



HEIDELBURG.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COACH TO BIGGARSBURG.

My next move was in the direction of Natal. The coach started at five in the morning, and we had to get up at four to catch it. It was a February morning, and quite dark as we crossed the market-square. There were two coaches starting, the other being for Kimberley. By lamplight our baggage was examined and excesses paid, mine being overweight, and the excess charge heavy. After much wrangling as to our places we were ultimately all seated, and after a flourish of the bugle the eight horses dashed away over the hills and

hollows of the streets. Our drivers guided the swaying vehicle, which bumped us about like india-rubber dolls ; then came smoother tracks, and we gradually shook down into our places, and began to make acquaintance with those with whom we should be closely associated for the next few days.

My neighbour (a London solicitor, with whom I made the voyage to the Cape, was a most pleasant and agreeable companion), three ladies, one little boy on the way to school at Durban, and three jolly young fellows comprised, with myself, the "coach load."

I found the coach several degrees more comfortable than the coaches I travelled in from Kimberley and to Bloemfontein ; but that is not saying much. It was a sort of brake, the passengers sitting along the sides and facing each other. It was very strongly built with massive wheels, and the springs were packed to lessen the force of the bumping. The luggage and mail-bags are loaded on shelves running on either side to preserve the balance. The driver sits on the front seat in the middle, the (very long) whip-holder on the right, who points out the path the driver shall take, and is also "boss of the show."

Presently the sun rose, the air becoming more balmy, and one's spirits improved, while conversation became general. The time wore on until seven o'clock, when the horses were outspanned, and breakfast was announced at the wayside inn. The repast was not inviting, the choice

of viands being curried mutton, and steak with bacon. The latter I chose ; but the steak was tough as leather, and the bacon rancid and hard. A cup of tea washed it down; but the flies were numerous, and we were all glad to start again. The waiter at this hostelry was a small coolie boy of about ten, very soiled as to his clothing and general appearance.

We reached the town of Heidelberg about nine o'clock; rather a nice place, with trees and gardens all about, and a very good clean-looking hotel, where we should have breakfasted with far greater comfort. After receiving the mails we again started on our way. At one of the outspanning stations we espied a nice orchard; going into the Dutch farmhouse, we procured some fresh milk and a pailful of ripe peaches, which were delicious, and beguiled the tedium of travelling, which was further lightened by occasional songs and yarns from one or other of the passengers.

About one o'clock we changed horses (now increased to ten, as the roads were getting more hilly), at a pretty farmhouse surrounded by a nice garden. Here we really enjoyed a good tiffin, consisting of a roast wild turkey (called phow), with vegetables, followed by a most capital pudding—a sort of light boiled currant pudding with sauce; this repast, washed down by a bottle of German lager beer, was a very satisfactory one. From this until nine o'clock we had nothing, except a cup of coffee, until we arrived at Standerton, having travelled

some ninety-five miles. We got to this hostelry, called the "Blue Peter," thoroughly tired out and almost famished. After some delay our host showed us to our rooms for a wash and brush-up, which having done we adjourned to look for our dinner. A suggestion that we had better lock up our rooms, as the coach passengers coming in presently might be inclined to appropriate them, led to some discussion, seeing that our apartment was for three sleepers, and one had already gone to roost; we determined not to lose our chance, and speedily locked up the room and its occupant. Although tired, our party was very cheerful and jolly. On the soup appearing and being served, every one called out, expressing great disappointment, as it proved to be a weak, watery, and greasy arrangement, with beans, called "bean soup." I never have tasted this before, and don't wish to again. Now for the *pièce de résistance*—roast mutton—also tough, hard, stringy, and leathery; we were still unsuccessful in appeasing our appetites, the cheese and butter being equally bad. Calling for a "B. and S.," myself and friend simultaneously drank, and looking round on the company with such wry faces, as the stuff tasted more like diluted paraffin and water, the whole party burst into a loud and hearty laugh. Alas! the "Blue Peter" of Standerton was a mistake, as we had been previously told by friends travelling, and have heard many complaints since. We "roasted" the landlord and manager consumedly, one asking was there a

landrost (magistrate) in the town. "Yes," said he. "Then I'm sure the butcher who was responsible for killing that very aged sheep ought to be taken before him to-morrow morning and have six months." "Have you a laundress?" the landlord was asked. "Oh yes." "Then why don't you have the linen washed?"—the napery on beds and table being of the most soiled appearance. We then appeased our feelings by a calm smoke and turned in, to sleep soundly until awakened by the bugle about four o'clock to start once more.

There had been considerable rain in the night, and the driver reported Vaal River to be impassable for some time, at which news we all imprecated, not loudly, but deeply, insisting on his going on. After some persuasion he agreed to send a man on horseback to see whether a passage could be found, and eagerly we watched his return. Yes, it could be forded. So off with our ten horses we galloped. It was a ticklish job getting across, but safely on the other side we laughed at our difficulties. Through very heavy roads till we drew up at Vietpoort for breakfast, which was very passable, and much enjoyed after our privations of the previous night.

We were now getting towards the borders of the Transvaal, and consequently the country changed from the undulating veldt to more hilly and mountainous regions. We stopped about noon to exchange passengers to and from Barberton, and then downhill to Coldstream, after which we were in the Colony of Natal. High on

the right hand stood Majuba Hill, noted for the disastrous rout of British troops by the Boers in the war of 1881. Here was pointed out the slope which the Boers ascended, and on the other side the steep down which our regiments retreated, losing heavily under the unerring rifle-shooting of the Dutchmen. The question on all hands was, How did it occur ?

While waiting for a change of horses let me give here an account of the disasters at Laing's Nek and on Majuba Hill.

On January 24th, 1881, Sir George Colley, having made a laager at Newcastle, and provisioned it for thirteen days, determined to march into the Transvaal. He had collected 1,500 men, a force which he obviously deemed sufficient, otherwise he would have waited for reinforcements, then expected from England daily. To put them in the field, however, it would take a month, and being unwilling to remain inactive, Sir George Colley ordered his column of 1,500 men to advance.

The actual number of Boers in the field is not known, but the best opinion seems to put their whole available fighting force at from 6,000 to 8,000 men, of whom there were parties at Potchefstroom, Pretoria, Wakkerstrom, Lydenberg, and other places. They were all mounted, but had no artillery, with the exception of one gun which was at Potchefstroom, and were armed with rifles only, having neither swords nor bayonets.

