatees a great quantity of iron forged by themselves; the iron is of good quality, and mixed with steel; they pointed to a small ridge to the south, where they melt, forge, and make spears of it, and then barter it to the Knopneus (Knobnose) Caffers for beads and other wares. The people also showed us a mine, from which they extract gold, and make rings, which I have seen; we have also brought some of the ore with us; this mine is just opposite the camp of Louis Trechard on the Zoutpansberg. We also found at the first nation we fell in with good tin, which they extract from the Ransberg and make rings of, calling it white iron. At Oliphant's River we saw banks of a kind of stuff resembling leaves, having the colour of silver; it is tough, and hard to separate, but I did not see anything forged or melted from it. There is also all kinds of game. From the Suikerbosch-rand we saw elephants all along our route. At the Vaale and Oliphant's Rivers we saw numbers of rhinosceros, buffalos, seacows, and black bucks with white bellies, a white stripe on the buttocks, and a star on the head, they are of the size of a hartebeest (deer); likewise cross-breed koedoes and gemsbucks; also the red buck and other known game in abundance.

We returned to our Camp, and reached it on the 2nd September, but found it in a sad state. When we were a third part of a schoft on this side of Trechard, we sent five men, named C. Liebenberg, R. Jansen, A de Lange, D. Opperman, and A. Zwanepoel, in advance to get fresh relays. Coming to the first camp they saw a wagon in the river; D. Opperman rode thither, while the others off-saddled, and on coming there he saw two wagons fastened together; he returned with the tidings that our camp presented a bloody scene; they all then rode thither,

and found Mr. Liebenberg, sen., and the wife of H. Liebenberg lying dead ; there were also several corpses which they could not identify. They returned to us the same afternoon with the said account ; five of us then rode thither, and found the killed to be B. Liebenberg, sen., Johannes du Toit and wife, H. Liebenberg, jun. and wife, S. Liebenberg and a male child, MacDonald, a school-master, and a son of C. Liebenberg. We then could do nothing there, followed the spoor of our camp, and reached it the third day ; we found the survivors and part of our cattle. The account here was equally melancholy. My son, G. Bronkhorst, and a son of Christian Liebenberg, named Barend, were missing, and not yet found. We found the son of Christian Harmse killed ; we then learnt how the sad disaster had occurred ; they began by killing Stephanus Erasmus, who, with eight others, were shooting at a distance ; four of them escaped, namely, Stephanus Erasmus and son, and Pieter Bekker and son ; and two sons of Erasmus, Johannes Clasens and Karl Kruger, are missing ; the Kafirs took all their wagons and goods ; they attacked us without the least provocation ; Erasmus brought the first report that the Kafirs were murdering. Ten of us then rode towards them, suing for peace, but the Kafirs drove them back to the camp ; the killed persons were separate, and not in the great camp ; a party of Kafirs divided and murdered them, while the other party fought against the camp.

There were only thirty-five men in the camp who fought against the Kafirs. They succeeded in repulsing them, killing several. Thence we retreated four schofts backwards to this side of the Vaal River, where the Kafirs attacked us a second time. The Mantatees informed us three days previous that the Kafirs of Matzelikatze were pursuing us, some of whom went to spy but did not discover them ; the next day thirty-five men left the camp, and met the Kafirs (about 9,000) an hour's distance on horseback from the camp ; we sued for peace through an interpreter, showing them our hair, as a sign that we did not wish to war with them, and that they should retire ; they cried out no, and attacked us immediately, while we retreated, fighting, to the camp, where a peace-flag was set up. We

reached the camp sooner than the enemy, and had scarcely time to clean our guns; they had in the meanwhile approached our camp to within 500 paces; halted, killed two of our oxen, and consumed them raw. Ferociously and with great cries they stormed the camp, but could not enter as the wagons were drawn into a circle, and the openings closed with thorn branches; between the wagon wheels and above the coverings we were obliged to shoot them, to prevent their entering. We conquered and repulsed the enemy after a great loss on their side, while we had two killed and twelve wounded. More than 1,000 assegais were found in the camp. The killed are Nicholaas Potgieter and Piet Botha. This took place on the 29th October, 1836, when we lost 6,000 head of cattle, and 41,000 sheep and goats. Our horses we retained from having been in the camp.

Three days after this we followed them to try whether we could retake any of our cattle, but all we found were killed and skinned (about 1,000 head), and were obliged to return unsatisfied.

What I have here related are facts, and am willing, if required, to confirm the same on oath.

(Signed) J. G. S. BRONKHORST.

The barbarities of the natives on this occasion, inflicted upon the poor self-expatriated farmers and their families were horrible:—

Not even satisfied with stabbing their welshed broadspears into the bosoms of unresisting women, or piercing the bodies of infants who clung to them, they cut off the breasts of some of the women, and took several of the poor little helpless babes by the heels and dashed out their brains against the iron bands of the wagon wheels.

It was no wonder, therefore, that atrocities like these should be visited with a fearful retribution.

A portion of the emigrants now remained with the wreck of their late flourishing camp, whilst others placed their wives and children under the protection of the Rev. Mr. Archbell's missionary station at Thaba Unchu for a short period, and then fell back on a new station at the

source of the Modder River. Here they were soon reinforced by a large party under Gert Maritz, a wealthy Burgher of Graaff-Reinet, who had been elected Governor-General. The number of emigrants, at this time assembled around Thaba Unchu, is computed at above 1,800 souls.

An old colonist, of the name of Bernhard Roedolf, who had emigrated to Natal, enlightened his brother colonists by the publication of the following Diary of their Proceedings, Government, and Discoveries :—

“On the 4th of April last I quitted Graham's Town in a horse wagon. On the 14th of the same month I overtook my two brothers, Gerrit and Andreas Roedeloff, with their party, (who had left their farms to join the emigrants in the early part of the year), having with them twenty wagons ; they were encamped at the Storm Bergen, behind *Penhoek*, residing in great spirits and glee in their tents. My object in going after them was to endeavour to persuade them, if possible, to abandon their journey, and return to the colony—but all my endeavours and trouble were to no purpose. Up to this, my intention had been not to proceed further, but to return to the colony from the spot whence I should meet them ; I however here changed my plan, and continued going further. Friday, the 27th of April we rode over the Orange River ; on Saturday, the 7th of May, we arrived at the village of the chief Maroko, where we saw the Rev. J. Archbell, who there fills the honourable station of missionary, and who received us very hospitably. He informed me that Messrs. Maritz and Retief had started from thence not long ago, and that he had that day received intelligence that they were encamped not far off in five or six divisions. I was gratified on hearing this ; re-commenced my journey instantly, and was so fortunate as to find myself the same evening safely lodged in the camp of Mr. Retief, surrounded by a large number of my countrymen. Mr. Retief was much pleased on learning that I had arrived. The following morning was the Sabbath, and the spot where divine service was held was made by wagons drawn up on each side, covered over the top ; at the upper end a large tent was placed, the front pulled up, and looking into the space thus covered in ;—this served us all for a church ;

the service being performed, twice in the day, in the usual manner of our Dutch Reformed Church, by the Rev. Erasmus Smit, who was appointed to the situation by the head of the farmers, Mr. Retief, by the approbation of a majority of the emigrants. On the Monday morning, Mr. Retief invited me to come to his tent, from the opposite side of the encampment, where I had put up with an old friend. I immediately complied with the request; he received me with kindness. I understood from him that he had entered into treaties of peace with the native chiefs in whose vicinity they were encamped, viz., Maroko, Towana, and Sinkajala. These chiefs, it appears, had suffered much from Matsellikatze,—their people murdered and plundered, and the remainder finally driven from their country. On Wednesday, the 11th of May, the whole encampment broke up, and proceeded to a high ridge, which I named *Fine Prospect* (Schoone Uitzigt), and where we met Mr. Maritz and his party. Thursday we continued our journey to the first branch (spruit) of the Vette River, which takes its origin in the Draagsberg, and runs into the Vaal River. On arriving there we found a public meeting convened for the purpose of sending out a commando against Matsellikatze, either to meet him as a friend,—or, in case of refusal on his part, to treat him as an enemy, and which was to start on the 1st June. The three above-named chiefs, and also one of the Captains of the Bastards, volunteered their services against Matsellikatze. This, however, Mr. Retief refused, but requested that they would accompany the commando in person, to which they all agreed.

“On the same day three young couples passed the matrimonial court, hold by Maritz, previous to the celebration of marriage.

“As respects the state of society, it appears admirable, which will be seen from the few disputes which have arisen. I could only hear of *three* cases of any importance: 1st. It was stated that a person intended blowing up one of the ammunition wagons; of this, however, there was no sufficient proof, and he was acquitted. 2nd. The dispute which arose four or five months ago, between H. Potgieter and Mr. Maritz, but which has since been amicably

settled ;—and 3rd, a person who attempted to take liberties with the wife of another, was condemned to pay a fine of Rds. 400.

“Provisions of all descriptions are abundant. The subjects of the chiefs before named, bring daily to the camp large quantities of produce on their backs and laden upon pack-oxen,—such as mealies and Kafir corn, pumpkins, potatoes, beans, &c. &c., which they dispose of with difficulty. The emigrants have with them an immense number of cattle and sheep—many thousands ;—the cattle, taken generally, are not fat, but still in good condition ; but the sheep are in good order. The country is healthy for all descriptions of cattle, as I have ascertained from more than 50 individuals, and water abundant, It is enchanting to the eye to view the beautiful face of nature here ; but particularly at the lovely spot whence I departed from the emigrants at the Vette River. It is very cold in winter, and firewood generally very scarce, on both sides of the Orange River to the residence of Maroko ; from thence there is abundance of olive wood (*olyvenhout*) on the sides of the mountains ; the first mimosa met with is at the Vette River.

“The encampment is surrounded by thousands of all sorts of wild animals,—such as lions, wolves, gnus, blesbok, bonteboks, springbucks, &c., &c.

“The intention of the farmers is, immediately after the return of the commando against Matsellikatse, to resume their journey ;—in the meantime the whole will remove to and concentrate at, the middle branch of the Vette River. This river has three branches, uniting together in one a little below the spot where the farmers intend moving to, and further on running into the Vaal River. About thirteen or fourteen stages (*schofts*) over the Vaal River, more to the north than to the east, the farmers have found a suitable spot to build their town :—this place is plentifully supplied with good timber, abundance of lime and building stone, as good as can be found any where within the colony,—and having a fountain, which fifteen yards below its source forms a running stream seventeen yards broad and twenty-two inches deep. There is also a good salt-pan in the vicinity ; and it is only ten or twelve stages

distant from Port Natal. The spot is stated further to be extremely healthy and fruitful. This account I received from many individuals at the camp who had been to the place and *saw* what they related to me

“On Monday, the 19th of May, we parted, while a great number of wagons were already on their journey forward to the middle branch of the Vette River; every individual I looked at appeared in high spirits, and wore a pleasant countenance; with the greatest astonishment I stood silently gazing at them;—finally we parted,—they proceeded on their journey with pleasure, and I returned in grief to the colony.

“There are now upwards of *one thousand wagons* with the emigrant farmers,—and it is said that they can muster 1,600 armed men.”

In the same month of this year the migration was greatly augmented by the departure of one of the oldest inhabitants of the District of Uitenhage, Mr. Pieter Uys, with about 100 followers. The reason which led to this influential person's expatriation is explained in the leading Dutch newspaper of the day, the *Zuid Afrikaan*. Addressing the government of the Colony, the Editor of that journal says, speaking of the complaints of the Dutch farmers against the Government:

“You have established posts to the villages,—but are branch posts established for the purpose of communicating with those residing at an isolated distance from the villages?—You have made penal laws, without giving them the opportunity of becoming acquainted with them,—and yet they are punished for the slightest mistake!—You have laws for the protection of the property of the apprentices and Hottentots, and the dear Kafirs,—but why do you remain behind in adopting laws for the security of the property of the farmers? You appoint special magistrates for the protection of the apprentices, and instead of fixing him in the centre of the district, so that he may be equally accessible to all, the special magistrate of Uitenhage district is residing at the very extremity of the district, “Port Elizabeth.”—If an individual brings an action against the special magistrate and fails to prove—however just his complaint—he must be

condemned in *treble costs*. But how stands the case on the other hand?—Piet Uys, the hero, who fell in his attempt to rescue a comrade in the battle against the Zulus,—who had volunteered in the war against the Kafirs in 1835,—was fighting for the protection of Her Majesty's subjects—and was shedding his blood for the integrity of Her Majesty's frontier,—when his wife was brought up to “Port Elizabeth” on a warrant of the special magistrate,—he brings an action for false imprisonment—makes a preliminary motion for papers, which the special magistrate opposes, but who is condemned by the Chief Justice, then on Circuit, with *the costs*,—which, however, were subsequently, on a warrant of the Governor, refunded to him *out of the District Treasury*!—“What!” says Piet Uys, “my complaint is as just as any,—if I get a sentence in my favor, the costs are paid out of the District Treasury;—if I fail in the *proof* of my case, I must pay treble costs; do you call that *equally protecting all parties*?—I prefer living amongst barbarians, where my life depends upon the strength of my arms; rather than——!” There he stopped—and—expatriated himself!”

The particulars of the departure of this much respected and regretted man is thus related in the local newspaper of the day, the *Graham's Town Journal*:

“We mentioned in our last Journal that a party of emigrants from the colony, consisting of upwards of 100 persons, were then in the vicinity of Graham's Town on their route towards the north-eastern boundary. As the circumstance excited considerable attention, and a feeling of deep and general sympathy, it was resolved that some mark of attention should be shown them, which, while it unequivocally displayed the fraternal regard of the English settlers towards the Dutch colonists, would also testify that deep commiseration which had been excited in their minds, by the fact that *any* circumstances should have arisen to induce so many productive hands to forsake the colony. As the most respectable and truly valuable present which could be made to them, a folio copy of the Sacred Scriptures was obtained, in massy Russia binding. The cost of this handsome volume was Rds. 100, which

was raised by a subscription of one shilling each. On the outside of the front cover was inscribed in gold letters as follows :—

The Gift
OF THE
INHABITANTS OF GRAHAM'S TOWN
AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD TO
MR. JACOBUS UYS
AND HIS EMIGRATING COUNTRYMEN.

On the inside of the cover was printed the following inscription :—

This Sacred Volume

Is presented to MR. JACOBUS UYS, and his expatriating
Countrymen, by the Inhabitants of Graham's Town
and its vicinity,

as a

farewell token of their esteem and heartfelt regret at their
departure.

The anxiety which they have evinced
to endeavour to obtain a Minister of Religion,
and their strict observance of its ordinances,
are evident proofs
that in their wanderings in search of another land
they will be guided by the precepts contained in this Holy Book,
and steadfastly adhere to its solemn dictates—
the stern decrees of

THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE,

THE GOD OF ALL NATIONS AND TRIBES !

This present was taken out to the encampment by a deputation of gentlemen, accompanied by about 100 of the inhabitants of Graham's Town, who were received with much respect by the assembled farmers and their families, drawn up in line in front of their wagons. The address,

1 M

which was read by Mr. W. R. THOMPSON, was as follows :

'MY GOOD FRIENDS,—The inhabitants of Graham's Town and its vicinity, hearing of your arrival in this district, with the intention of quitting for ever the land of your birth, have entered into a public subscription to purchase this Bible ; and I am deputed, with the gentlemen who accompany me, now to present it to you. We offer it to you as a proof of our regard, and with expressions of sorrow that you are now going so far from us. We regret, for many reasons, that circumstances should have arisen to separate us ; for ever since we, the British settlers, arrived in this colony, now a period of 17 years, the greatest cordiality has continued to be maintained by us and our nearest Dutch neighbours ; and we must always acknowledge the general and unbounded hospitality with which we have been welcomed in every portion of the colony. We trust, therefore, that although widely separated, you will hold us in remembrance, and that we wish always to retain for each other the warmest sentiments of friendship.

'We have fixed on the Sacred Volume as the most suitable offering to you, knowing, from your constantly expressed religious feelings, that it will be the most acceptable ; and we now bid you farewell—trusting that the Father of heaven will continue to watch over you, and with the hope, that through your means the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ may be spread over the now benighted nations of the interior.'

The above having been translated into Dutch by Mr. MEURANT, and the Bible presented by THOS. PHILIPPS, Esq., J.P.