On the following day the British column arrived at

the Ingogo River without opposition, and were then within four miles of the Boer patrols. After crossing the river the advance was stopped by rains, and the column encamped four miles from Laing's Nek, where the enemy were supposed to be from 2,000 to 3,000 strong, until the 28th. On the morning of that day Sir George Colley moved from camp to attack the Boers. The attack, however, was repulsed with heavy loss, including Colonel Deane, of the 58th, and six other officers, and some eighty men killed and a hundred wounded. Dr. Matthews, who visited the spot, says: "At Laing's Nek there were two sky-lines. There was a ridge running out and sloping down from the main sky-line, and between this apparent sky-line and the main sky-line was a ravine full of Boers, who were waiting for our soldiers to appear on the ridge of the lower sky-line. When the 58th Regiment charged up and reached this ridge, they were checked by the Boers in the ravine, and driven back. About three hundred yards beyond the point gained by the 58th was the main sky-line, and behind this was (not visible even from Majuba Mountain) the main camp of the Boers. The shelling, therefore, which was the real, and ought to have been the easily victorious, arm of the English forces, was blindly delivered, and either went over the heads of the Boers in the ravine, or was wrongly directed altogether to the left. When the Boers showed themselves, the shells fell in amongst them; but a retreat had been sounded."

It was at Laing's Nek that Colley suffered his first defeat. The second was on the plateau of Schuins Hooghte. On February 7th, making a reconnaissance that morning with 273 men of the 60th Rifles and 38 men of the mounted squadron from Mount Prospect, Colley was virtually lured to his destruction. The Boers retired before his advance, until having decoyed our troops to Schuins Hooghte, a high and perfectly unsheltered plateau, they opened a galling fire from the other side of the valley which intervened—a perfectly safe position for them. This was at 10.15 a.m., and until sundown our soldiers were nothing more or less than English targets for Dutch bullets. The field-guns which Colley brought with him were useless ; he had nothing to fire at but rocks, the Boers finding most excellent cover. The horses were shot down at the guns, the mules at the ambulance waggons—nothing living was safe for a moment from the unerring aim of the Boers. The stone is pointed out near the centre of the plateau where Colley, Essex, and Wilkinson took cover most of the day. Wilkinson, a brave young fellow, was drowned the same night in the Ingogo, when pluckily returning with comforts for the wounded. The river had become a sweeping torrent, owing to the storm of rain which had been raging for some time previous. The poor fellows left on the plateau in the rain were totally deserted except by one or two comrades, Colley having made good his retreat in the night with his

troops and guns to Mount Prospect. And thus ended his second defeat.

On February 26th Sir George Colley ordered the advance to Majuba Hill. It was at night, and the English soldiers toiled up laden with ammunition and accoutrements from 9.30 p.m. to near daybreak. The top is described as like a large soup-plate, sinking down all round from the sides and flat at the bottom, so that no troops resting in the centre could see an enemy advancing up the sides of the mountain. "The first intimation," said one who was present, "of the attack of the Dutch was from the consternation which seized every one, when the Boers, who had gained the summit from the Transvaal side, poured in their first deadly general volley." There appears, however, to have been desultory firing since daybreak. The first volley at once created such a panic that a regular stampede commenced, which the officers tried in vain to stop. Many of the men jumped down or fell headlong on perpendicular rocks below, some as much as forty feet in height. Among the killed was Sir George Colley. The Boers were astonished at their success. Our losses were 6 officers killed, 9 wounded, and 6 prisoners; non-commissioned officers and men—86 killed, 125 wounded, and 53 prisoners.

The official reasons given for the loss are: (1) The slopes below the brow of the plateau were too steep to be reached by our fire, and cover existed up to the brow.

(2) The rocky ridge we occupied in second line, though the best we had time to hold, did not cover more than



COLONEL G. P. COLLEY.

(From a photograph by Messrs. Maull & Co., London.)

fifty yards to its front, as the plateau rolled continuously to the brow. (3) The men were too exhausted to entrench, and hardly fit to fight. (4) When the Boers

gained the last ridge ours had to descend almost impassable slopes, and many were shot in doing so.

In the cemetery at Mount Prospect are the tombstones of Sir George Colley and Colonel Deane. In the background is Majuba Hill. This is the simple chronicle:—

“SIR GEORGE COLLEY, K.C.M.G.,
H.M. COMMISSNR. FOR SOUTH AFRICA,
GOVERNOR OF NATAL,
AND MAJOR-GENERAL COMMANDING THE FORCES,
BORN 1ST NOVEMBER, 1835,
DIED 27TH FEBRUARY, 1881, IN HIS 46TH YEAR.

‘O for thy voice to sooth and bless—
What hope of answer or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.’”

The other—

“COLONEL BONAR MILLETT DEANE,
LATE 19TH REGT.,
WHO FELL IN ACTION AT LAING’S NEK,
AT THE HEAD OF A STORMING PARTY,
TEN YARDS IN FRONT OF THE FOREMOST MAN.”

On again starting we drove along the roughest bit of road I have ever experienced; we literally had to hold on tight to prevent our being shaken to pieces. How the post-waggon stands the awful bumps is a marvel to me. But they are specially built for the purpose, and come through all right—of course, occasionally with an upset. Now you can understand how furniture and glass get so smashed in transit up-country; being conveyed in long springless waggon, which sometimes go crash over a hole in the road two feet or two feet six inches deep. We



A POST WAGON. MODE OF TRAVELLING FROM THE TRANSVAAL TO NATAL.

met hundreds of ox-waggons going towards Johannesburg, laden with machinery and cases of furniture, wine, spirits, also a vast quantity of timber. About three o'clock we lunched at a pretty little hotel, just under Prospect Mountain, and within sight of Majuba, jogging on again till we reached the Ingogo River. Here we procured some fruit, consisting of pineapples, peaches, and grapes, most welcome and refreshing. Forging the river we went up a steep hill, the scene of another fight. Although particularly interesting, this day's ride was depressing, witnessing, as we did, three scenes of disaster to our brave troops, who invariably render such a different account of themselves. Nothing more of note this day until we arrived at Newcastle about seven o'clock, a very prettily situated town in the hollow, and with nice gardens and trees about.

Dinner was served, and proved exceedingly good, the waiters being small coolie boys, from seven to twelve years of age, dressed in clean white jackets; notwithstanding their youth, they waited most dexterously. After a rest on the verandah and a cigar, I turned into bed thankfully.

On this the third day of our trip we were up by five, and started by six o'clock. Previous to starting, our driver stated he could not take all the luggage, having additional passengers, but promised that it should come on by post-cart carrying mails, and be at Biggarsburg before the train started. Very unwillingly I parted

company with my three packages; but as others were in the same predicament I felt somewhat comforted. Just outside of Newcastle was pointed out to me a small farmhouse where Mr. Rider Haggard resided some years. We breakfasted at a wayside inn called "Ben Lomond." Very poor viands; the everlasting scraggy chop and curried mutton, washed down by third-rate coffee or tea; Swiss milk instead of the real thing. Although with most abundant pasturage without cost, very rarely indeed do people here keep cows, being too lazy and indolent to look after them. At one of the outspanning stations I saw a very clean-looking and bright baby in the arms of a Kaffir girl. Being naturally fond of children I made signs to the child, and ultimately took it for a minute or two, at which it was much delighted; but when I had to give it up it objected strongly, and made quite a noise when replaced in the arms of its dusky little nurse.

By twelve o'clock we came in sight of Biggarsburg, the end of our coach ride; and before we did so a number of ox-waggons proclaimed the fact that we were approaching some busy centre. It was a welcome sight, and with further signs of civilization in the shape of a railway to Natal. This same railway is in progress all the way to Coldstream, on the border of the Transvaal; no farther at present, as Paul Kruger (the President) is not in favour of railways, and the only concession is one to come from Delagoa Bay.

Arrived at Biggarsburg, I anxiously awaited the

arrival of the post-cart, which on unloading I found had brought two of my packages ; the other, a small box containing my papers, writing case, and so forth, was missing, the absence of which would cause me much trouble and inconvenience, and was most annoying. I went to the two drivers, who had no answer except that it should be sent by next conveyance. I then sought the agent, who was profuse in his apologies, but assured me it would be all right. This was but cold comfort, as I know the happy-go-lucky ways of South Africa. I wired back to Newcastle, which seemed all I could do. This incident rather upset me; my lunch, consequently, was not a success, especially as we had to hurry to catch the train starting at two o'clock.

I secured a compartment with four other fellow-passengers from the coach, and in a few minutes after we left the station, glad enough to have entered upon the last stage of the journey. The country through which the train passed was at first mountainous, and the ridges seemed richly clothed with vegetation. Then on a lower level the evidence of cultivation presents itself. Flowing water and luxuriant foliage were an agreeable change from the everlasting veldt of the Transvaal, and as the train wound round the slopes new beauties of landscape came in sight. We crossed the Tugela River several times, catching a view of some lovely spots of country. The recent rains had filled the river, and it was flowing strongly and swiftly along;

and for hours, indeed until dark, we watched the changing scene.

Then when we could see no longer we had the carriage arranged as sleeping apartments—one each side, with mattress, pillow, sheets, and blankets. Supper followed between seven and eight. Then a weed and a chat, and we turned in for the night, the train continuing its journey eastward. We all slept soundly and well on board the train till sunrise, and as we looked out the carriage window it seemed as though we had passed into another region. The wild mountain ranges were far behind, and we had passed into a habitable country. The signs of tillage were everywhere; fruit trees and vegetables and hundreds of wild plants caught the eye as the train moved swiftly on. Here and there nestled neatly balconied houses; gardens and pretty plantations came in sight; and in and out a perfect maze of tropical plants the train wound, till at last we beheld again the sea.

Before reaching the station the windings and turnings of the train had been so perplexing that the geography of the place puzzled me. I knew that I had arrived at the Royal Hotel, Durban; but to have picked out the course on the map would have been a feat I should not have attempted.



DURBAN, THE SEAPORT OF NATAL.

CHAPTER XIX.

DURBAN, NATAL.

DURBAN, as everybody knows, is not the capital of Natal, the seat of government being Maritzburg; but, arriving here first, I may as well say something about it before going farther. I found myself in very comfortable quarters at the Royal. My bedroom is pleasantly placed in a cool courtyard at the back, and one is tempted to lounge in

easy willow chairs rather than encounter the heat outside. One is reminded of an Indian hotel by the appearance of the servants. They are Hindoos, dressed in white shirting, with yellow silk waistband, and large pugaree wound round their heads. The chief butler, who received us on entering, salaamed with great gravity, and handed us over to his subordinates.

That there should be so many Hindoos in Natal surprised me; but it appears that many of them have been introduced by the Government, as they are willing to enter into contracts to serve continuously, which the native black, Zulu, or common Kaffir, will not. Both the Zulus and Kaffirs object to engagements for any length of time, and in consequence the waiters at the hotels and clubs and those in domestic service are mostly Hindoos.

One peculiarity of the Colony, I may mention at the outset, is that every town takes its name from some person associated in some way with the development of the Colony. Durban, for instance, takes its name from Sir Benjamin D'Urban, a former governor; and Maritzburg, or rather Pietermaritzburg, owes its compound name to two Boer leaders—namely, Pieter Retief, and Gerrit Maritz. Surrounding the town of Durban are hills called the Berea, from which the Natalians get a fine view of their really charming town. In the early morning or at sun-down the scene leaves an impression, delightful and abiding, of calm and beauty. The Berea

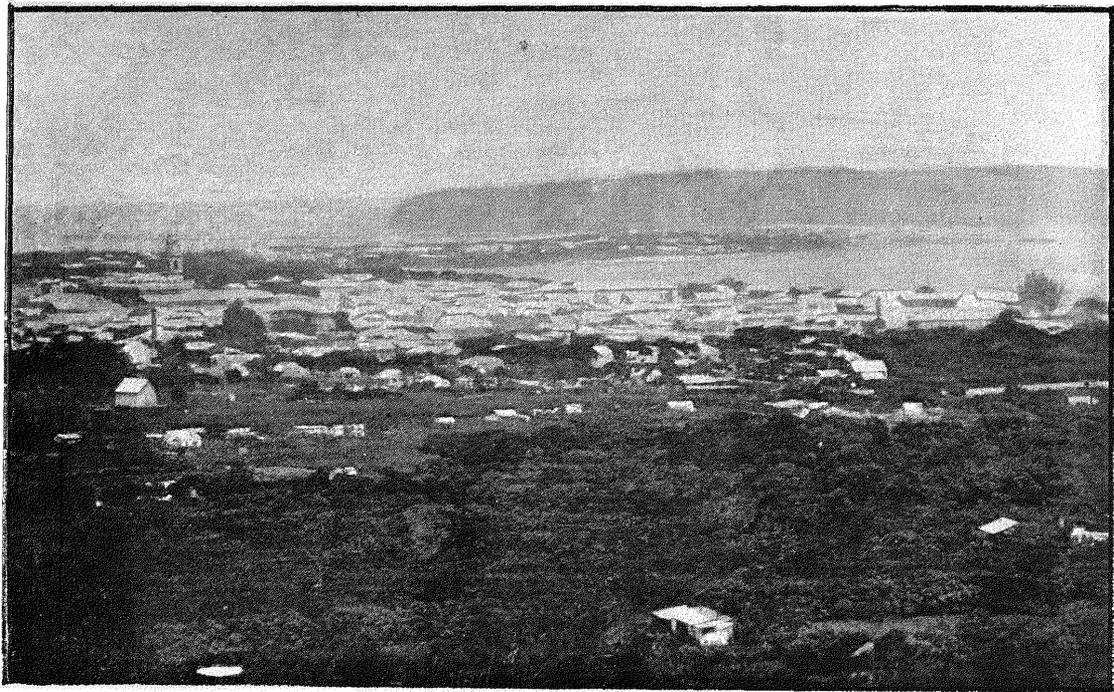
is the residential part of Durban ; and on the heights are well-built verandahed villas and cottages, with pretty gardens and ample shade. There the Natalian enjoys his morning or evening pipe. As he sits smoking and reading, maybe, "he is in the midst of a scene of holy and serene peace, which is interrupted only by the occasional chatter of monkeys, as they leap from tree to tree in little armies, enjoying their matutinal or nocturnal gambols, as the case may be." The breeze blows cool from the sea, and even in the hotter months nothing like oppressiveness is felt. Those who live there in the winter months say the weather is lovely.