Mr. JACOBUS UYS,* the venerable leader of the party, made a reply in Dutch of the following tenor :—

"I thank you gentlemen most heartily for the good gift which you have presented to us, and still more for the very good wishes with which your present has been accompanied. I feel confidence in assuring you that your

* It is a remarkable fact that this party, though consisting of upwards of 100 persons, are all related either by birth or marriage, and that they have to address the truly patriarchal leader of it either as Father, Grandfather, or Uncle.

gift will not be ill bestowed, but that I, and every one of my company, will endeavour by every means in our power, to act up to the precepts which are contained in that Holy Book, and thus show that we are faithful disciples of our Lord JESUS CHRIST."

Mr. PIETER UYS, eldest son of the above, said he wished to say a few words. He begged to thank the deputation for the very kind manner in which they had expressed themselves. He felt deep regret at parting with so many kind friends, but he hoped that as long as they all remained on this side of the grave, although parted by distance, they should remain united in heart.



CHAPTER XXXVII.

MURDER OF BOERS AT BLAAUWKRANTZ.

As the time fixed by Retief for his return had elapsed, and rumours were spread about that a Zulu—talking across the river at one of the encampments to another then in the service of the farmers—had said that all the white men were dead ; as also that a large party of the Zulus had been seen together on the other side of the Tugela, a small patrol was at length sent over the Tugela into Dingaans territory, pretending to be hunting buffaloes ; and as they actually took their course towards the spot where Dingaans army was then encamped behind a hill, and had approached to within a few hundred yards, an old Zulu met them and enquired what they were looking for, and upon being told that they were hunting, he pointed in a different direction, where he said there were many buffaloes. But as they still persisted in going on, the Zulu went before them, and strenuously insisted upon their taking the direction pointed out by him. Here, again, they were unfortunate enough, with a view to avoid suspicion, actually to suffer themselves to be turned about. On their return a report was made, of course, that they had discovered nothing, and the people were once more persuaded that there was no cause for apprehending any danger,—nay more, those who still inclined the other way were laughed at and accused of cowardice. Early in the morning of the second day after the return of this patrol, on a Saturday morning, the hour was come that all should be undeceived. The Zulus, who by their spies had mixed frequently with the farmers, and who knew their position so well that they could execute their bloody purpose to their utmost desire, began to attack both the encampments, situated at the Blaauw Krans River and Bushman's River, about ten miles asunder, at the same moment. The attack having been begun a little before daylight, many of the farmers at the outposts were

butchered before they awoke ; and others only just opened their eyes to close them again for ever ! As day began to dawn, the Zulus were perceived at some of the scattered wagons,—they had surrounded them, and the cries of the women and children were heard mingled with the report of the few shots that were fired now and then ; but the word “mercy” was unknown to these miscreants. So perfectly taken by surprise was the encampment that not a few of the parties in the vicinity, upon hearing the few shots fired, were congratulating themselves on the circumstance, thinking that Retief and his party had at last returned, and were firing a salute. No preparation for defence was made until daylight enabled them to see the approach of the ferocious enemy. Then every one flew to arms, and a resolute resistance was made. Parties of three and four, in their night-clothes, were seen to defend themselves with success against whole Zulu regiments,—the women assisting in carrying about ammunition for the men, and encouraging them. A little son of Mr. Maritz, about 10 years old, was repeatedly told by his mother to go and hide himself, but he as often replied “I see no place where to hide myself, give me the pistol and let me shoot too.” Small parties of three, four and five, were now coming in from all directions ; and at the Bushman’s River the savages, having at last been repulsed by less than fifty men, they fled precipitately through the river, which was rather swollen, and being fired upon as they crossed the river up to their breasts and chin in water, hand-in-hand to support each other, many were drowned and shot.

At the Blaauw Krans they were also repulsed, but the farmers, after pursuing them a short distance, had to return to their wagons, which they brought together to form a close camp, and then to search for and attend to the wounded, which fully occupied them that day. On the following day Mr. Maritz, at the head of about fifty men, resumed the pursuit of the enemy, but as they had been left unmolested for the greater part of the previous day, they succeeded in carrying off to a safe distance over the Tugela, the greater part of the cattle, between 20 and 25,000 head, as also some sheep, and the goods plundered at the wagons. Maritz only recovered what was still on

their side of the river; and wherever his little band appeared the enemy fled without offering any resistance. At the river they found a large body of Zulus endeavouring to drive cattle and sheep across the stream, but upon being attacked they rushed into the water, and here again several were shot and many more drowned. It was now about dusk, the river greatly swollen, and the few fordable places dangerous in the extreme. Maritz and his party, therefore, with tears flowing over their cheeks, were compelled to leave their property in the hands of the enemy, and to return to their wagons. This day search had again been made for the maimed and wounded, and several found, but of these very few indeed were in such a state as to afford any hope of their recovery. To hear of the number of wounds inflicted upon some who have recovered is incredible; one child who had received thirty, and a woman twenty-two assegai-wounds, are still living, though injured for life. It is believed that about 500 Zulus fell on this occasion, besides the wounded and those that were drowned. At one place about eight or ten families, the Rensburg's and Pretorius', were driven from their wagons to the top of an adjoining hill, which was only accessible from two sides. Fourteen men here stood to their defence against a whole Zulu regiment, the number of which increased to about 1,500. Repeated assaults were made for about an hour, but the gallant little party as repeatedly drove them back, until at last their ammunition failed, and no hope was left. But providentially at this critical moment two mounted men came to their assistance, and made their way to the top of this hill through the line of Zulus, and upon learning there that the ammunition of the party was almost expended, they undertook, at the most imminent peril of their lives, to force their way back to the wagons, from whence they safely returned at full speed with an ample supply. All this was done in less than five minutes, and as the firing now began with greater vigour than before, the Zulus retreated, and as a few more burghers arrived, they were soon put to flight, leaving on that spot about eighty killed. Several more striking anecdotes of bravery and resolution on this trying occasion could be told on the part of the defenders; but it would require too much space.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A. BIGGAR'S ACCOUNT.

I SUBJOIN, says Mr. Chase, the account of Mr. A. Biggar, (the maternal uncle of John Dunn of Zululand), one of the British settlers of 1820, who had migrated to Natal, and who was soon himself destined to fall under the same fate which he herein deplotes for his poor boy. This family, one of the most respectable of the settlers, was particularly unlucky, as the father and two sons all fell at this wretched place :—

Extract of a letter from Mr. Alexander Biggar, to Capt. Evatt, dated Port Natal, 17th March, 1838 :—

“ Your letter per *Mary* found us in a similar situation as your last did—within four walls, as a camp ; not from fear of an immediate attack from the Zulus but as a matter of precaution. I have an awful tale to tell of the base treachery of Dingaan, by which I have lost my beloved son, who fell a victim on the 17th February, in the attack of the Zulus upon the Boers' wagons. Retief, with 60 Boers and their achter riders, in all about 100, arrived at Dingaan's on the 3rd February, with their cattle which they had retaken. From the best accounts it seems they arranged matters satisfactorily with the tyrant, who gave them the whole of the Natal country, notwithstanding he had given it away so often.

They had saddled up to return, when they were invited to take leave of him, and partake of some refreshment, but were told *not to bring their guns with them*. While in the act of drinking beer and milk, they were suddenly seized and dragged about half a mile to the place for execution. They then fell upon them, and with knobkerries murdered them all. One young man of Port Natal (Thomas Halstead) had been employed as interpreter, and was privately informed of their intention, and we hear did tell Retief and party of what he had been informed, but they put no faith in it, as Dingaan had been *so kind* to them. Halstead, having his fears, carried his open knife,

and when about being seized, stabbed one Zulu through the throat, and gave another a deep wound on the side. He was kept a spectator of the murder of the Boers, and then shared their fate. After this dismal tragedy Dingaan dispatched a commando to surprise the Boers. The news did not reach me until the 13th, when in the utmost alarm for the safety of my dear George, I instantly dispatched two trusty men with a letter to apprise him of this sad event and to communicate the dismal tale to the Boers. But Providence had ordered it otherwise. They did not reach the camp until the day after the surprise, which took place on the dawn of the 17th February. The Boers were quite unprepared, never contemplating an attack from that quarter. The numbers killed* we have not heard. The rivers being full our communication with them has been cut off. How they could have been so fatally blind to their danger is much to be wondered at.

That Dingaan meant to kill the Boers whenever he could there is abundant proof. Retief and his party owed their safety on a former occasion to the refusal of a chief to whom Dingaan had given orders to kill them, and for which refusal he was nearly destroyed by Dingaan, and obliged to fly to this place for safety. I wrote to Retief to caution him to be on his guard, and he had warnings from other quarters not to place too much confidence: but all proved unavailing, —they are gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns. Peace to their manes!

“The massacre took place on the 6th February. A commando from this place sets off to-day to co-operate with the Boers; my lameness prevents my accompanying it, and the death of my son at present overpowers me. I remain to command this place.

“We daily receive deserters, who report the Zulu nation in great confusion from their severe defeat,—the Boers having, on recovering from the suddenness of the

* Altogether about 616 were massacred, viz. :—

African Dutch Farmers... ..	120
Women	55
Children	191
Coloured People	256

attack, killed vast numbers. Dingaau has called out the whole nation, but our informants state their refusal to renew the attack, alleging that "it was of no use to go against a people they could not get at, as they were killed before they could get near enough to stab." * * * The critical arrival of the *Mary* with lead has put all into good spirits, as we had little indeed before her arrival,—of gunpowder we have an ample stock. * * * * On the night of the surprise the boers took a Zulu prisoner, from whom they first learned the fate of Retief's party. He enumerated to one of my Kafirs the names of the ten Zulu regiments which made the attack, and as they are composed of about 1,000 each, the force employed must have been about 10,000.

"In consequence of the receipt of a letter by Captain Gardiner from Lord Glenelg, declining to acknowledge this place, and afford him any support, he also goes from hence. The *Ligonier*, by her charter, was to remain 21 days after her arrival, and she is to be kept on until the arrival of the *Comet*. Our commando left on the 13th, in the direction of the Boers, not to join but to co-operate with them. It amounted to about 1,000 men, of which 250 had guns. You shall hear further from me per *Ligonier*.

In the face of the reports, both by Government and the press, of the distress of Natal, the mania of emigration not only remained unabated, but was increased by the state of the frontier, and men of a superior stamp, both for piety, intelligence, and wealth, now joined the ranks of their expatriated countrymen. As a proof of the rapidity with which the abandoning process was going on, we have the following account in June of this year, from the pen of a credible eye-witness :

"On my journey I fell in with 124 wogons, which were going beyond the boundary. On Monday, the 11th June, several wogons crossed the boundary at the Orange River. Amongst the party was Stephanus Lombard, who lived formerly on the Kaga River. This party had with them above 6,000 sheep and goats, and a vast number of cattle. The party from Uitenhage district arrived on Saturday, the 2nd June. It consisted of 29 wogons. Among the party were C. van Staden, late Heemraad, and Gert Van Rooyen. On Saturday evening I counted the wogons at

Klein Buffels Vley, and found them amount to 72. Tents were pitched on the Sabbath. The party from Uitenhage assembled about 10 o'clock for Divine Service. About 150 souls, young and old, were present,—all clean, and neatly dressed. A sermon was delivered from Isaiah 53rd chap. ; 3rd verse. A prayer before and after service was read. The 84th Psalm, 1st part, and the 55th Hymn, were also sung. At the conclusion the 7th Hymn was sung. It was very suitable to their situation, the first verse being—

“Op bergen, en in dalen, en overal is God ;
 Waar wy ook immer dwalen of zitten daar is God ;
 Waar myn gedachten zweven of stygen daar is God ;
 Omlang en hoog verheeven,—ja, overal is God !”

Which may be thus paraphrased :—

“On lofty mount and lowly dell—and everywhere is God ;
 Where'er my eye may stray or dwell—there everywhere is
 God ;
 My thoughts if fix'd or waud'ring round—will ever meet
 their God ;
 Whether to skies, or deeps profound—yes, everywhere is
 God !”

The colonists of the northern frontier, feeling deeply the distressed state of their unhappy countrymen over the border, dispatched immediate relief for the more necessitous, and both Mr. J. N. Boshoff and Mr. Joubert became their almoners on the occasion. Mr. Boshoff gives the following account of the situation and sentiments of the emigrants :—

On the 22nd of May, 1838 last, the caravan to which I belong arrived at the first camp of the emigrants, situated at the distance of about five hours on horseback from the Tugela River, being a distance of 99 hours with a horse-wagon. A few days after our arrival we had an opportunity of also visiting the next encampment, which is about 1½ hours on horseback from the first. We have ascertained that the emigrants, since the horrible murder in February, committed by the Zulus, were obliged to remain in their wagons and tents very close to each other, partly to prepare themselves for a “commando” against the blood-thirsty tyrant Dingaan, who still had upwards of 20,000 head of cattle in his possession, which he captured at the

time he committed the cool-blooded murder, besides a large number of sheep, which caused the entire ruination of so many widows and orphans, who fled on this occasion, saving no more than their lives, and who were thereby reduced to a state of incomparable poverty. They have since been fed by the benevolent who still had something left, or by those who did not share in their fate. Almost all the oxen have been taken from them, leaving thereby, of course, many a poor widow in a state of destitution, not knowing how to rejoin them, and to escape the vengeance of their fearful enemy. Their poverty was increased, as they were not able to cultivate their ground or to sow such seed as might assist them in the hour of need, and their supply of maize, flour, Kafir-corn and rice, decreasing daily through consumption, and very soon even these provisions were totally gone. *Among these were also sufferers by the LAST KAFIR INVASION.*

Gentlemen, fancy therefore to your imagination how many oppressed hearts were gratified when Mr. Joubert handed over to Mr. Maritz the provisions received from Colesberg to distribute the same among those who were most in want of them—as also when we understood that a general commiseration, with the exception of a few, existed all over the colony, for the undeserved sorrows and oppressions which they had to suffer. Tears of gratitude were seen upon every cheek, while others, weeping and sighing, said, “*Let our faith be on the Lord, for He will deliver us!*” I could see that they did not rejoice so much for the means so kindly forwarded to them, as on hearing that almost the whole Colony commiserated their fate, as they thought that their remembrance was entirely effaced from the memory of others.

On our arrival, we understood that the emigrants who were located there expected, according to promise, not less than 400 or 500 men for their assistance, by the aid of which they would be able, notwithstanding the bad condition of their horses, to meet their enemy and to recapture the cattle so treacherously taken from them,—but finding that our company consisted of no more than 64 persons, and of which the majority were still residents of the Colony, we were aware that none of us could afford them any other relief, but only in case they intended to

return to the Colony. They were therefore obliged, as their horses suffered dreadfully by the commando of Uys, and several other excursions, and were consequently very tired, as also driving the cattle together, that they were entirely unfit to be used for a second commando, to drop their plans until the winter season expired, or till the enemy would farther approach them. By this resolution they were compelled to remain in separate encampments, and to do the best they could to procure for themselves, with danger of life, such necessaries as were indispensable to their support.

On our journey to the spot we met about 160 men with their families and cattle, who were retiring back, as they could not agree, on account of their being too near each other with their cattle, among whom were the Commandant Potgieter, to whose bad, treacherous, and cowardly conduct the farmers attribute their defeat and the death of Uys. *We thought from this example that we would find a great many, if not all, of the farmers of the same intention, to return to the colony. We, however, found that very few of them had that intention.* The number of persons who remained amounted to about 600 men and 3,000 women and children, with about 1,000 wagons. Upon a further investigation *we found that those who were the most in distress, viz. the widows and orphans, had the least inclination to return to the Colony.* They say, that their means of existence and their oxen have been entirely taken away from them, and in order to get their wagons back to the Colony not less than 500 oxen and 100 men would be requisite. But now, even supposing they were to return to the Colony, what then? Live on alms? Or to be apprenticed with their children? No! death is more preferable!—and particularly now, as there is still some hope that another commando under a better management, and by the grace of God, will meet with a better success, and that they may then perhaps re-capture their cattle, and live in peace on that land so dearly paid for with the blood of the men, without finding themselves obliged to beg for their support.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

J. N. BOSHOFF'S LETTER ON HIS TREK AFTER THE TREK BOERS.

“ON the 13th of August, 1838, Dingaan made another furious attack on the emigrants' camp under Potgieter, at the Bushman's River, where only about 150 men were encamped. The farmers met the Zulu army in front of their enclosed camp and drove them back with loss. They then sent only 15 men in pursuit, but upon these they turned round, drove them back, and made another still more violent rush upon the camp, so that the men were on the point of retreating behind the first line of wagons, but their Commandant Potgieter cheered them on and said, “Don't retreat one step—let us keep our ground outside the camp, lest they take courage.” They were then again repulsed with loss, notwithstanding their numbers appeared to be most overpowering; for to overcome the Boers they had apparently brought out every man they could spare, as a great many young lads were seen arrayed at a distance of about 400 yards behind the others—some of them from 10 to 14 and 15 years old; very old men were also found amongst the killed. On the part of the farmers, only one man named Vlotman, who was out with the cattle unarmed, was killed. Maritz, who was encamped at the “Klein Tugela,” on being apprised of this affair, sent 60 men to the assistance of their comrades, but the Zulus had retreated so far that they could not be overtaken, having only killed many cattle and sheep which were within their reach on their retreat.

On this occasion the Zulus had 100 men armed *with guns*, and many on horseback.”

It is also stated that at this time above 300 Dutch farmers had taken up their abode at Port Natal itself, where they were busied in all the operations of agriculture, and Mr. Ogle, an English settler at that place, stated, “*they were very desirous the Government should*

establish that Port as a British Colony;" to which, unhappily, a deaf ear was turned.

In the month of April, of this year, Mr. J. N. Boshoff, (who afterwards settled in Natal)—a Government servant—a very intelligent person—and possessing great influence with his countrymen, the Dutch Boers, visited the emigrants at Natal, for which step he was injudiciously removed from office by Lieut.-Governor Stockenström, and thus another individual inimical to British rule was added to the mass beyond the boundary. His object in resorting to that place was to satisfy himself of the prudence of several of his relatives and friends emigrating thither; who, placing great reliance on his judgment, requested him to ascertain the condition of the emigrants previous to their removal. On his return, he published an interesting narrative of the events which had occurred there, to which I have already adverted, and on the 1st of September he gave, through the medium of the press, the following account of the country and situation of the farmers.

"Our party left the Nieuw Hantam on the 30th April, 1838, and on reaching the Orange River found it greatly swollen by rains in the interior. The fords were utterly impracticable for wheel carriages, except by floating them across; and by this process, which occupied one whole day, we at length reached the opposite shore. On the 31st April we stopped at the first Griqua or Bastard farm-house, the residence of a person named William Neilsen. This man is superior to the generality of these people. His residence is about an hour and a half with a horse-wagon from the Orange River. He has much land under tillage, and we are informed, that he is the only individual among Kok's people who cultivate land to such an extent as not only to supply himself, but to have a surplus for sale to the colonial farmers. He has built a neat little cottage expressly for the accommodation of travellers and strangers; and a day seldom passes without visitors, either traders or Boers, with both of whom he appears to be on the best and most friendly terms, although one would suppose that if any of the Griqua Bastards had cause to complain of annoyance by trek-boers old Nielsen must be the greatest sufferer. The

main road runs across his place, and every day such visitors pass his door either backward or forward. Here we met with the two Italians and a woman I mentioned in my former communication, returning from the camp of the emigrants, having travelled the whole distance on horseback. These persons gave us such an account of the danger we were likely to encounter before we could possibly reach the farmers, whose situation was also described as so imminently perilous, that we began to entertain apprehensions that, even should we be so fortunate as to be able to make our way through the numerous and strong posts of the enemy, yet there was very little probability of our being in time to render any effectual assistance to our unfortunate brethren. But the greater the danger was described, the more determined were my brave companions, Joubert and his little party, to proceed.

The journey from thence to Moroko's station, a distance of 25 hours from the Orange River, was travelled so slowly that we did not reach it until the 11th May. A body of 200 men was expected here on the 12th from the Riet and Modder Rivers on their way to join the emigrants; but instead of that number only two arrived. From Neilsen's place to the sources of the Modder River, we saw but three places which exhibited any traces of occupation. On one spot there was a small house half finished, and on the other two structures something resembling the habitations of men one grade in civilization above the savage tribes, and even these were in a dilapidated state. This unoccupied country is about 100 miles in breadth, and it abounds in pasturage and water for millions of sheep and thousands of large cattle. It is claimed by Kok's Griquas, and it is said that his right thereto was fully acknowledged by the Lieut.-Governor on the occasion of his meeting their chiefs and principal men on his visit made some short time ago to the frontier. They were then told that if they could agree with the farmers they *might allow them the use of these lands upon payment of rent*; and as these people do not require one *fiftieth* part of the rich pasturage abounding in that extensive waste, several of them have rented out large tracts of land to colonial farmers for 6, 8, or 10 years, and longer.

We visited several of the farmers who are settled there, and they seemed quite happy. They appear to know little, and indeed not to care much, about what is going on in the colony. They have few servants; but these give them little trouble by bad conduct, as where they find it necessary they punish offences, *without any fear of vexatious law-suits in consequence.* *The servant aware of this, gives very little trouble;* he respects his master's authority, and, in general, conducts himself in a very exemplary manner. Few of these farmers sow corn or cultivate gardens, for want of running water or strong fountains for irrigation. They obtain wheat, Indian and Kafir corn, from the Griqua Bastards occupying the tract of country called "Newland," and also from Maroko's people, for money, or in exchange for cattle and sheep. They do not trouble themselves about politics; and as they can readily sell or exchange their slaughter oxen at the rate of Rds. 50 per head, cows at Rds. 20, and wether sheep at Rds. 4 or 4½, without the trouble of going any distance to market to dispose of them, and as the traders not only purchase their cattle, but supply them at their own doors with everything they require, they seem to be content. *There are no complaints of cattle stealing,* instances of which are very rare. *Vagrants are very few,* indeed, except a small party now and then of wandering Bushmen and Coranas may be considered as such. Independently of these advantages they enjoy a privilege highly valued by the grazer, viz., that of changing the pasturage frequently, which, without any expense worth mentioning, tends to cause an increase of their stock to an extent of 20 per cent. beyond that within the colony. *I believe these persons still pay their taxes, at least many of them repair to Colesberg for that purpose, and also to get their children baptized, and hence they consider themselves as still within the jurisdiction of the colonial Government.* During the whole of our journey from the colony to Natal we only met with two parties of Bushmen. On our way thither we fell in with a small company of six, and on our return with another consisting of eleven persons, and we heard there were but very few of those people in that part of the country.

Throughout that district, and for a distance of fifty

miles beyond Moroko's territory, there is abundance of game. The pasturage from Moroko's country to the Sand River, a distance of 90 miles, or 18 hours, is a mixture of sour and sweet grasses. With the exception of a few fountains, the Sand River was the first running stream we found after crossing the Riet River, and both of these are weak and inconsiderable. Still there is no scarcity of water, as for the whole of that distance there are along the road a number of large pools of good fresh water, so that the traveller is sure to find a plentiful supply of water every day, however short the stage he may make.

From the Sand River to the top of Draakberg, also about 90 miles, the country presents an irregular surface, and the pasturage is sour. On the Draakberg we crossed several running streams; the largest is the Eiland's River, and which is much such a stream as the Hex River. All the way from the New Hantam to the Draakberg, the country is nearly destitute of wood, and the traveller is compelled to collect cow dung for the purposes of fuel. From the New Hantam to the Riet River our course was north east, thence to Moroko's due east, thence to the Vet River, a distance of 35 miles, again north east, thence to the Eiland's River, again east, and from the Eiland's River down the Draakberg to the emigrants' camp, south east.

On the 19th May we descended the Draakberg with six wagons and a cart, and reached its base in an hour and a half. Some parts of the descent were so steep that we were compelled to chain two wheels; but upon the whole the road is not very difficult. From the foot of the mountain to Port Natal, the distance is computed at 42 hours with horse wagons (210 miles). In the winter the cold is as severe on these mountains as in the Sneeberg; but on descending into the level of the country it is as temperate as in the Camdebo; and as you approach Port Natal it becomes still warmer. On the 4th of June (nearly the middle of winter in this latitude) we saw in the garden of a native, under the Stinkhoutberg, a distance of between 50 and 60 miles from the coast, Indian corn of luxuriant growth, in full blossom, together with tobacco-plants, and pumpkins, and calabashes, all uninjured by frost. At Natal we partook of two large dishes of Indian corn in a green and unripe state.

On the whole the climate is healthy, and so mild that two crops of almost every kind of grain may be reaped in the year. The soil is a dark mould, deep, loose, and very fertile. Indian corn has been often found in the fields of the natives of such vigorous growth that a man on horseback, standing in his stirrups, could not reach the top of the plant. This grain, as also Kafir corn, pumpkins, and tobacco, are grown without irrigation. It is said that from September or October to March, and sometimes to April, rains are so frequent that the highest hills may be successfully cultivated. Independent of this, however, there is such abundance of water, both by rivers and springs, that by means of irrigation, a hundred times more produce might be raised within the comparatively small tract of country over which I travelled from the Draakberg to Natal than in the whole of the eastern province. But as irrigation does not appear necessary, with very few exceptions, it appears certain that were there sufficient population, the whole country might be converted into corn fields and plantations.

We crossed, in our progress, several beautiful rivers, the largest of which are the Tugela and Umgeni. The first resembles the Breede river, near Swellendam, or even lower down, and the second is not much inferior in magnitude. In rainy seasons I have no doubt but they are navigable for large boats for a considerable distance. The other rivers are, the Little Tugela, the Bushman, the Umvooti, the Umzalak,* the Umlas, and several other streams, resembling in size and volume of water the Berg river, the Hex, or the Zonderend, and some rather smaller. All these streams have their sources in the Draakberg, at a distance of from 15 to 30 miles higher than where the road crosses the range. In many places they are capable of being led out without any expense or labour than merely making a channel to conduct the water.

From the character of the soil and climate, I have no doubt but that every kind of fruit tree which grows in the colony will flourish there. I have seen bananas, dates, a species of medlar, and some others growing wild, as also a sort of cane, and Spanish reed, which are also indigenous.

* The writer of this journal has failed to make this name clear.

Timber for building purposes, wagon-making, &c., is everywhere to be had. The country is hilly, like that in the neighbourhood of Swellendam or George; but it is quite open, the wood only growing along the margin of the rivers, and in the kloofs. Near Port Natal, for 15 miles from the shore, it has, however, the appearance of a continued forest.

Coal is found at the Sand River, between the great and little Tugela Rivers, and at the Blue Krans River. We dug up some near the road between the Tugelas, of which I brought home with me a small quantity. This was taken from near the surface, and proved, on trial, to be coal of second or third rate quality. We also found a small piece of coal on the shore, about a mile east of the entrance of the Bay of Natal; but this might have been washed on shore from some vessel. However, there can be no doubt but that the country in the vicinity of Natal produces abundance of this valuable mineral.

The pasturage is extremely rich and very healthy for large cattle and sheep. The whole face of the country is thickly clothed by a great variety of grasses, growing from one to *eight* feet high. It sometimes for many miles in extent has more the resemblance of corn fields than grazing ground.

Elephants, elands, buffaloes, and wild boars, are found in this part of the country; but animals of prey are very rare. After we descended the Draakberg, we never saw so much as the footmarks of a jackal, wolf, lion, or other noxious or ferocious animal. Sheep are permitted to graze at a great distance from the camp day and night, and are uninjured.

The cattle, sheep, and horses, excepting such as have been much used, or kept close to the camp, look very healthy and are in excellent condition. The farmers state that they have had no diseases amongst either cattle or sheep all the time they have been there. The horse-sickness, however, similar to that known in the colony, is also prevalent there.

The roads are smooth and good, although the country is not level. Stones are rarely met with, except in the beds of rivers.

Since the death of Retief, and subsequently of Uys, the

form of government amongst the emigrants has undergone some changes, and they have had several meetings to discuss, alter, and mature the system. These discussions have arisen out of the differences which existed between the respective adherents of Uys and Maritz. The former presented at last a memorial to the general council, stating that for various reasons they could not submit to him as their magistrate, and praying that another individual might be appointed to preside over them. The council acceded to this, and accordingly appointed in his room a person named Badenhorst. The council consists of twenty four members, who are elected by the people. It holds supreme authority, makes laws and regulations, appoints to all offices of trust and power, such as field-commandants, field-cornets, and ward-masters, and hears and determines upon all matters of importance.

Mr. Maritz holds, in conjunction with the office of magistrate, the appointment of chief commissioner or president, and, as such, has the charge of all public moneys, regulates the receipts and expenditure, and in other respects has the same authority, and discharges similar duties as the civil commissioners within the colony. The magistrates alone have jurisdiction in petty, civil, and criminal cases; but where the interest at stake amounts (I believe) in civil cases to the value of £7 10s.; and in criminal to a fine of £5, or imprisonment for one month, he is assisted by six heemraden. From these decisions there is no appeal. This court has, however, jurisdiction, with appeal, in cases of higher value and importance. In criminal cases, however, where the offender is liable to the punishment of transportation, or whipping, and hard labour for more (I think) than six months, as also to the punishment of death,—for the trial of such offences a court is held, at which the magistrate within whose jurisdiction the crime is committed presides as judge, and a jury of 12 men, called “gezwoorenen,” is impanelled to hear and decide on the evidence given. No death warrant can be executed until it has received the *fiat* of the general council, or “volksraad,” which also decides all cases in appeal, and exercises the power to remit fines and punishments. This council holds monthly sessions, and oftener when necessary, when one of its members sits as president.

The laws of Holland, as they are recognized in this colony, are followed by them, except in matters of a purely local nature, when the general council promulgates such regulations as may be necessary, or gives instructions to the respective officers according to circumstances. The members of council, and also their present magistrates, have been elected for one year only; and they deem this period, and the laws and regulations now in force, as sufficient to the exigency of their present circumstances; but they contemplate making many changes when they shall be peaceably settled. They are, however, greatly in want of an efficient head—of one properly qualified in every respect to direct and guide them, and who, unconnected with any party, may acquire the confidence of all. They feel this want very much, and it is generally thought that were such a person raised up, he would soon remove all party feeling, suspicion, and jealousy from amongst them, as well as prevent ambitious men from creating dissensions, which, though frequently of a trifling nature, have too often caused much annoyance, and brought them into great difficulties. Such disputes might have been the cause of great misfortunes had it not been for the forbearance which has been very generally manifested, by which party spirit has been prevented from degenerating into personal hatred between themselves. They have exerted themselves on all sides to remove the causes of disagreement as soon as known, and to reconcile the disputants if possible. On the whole I found the people peaceably disposed, well-behaved and orderly. During our stay among them we did not hear of a single instance of quarrelling or fighting between either man or woman, although it was feared by some, that as wine and spirits had been obtained from Port Natal, such disorders would take place. Nor did I meet with an individual intoxicated, although while I was there brandy was for a few days retailed in the camp, and notwithstanding I saw some there who when in the colony were addicted to liquor, and were there very disorderly when under its influence. The emigrants in general are still decently, though some rather poorly clothed. Not a child did I see in rags, or naked; but there are many among them, chiefly widows, who have been ruined by Dingaen, who subsist on the charity of others.

Divine service is publicly performed thrice on every Sunday, and also on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. The officiating minister in one camp is Mr. Smit, formerly missionary. He was elected to the sacred office he now fills during the time of the late P. Retief, and he still acts as the pastor of a considerable number of the emigrants, and is of great use to them. During the week days he catechises the youth, while Mrs. Smit instructs the younger children. Every day Mr. Smit is actively engaged in the duties of his calling, and he is highly esteemed by his congregation. In the other camps Messrs. Muritz, Charel Cilliers, and some others perform divine service. Every morning and evening the sound of family devotion is heard in the tents in all directions. Prayer meetings are also frequent.

There are many who will not acknowledge Mr. Smit as their pastor, he not having been ordained. Such persons marry their sons or daughters by means of a civil contract made before the magistrates. Their children they leave unbaptised, waiting in the hope that their repeated applications for a minister will be attended to ; if not by their own countrymen, at least by some foreigner of the same religious persuasion.