I had a delightful walk on Sunday morning on the headland called the "Bluff." This, a long wooded range, juts into the sea, and trends away into the distance. On the extremity stands the lighthouse. The bay is really beautiful. Near the head-waters is a group of tiny islands, where the coolies catch fish, and where also picnic parties spend time agreeably. Flowing into the bay from the west and north-west are the rivers Umbelo, Umhlatazan, and Manzie-manyam. Farther north are the Congella flats and mangrove thickets, in which the sea-fowl find shelter ; and on the southern edge of the bay is the town, presenting in a picturesque plain many attractive features.

A comparison between what Durban was thirty years ago and what it was the other day was drawn by the *Natal Mercantile Advertiser* on the occasion of the

laying of the foundation stone of the new town-hall. Thirty years ago there was no drainage, and waggons were outspanned and cattle kraaled in the thoroughfares. The place was swampy, and the water from the wells undrinkable. "Horses," says the writer, "were kept, but there were no traps, and merchants, like their ancestors, went to the city with saddle-bags and samples, and brought back gold fastened round their waists in leather belts, the journey each way usually occupying two days. It is difficult to believe that all this primitive and undeveloped life, these evidences of roughing it in the truest and most unkind sense, could in a concrete form have constituted Durban twenty-nine years ago.

"When we call to mind the grandly lengthened Smith Street and West Street, and the flourishing Pine Terrace and Commercial Road, with the numerous cross streets and roads, many of which are properly hardened, and in which paving is proceeding briskly, and the public gardens in place of the sandy market-square, and the fully planned public parks; when we think of the continuous rows of extensive warehouses, of stores, and of houses which line these streets, of the fact that the population of Durban of all sorts is now nearly fifteen thousand, of the seven churches and twelve chapels within the borough, of the splendid Theatre Royal, of the railway facilities, of the harbour works and improvements, and that the number of ships visiting this port



VIEW OF DURBAN, FROM THE BEBA.

during the past year was as nearly as possible four hundred, the value of the imports in the same period being £2,213,538, while the exports were worth £731,809; when we recollect—not an unimportant factor when considering the prosperity of the borough—that the average receipts on Saturdays alone of the collective canteens and hotels are £250, that the valuation of freehold property in the borough is £1,883,822 or close upon £2,000,000, and that the receipts of the corporation during the last municipal year were £53,697,—we shall probably form a tolerably correct conception of the increased and increasing importance of Durban.”

The town-hall—the foundation stone of which was at that time laid—has since been built, and it is a stately building, which with pardonable pride the good folks of Durban show you. I should perhaps say that Durban may be regarded as in three parts. The Point and Addington are one; then there is the business quarter; and the residential part on the Berean heights. The streets are laid out at right angles; and the principal thoroughfare, West Street, is broad and well built, paved, and lighted. On the shipping side the wharves are solid, broad, and laid with rails, and there are all the appliances required in an extensive trade.

The fruit is both good and abundant, the pine-apples in particular being plentiful and cheap, and one is tempted in the thirst-creating heat to indulge somewhat freely in this delicious fruit. The heat was very great.

What it was in the sun I don't know, but it was 90° in the shade. I was glad to rig myself out in a suit of white duck to go about in, and this I bought uncommonly cheap. Mosquitoes? Yes; but in getting into bed I took care that not even the most artful should get admittance within the mosquito net, and they didn't trouble me much during the day.

The hospitality of the Natalians seemed unbounded. I certainly got a good share of it. There was open house to me at half-a-dozen places. The club is an extremely well-appointed establishment; and need I say that the champagne cup, prepared and iced by one skilled in the making of cups, was very welcome? What with delightful drives and pleasant evenings, and much to see and do, the time passed very pleasantly.

What would at once strike you is the predominance of the black race over the white. Throughout the Colony this is very marked. The proportion is about fourteen to one. In Durban, however, there are more whites than blacks. I hardly know what is the proportion, but I should say that it is considerable. Nevertheless, there are many blacks, for whichever way you turn colour manifests itself. And it would amuse you to see some of the "boys"—natives of all ages—in domestic service; in particular those who take the little white children about. They take great care of and amuse them, and in this respect they are better than any English servants I have known. There is a catching cheerfulness one

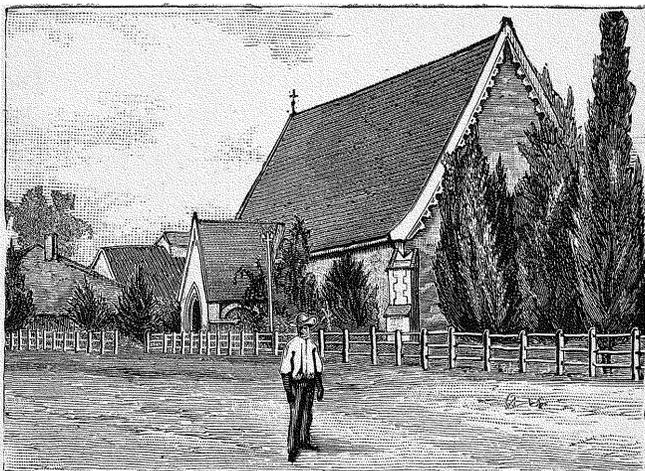
likes, even when kept pretty hard at work. In, for instance, moving about large things they always sing a song, and all keep time. When any big cases were moved twelve "boys" were at work; it was so very funny I stood and watched them, one leading off and the others joining in chorus. It is more a sort of chant than a song, and over and over again the same strain, the perspiration the while streaming off them in the hot sun.

As a health resort I should say Durban surpasses most African towns; but, not being a medical authority, I had better consult a professional man and embody his opinion in these pages. Dr. Bonnar, jun., who for some years has been in practice in Durban, writes in Dr. Fuller's book the following: "During the winter months, April to September, the climate of Durban is most enjoyable, though compared with the more inland and higher localities its percentage of atmospheric moisture is considerable. This averaged 74 per cent. during the year 1886, the thermometer registering for these months about 67° Fahr., the mean maximum being 78° Fahr., and the mean minimum 37° Fahr.

"Like all districts of Natal, Durban has its dry season during the winter, when we have six months of bright, clear, sunny weather, varied by occasional downpour of rain. . . . Looking more especially at the adaptability of Durban and the Natal coast belt generally for phthisical cases, they cannot hold a first place as compared with

such localities as Howick, Estcourt, or Ladysmith. The summer months are especially trying; but cases under my care have proceeded favourably, and some exceptionally so, during the winter season. Those who dread a low thermometric register may be advised to locate themselves near Durban between the months of April and September, and then they can with advantage proceed to a more elevated and drier district. Some patients, whose condition has hurried them from the mother country, have to my knowledge been able, after a few years' residence in Durban, to return to England, and with care stand its climate comparatively well."

I cannot help thinking that both in commercial and municipal enterprises Durban is likely to be in a few years' time the foremost town in South Africa. Its progress has been immense, and it is still striding on wisely, building and planting and adding to the town's improvements.



BISHOP COLENZO'S CATHEDRAL, PIETERMARITZBURG.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CAPITAL OF NATAL.

AFTER spending ten days very agreeably at Durban, for which I am largely indebted to my good friends there, I set out with one of them to pay a flying visit to Pietermaritzburg. This, the capital town of the Colony, may be reached by road, a distance of fifty-four miles, or by rail seventy-two. We preferred, I need hardly say, the railroad, which for some little distance runs along shore, and then turns high up-country. The ascent is to a height of 2,080 feet above sea-level, and the curves and gradients following each other seem innumerable.

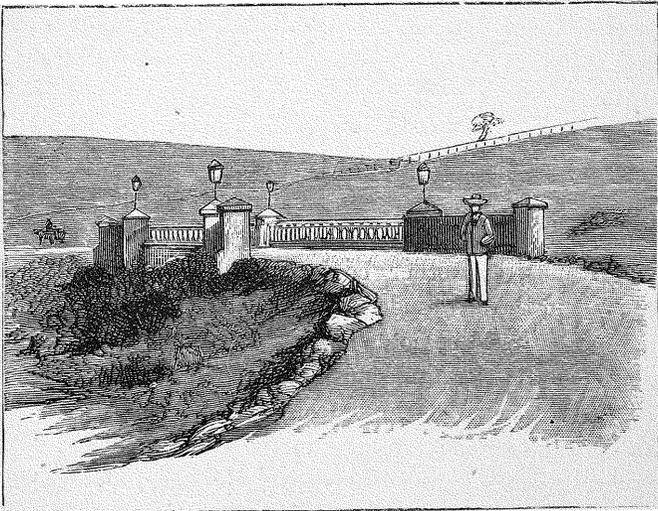
But there is so much delightful landscape seen from the carriage window, that what would otherwise be a tedious is really a very pleasant journey. The slopes, thick with grass, and the beautifully wooded and watered country between the ranges of hills westward, refresh the eye after resting long on the coast lands. The ground is very broken ; you see hill and dale, and towering mountain, and forests of trees, and over all varying hues of green.

From Botha's Hill station you see over the open country, and inhale a fine, genial air. Pietermaritzburg, usually called Maritzburg, lies in a basin in the distance, and ere long the red-tiled houses and the stately public buildings of the capital come within view, and in a few minutes you are at the station, wondering whether you are in a Dutch or an English town. Behind, the lands rise immediately to nearly 4,000 feet, and extending beyond are the Drakensberg Mountains, rising here and there to an altitude of 9,500 feet.

The streets of the town are generally laid out in right angles and parallel lines, and in many cases planted with shade trees. One soon gathers the impression that there is much care and comfort in the place. Everything looked clean and cheerful. "A pretty bridge takes us over a river skirted with trees, upon which we meet pedestrians in Bond Street attire, well-mounted equestrians, far more fashionably dressed than our friends at Durban, and equipages well appointed in every respect.

The residents choose this road whereon to take their constitutional exercise before dinner, and here they may be seen taking such exercise in its various forms."

There are the usual institutions one would look for at the seat of government. Among these are the Victoria Club,



VICTORIA BRIDGE, ENTRANCE TO PIETERMARITZBURG FROM SOUTH.

the reading-rooms and public libraries, a swimming bath, botanic and horticultural societies, and friendly societies.

The Parliament House is a fine building, and the internal arrangements are excellent. In the courtyard in front of the public buildings is an obelisk, erected as a memorial to the men who fell in the Langalibalele

struggle. There is a hospitable club; and in Church Street, the principal thoroughfare, the overhanging verandahs to the shops present to people shopping a welcome shade.

Bishop Colenso used to preach at the cathedral, and when he did I was told the church was crowded. Those who have heard him say that "his noble and commanding presence, an attraction in itself, added greatly to the fascination of his eloquence." Of course opinions differed as to his views; but it was difficult, says one who heard him, "seeing and hearing him, to realize the opposition with which he was met, or to comprehend the presumption, I might say the snarling, that characterized the majority of his revilers." The Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and other bodies have their churches and chapels in the city; indeed, in respect of places of worship, there appears to be no deficiency.

One meets here up-country sheep farmers, sportsmen, Englishmen *en route* to the hunting fields of the Transvaal, Zululand and Zambesi merchants, an officer or so, the members of the Legislative Chamber, and various types of the globe-trotter. In his book on South Africa, Mr. J. Stanley Little presents two views of society here, which differ in some respects so widely that I have extracted them. The first is this: "The inhabitants of Maritzburg are a kindly, hospitable race, and they spare no pains to find amusement for a visitor. To-day they will drive you out to the Umgeni Falls or the Table Mountain; to-morrow they will be your cicerone to the volunteer

shooting butts. They will organize private theatricals, balls, tennis matches ; in fact, if you behave yourself, they will do anything for you. The inference is obvious. There are a great many men of good fortune ; there is also a clique of Britishers, well-born and well-bred, and who, having sowed their wild oats too freely in England, are sent here to settle down and reform."

Here is Mr. Little's other picture : "The capital has many a tale of gay and reckless adventure to tell. It is a rendezvous of broken-down spendthrifts, and of damaged reputations generally. Copious materials for three-volume novels might be gleaned there. People are pointed out to you on all hands with sad, sad histories. The finger of scorn has hunted them down, and they have come here to hide their frailties from a world they can no longer look in the face. To the man who tempers justice with mercy, who judges not that he be not judged, who bewails the fatal weaknesses of human nature, the aching regrets and hot tears of remorse shed in plenty in Maritzburg will excite at least his pity. Others, with minds better balanced perhaps, will see in all this suffering the retributive hand of Providence, and they will in nowise allow it to mitigate the feelings of contempt and loathing with which they regard the sinners and their sins. The world only hears the half of the tales of these poor mortals who have sinned against God and man. I was very soon initiated into the details of one of these unfortunate romances. Upon the bridge before mentioned

stood a gallant. Leaning affectionately upon his arm was a lady, whose face had but to be seen once to be remembered ever. They were resting against the buttresses, looking into the stream below; and as the setting sun threw its sheen upon them, I thought I had rarely seen a more happy or appropriate couple. A fellow-passenger, who knew, or kindly professed to know, the whole history of the couple, whispered half-a-dozen sentences into my ear, which at once dispelled my illusion. The canker was in those roses, and had eaten deep down. Turning from the marred picture with reflections more or less appropriate to the occasion, I became aware that we were passing what at first I took to be a mellow churchyard; but no, it was a modern cemetery."