They have established several schools, but the parents complain that the want of accommodation prevents the teachers from receiving so many pupils as they might otherwise instruct. Others are compelled, in consequence of the paucity of servants, to take care of their parents' cattle ; and, of course, the education of these is much neglected. In some instances, parents instruct their own children.

There are not a few slave apprentices with the emigrants ; *but it has been determined by council that these shall be set at liberty on the 1st December*, the same as in the colony. The emigrants do not seem to have the slightest idea of entering into any slave trade whatever, and are even offended at a question on the subject being put to them. They say, " We are not averse to the emancipation of the slave,—*the colonists never introduced the slave trade, the European Governments forced it upon us,*—what we complain of is that our slaves have*

* This assertion is in accordance with fact.

been emancipated by England under a promise of full compensation, whereas we have scarcely received one-third of their value."

They are most anxious to remain on friendly terms with the colony ; but if you begin to propose to them their return, or argue as to the causes of their emigration, you soon find yourself in the back-ground ; you must submit to listen to *a long catalogue of grievances*, and which they state have driven them to take the step they have done ; and they appear fully determined to run any risk, and to suffer any privation, rather than to submit again to the same annoyances.



CHAPTER XL.

JOURNAL OF THE EXPEDITION OF THE EMIGRANT FARMERS
BY J. G. BANTJES, CLERK OF THE REPRESENTATIVE
ASSEMBLY, AND COMMANDANT PRETORIUS' DESPATCH.

THE following journal of the farmers, in their expedition against and conquest of Dingaan, is of sufficient interest to find a place in these pages, in its original state, *verbatim et literatim* :—

Journal of the Expedition of the Emigrant Farmers, under their chief Commandant Andries Pretorius, (formerly of Graaff-Reinet), against Dingaan, King of the Zulus, in the months of November and December, 1838,—undertaken for the purpose of revenging the most cruel and barbarous murder of the late Chief of the Emigrants, Pieter Retief and his sixty companions, and the subsequent inhuman butchery of men, women, and children, committed by Dingaan and his men; and also for the purpose of recovering the goods and property stolen by them from the Emigrants on those occasions.—The Journal was kept by an Emigrant, Mr. J. G. Bantjes, the Clerk of the Representative Assembly, who acted during the Expedition as the Secretary to the chief Commandant, Pretorius.

Tugela's Spruit, November 26, 1838.

Whereas, Mr. Andries Pretorius has arrived at this place a few days ago, with some of his party, in order to march in war against Dingaan, Chief of the Zulus, with a Commando, for the purpose of endeavouring to recover the things which had been stolen by him from our brother Emigrants, after he had cruelly butchered them;—a general feeling of rejoicing was felt by the whole community, on account of his arrival. The appointment of said Mr. Pretorius as chief officer, or Commandant of the commando about to march, was then proposed to the Representative Assembly, who gladly

assented, and having previously taken the votes of the other Commandants, he was unanimously elected. He was therefore appointed, under the congratulations of all present, under proper instructions framed by the Representative Assembly. When he, Mr. Pretorius, now the Chief Commandant, expressed his thanks in a becoming manner, and said, that though reluctantly, yet, as the vote had fallen upon him, and in consideration of the state in which his fellow travellers were placed, shut up in their camp as in prison, he would willingly take that important task upon him, and would use all his endeavours to do all that which is requisite for the good of our interests. All this induced me to accompany the commando, for the purpose of noting down the necessary observations. being confident of a prudent command.

I therefore lost no time, and sent my wagon the next day, being the 27th November, 1838, amongst the wagons of the commando. On the day following, being the 28th, I followed, and reached the commando at the small Tugela Spruit. The Chief Commandant had already proceeded, and we went on to the other side of the Great Tugela, in the entrance under the rising ground. The camp was then pitched, and enclosed by the wagons, 57 in number, and when all preparations had been made, the sun was setting.

Here my attention was drawn to the first commencement of the government of the Chief Commandant; for he ordered that the camp should be properly enclosed, and the gates well secured, after the cattle should be within the same, and that the night patrols should be properly set out; all which was executed with the greatest activity and readiness.

After all this had been arranged, the officers met in the tent of the Chief Commandant; which officers were Carel Pieter Landman (2nd Commandant), Pieter Daniel Jacobs (2nd member of the Court Martial), Jacobus Potgieter (successor of the 2nd Commandant), and also the other Commandants, Johannes De Lange and Stephanus Erasmus, with their Field-cornets. They held an amicable conversation, for the purpose of agreeing on the measures of the Commando. The Chief Commandant then requested Mr. Cilliers to perform evening Divine Service, and the

old Evening Hymn was sung, which Mr. Cilliers concluded with a most fervent prayer. The Chief Commandant further ordered the Commandant Erasmus to go out with a patrol in the night to spy the kraals of Tobe, as he intended to make the first attack on these. This was done. Now the weather was rainy, and it rained by showers.

The next day we rose, and every one was glad. After we had enjoyed some refreshments, the Chief Commandant requested me to assist him in writing. He gave me to write a strict order or regulation for the Commando, which he had framed in a few words. After I had done this the Commandants were assembled, and their approbation thereof asked, which they gave. I then made copies of that order for each Commandant; in the meantime the patrol of Commandant Erasmus returned, but had not traced anything, on account of the unfavourable weather, and had seen nothing but smoke here and there from the kraals.

We were obliged to stay here, to wait for the men of Commandant Landman, who had sent a message that they could not be here before the 2nd of the next month.

I then resolved, with the permission of the Chief Commandant, to ride back to the great camp, where I remained until Monday, the 2nd December, when I returned to the Commando, and I overtook them while they were proceeding; and after having proceeded further on our way, we arrived at the same river, somewhat higher up, where we encamped. Here I enquired, in what manner the last Sunday had been spent, and became informed that Mr. Cilliers had performed Divine Service with all those who were present; that he had commenced Divine Service with singing the 1st and 4th verses of the 51st Psalm; that after the public prayers he had sung the 2nd Anthem from Psalm cxvi. 6, 7; and had afterwards preached about Josua, and concluded with a public prayer, and the singing of the two last verses of the 3rd Psalm. The evening was spent in prayers, which Mr. Cilliers began, by singing some appropriate verses, which was followed up by Mr. J. Vermaak, and the service was again concluded in a proper manner with prayers.

Our Commando in the meanwhile proceeded on. We

were rejoiced at the arrival of the long expected party of the Commandant Landman; the number of his men was 123, besides the English and Kafirs. Speedily a consultation took place, and Commandant De Lange was immediately sent out with three men on some further spying expedition. In the mean time Daniel Bothma was brought before the Chief Commandant for unwillingness to mount his guard, and using abusive language towards his Commandant; he also made use of improper expressions before the Chief Commandant, who was obliged severely to reprimand him for it. The Commandant Jacobs, who lodged the complaint against him, used his influence to obtain his pardon, under a severe reprimand, and a promise of better behaviour, which was granted. In the evening the Chief Commandant held a conversation with the several Commandants about his and their duties, with which they had undertaken to comply, under the instructions of the Representative Assembly, and about the steps which were necessary to be taken against the enemy, and resolved thereafter to break up the camp on the next day, and to proceed.

On the 4th December we continued our journey from the Tugela, proceeding through a plain open field—the field is rather sour, but may be useful—as far as the Klip River, which we passed. About a quarter of an hour on the other side thereof, the field begins to look most beautiful, dressed with sweet grass, presenting a youthful verdure, and variegated by mimosa trees. Having proceeded a little further on, we encamped; and here we had a beautiful sight of the field, but there was no running water.

The camp having been pitched, the Chief Commandant again gave me to write *An Ordinance for the prevention of improperly attacking or interfering with the free Persons of Color*, which I had finished, and then, after the evening Divine Service had been performed, I retired to sleep.

The following day, being the 5th December, all was still in good order. Every one looked out, and was anxious for the return of the spies who were sent out, as we were to remain here waiting for their report or return. In the meantime the Chief Commandant, after having assembled all his officers

and their men, began in the first place to read to them, for their encouragement and admonition, a letter of a brother and friend, Mr. Christian Hatting, which was addressed to all his emigrant brethren, and this letter was well worth the attention of the audience. The Chief Commandant then addressed himself to those under his command, which greatly roused the spirit of many, while he himself, speaking with great feeling, was much moved in his heart. He then next read another letter, addressed to him by the Reverend Mr. van der Lingen. This was also most worthy of being read, and every one felt grateful towards God for receiving such consolatory messages in such a barren wilderness. The Chief Commandant also performed the utmost of his duty, by impressing this circumstance on the minds of his men. He also communicated to them his answer thereon, which every one lauded. He then further admonished them all to begin this most important task which they had undertaken, (and which must be blessed by the Most High, should it be successful,) with supplications and prayers to the Throne of God, for to remain steadfast to the end, and to show obedience to their superiors, as otherwise we can expect no blessing, and our ruin, to the great rejoicing of our persecutors and enemies, will have been occasioned by ourselves.

He then proceeded to read the instructions, framed for himself, by the Representative Assembly, and to point out to them the great responsibility with which he was charged thereby. He then read the strict Order framed by him for the Commandants, and also the last mentioned Ordinance. He then called towards him all the inferior officers, according to rank ; the assistant commandants, the Field-cornets, down to the corporals, exhorted them to behave with courage and prudence, if necessary : reminded them how any design undertaken without God is frustrated ; how every one was to act when engaged with the enemy ; that we, as reasonable creatures, born under the light of the Gospel, should not be equal to them in destroying innocent women and children ; and that we may pray of God everything which is not contrary to his great righteousness. He admonished them further, to press on the minds of the men under them, submit every morning and evening their duties and their doing to the

Lord in prayers ; and to spend the holy Sabbath to the honour of God, and not use that great name in vain, nor calumniate the Most High. He further expressed his great joy in experiencing that peace, reasonableness, and fraternal love was still reigning amongst so many thousand souls, living together as in one and the same house,—and that this was more than he had expected ;—that he had, however, to admonish every one to join their hands together, to remove everything that might tend to give rise to disunion ; so that we, as one body, might, with the assistance of God, accomplish our intended work ; and finally, repeatedly remind us that “unity createth power.” Amongst others, *he strictly prohibited any one to interfere with the Kafir children or women during the conflict, or to take them prisoners.*

The successor of the Chief Commandant also mounted the carriage of the cannon, and said that every one should notice that which the Chief Commandant had communicated to us ; that we ought to be most grateful to God for such valuable admonitions ; that in all our doings we should give the honour to God ; how it was now our time all to kneel down, and humble ourselves before God, for that our enemies, like the wolves, were watching our destruction ; that in particular we must be grateful to God that he has provided us with such a chief, who is wise in all his doings, and who even shows himself careful as well for our spiritual as bodily welfare. The Chief Commandant again resumed, and dwelt upon everything which he considered might be ruinous to us, and that we might well acknowledge the truth of what had been stated by his successor, &c. He then requested every one to unite in prayer, requesting Mr. S. Celliers to conclude this momentous meeting with a solemn prayer, who first addressed the Chief Commandant, and in very appropriate language exhorted him to his duty, and so on all the officers according to their ranks, and all the men, and thereafter concluded with a solemn prayer. Thus was this moment properly spent ; every one was affected, and general silence and calmness prevailed.

We expected every moment the return of Commandant de Lange from his expedition.

In the meantime I proceeded to take a general return

for the Chief Commandant, of the number of men on the commando, which I found to be, including the persons of colour, 464 men, besides the Commandants. A report from the Tugela, by a Kafir, was also received, sent by an Englishman named Robert Joyce, requesting E. Parker to send him a horse, he being unable to proceed further on foot. Said Parker submitted that request to the chief Commandant, who gave his consent. In the mean time, the chief Commandant examined the Kafirs at Port Natal, and gave them the necessary orders. At last we were so unfortunate as to see Commandant de Lange return from his expedition as a spy, bringing with him a Kafir of the tribe of Tobe, as a prisoner, "*a stout man, more than six feet high.*" We, however, regretted to be informed, that having with his three followers, while riding about, unexpectedly got amongst the kraals, they were compelled to defend their lives, and to fire, so that in a moment they killed three Kafirs, and took one prisoner, while the others all escaped. They brought with them 11 sheep, and 14 head of cattle, which they had found there. This was a greater curiosity than to have seen the Kafir when he came riding on horseback; such as no one had ever seen before, in respect of largeness and fatness. All the ewes had lambs, and even of these the tails had been cut, while the rams were obliged to drag their tails after them, to the great burthen of their bodies, on account of the size.

The Commandant de Lange, having reported to the Chief Commandant the occurrences, the Council of War resolved to break up the camp the next day, and to place it a little nearer, for the purpose of attacking the said tribes of Tobe. The Chief Commandant at the same time took the opportunity of questioning the Kafir prisoner;—whatever we got from him was of no importance, and which it is not necessary to record.

The next day, being the 6th of the said month, we pursued our undertaking, and marched on with our commando to a similar river, where we encamped, and then forthwith a meeting was held about proceeding against the tribe of Tobe. It was resolved to do this, and only to take so many head of cattle with them as might be necessary for provisioning the Commando. For that purpose 300 men were immediately commanded, and they left in the after-

noon. I observed their departure, and saw the Chief Commandant (when a little way from the camp), dividing them in five divisions, to the number of Commandants, and issuing the necessary orders to each of the officers. All this having been done, they followed him in a regular way. The Chief Commandant also gave orders to secure the camp, immediately after his departure, with thorn branches (mimosas), which was done. The Kafir prisoner went with the commando.

The Commandant Jacobs having been left behind in the camp, about the evening, ordered fifty men to proceed with him that night to the Maize Gardens, in order to see what sort of kraals there were ; which was done. On the next day, being the 7th of said month, the patrols and spies were duly sent out, and shortly afterwards, the Commandant Jacobs and his men arrived, without having found out anything, whilst all the Kafirs had taken to flight.

In the afternoon, the Chief Commandant arrived with the commando ; but every place was deserted, and Tobe's Kafirs had also fled, occasioned by the alarm of Commandant de Lange on the preceeding day, so that they could not be overtaken ; they brought with them twenty-seven goats and seven sheep, not having met with anything else, and having seen only a few signals at great distance. The general conversation then taking place, was about the unpassableness of the road which they had got to go to overtake the Kafirs. I thought I might make sure to get some information from persons not residing here, and who may be relied upon, about the state of the field ; which I did, and received for answer, that all over Africa they had never yet seen such beautiful and fertile lands. Now, the horses, to our great regret, were all knocked up. It was therefore resolved at once to march towards Dingaan's residence without any further delay. We proceeded the next day, being the 8th of the month, on our undertaking, marching on through an open level field, until we arrived at the Zondags River. We had, in the meantime, also passed two rivers of the same kind, which, by the road, had no running water, but according to the statement of the patrols, had running fountains near their origin.

The fields along the Zondags River are splendid and

beautiful, overgrown on both sides with valley-shrubs of every description, and as far as we went the grass was quite sweet. We thns proceeded on, and crossed another valley, which, along the road, contained stagnant waters. We went further on between two flat heights, through a sandy passage ; a horrible bad road, large rocks, and then several deep ditches, some very muddy. Having passed all this, we got to an extensive valley, which offered a beautiful view. We went through it and continued until we came to a river with running water, named by the former commando the *Bly River*, situate under a flat mountain ; here we encamped. The next day, being the 9th, all was well, and we remained over to celebrate the Sabbath ; while the previous Saturday evening had been spent in the tent of the chief Commandant, with the singing of some appropriate hymns, and a fervent prayer delivered by Mr. Cilliers.

On Sunday morning, before Divine service commenced, the Chief Commandant called together all those who were to perform that service, and requested them to propose to the congregation, "that they should all fervently, in spirit and in truth pray to God for his relief and assistance in their struggle with the enemy ; that he wanted to make a vow to God Almighty (if they are all willing), that should the Lord be pleased to grant us the victory, we should raise a house to the memory of His Great Name, wherever it should please Him ;" and that they should also supplicate the aid and assistance of God to enable them to fulfil their vow, and that we would note the day of the victory in the book, to make it known even to our latest posterity, in order that it might be celebrated to the honour of God.