Were I asked to add a word to this, I should say that Maritzburg has no monopoly of "sad histories," and that, so far as I was able to judge, the residents were taking an active and healthy interest in every movement worth helping forward. It is just possible that Mr. Stanley Little may have had a touch of "liver," and, if so, was not likely to look at the bright side of things. No doubt many of the people here have a good deal of time on their hands, but then there are others who find no lack of employment. Wool washing or scouring and hydraulic pressing go on here. So does leather curing. The Pietermaritzburg tannery is, I am told, successful, colonial-grown bark (*Acacia mollissima*) being chiefly

used. There are turnery works, at which furniture of a kind is produced.

Perhaps it may be useful to say what the timber-yielding plants of Natal are. The best known are yellow-wood, a species of yew (*Podocarpus elongata*); sneeze-wood, of the horse chestnut tribe (*Pteroxylon utile*); stink-wood, a laurel (*Laurus bullata*), black iron-wood, an olive (*Olea latifolia*); white iron-wood, allied to the rues (*Vepris lanceolata*); and essen-wood, the South African ash (*Eckebergia capensis*). It has been reported by a forestry commission that there are over two million acres of timber forest and thorn jungle in Natal. It is lamentable, however, to add that, owing to ignorance, these forests are becoming rapidly thinned. Young trees are destroyed both by natives and colonists. The importance of preserving existing forests, and of promoting the planting of fresh timber of economical and possibly exportable value, has forced itself on public attention. At first returns from such an enterprise are so slow that it can only be followed up as an adjunct to other farming. The Government aid by distributing plants and seeds, but there is still much to be done to assist private enterprise.

With regard to education and the provision made by Government, there can be no reasonable grumbling. There are two high schools, one at Pietermaritzburg, and the other at Durban. These are designed to supply the highest education which may be called for at present.

To meet the more general demand of the community for elementary education, there are four model primary and five primary schools distributed through the chief towns. There are two each at Pietermaritzburg and Durban, and one each at Verulam, Greytown, Ladysmith, Richmond, and Newcastle. It is probable that by this time one has been erected at Estcourt, and another at Pinetown. In addition to these there are perhaps forty or more private institutions in receipt of Government grants, and subject to Government supervision.

One or two excursions in the neighbourhood and a little distance beyond made my visit very enjoyable; that to the falls of Umgeni was extremely interesting. By taking the train in the morning you can easily get back in the afternoon. The river near Howick has worn its way through piles of columnar basalt to an apse of rock, over which the water pours into the broad, deep pool below. There are various measurements of the height given, but I believe 330 feet to be correct. You can walk round on the high-level and see the falls from a certain distance across the chasm; or you can climb down and up the Kaffir path, and see them from the bottom. The view from the rocks is very fine; and, if ever the opportunity offers, see the falls from this point.

The railway continues its tortuous courses to a spot called Highlands, 132 miles from Durban. It there reaches its highest point, just one mile above sea-level. Its most rapid curve is 1 in 300, and its steepest gradient

is 1 in 30. Nor are rapid curves and steep gradients exceptional; they are continual, and often the curve and gradient are at their worst together. The gauge is 3 ft. 6 ins., and the rails steel, weighing 45 lbs. to the yard. All these curves, gradients, weights, and measures are of importance, as they most naturally govern the extent to which the Colony will be able to make use of its railway, particularly as regards its coal.

These railway facts were given by the contractor for the line to Mr. J. J. Aubertin, who saw a good deal of Natal a year or two before my visit. He was travelling through the Colony leisurely. I was not; consequently I could get little more than a glimpse of the country round. I had heard of an agricultural settlement about six miles from Maritzburg, at a place called Wilgefontein; and this settlement had, I was informed, been singularly successful.

In 1879 a farm of 5,471 acres had been bought by the Land and Immigration Board, an authority created to provide for the introduction of artisans, mechanics, domestic servants, and general labourers. After the farm had been purchased, twenty-one families entered on occupation, of whom seventeen remain. Their condition and prospects were very favourably reported upon by a commission appointed by Government. According to that report, in May 1885 there were 590 acres under cultivation, mostly in cereal crops for the Maritzburg market. 285 head of stock, besides 146

goats and pigs, were owned by the settlers. Produce to the value of £3,400 had been sold from the place, or consumed on it, during the preceding twelve months. A building had been erected for meetings and public worship. A school had been established, and had an average attendance of twenty scholars.

The progress made is the more satisfactory when it is considered that the bulk of immigrants were unfortunately not selected with a due regard to previous farming experience, only seven of the seventeen families now on the settlement having had such experience; and thus, not only time, but a good deal of the small capital with which they started, was expended in gaining a knowledge of the conditions under which their work could be carried on. After referring to other drawbacks connected with this first attempt at a settlement by Government, the commissioners state, "The determination of the settlers to succeed has largely done away with the unfavourable conditions which affected the settlement at its commencement."

There is another settlement about seventy miles from Maritzburg, at a place called Weenen, but in some respects it differs from that nearer the city. The land bought was a block of 5,000 acres, and the principal feature of the settlement is that a watercourse six and a half miles long leading from Bushman's River has been constructed by the Board at a cost of about £1,560. From the land thus irrigated seventeen lots of fifty acres

each were laid out, of which half were open for application by resident colonists of five years' standing. On the other half were located immigrant farmers. These allotments were granted on lease, with certain rights as to purchase, and were conditional upon personal occupation and cultivation, and on the possession of capital to the value of £200 in stock, implements, and cash. Valuable grazing rights were attached to each lease.

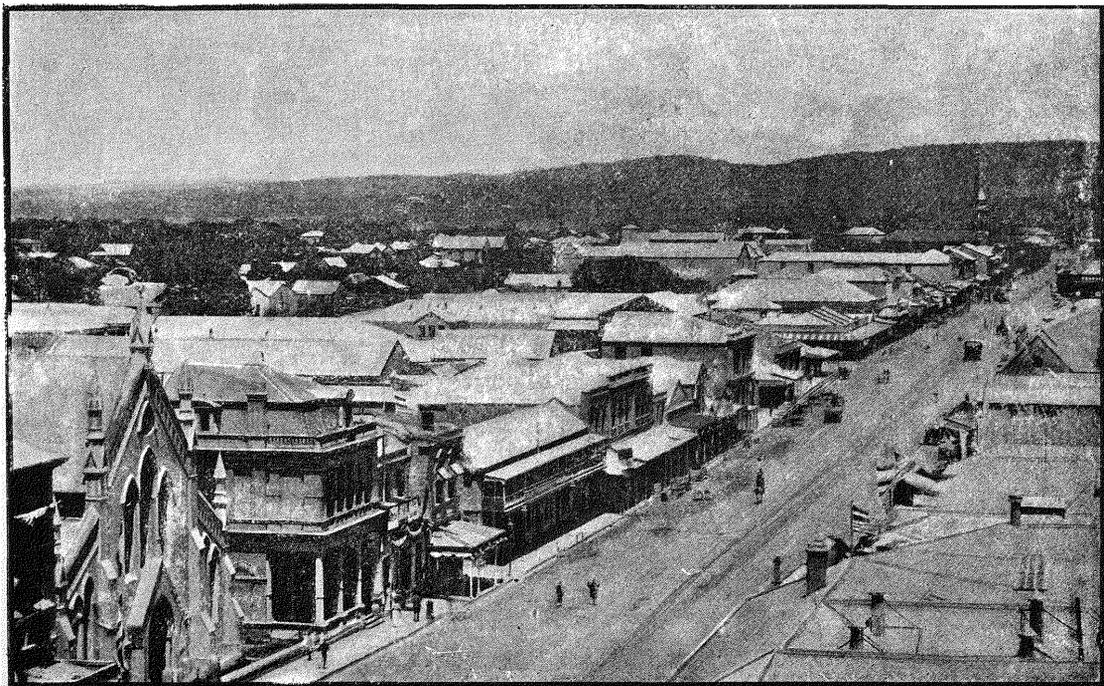
There are other settlements, but to these I need not refer, as I have said enough to show what the Government of Natal are doing in this direction. The question may perhaps be asked, What lands are now unappropriated in the Colony? There are twelve million acres in all, the larger portions of which are held by private holders. It would be difficult to answer the question from the reports to which I have access at present; but this may be said with certainty, that agricultural settlers would, if possessed of moderate capital, easily obtain possession of eligible holdings. But on this subject I need say no more now, more especially as my time at Pietermaritzburg is up. On my way to the station I was reminded of a passage in Mr. Aubertin's book.

"If you are walking," he says, "down by one of the broad streets, take care a Kaffir on horseback does not gallop over you. But the white and whitey-brown are quite as bad in this respect. Maritzburg is full of galloping horses. If, however, you hear an unearthly

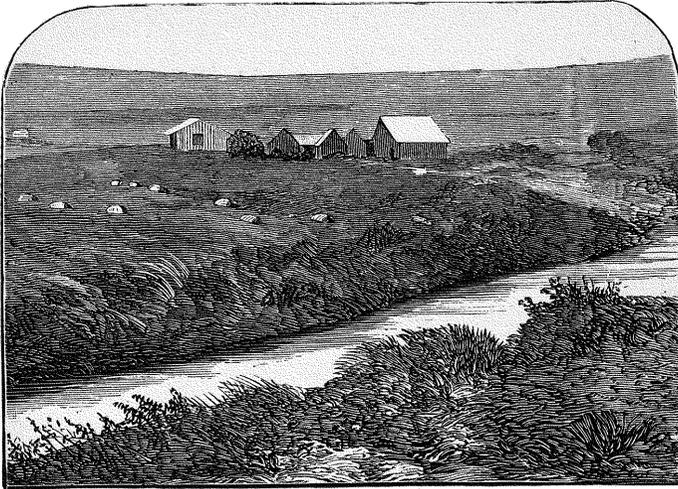
scream, it is a Kaffir driving bullocks. I have been told that each of the sixteen or eighteen knows the cry that is meant for itself. They all seem quite indifferent to the agonized voice. Look at those passing now; look at the bullocks. Mooning on they go, as if to say, 'What's all the row about?' The Kaffir's food can cost him very little, and his clothes still less. When he wears trousers, they are the cheapest in the world; for they are made of patches on patches; not always from need, however; sometimes from love of colour. In the country there is a cheaper sort of trousers still; and certain it is that the naked, loin-bedecked Kaffir looks the best. The dressed Kaffir almost always looks ugly, except in mere shirtings."

Need I say that I heard much of the Zulu war? Without going into that at any length, let me add a chapter about Isandhlani and Ulundi.





WEST STREET, DURBAN.



ON THE ROAD TO ZULULAND *via* BORKE'S DRIFT.

CHAPTER XXI.

ISANDHLANI AND ULUNDI.

THE war with Cetchwayo grew out of long-standing difficulties, to which the Boers had contributed in the first instance. And with a view to settling these and securing Natal from Zulu aggression, Sir Bartle Frere demanded from Cetchwayo guarantees that he would abolish his military system and observe his coronation promises. Moreover, he was required to accept the presence and advice of a British resident, to permit the return to Zululand of missionaries, and to surrender certain prisoners and pay fines. These demands were *not*

complied with by Cetchwayo, and on January 4th, 1879, our relations with the Zulus were placed in the hands of Lord Chelmsford, the commander-in-chief of the forces, who had proceeded to the front and held himself in readiness to invade Zululand. The number of Zulu warriors was estimated at from 30,000 to 40,000. Preparations were made by Lord Chelmsford for crossing the Tugela River, which was then flooded. There were only two practicable roads from Natal into Zululand—one by Rorke's Drift, the other by the Lower Tugela. It was impossible with the forces at his command to repel invasion at every point of the wild frontier. Relying on the well-known reluctance of savage armies to operate with an enemy in their rear, Lord Chelmsford decided to take up positions in the heart of Zululand. Three columns were to advance—one, under Colonel Pearson, by the Lower Tugela; another, under Colonel Glyn, by Rorke's Drift; while a third, under Colonel Wood, was to move from Utrecht, and finally join hands with Colonel Glyn's column.

On January 11th Colonel Glyn's column, which consisted of 2,100 English troops and 2,000 natives, under the direct command of Lord Chelmsford, crossed the Buffalo at Rorke's Drift. Owing to the conflicting nature of the reports from Zululand, the General was uncertain as to whether he would meet a hostile army on the other side or receive the submission of the Zulu King. On the following day the column had a successful

fight with some bands of Zulus; and, proceeding, encamped on the 21st at Isandhlani. In the meanwhile Colonel Durnford's column, consisting of 3,300 natives and 200 Europeans, had crossed the Tugela at Middle Drift, and marched up the left bank of the river to Rorke's Drift.

Major Dartnell had been sent from the camp to



OETCHWAYO

Matyana's stronghold, about ten miles from Isandhlani, to reconnoitre. About 3 p.m. he sent a message to the General that the country in front was occupied by the enemy. He asked for reinforcements in order to attack them. None were sent. At 2.30 p.m. on the 22nd a despatch came again from Major Dartnell to say that the enemy was in force. Lord Chelmsford ordered Colonel Glyn to move out with all the available

force to his assistance, and orders were sent to Colonel Durnford to bring up his natives from Rorke's Drift to reinforce the camp. The General accompanied Colonel Glyn, leaving Colonel Pulleine in command of the camp, with orders to defend it, to draw in the infantry outposts, but to leave the cavalry where they were.