Messrs. Celliers, Landman and Joubert were glad in their minds to hear it. They spoke to their congregations on the subject, and obtained their general concurrence. When after this, Divine service commenced,—Mr. Celliers performed that which took place in the tent of the Chief Commandant. He commenced by singing from Psalm xxxviii. v : 12-16, then delivered a prayer, and preached about the twenty-four first verses of the sixth chapter of Judges ; and thereafter delivered the prayer in which the beforementioned vow to God was made, with a fervent supplication for the Lord's aid and assistance for the

fulfilment thereof. The 12th and 21st verses of said 38th Psalm were again sung, and the service was concluded with singing the 134th Psalm. In the afternoon the congregations met again, and several appropriate verses were sung. Mr. Celliers again made a speech and delivered prayers solemnly; and in the same manner the evening was also spent.

The following day, being the 10th of the month, we again proceeded, crossed the river, and were much impeded by the grass being very high in the road, and dangerous to ride through. We were obliged to set fire to it; and having done this, we passed several ditches, and ascended the mountain, which was very steep, and covered with large rocks; and it was late in the evening before we had got over it. The field * in itself was beautiful, good, and plentifully supplied with grass, and several fountains are found along the road, which seemed to have been filled up; and we therefore saw nothing but bubblings.

A short distance from this inaccessible mountain we came to an extensive valley, which had a beautiful sight, overgrown with clover, and valley grass and herbs of every description. Here we encamped. Several signals were seen; but the patrols which had been out came back, having discovered nothing, but only seen in different directions smoke, which they supposed to come from the van of Dingaan's kraals. The next day, being the 11th, we continued our journey, and some wagons went out of the road for the purpose of loading some elks, which the day before had been shot by the patrols; there were also several which had been killed that morning, which were all put on the wagons. The wagons had not all come together yet, when we received reports that Kafirs had been seen; probably Dingaan's commando. With the greatest speed, the camp was pitched on the other side of the *Umzinyati* (the translation of which is Buffalo River). The chief commandant in the meantime sent some of his people to meet them, and remained behind himself, to make personal arrangements in the camp, not being sure himself whether it was the commando; but a little while after, reports came back that they were merely spies. Those,

* Field, i.e. Veldt, meaning the surrounding herbage.

however, who were sent out on our side, crossed their places, where there were several Kafir kraals, and found nine of them, who, having engaged, were all killed. Several fresh traces were also seen. About the evening, a Kafir was seen at a distance passing the flats, but he could not be well distinguished. Two men were immediately sent off. The Kafir had, however, concealed himself in a reed bush, but Mr. Parker, who had also followed them, coming from behind was the first who found him, having with him a knapsack with maize. He was about throwing his assegai, but said Parker fired and killed him. Having thus passed the day, we remained here during the night.

The next day being the 12th Dec., the patrols went out early. As it rained we remained over here. A Kafir spy was shot by the patrols. Mr. Parker, having been out with his Kafir spies, had also taken one prisoner, besides some women and children, which latter he left under the protection of his comrades, while he himself went before them to the camp with the Kafir prisoner; but the Kafir being fastened to the riem of Parker's horse, on the way got hold of Parker by his gun, and pulled him from his horse on the ground; he had but his knobkerrie, and could not do much as his arms were tied; so Parker had the good fortune, as the Kafir was lying upon his gun, which was a short double barrel, to fire both charges into the arm and shoulder of the Kafir. He thus escaped, and leaving one of his companions with the wounded Kafir, reported the circumstance to the Chief Commandant, who himself repaired thither to speak to the wounded Kafir, but whom he found dying on the spot. The women and children having arrived, the Chief Commandant gave them liberty to return; but gave them a sign, being a white flag, to show to their king that they had been set at liberty, and to announce to him that we were now come to wage war with him, and that, if he were willing, we were ready to conclude peace with him, if he will deliver up the horses and guns of our butchered brethren, leaving it, however, to his option; or, if he were otherwise inclined, that we were prepared to wage war with him even for ten years running.—The name of the Chief Commandant was written on the said flag.

The women were very grateful for their merciful release by the Chief Commandant, and praised him above their king; for, said they, he never pardons any defenceless woman or harmless child, but causes them often, for pleasure sake, to be put to death. They thanked him a thousand times for their lives. The Chief Commandant further assured them that they, and even their husbands, might safely bring back a message; that if they only had the sign with them, which was now given, no harm would be done to them; and moreover told them that no woman or child would be killed by us. They continued to express their thanks, and went to deliver the message.

On the 13th December we proceeded on, the weather being bad, for some time along the river, which runs eastward, to get nearer to the wood. While we were departing, the Kafir spies again reported having seen some Kafirs, three in number, which were found by the patrols, and they were all killed. In the afternoon another patrol returned, making report that they had met a great number of Kafirs, in a certain place on a mountain, who had many head of cattle with them; but being only four men together, they dared not hazard themselves any further, after they had killed three of the Kafirs, and the gun of one of them had become useless.

We stayed here during the night, and on the next day, being the 14th December, 120 men, who had been commanded on the previous evening, went out by dawn of day to attack said Kafirs. I now made enquires after the number of Kafirs who had been killed up to this morning, which I found to be "Twenty-three." In the evening the patrols returned, and had again killed eight Kafirs in a skirmish. The next day, being the 15th December, we went on further, to a spruit, where we encamped, and where instantly reports arrived from one of the patrols, that they had fallen upon five of the Zulus, and had killed one of them, while the others had made away, by means of the impassableness of high banks and ditches. From another patrol there also arrived a report that they had seen an equally great number, and, continuing their way, had discovered a great number who were in a very dangerous and inaccessible place. This last report was made on Saturday, the 15th, while we were just encamped at another spruit.

Having well secured the camp, the Chief Commandant repaired to said place with part of his men, having also received reports of the Commandant de Lange of its being the Commando of the Kafirs which was approaching.

The Chief Commandant, having arrived at the place, thought it advisable (as it was about the evening, and several men were out on patrols in different directions, so that he had too few with him to make an attack at so inaccessible a place; the more so as the Sabbath was at hand), to postpone the attack till the next Monday (even if they were to approach nearer), in order not to profane the Sabbath. The Chief Commandant ordered the barriers and gates to be properly secured, and that all men should be up about two hours before daylight. Every thing was complied with; at the appointed time all men roused, and we held ourselves in readiness. Sunday, the 16th, was a day as if ordained for us. The sky was open, the weather clear and bright. Scarcely was the dawn of day perceivable when the guards, who were still on their posts, and could scarcely see, perceived that the Zulus were approaching. Now the patrols were all together in the camp, having been called in the day previous by alarm signals of the cannon. The enemy then approached at full speed, and in a moment they had surrounded the camp on all sides. In the meantime the day began to dawn, so that they might be seen approaching, while their advanced lines had already been repulsed by the firing from the camp. Their approach, although frightful on account of the great number, yet presented a beautiful appearance. They approached in regiments, each captain with his men following him. In the same way the patrols had seen them come up the day previous, until they had all surrounded us. I could not count them, but it is said that a Kafir prisoner had given the number of thirty-six regiments, which regiments may be calculated at from nine to 10,000 men. The battle now commenced, and the cannons were discharged from every gate of the camp; the battle then became violent, even the firing from the muskets from our side as well as from theirs. After this had been kept up for full two hours by the watch, the Chief Commandant (as the enemy was continually bestorming the camp, and he was afraid that we would get short

of ammunition), ordered *that all the gates of the camp should be opened, and fighting with the Kafirs take place on horseback*. This was done, and to our regret, they took to flight so hastily that we were obliged to hunt after them. Few remained in the camp, and the Chief Commandant in person, after having given the necessary directions, also followed them. His shooting horses had been taken by others, and he himself was obliged to mount a wild horse; he pursued a large party, and, riding in full speed, he got upon them. One of the Zulus rushed upon him, he however discharged one of the barrels of his gun to kill the Kafir, but the horse whereon he was mounted was so frightened that he missed, and wishing to discharge the other shot, did not know that the stopper of the lock had been closed, so that he could not cock his gun! Now, no time was to be lost; he jumped from his horse—the Kafir at once rushes upon, stabs at him with his assegai, which he parried off twice with his gun; but the third time, unable to do otherwise, he parried it off with his left hand, in which the Kafir then stuck his assegai. He now falls upon the Kafir, lays hold of him, and throws him on the ground, and holds him fast, though he struggled terribly, until P. Roedeloff came to his assistance; he then forced the assegai out of his hand, and stabs the Kafir under him, so that he died. He then returned to the camp to have the wound dressed, which was done. He, however, said that he hoped no one would be terrified, that this wound could do him no harm, and that he was glad of having been the only man, in such a serious conflict, who had been slightly wounded; the wound, however, was bad. We also ascertained, with regret, that Gerrit Raath had met with a similar accident, in the same manner as with the Chief Commandant, but he was dangerously wounded in his side; as also Philip Fourie, who had been dangerously wounded with an assegai during the battle in the camp, which was also dangerous. G. Raath remained in the field, and was fetched away, and brought to the camp on a stretcher. Thus the Zulu commando was pursued for more than three hours, and we returned, as we were all short of ammunition. The Chief Commandant ordered the cleaning of the guns, and that every man should provide himself with ammunition. This was complied with, and balls were

also cast. Prayers and thanksgivings were offered to God, and after Divine Service had been performed, the Chief Commandant again sent a strong party to pursue the Zulus as far on as they could ; but they returned in the evening, not having been able to come up with them. The next day we counted the number of the slain ; those who had been killed about and near the camp, of which some have not been counted, with those who had been overtaken and killed, we found amounted to, the lowest certain number, more than 3,000, besides the wounded.

We proceeded on our journey, and got to the *Umhlatuzi* on the 19th. In the meanwhile several spies and Kafirs were killed. I should also mention that *Dingaan's servant*, in his *full dress*, was also killed during the conflict near the camp!—Being encamped at the Umhlatuzi, the patrols, while spying, saw Dingaan's Town covered with clouds of smoke. We could form no conception of what it meant ; meanwhile we broke up the next day, and marched on towards it.—N. B. Two Kafirs were caught after the battle had ended, and these also the Chief Commandant sent to Dingaan, with the same message which he had given to the women and children before mentioned ; another was again caught, and this he also sent to Dingaan. One of the prisoners is now our guide. We went on, and encamped near to his town on the 20th, at a distance of about a quarter of an hour. No sooner had the camp been formed but a commando was ordered towards the town.

We went with about 900 men, and found the town deserted, and the palace of the King totally burnt down, together with the whole upper part of his town. The Chief Commandant ordered all that was found to be brought together, and whatever was in the fire, such as iron and copper, to be taken out and taken care of. We went back again, and the next day, being the 21st, we fixed our camp on the very hill "where the unfortunate Mr. Retief and company had been butchered." *The sight of the cruel martyring, whereof the dead bones still gave proofs, was indeed horrible to be looked at ; while the raw straps with which they had been tied were still fastened to the bones of several of them ; and the sticks and spokes with which they had been beaten were found by thousands, and in pieces, along the road on which they had been dragged. Of*

those sticks some were those with which they danced, and some were poles whereon they build their houses, or where-with they plant their fortifications. While other skeletons or dead bones laid there, these were recognised by us by their skulls, which were all broken, and by the heap of stones lying by each of their corpses, wherewith they had received their last sufferings. Oh, horrible martyrdom!!!

The late worthy Mr. Retief we recognised by his clothes, which, although nearly consumed, yet small rags were still attached to his bones, added to which there were other tokens, such as his portmanteau, which was almost also consumed, in which there were several papers, of which some were damaged and rained to pieces; but some were found therein in as perfect a state as if they had never been exposed to the air; amongst which was also the contract between him and Dingaan, respecting the cession of the land, so clean and uninjured as if it had been written to-day, besides a couple of sheets of clean paper, on one of which the Chief Commandant wrote a letter to Mr. J. Boshoff the following day. Every exertion was used for the gathering of the bones, and we buried them. This having been done, the Chief Commandant questioned the Kafir prisoner; and as he pretended to have been but a spectator of this martyrdom, being sick at the time, he related the whole circumstance just in the same manner as the appearance of the bones vouched to be correct; but amongst others, that the King, after the treaty had been concluded, had invited Retief and his company to come to his town, that his people might dance in honour of them; and while dancing, he caused them to be attacked, and though the farmers were without their arms, they, however, defended themselves with their pocket knives, in such a manner that when they had already fought their way through *one* regiment, another had to resume it. One man, says he, of a tall stature, could run very fast, and escaped, after fighting hard, from the town to the other side of the river, which I believe, is about 2,500 paces; but by their great numbers they outran him from all sides, and overtook him before he got as far as where his horses were; he then defended himself with stones, until he could no longer. He further states, that twenty of them had died from

severe cuts which they had received by the pocket knives, and several were wounded.

Several articles were also found, which had been buried under ground ; and the following day, being the 24th Dec., it was resolved to sell the same by public auction, and to distribute the money arising therefrom among the commando,—which was done. The next day, being the 25th, one of Dingaan's Captains was caught by the Kafir spies, and brought up. He related a great deal, but little reliance could be placed on what he said. However, he related as to what occurred about the martyring of the farmers in the same manner as the former. The next day we broke up the camp, and replaced it on a hill towards the sea side, under which place there are wide and rough cliffs, and in these very places the whole Zulu army was assembled. We encamped, and secured the camp. The next day about 300 men were ordered to descend. We saw from our camp the Kafirs going backwards and forwards. The commando descended, and the Chief Commandant went with them, but before they met the Kafirs, he was obliged to return on account of the pain of the wound in his hand ; for the weather was stormy. The cannon which they had taken with them could not be taken further, and was also sent back. No sooner had the Chief Commandant arrived at the camp when we heard the attack commencing violently, and there was a continuing noise of the firing. I was immediately sent off with some others to the point of the mountain, to spy the battle with a telescope, which I did ; and as long as I could see, the firing continued without intermission.

The Chief Commandant had, on his leaving them, given the necessary orders to be prudent, but they had, notwithstanding, descended into the clift, and without any precaution been riding amongst the Kafirs in the caves and dens, so that they could neither advance nor retreat, and were obliged to fight their way clear through the Kafirs, by whom they were surrounded as so many ants ; and not daring to venture to continue fighting, for fear of getting short of ammunition, they retreated until they came to a very bad road, where the river was swollen, when the Kafirs had an opportunity of getting amongst them, and they then killed another five of us, named Jan Oosthuysen, formerly of

Nieuwveld, Marthinus Gous of Zwarteberg, Gerrit van Stade, Barend Bester and Nicolaas le Roux, besides Alexander Biggar, with five of his Kafirs. They returned to the camp as their horses were all knocked up. The Kafirs pursued them to the open field, when they returned to the same caves.*

We remained here for two days, to see whether they would still venture to come to the field, which they dared not, and we were necessitated to return on account of the horses. The Chief Commandant then caused the town to be further destroyed by fire, and we returned, halting now and then, for the purpose of seeing whether they would not follow us. Having again arrived at the "Umzin-yati," two hundred men were sent out, to see whether they could not get any cattle, and they returned with about 5,000 head of cattle, which were herded by 100 Caffers, who were all killed. Thus we returned to the Tugela River, where the Chief Commandant divided the booty, and the commando separated.

The news of this victory was received, as might be expected, in the Colony with rapture, especially by those who had lost their dearest and nearest relatives in the cold-blooded butcheries of the 6th and 17th of February. The town of Graaff-Reinet was specially illuminated, and a new spur given to the migration.

Commandant Pretorius' Despatches of these events here follow :—

King Dingaan's City, called

Ungunguhloos, Dec. 22, 1838.

GENTLEMEN,—I send you this to inform you of the particulars of our commando against the Zulus. After the people had, by general election, chosen me as the Commander-in-chief, we marched out against that formidable foe not trusting in our own strength in the least, as we could muster no more than 460 men ; but we had full confidence

* On this occasion one of the Zulus showed extraordinary determination. A horse on which he rode, alarmed at the noise of the contest which was raging around him, broke loose, and ran in amongst the farmers with his rider on his back, who then stabbed himself to the heart.

in the *justice* of our cause. Our only hope was in God, and the issue has proved that

“Die op den hoogen God vertrouwd,
Heeft zeker op geen sand gebouwd.”

[He who places his trust in the great God will find he has not built on a sandy foundation.]

We marched in five divisions, each under the command of its proper officer. Our object was only to recover the property which the enemy had taken from our people. During the next few days we took prisoners several men of the Zulu nation, to whom I gave a white flag as a proof of our amity, and desired them to proceed to their king, and to inform him that if he would return to us the horses and guns which he had taken from our people, we should be willing to enter into negotiations for peace. I sent this message to him twice, but received no answer. In the meantime our patrols were out in all directions, and on Saturday, the 15th of December, the Zulu army was discovered posted on a very difficult mountain.

On receiving this information, I immediately proceeded there with 200 men, but finding it unadvisable to attempt anything with so small a force, and in such a place, I returned to the camp. The next day, being Sunday, we intended to remain quiet; but as soon as day broke upon us we discovered that our camp was surrounded by, as we thought, the whole of the Zulu forces. The engagement instantly commenced on both sides. The Zulus *fired* upon us, and made several attempts to storm our encampments, and on being repulsed, they only retreated for short distances. They stood their ground firmly for two hours, and then were reinforced by five more divisions.

At this juncture you will scarcely be able to form an idea of the sight presented around us. It was such as to require some nerve not to betray uneasiness in the countenance. Seeing that it was necessary to display the most desperate determination I caused four gates of our enclosed camp to be simultaneously thrown open, from whence some mounted men were to charge the enemy, at the same time keeping up a heavy fire upon them. The Zulus stood our assault firmly for some time, but at last finding their number rapidly decreasing, they fled,

scattering themselves in all directions. They were pursued on horseback by as many of our men as could be spared from the camp. Having made some necessary arrangements I started off myself, and shortly overtook a Zulu warrior. At the distance of about fifteen yards, I made signs of peace to him, and called to him to surrender, intending to send him with a message to his King; but as he refused to submit and threatened me I at length fired but missed. My horse being restive, I dismounted and attempted to fire the second time, but the lock of my gun had got out of order. At this instant the Zulu made a furious rush upon me, stabbing at me with his assegai, and which I parried repeatedly with my gun. At last he closed in with me and attempted to stab me through the breast. I averted this by grasping at the weapon with my left hand, but in doing so received it through the hand. Before he could extricate it I seized him and threw him to the ground, but as the assegai remained pierced through my hand, and which was under him, as I lay upon him, I had but one hand with which to hold him and use my dagger whilst he attempted to strangle me. At this crisis one of my men came to my assistance, pulled the assegai out of my hand and stabbed the Zulu on the spot. My hand bleeding very much I was obliged to return to the camp, and it was apprehended some of our men had fallen—however it pleased the Almighty to give us this victory without the loss of a single life on our part, only three of us wounded, viz., myself, Gerrit Raats, and Philip Fourie.

The following day we resumed our march, and arrived here this day. Yesterday, when we were seen to approach, Dingaan set his capital on fire, and his own palace was destroyed by the conflagration.

We learn from two Zulu women that one Captain who had not been in the engagement wanted to renew the attack, but all the others refused, stating that they had lost nearly all of their men. The result was a precipitate retreat.

After the battle I caused returns to be made of the number of the enemy killed, and found it to be 3,000 and some hundreds, but that we may make every allowance for inaccuracies we have stated it at 3,000.

We are now encamped at Dingaan's capital. Here we found the bones of our unfortunate countrymen Retief and his men, and which we interred. They bear the marks of having been cruelly murdered. The sight of them must have moved the most unfeeling heart, and the account which the Zulu prisoners gave of the affair shows that they must have fought desperately, though without any other weapons than their knives, and some sticks which they wrested from the Zulus. Before they were overpowered they say that twenty Zulus were killed and several wounded. The Zulus took nothing from them except their arms and horses. We found among their bones, independent of several other things, Mr. Retief's portmanteau containing his papers, some of them very much defaced, but his treaty with Dingaan is still legible."

On the 27th January, 1841, Sir G. Napier, Governor of Cape, wrote to the President Boer Council at Pietermaritzburg about Nepai, and sent troops to the Umgazi to protect Faku.



CHAPTER LXI.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT IN NATAL— BATTLES BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE BOERS.

THE Rev. W. C. Holden in his History of Natal says :—“ About this time the Home Government were most anxious to give to Natal an enlightened, liberal, and efficient Government, and for this purpose persons of acknowledged skill and ability in colonial matters were selected. Martin West, who had been Magistrate of Graham's Town, was appointed to the onerous position of Governor, and Mr. Moodie, late of the Royal Navy (the father of the present writer), who had displayed deep-acquaintance with colonial affairs, and especially those relating to South Africa by the publication of the ‘Records of the Cape of Good Hope,’ was chosen as the first Colonial Secretary. Mr. (now Sir Theophilus) Shepstone, late diplomatic agent at Fort Peddie, was placed in charge of the native department, and Major Smith of the 27th Regiment was Military Commandant, but was shortly afterwards succeeded by Col. E. F. Boys of the 45th Regiment. Henry Cloete, Esq., LL.D., was Recorder, W. P. Field, Esq., Collector of Customs, and Walter Harding, Esq., filled the position of Crown Prosecutor ; whilst Dr. Stanger, who from his connexion with the Niger Expedition, his scientific attainments, and unswerving integrity, was adjudged a very suitable person to fill the post of Surveyor-General.” Since Mr. Holden's time Natal has in turn been governed by Sir Benjamin Chilley Campbell Pine, John Scott, Robert Keate, Col. Maclean, of British Kaffraria celebrity, and Col. Bisset (now Major-General). He joined as a volunteer in the first Kaffir war and afterwards gained an ensigncy in the Cape Mounted Riflemen, and after a long series of engagements lasting through the Kaffir wars up to 1853, in one of which he was severely wounded, went home and published his book entitled “Sport and War in South Africa.” A volume full of incident and very interesting ;

and although not overladen with the doubtful art of the wordy literary florist and perhaps sophist, but couched in blunt, honest, soldierlike language, bears the stamp of genuine truth to the minutest detail. Mr. (now Sir Anthony) Musgrave was the next Governor, and was succeeded by Sir Henry Bulwer, and Sir Arthur Havelock is the present (February 1888) Governor.

We have now brought the account of the battles between the British and the Boers nearly to an end as far as they are concerned as opposed to each other, and now, in dismissing this part of our subject, it only remains to give a short account of their next collision, which occurred at Boom Plaats in the Orange River Free State, and which was brought about by the vacillation of the English home policy regarding the Boers in South Africa, and owing probably to the conflicting opinions of successive leaders of British Cabinets. The unfortunate Boers, leaving the Cape as we have seen, trekked through strange wildernesses, fighting a series of battles with Zulus, wild beasts, &c., which were accompanied with great suffering, privation, and bloodshed, force their way into Natal, and are no sooner comfortably settled down than Britain says, "I can't allow you to erect a republic and threaten me, as you do, with the arms of Holland," and steps in and takes the land. They then trek over the Orange River and set up a Free State. Before crossing the river an "influential deputation" of Boers waited upon Governor Stockenstrom in 1835 and inquired as to the legality of their proceeding, and the Governor said "I am not aware of any law which prevents any of His Majesty's subjects from leaving his dominions and settling in another country, and such a law, if it did exist, would be tyrannical and oppressive." Sir Harry Smith, however, directed by his orders, claimed all the land between the Orange and Vaal Rivers for England, and announced his intention of supporting his claim by force of arms. Andreas Pretorius was again selected by the Dutch as a leader, and he at once collected a "commando," or army, of about one thousand men, and on the 29th of August, 1848, was fought the "Battle of Boom Plaats," which latter place is situated a little above the 30° of latitude, near where it is cut by the 26° of

longitude. Sir Harry's forces numbered about seven hundred, supported by a small body of Griquas. More English were killed than Dutch. "About a dozen Boers" (says one writer) "fell, and about four times that number of English. But the English beat the Dutch, and Pretorius and his friends again resumed their wandering, and trekked across the Vaal River, and there founded the Transvaal Republic," where, as we are aware, the pertinacious John Bull again followed them and again took their land from them, when (to refer to recent times) they yet once again "inspanned" their wagons, and gathering their relations and flocks and herds about them, penetrated the remote interior towards the Great Lake—anywhere to get rid of contact with the hated British. The South African papers of 1879 say that many of these unhappy wanderers had to abandon their wagons and all their goods, and make the best of their way back to the Transvaal, through hostile blacks and wild beasts, owing to their cattle and draught oxen having perished for want of water. But of these matters ample details will be found further on, as well as of the battle of Boomplaats.

It is truly a sad subject to contemplate—the repeated expatriation, wanderings, sufferings, and hardships of these peculiar people, whose rustic peculiarities would never permit them to dwell in harmony with the English. They simply said, "We thoroughly dislike you and yours, we all wish to go anywhere where there is game to be had, water to drink, and grass for our cattle." But the exigencies of British rule did not somehow seem to admit of this, and so, as before said, they resumed their wanderings again and again. As an instance of their antipathy to the British, we may mention the following:—An English gentleman of considerable attainments, during a journey with a friend, dismounted for a moment and called at a Boer's house for some little refreshment. The friend was told, by some one who was in the house at the time, that when the gentleman of attainments rose from his chair and departed on his journey, the "vrouw" got up and fetched a damp cloth and wiped the seat of the chair. The friend she could tolerate, as, although an Englishman, he had been in the country a long time, and spoke Dutch, or

rather the *patois* composed of Dutch, Malay, Portuguese, &c., spoken by these people in South Africa ; but the raw "Engelsman" she couldn't stand, as she said he reminded her of the abominated red-jackets, who followed her nation about like a lot of fiery-eyed stoats or weasels.

As I was once coming southward from a trip into the far interior, we bivouacked under the bright moon by some giant trees, which threw their great arms more than half across a deep dark stream which passed silently away eastward, and near the abode of one of these Dutch wanderers of the wilds ; and it sounded passing strange, and rather feelingly deepened the interest in the lovely scene, to hear the solemn strains of the Hymns of David borne upon the night air, and emanating from the old Boer's residence. Where'er these poor people wander, there is the old-fashioned and ponderous Bible, with clasps fit for the Gates of Gaza, with them, and when the groaning board has been cleared, all sit round the room, and the black folk are called in, and the venerable volume is produced, and the farmer puts on his spectacles, and shading his eyes with his hand from the flare of the mould candle, reverently reads aloud a chapter from the good old Book ; after which the most plethoric-looking stumps of clasp-bound hymn-books (which look as if they might be wielded with affect against British troops) are brought in, and a hymn concludes the proceedings of the evening.

It was the followers and relations of these men that trekked away northwards and eastwards, till after many a bloody battle they arrived at Natal. And long afterwards Sir Harry Smith shot a Boer rebel of the name of Dryer at or near Boom Plaats, in the Orange Free State, in 1848. The Boers at the time were very indignant at what they called a most wanton outrage to their dignity. They handed the deed down to posterity by setting to music a song beginning—

"Engelsman, des lands verayer,
Gedinkt à oor de dood van Dryer."

Or,

"Englishman, the land's betrayer,
Bethink you on the death of Dryer."

"Verader" is, I believe, the proper Dutch word for "betrayer," but it wouldn't rhyme.

In 1853, the War Minister at home (who, I see by a late writer, was also Colonial Secretary) had quite enough of fighting in hand without having to fight the Basutos in defence of the Dutch, or the Dutch in defence of the Basutos; and it was decided that the "Free State" should be abandoned. We had claimed the Dutch as our subjects when they attempted to start for themselves in Natal, and had subjugated them by force of arms. Then we repudiated them in the nearer region across the Orange. Then again we claimed them, and again subjugated them by force of arms. Now we again repudiated them. In 1854 we executed, and forced them to accept a convention by which we handed over the government of the country to them—to be carried on after their own fashion. But yet, even then, it was not to be carried on exactly as they pleased. There was to be no slavery, and the natives were not to be forced by labour. Then came terrible days of fighting between the Basutos and the Boers, and of renewed fighting between the Basutos and other tribes; during which time the Basutos were so famine-stricken as to resort to cannibalism. Then they asked for British intervention, and at last, in 1868, Sir Philip Wodchouse issued a proclamation, in which he declared them to be British subjects, and a line of boundary was made between them and the Orange Republic. The Boers did not like this, but the matter was ultimately arranged, and the Basutos, under a son of the old chief Moshesh, or Umtywetywe, as they pronounce it, are now a happy and flourishing people.

In concluding the subject of the battles between these people we will go back to October, 1854, and describe a slaughter of Boers by the "Makatese" under "Makapan," or "Umgobana" as his own Kafirs pronounce the name, and the terrible retaliation upon them by the Boers under Commandant Potgieter and young Pretorius (as he was then, but now President of the Transvaal Republic, and son of the old General before alluded to). I have been at Makapan's kraal. (I may here parenthetically explain that the term "Kafir" is of Arabian origin and means "infidel," and is a *generic* appellation; the Zulu—who is the highest by far in the scale of Kafir worth—the Basutos, also called Makatese; the Korannas,

the Bechuanas, the Fingoes, the Gcalekas, and the Ngqikas, and such like, being *specific* terms.)*

It appears that the Kafirs had given the Boers most dreadful offence. They had murdered seven or eight of the latter, including a "field-cornet," or officer of colonial levies, and had put to death several Dutch women, with circumstances of the most frightful barbarity. Accordingly, General Pretorius, accompanied by Commandant-General Potgieter—a brother of the slain "veldt-kornet"—proceeded on an expedition to avenge the blood which had been shed by the Kafirs. The force altogether was about five hundred strong, the greater part being mounted; and they had one hundred and sixteen wagons and two field pieces. Towards the end of the month they reached certain subterranean caverns of vast extent, in which the offending Kafirs, under their chief Makapan, were known to have entrenched themselves. These extraordinary caves are described as being upwards of two thousand feet in length, and from three to five hundred in width, intersected by several walls—we presume of natural construction—and so dark that no eye could penetrate the gloom. Arrived at this retreat, General Pretorius appears to have debated, without scruple or hesitation, how he could exterminate the enemies with the greatest facility, and at a council of war it was resolved to blast the rocks above the caverns, and thus crush and bury the savages alive under the ruins. This scheme failed, in consequence of the stone proving unfavourable to the operation. The caves were then surrounded and rigorously watched day and night, to prevent the entrance of any supplies; so that the wretches within, who seem by the accounts to have represented the whole population of a large Kafir village, wives and children included, might be reduced to the extremities of famine. At first fences or barriers were constructed round the rocks, behind which the Boers maintained incessant watch; but as the work proceeded enormous loads of

* Apropos of the foregoing parenthesis. I see that it is the fashion with many eminent ethnologists to call this collection of tribes the "Bantu" tribes. As a Zulu linguist, I respectfully object to this. Bantu, or "Abantu." Abantu simply means "people" in Zulu, and is used in this sense "Abantu bamhlope" i.e., white people—and "Abantu bamnyama"—*videlicet*—black people.

timber and stone were brought up and thrown into the openings of the caverns. Fifty "spans" of oxen (teams of twelve or fourteen), with an adequate number of labourers were employed upon the work the first day. During the next five days 1,500 drags of trees and stones were thrown down the caverns by 300 Kafir allies ; it was here that the handsome, tall, and gallant Commandant Potgieter was shot. Pretorius says in his account of the affair that his colleague was standing at the top of a small precipice, urging on the friendly Kafirs, when a shot from the caves entered his right shoulder, and came out between the left shoulder and the neck and he fell down the "krantz" right in front of the enemy's fence. Pretorius, however, and those with him stormed the fence and recovered the body. The pangs of thirst soon forced through the obstacles thrown in their way. Some of the miserable creatures within, and a large number of women and children, suffering for want of water, sallied forth, but died after they drank a little. Meantime patrols kept ward night and day, and with their rifles laid every Kafir dead who showed himself in his exhaustion or misery at the cavern's mouth. As this dreadful siege was protracted through the greater part of three weeks, it is plain that the savages must have had some small amount of provisions with them ; but the work at last came to an end. On the 17th of November the besiegers, as they advanced towards the rocks, encountered little opposition, and the silence of the caves, together with the horrible smell of the dead, told them how effectually their object had been accomplished. The miserable savages had perished in their holes, and the estimate of their losses gives a frightful idea of the tragedy. Women and children in considerable numbers appear to have escaped, but upwards of nine hundred Kafirs had been shot down at the openings of the caves, and the number of those who had died by inches within was, the Boers themselves say, "much greater."

The above account points to the difference between our mode of procedure with natives and that of the Boers. Judging from experience, we could not have done as much to curb the Kafirs in a long and tedious campaign as General Pretorius did in two short months with a handful of volunteers, at little or no cost to his countrymen, and

with a loss of only two killed and five wounded. The whole expedition was contrived with a rude simplicity which, though barbarous enough in its results, was successfully adapted to the purpose in view. The settlers of the Transvaal Republic simply turned out to hunt savages after a savage fashion. The Kafirs had not only barbarously butchered their countrymen, but pots were found containing the roasted limbs of the victims. To such offenders no more mercy was shown than to so many wolves; and when they had been tracked to their dens they were starved and shot without respect to the usages of more civilised warfare.

We English, it is plain, do not fight with savages on fair terms. All Kafirs, in passing from peace to war with us, forego little, sacrifice little, and hazard to a small extent their own savage lives. We export thousands of soldiers thousands of miles, every man of whom has cost us the worth of a Kafir province in training, and who are expected to encounter treacherous and sanguinary barbarians in their own wilds according to the punctilios of regular war. The result is that the losses are almost exclusively our own. The Treasury is drained of million after million; our best officers and men are surprised, surrounded, and killed; and after the lapse of a year or two the "Kafir War" is concluded, to be followed in a few months by another. Not near as many Zulus have been killed in Zululand by all the thousand bayonets, bullets, and swords of our thousands of regular troops in that country as were destroyed in this single expedition by Pretorius. It would be hard indeed to argue that such an example should be followed; but of this we are convinced—that if the colonization of South Africa is to be continued, the savage tribes can only successfully be encountered like the savages of all other regions—by acts resembling their own. The backwoodsmen of Kentucky pursued the red Indians as the red Indians pursued them, and victory in the end fell to the superior race. It would probably be the same in South Africa; but to expect that the contest should be conducted without offence to civilised feelings is altogether vain. We simply put the case by aid of this illustration before the eyes of the reader. Handled as those on the spot could handle them, the Kafirs—those bugbears of our

statesmen and economists—could be kept down with comparatively little outlay or trouble ; but the system would be only too sure to involve shocks and scandals to the humanity of the nation. This, however, we must needs add—that if such an alternative be rejected, the border provinces ought to be relinquished altogether ; for the country can no longer afford or tolerate these periodical wars, of which the cost is found so great and the fruit so little.



CHAPTER XLII.

THE BATTLE OF BOOMPLAATS, BY THE HON. R. SOUTHEY, C.M.G.

FOR some years prior to the arrival of Sir Harry Smith, as Governor and High Commissioner, in November, 1847, there had been feuds and fighting between the emigrant farmers—British subjects who had migrated from the Colony into the country north of the Orange River, and the native tribes to whom the territory belonged—notably the Griquas under Adam Kok, and the Basutos under Moshesh—and these chiefs had called upon Her Majesty's representatives, in accordance with the treaty arrangements at the time existing between them and Her Majesty's Government, to put a stop to the encroachments of Her said subjects, and on one or two occasions armed interference had been resorted to. There had also been fighting in Natal between a portion of said emigrants who had penetrated into that part and a detachment of Her Majesty's troops sent thither from the Cape Colony, to prevent them from carrying out their intention of seizing and keeping possession of the British territory there and establishing an independent Republic. Several attempts had been made by previous Governors to settle amicably the difficulties that had arisen, but without success, and Sir Harry determined to try his hand at it. Very soon after arrival, he with this view—after visiting Graham's Town and King William's Town—crossed the Orange River, saw Adam Kok and his councillors at Philippolis, who, on the invitation followed him to Bloemfontein, where also he met many of the leading emigrants. He afterwards met Moshesh and his councillors and a considerable number of followers at Winburg. Proceeding thence to Natal he met and had palavers with many emigrant farmers, one of them being the late Andreas Wilhelmus Pretorius, at that time recognised as Commandant-General among them, who at the head of a considerable party was on the move from Natal with the intention of joining those who had

taken up their abode beyond the Vaal River. Sir Harry did his best to dissuade them from this move, and promised, if they settled down quietly in Natal, they and all who remained between the Orange and Vaal Rivers should have titles to the lands they occupied at moderate quitrents, and that he would do all in his power to rectify their grievances, &c., Sir Harry's idea was that their chief, and almost only, complaint or grievance was their inability to obtain titles to land, and that was so with some of them—but not with Pretorius and a large number of his followers. Their ambition was to shake off the British yoke and to form themselves into an independent republic. These crossed the Vaal River and joined their brethren who had previously done so. Sir Harry, however, proceeded with his plans, and in accordance with new treaty arrangements made by him proclaimed Her Majesty's Sovereignty over all the territory between the Orange and Vaal Rivers, appointed needful officers for its government, and surveyors to survey and prepare titles to the farms occupied by the emigrants; also made similar arrangements for surveys and issue of titles to lands occupied in Natal, and returned to Cape Town, believing that the measures he had adopted would satisfy the main body of the emigrants—and that all would settle down quietly—in this, however, he was doomed to be disappointed. There was a strong party among them whom nothing would satisfy short of being allowed to throw off their allegiance to the British crown and establish an independent republic. This party, feeling, no doubt, that if they wished to be successful no time was to be lost, organised a large field force, with which they proceeded to the neighbourhood of Bloemfontein, where the British Resident, with a small garrison of British troops was stationed, and demanded that he and they, and all other British officials, should quit the territory over which Her Majesty's Sovereignty had been proclaimed and cross the Orange River into the colony. The British Resident considering that the force at his disposal was inadequate to cope with the insurgents, complied with the demand, and retired, crossing the Orange River at the ford nearest to Colesberg. Upon intelligence of these doings reaching the Governor at Cape Town

he at once ordered up reinforcements of troops from the Eastern frontier to join the detachment that had retired from Bloemfontein, on the banks of the Orange River, whither he determined also to proceed and personally to superintend needful operations. With this object in view he left Cape Town on the 29th July, 1848, attended by his private secretary, his secretary as High Commissioner and two A.D.C.'s and arrived at Colesberg on the 8th August where he remained two or three days awaiting the arrival of the reinforcements from the frontier at the Orange River. As soon as that was accomplished he joined them, and here his first difficulty occurred—the river was flooded and some two hundred yards wide, and the stream terribly strong. The force to be got across, consisted of two six-pounder field pieces and their needful complement of Artillerymen, two troops of Cape Mounted Rifles, two companies of the Rifle Brigade, and two companies of the 91st Regiment, in all about 600 rank and file, with the needful number of commissariat and baggage wagons, some 150 in all. Sir Harry had provided himself with two cautchouc (India-rubber) pontoons. Then a recent invention, but before they could be worked it was necessary to stretch ropes of sufficient thickness and strength across the stream along which to work them, hence arose the difficulty. There was a small boat worked by two oars into the stern of which one of the ropes was coiled, and the secretary to the High Commissioner volunteered to go in her and pay out the rope as the two men at the oars rowed. In this way they started, but before they got into mid-stream the weight of the rope behind was too powerful for the two men at the oars, the boat swung round, and was dragged back to the site from whence they started, but some distance lower down the river. The attempt to cross was made over and over again, with the same result, and it almost looked as if the attempt to cross in that way must be abandoned when he who had been paying out the rope suggested that they should send back to Colesberg for lighter ropes—in the shape of sash lines. So said so done, and on the following day all the sash line or other lines of similar lightness obtainable in the village was brought out, work recommenced and was successful, the sash line was carried

across, and by its means the stronger ropes were drawn over and fastened to trees on the bank. The pontoons set to work and they worked well; the troops and their commissariat and baggage waggons were got across a very formidable river without accident worthy of mention, and the troops moved forward *via* Philippolis towards Bloemfontein. During the march information was received daily or at shorter intervals that the insurgents were being massed behind the hills on the farm known by the name of "Boomplaats" (Tree place) so named because it had two or three trees growing on it and the surrounding country being bare of wood. On the morning of the 29th August, exactly a month after leaving Cape Town, the troops halted for breakfast at a distance of four or five miles from the hills above mentioned, and moved on again about 11 o'clock. After marching a short distance, information was received that the insurgents were getting into position for attack, on which a halt was called, and an officer of the Cape Mounted Rifles sent on to high ground in front to reconnoitre. He returned and confirmed the report previously received, viz:—that the insurgents were in force behind the hills and ready for action. Still the Governor could not bring himself to believe that the Boers would fire on him, an old, and always a true friend of theirs. He, however, prepared for the worst; a portion of the small force under his command was told off to guard the waggons and the remainder moved to the front of these, fifty C.M.R. formed the advance guard, and strict orders were given that no shot should be fired on our side unless we were first fired upon, and to avoid any possible disregard of these orders all caps were removed from the nipples of the advance guard's carbines. These things having been carefully attended to the order to march forward was given. Sir Harry had that morning dressed himself in a costume worn by him when travelling through the country six months before, and by which he thought he would be recognised by many of the people—still in the belief that they would not fire on *him*. The advance forward had scarcely covered a hundred yards of ground before Sir H. putting spurs to his horse, and followed by his staff, galloped forward, joined the advance guard, and took up a conspicuous position with it. Thus formed, the

troops moved onward along the road, which skirted the hill behind which the insurgents were in force. The position occupied by them was an exceedingly strong one. There were two ranges of hills, covered with large boulders, rocks and stones, one range running parallel to the road, on the right of the forward march, the other running out at right angles on the left side, the road passing through between these and going down into a valley, along which ran a small river, with some wide, and deep pools of water impassable for troops, except at the drifts (fords). Beyond this river, on a somewhat elevated position, stood the Boomplaats homestead with kraals, gardens, &c., enclosed by high stone walls, behind which there was good shelter to resist the advance of the troops. Beyond this again there was a much higher range of hills, also very rocky, through a gorge in which the road passed up, and on towards Bloemfontein. As soon as the advance guard got well in under the hills on their right, the insurgents showed themselves on the top in force, and opened fire on it, which forced it to swerve round on the left and retire on the main body, leaving about a dozen of its number dead or wounded behind, on this a considerable number of the Boers came out from behind the hills on the left, apparently with the object of taking the troops in flank or capturing the commissariat and baggage waggons, but on fire being opened on them by the two six-pounders and the Cape Mounted Rifles advancing towards them they retired in the direction from which they came. Simultaneously with the opening fire by the two field pieces and movement of C.M.R., the two companies of the Rifle Brigade stormed the Boer position on the right, and after a brief resistance drove them out of it, not, however, without severe loss to the troops. Captain Murray, who led the attack, riding in front with Lieut. Glyn, acting as Adjutant, also on horseback, was so severely wounded that he died the same evening and the Adjutant's horse was shot under him, while several of the men were killed or wounded. During this operation the two companies of the 91st Regiment moved along the road into the opening between the hills, and on towards the homestead, driving out those of the insurgents who had taken shelter behind the stone walls, these retired along the road towards the

higher range of hills, and were soon joined by those who had been driven from their position by the detachment of Rifle Brigade, while those on the left also retired, crossed the river, and ascended about half-way up the higher range of hills where they made a short stand, but finding that they were within range of the six-pounders, and that their comrades were in full retreat, they gave it up as a bad job, made for the road in the hills, and accompanied their retreating friends. At one time, when this large number of horsemen were retiring huddled together in the road up the gorge in the hills, great havoc might have been made among them by the six-pounders, but Sir Harry, whose attention was drawn to it, declined to take advantage of the opportunity.

The whole affair lasted about three hours, and the first hour was a very hot one. Sir Harry, who was a Waterloo man, said it was as hot as any portion of the great battle of that name. The number of killed and wounded on our side amounted to fifty, and when we consider that the whole force present was but 600, and that a number of them were detailed to guard the waggons, &c., probably not more than about 400 were under fire, no one will deny that it must have been rather hot work. How many of the insurgents were killed or wounded is not known, but it is believed very few. They fought at great advantage, sheltered by rocks, stones, walls, &c. The general orders issued early next day, however, gave the number at 300—twelve, they said, had been seen lying dead on one spot, killed by the bursting of a single shell, &c., &c., but this was a *little* exaggeration, the usual thing on such occasions. It is pretty generally believed that the loss was but small not ten in all both killed or afterwards died of their wounds.

The insurgents having retreated up the gorge in the hills and disappeared, it was needful to ascertain whether they intended to dispute the advance of the troops in the same direction, and while it was still light a reconnoitering party was sent forward to ascertain, and sent back to say that the road was clear, all had disappeared. So arrangements having been made for a temporary hospital at the homestead and for leaving the wounded there in care of needful medical officers, and a detachment of troops, the

main body moved on again and continued its march until near midnight, halted a couple of hours, and then moved on again. Before daylight scouts were sent out in directions where it was supposed the insurgents might congregate again and offer further opposition but none were found ; and the information received during the following day left no doubt that they had dispersed and gone to their homes.



CHAPTER XLIII.

BATTLE OF BOOMPLAATS.

EXTRACT from "The Zuid Afrikaan" of Sept. 11th, 1848.

THE Boers beyond the Orange River.—By an extra post which arrived on Saturday last, information was received that contrary to expectation the disaffected farmers had given battle to the troops. The particulars of this truly deplorable event were a few hours after the arrival of the post communicated to the public in the shape of a *Gazette Extraordinary*, of which the following is a transcript.

Private accounts received by the same opportunity only state a few particulars. The Boers, it is said, fought bravely and displayed great tact. Sir Harry was always seen in the thickest of the fight, was grazed in the leg and his horse hit on the nose, so that he had a narrow escape.

The official account is as follows :—

Government Notice.

Colonial Office, Cape Town.
9th September, 1848.

His Excellency the Governor has directed the publication of the following account of an action which took place on the 29th ultimo, at Boomplaats, between the troops under his command and the rebel Boers beyond the Orange River, and which ended in the total rout of the rebels.

The notice published on the 30th ult. gave information of the passage of the Orange River by nearly all the troops on the 23rd of that month, whereupon Pretorius, the rebel chief, together with those under his command, in number exceeding 1,000 men, had fallen back towards Winburg, with a degree of precipitation which rendered the prospect of an action improbable. All the troops had arrived on the 25th, when His Excellency crossed the river, and by in-

credible exertions the passage was completed by them on the 26th ult. His Excellency then moved the troops with the greatest rapidity in the direction of Bloemfontien in pursuit of the rebels, whom on the 29th ult., he found posted in a very strong position at Boomplaats on the Krom Ellenboog River, where is a succession of ridges of low hills, backed by a higher range, through a pass in which the road runs.

On a reconnoitering party, accompanied by His Excellency, approaching the first ridge, the rebels suddenly sprung up, and opened a heavy fire upon them. The left of their position was, however, quickly carried by the Rifle Brigade, 45th and 91st Regiments, the Artillery 6-pounders opening at the same time a very effective fire. The rebels' right having been considerably thrown forward, was gallantly attacked by the Rifles, under the orders of Lieut.-Col. Butler, and driven back towards the pass in the direction of which the rebels were at every point hurrying, pursued from ridge to ridge of the low hills by H.M.'s troops, and suffering great loss as they retired from the guns, which opened upon them wherever they could be brought to bear. It was afterwards found that twelve men had been killed by one well directed round shot. On reaching the summit of the pass, the enemy made a hold, though fruitless effort to maintain their position, but, by a combined attack of the C.M.R., with a body of the Griqua auxiliaries they were at length driven from this their last position, on abandoning which they fled in the utmost disorder in all directions over the plain beyond, leaving behind them many horses, arms, and various articles of dress, &c. His Excellency continued the pursuit for several miles, and until dark, but it being evident that the rebels were completely broken, halted for the night at "Calver Fontein." In the hope of overtaking and capturing the train of wagons, he started the next morning, the 30th ult., at 2 o'clock for Bethany, which he reached early in the day, and then ascertained that the enemy's camp no longer existed, they having fled in parties of two or three with their wagons in all directions. On the march evidence was everywhere afforded of the precipitate retreat of the rebels, numbers of horses, &c., having been left in the road. Forty-nine of the enemy were counted dead

upon the field ; their wounded may be considered upwards of 150. Owing to the nature of the ground, which afforded great advantage to the rebels, the loss on the part of H.M. troops is unfortunately rather heavy, as will be seen by the following return.

By His Excellency's Command,

(Signed) JOHN MONTAGU,
Secretary to Government.

CONFISCATION OF LAND.—A REMINISCENCE OF
BOOMPLAATS.

January 17, 1881.

To the Editor of the Cape Times :

SIR,—It is as well to be accurate about historical matters when we can. A correspondent, signing himself "C," in your issue of Friday, the 14th, draws attention to the Roman-Dutch law as bearing upon confiscation of land for rebellion, and mentions a case in point tried at Natal before Mr. Recorder Cloete, and you have made some remarks thereon in the leading article. Both you and your correspondent speak of the case as having occurred when Natal was formally re-annexed to this colony. I don't know when Natal was re-annexed to this colony. My impressions of the history of Natal are, that the port and a certain extent of land around it belonged to this colony when England took possession of it in 1806, and that it never ceased to be a part of this colony until separated from it by Her Majesty and formed into a distinct colony. At an early date a small party of Englishmen, under Lieut. Farewell, R.N., formed a settlement at the port, and after a while obtained a cession from the Zulu Chief Tshaka, of a much larger extent of land than was considered to belong to the Crown of England. That cession, if worth anything, must, I presume, be held—as far as the sovereignty over it is concerned—to have been a cession to the British Government, the persons to whom it was made being British subjects. Later on, a number

of emigrants from this colony (commonly designated "Boers"), under the leadership of Pieter Retief and Gert Maritz, found their way into Natal, and obtained from Dingaan (Tshaka's successor) a cession of a considerable extent of territory, including that previously ceded to Farewell, and that around the port which belonged to the British Government. These emigrants being British subjects, that cession also, if I am right as to the law, was a cession to the Crown of England, in so far as the sovereignty over it was concerned. But the Boer emigrants proclaimed themselves to be an independent people, and proceeded to act as if they were, upon which Governor Sir George Napier sent a small military force—much too small for the work to be done—to prevent them from so acting. This small force was attacked by the emigrants during a night march, and a number of them killed, and others wounded. The soldiers formed an entrenched camp, and held their position in it until assistance could be sent from here. The relief was sent by sea, under command of Colonel (now General) Sir Josias Cloete, whose brother, Mr. Advocate Cloete, afterwards Recorder of Natal, and subsequently a judge of the Supreme Court of this colony, accompanied him as a Special Commissioner. Shortly afterwards Martin West was sent there as Lieut.-Governor, and a system of government was established, but I am not aware that any case arose out of these proceedings so far as to test the Roman-Dutch law in regard to the confiscation of land for rebellion. Later on, however, a case did arise which was so tested. This was during the administration of the Government of this colony, and of Natal as a portion of it, by Sir Harry Smith, and after the battle of Boomplaats in 1848. Andries Pretorius, the chief organizer of the rebellion of that period, and Commandant-General of the Boers who joined in the rebellion, possessed land in Natal, which land was proclaimed by Sir H. Smith as forfeited, or confiscated, because of his rebellion. Pretorius, or some one on his behalf, got the case tried in the Recorder's Court, where it was decided that under the Roman-Dutch Law land could not be so confiscated. This decision was, I fancy, acquiesced in by the Governor and his Executive Council, of which the late Attorney-General

Porter was a member, and I make no doubt that the then judges of the Supreme Court, Sir John Wylde, Mr. Menzies, and Mr. Musgrave, concurred. The present time is not favourable for letter writing on such subjects, but having written the above, I shall perhaps do no harm by noticing the following paragraph contained in the *Eastern Star* of the 11th instant, taken over from the *Du Toit's Pan Herald*:—"At the battle of Boomplaats, a Dutchman was being attacked by an English officer, and threw down his gun and begged for mercy. Of course quarter was granted to him, and the officer rode past, when the treacherous and ungrateful scoundrel seized the gun and shot the officer through the back, and then jumping on his horse made his escape. This cowardly murder has been openly justified by some of the Boers." If this statement were true, it would, in my opinion, have been better not to have given publicity to it now, but being, as I believe, not true, I feel myself called upon to say so. I was present at the battle, and had the best possible opportunity for hearing what took place; and certainly no such case of treachery was mentioned in my hearing, and, in my opinion, it could not have occurred, for had any Boer thrown down his gun and begged for mercy, he would at once have been taken prisoner. The only noteworthy occurrence between one of the rebel Boers and a British officer on the battle-field that came to my knowledge was a very different one. When the Boers opened fire with some two or three hundred rifles from their concealed position on and behind the stone-covered hill, upon the advance guard of fifty Cape Mounted Rifles, and the Governor and his staff, this small number of men swerved round to the left and back to the head of the column, leaving something like half their number killed and wounded on the ground. One of the wounded was the officer commanding the advance guard. During the brief interval between this and the advance of the column upon the Boer position, some of the Boers rode in among the killed and wounded, and one of the young fellows raised his gun to shoot the wounded officer, but desisted from so doing upon the officer saying in Dutch that he had a wife and children at home. This was the officer's own account of it, and afterwards, when sitting at Winburg as president

of the War Tribute Commission, a young fellow was pointed out to me as one who had spared the life of an officer on the field, and I then heard from himself the same account as the officer had given of the affair. I do not think that any of the wounded were killed by the Boers during the short interval of time above mentioned, nor can I think that they would have killed the wounded if they had had more time at their disposal, though the young fellow did not deny that he might have done it in the one instance if the officer had not appealed to him as he did.

R. SOUTHEY.



CHAPTER XLIV.

ENGAGEMENT AT ZWART KOPPIES.

WITH the following account of the battle of Zwart Koppies, which place is close to Bloemfontein, in the Orange Free State, we conclude the accounts of the battles between the British and Boers. I have not as yet seen any writer of South African works touch upon this engagement, and the following short notice I glean from a diary kept by Sergt. Williams, late of the 15th Hussars, 7th Dragoon Guards, and also of the Cape Mounted Riflemen, who was present in this action, as well as in most of the engagements during the 1850-1-2-3 Kafir wars in and about British Kaffraria. He bears the good conduct and Kafir Wars medals. This sergeant is now in Adelaide, South Australia, seeking the means of an honest livelihood. The sergeant, who was then quite a stripling, says, after an allusion to some family matters :—"I accompanied a friend of my brother's to Maidstone, where we attended some theatrical benefit, during which I made the acquaintance of Cornet Sleigh, of the 15th Hussars, the son of an old brother officer of my father's who had been together for many years in the same regiment. After the performance was over we retired to have refreshment together, and then took leave of each other, promising to meet again the following day. Soon after rising the next morning I ventured for a walk through the town, when I soon found myself in proximity with the cavalry depôt, and the dashing dragoons who paraded through the square, mounted and dismounted. I had not long been looking on when I was addressed by a smart sergeant of the 15th Hussars. who soon enticed me to retire with him to a small parlour, where, after partaking of sundry refreshments and being well washed over with "soft soap," he gave me to understand that I belonged to his noble and gallant corps, the 15th Hussars, and he took good care to keep me in liquor till I was properly attested and sworn in, lest a friend should get hold of me, pay the "smart," and release me. In those days recruits were

marched to the hospital and put into the itch ward ; their own clothes were taken from them, and hospital garments were served out instead. After the lapse of forty-eight hours they were put into other wards, and kept there until their military uniform was ready, when they would be marched to the tailor's shop, and from thence to their respective corps. Little did I know, or even guess, of the new career I had bound myself to for twenty-eight years to serve Her Majesty ! With many a heaving sigh and sore heart did I often retire to my barrack room and bed, pondering over my fate. However, as time rolled on I got used to my new pursuits, and bore up with them. After spending six months at the cavalry depôt at Maidstone, volunteers were called for to make up the 7th Dragoon Guards to their full strength, that corps having been ordered to the Cape of Good Hope for service in that country, being the first heavy cavalry regiment that had been ordered abroad for foreign service for many years, and the first European cavalry that had ever been seen in the Cape. Being desirous of a change, and wishing to travel and see a part of the world I had read so much about, I volunteered my services from the depôt of the 15th Hussars (which regiment was in India at the time), together with others from the several regiments stationed at Maidstone. We left *en route* for Gosport Barracks, to join the 7th Dragoon Guards, on or about the 2nd of April, 1843, which corps embarked on board H.M. ship *Rodney*, at Spithead on the 6th of April, 1843, and sailed on the 10th, bound for the Cape of Good Hope, with 1,617 souls on board, comprising 7th Dragoon Guards, detachment of Artillery, Sappers and Miners, women and children, ship's crew, and marines. On our way we put into Madeira and Rio de Janiero harbours. On our arrival at the Cape one division of the 7th were disembarked and sent to Cape Town to take up the horses purchased by Capt. Le Merchant, who was sent on before the regiment for that purpose. They proceeded overland to the frontiers, a distance of 500 miles, whilst the remainder of the troops, who were transhipped to the *Isis*, frigate and a transport ship, proceeded by water to Algoa Bay, from whence they marched to Graham's Town, on the frontiers, being played in by the band of the Cape Mounted Riflemen. The party

sent to bring the horses overland arrived almost as soon as we did, and a fresh lot were brought down the country by Capt. Le Merchant. The whole of them were very young and wild, and having the habit of "bucking," they surprised many of our best riders. After a short stay in Graham's Town, head quarters proceeded to Fort Beaufort, leaving one troop behind. After getting our appointments and accoutrements cleaned up, we assumed our regular duties of drill and training the young horses. It may be as well to remark that our arms formerly belonged to the 60th Rifles, an infantry corps, so that we had to learn the infantry drill—fixing bayonets, &c., &c. We found these arms very awkward to load when mounted; when dismounted, we had to place the rifle between our two knees to insert the ball, which most of us found very tedious after firing some fifty or sixty rounds of ammunition during the Kafir warfare, the barrel becoming so heated that the ball would often melt and become so soft that it could not be rammed down. This occurred to me after firing sixty-three rounds when in the rear guard of the regiment, coming through the Fish River Bush about the month of July, 1846. The regiment being too conspicuous owing to the brightness of their clothing, accoutrements, &c., &c., were dismounted, the rear guard giving up their horses to the main body to lead with their own. Having dwelt sufficiently long on the arms, I must now say that before we could get the horses properly trained the regiment was ordered up the country, a distance of 300 miles, against the Dutch Boers, to protect the Griqua tribe, who were under British protection. The 2nd division of the 91st Regiment and the Griquas were engaged with them when we made our appearance. The Boers had much the advantage through their being all mounted, and having guns that reached further than those in possession of our troops. They much annoyed and harassed the infantry by dismounting, laying their "Snelders" (long guns with hair triggers) across the saddles on their horses, firing, reloading and remounting, to gallop out of range of our Brown Besses; and our troops kept patiently following them up until they took to the entrenchments of their camps, and posting themselves in the rocks, prepared to receive the "bloodhounds," as they termed us, when they

beheld us charging over the plain. On our approach they poured in a volley from all their places of concealment, which had but little effect at the pace at which we were going. After returning them the compliment, a portion of the regiment was sent round both sides of their ambuscade, while the main body stormed the hill they occupied. All those of the Boers who could get to their horses in time made their escape, taking with them all their vans, laden with brandy and other provisions. Two field pieces were left in our hands, at which were captured two deserters from our army, who had been with the Boers some time. These men were afterwards sentenced to death, but the Governor changed the sentence to transportation for life, but they escaped out of gaol, and have never been heard of since. Many fell victims in this encounter, especially the infantry, who fell fast from the well-directed fire from the rocks. Many also fell among the Boers, and several prisoners were taken, together with several horse-vans laden with provisions, clothing, &c., &c. The following morning we followed them up to their chief encampment, when they hoisted the flag of truce and surrendered. Many of the tents and houses were found full of dead bodies, which they covered up on our approach. Many of those who had been wounded and died were found among the hills some time after. Thus ended the battle of Zwaart Koppies in 1844. This was my first appearance on a field of action, at the age of twenty."

The above, I hope, will be found interesting and amusing, especially the fact of the Dragoon Guards loading long infantry rifles on wild young bucking horses.

Cavalry are very useful against South African natives, especially against people like the Zulus who come out into the open, but it is hardly advisable to take the course so often adopted in sending cavalry to South Africa, namely that of sending out stalwart dragoons who, with all their heavy trappings, are much too heavy for the little Cape horses. English horses, imported with the men, would do well, especially if landed after the "horse sickness" months, viz., January and February.

END OF VOLUME I.

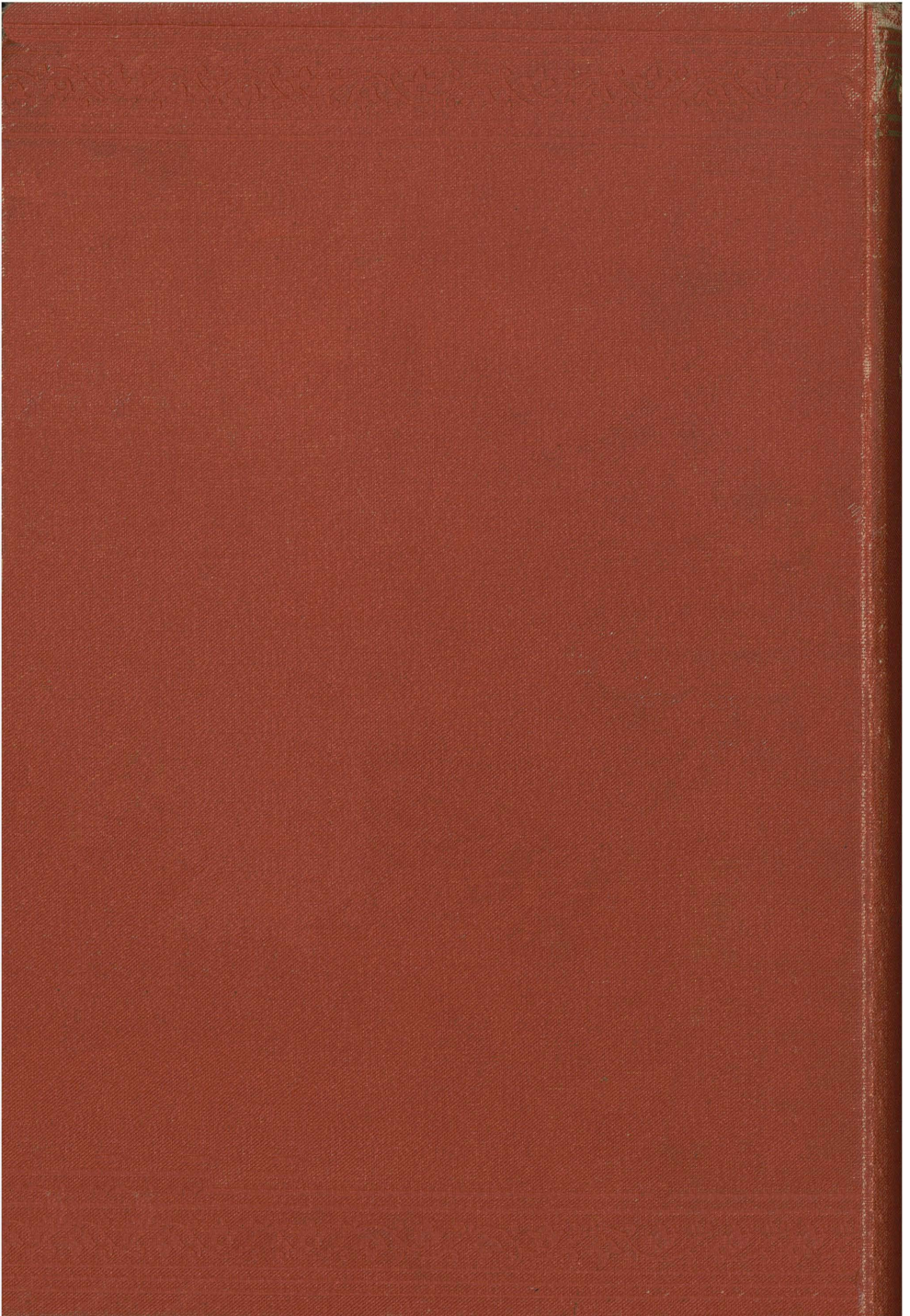



SOUTH AFRICA

Brit. Stat. Miles. 691-1

Heights in English Feet above the Sea.

In the above Map the districts coloured green show where the wars alluded to in this work have occurred; the exact position of each engagement is distinguished by a red circle.





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