About 6.30 p.m. Lord Chelmsford reached Major Dartnell. An engagement followed with the enemy, which the General regarded as the main body. They were dislodged and repulsed. Meanwhile, about 9 a.m., a short note came from Colonel Pulleine to say that firing was heard to the left of the camp. One of the *aides* ascended a hill which commanded the view of the camp, but saw "nothing unusual." Lord Chelmsford's force therefore proceeded leisurely with its evolutions with a view to returning to camp. The General went to select a site for the next encampment. Having done this, he was riding slowly back with his escort when Commander Lonsdale rode up with the news that the camp was in the hands of the Zulus. That officer had, in fact, ridden almost into it, and owed his life to the speed of his little pony.

This was in the afternoon. Some time was spent in drawing the troops together; then they advanced in fighting order, and, after dark, came near the camp. They approached it cautiously in order of attack, but found that it had been abandoned by the enemy. The whole force lay down on ground strewn with the corpses of men,

horses and cattle, and the *débris* of the plundered tents and waggons. They had no spare ammunition, and only a few biscuits for food. Many of them had no other food for forty-eight hours. All had marched at least thirty miles that day. They expected every moment to



ZULU KAFFIRS.

be attacked by the enemy, of whose desperate valour they saw such bloody proofs.

There is no authentic account of what had occurred, but it is surmised that the Zulu army, 25,000 strong, out-flanked the British position and, charging, overwhelmed our soldiers. The bravery of officers and men was un-availing, such was the fury of the repeated charges of the

Zulus. A few mounted officers galloped through a part where the ring had not as yet been formed round them. A few crossed the Buffalo and got safe to Natal, and Lieutenants Melville and Coghill escaped with the colours, to perish, however, in the river. By 1.30 p.m. the Zulus were masters of the camp. They believed they had annihilated the whole column, and when they saw Lord Chelmsford's troops approaching at night they fled in dismay.

Lord Chelmsford, fearing that the Zulus would swarm into Natal, decided to retire while it was possible to do so. So at early dawn the force started for Rorke's Drift. That post was held by Lieutenants Chard and Bromhead with eighty men of the 24th Regiment. From some fugitives who had escaped from the slaughter these officers heard of the disaster at Isandhlani. Believing that the victorious Zulus would attempt to cross into Natal, they prepared if possible to hold the Drift till help should come. Defences had to be put up, and they had barely finished a hastily constructed barricade of bags and biscuit tins when the Zulus, gathering round them, began to pour in their fire. They numbered in all about 4,000. The attack lasted the greater part of the night. Six times the enemy got within the barricade, but were driven out at the point of the bayonet. Creeping to the rear, they set fire to the hospital. At dawn the assailants withdrew. But the anxieties of the little garrison were not at an end. Looking towards Isandhlani they descried a fresh host

advancing. Soon they saw that it was Lord Chelmsford's jaded men, and these, too, found to their relief that Englishmen still held the Drift. There were the bodies of 351 Zulus in the entrenchment.

It has been said that after Isandhlani Lord Chelmsford was the "unhappiest man" in all South Africa. There was a great outcry raised, and he was accused of having neglected the simple precautions the Boers had always adopted in fighting the Zulus. The authorities attributed the disaster to the want of cavalry.

The Zulus were not allowed to rest upon their victory. On the day Isandhlani was fought Colonel Pearson's column had also been engaged against 5,000 Zulus ten miles south of Ekowe. The enemy's position was carried by the naval brigade, and the Zulus withdrew. After the action Colonel Pearson sent back the troops on which he could least rely, and with the rest (1,200) he prepared to hold the carefully entrenched position he had selected round the mission buildings at Ekowe. Meanwhile the Zulus had been defeated by Colonel Wood, who had advanced from the east, and engaged, on January 24th, 1879, from 3,000 to 4,000 Zulus near the Intamba Mountain. Having heard of the disaster to Colonel Glyn's column, Colonel Wood covered Utrecht, and moving swiftly on the Bagulisini kraal, accomplished one of the most hazardous and splendid exploits of the war.

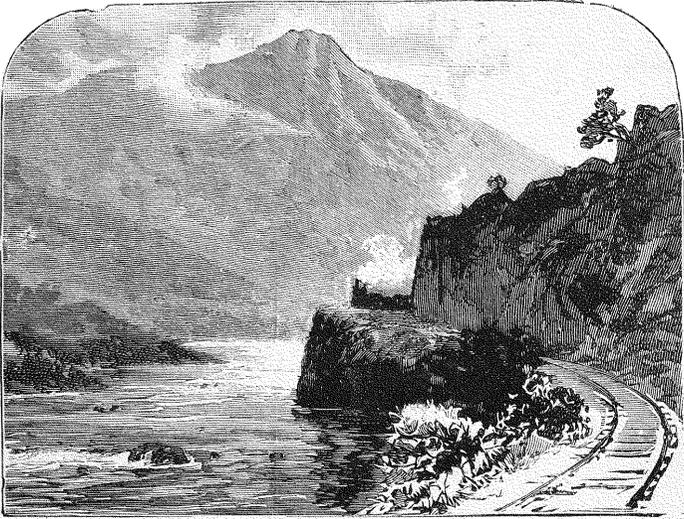
Lord Chelmsford had made such dispositions as were practicable to resist an invasion of Natal, and on

April 15th, reinforcements from England having arrived, he was free to recommence the invasion of Zululand. It was not, however, till June that the camp at Koppie Allein was broken up, and General Newdigate's column advanced. On June 2nd the ex-Prince Imperial of France was sent with a small escort to examine the proposed line of march from the Itilezi Hill to the site of the camp beyond. Lieutenant Carey went with him, and while the party were preparing to remount after a rest the Zulus crept up and killed the Prince. His body was found next day in the Tonga, covered with assegai wounds.

On June 4th the camp was on the site selected by the Prince, and information was brought of the approach of the Zulu Impi (army). General Buller succeeded in scattering it. Messengers came from the King with overtures of peace. The General required that the two seven-pounders captured at Isandhlani should be given up, and that one regiment should come to lay down arms, also that the cattle the King had with him be given up. By noon, on July 3rd, these demands were not complied with. Some of our men who went to the river to water were fired on by the Zulus from the other side. Colonel Buller was sent across the river with his cavalry to reconnoitre. He was soon surrounded by Zulus, who seemed to spring from the ground on all sides, and had to make his way back to the camp by hand-to-hand fighting.

Early on July 4th the whole force crossed the river

and advanced towards Ulundi. Streams of Zulus soon appeared on every side, but they did not approach till our force had been drawn up in a hollow square in a singularly advantageous position. The enemy advanced in loose formation, throwing out, however, the traditional "horns." While they were still at a distance the cavalry engaged them. As they came nearer, the cavalry retired within the square. The artillery then came into action. When the distance was sufficiently reduced, the fire of the infantry began. The enemy fired rapidly, but, as on other occasions throughout the war, caused little loss. They advanced at first with all their old *élan*, but under the steady fire wavered midway; in the moment, apparently, of preparing for the final rush and close fighting with assegais, the cavalry sallied forth from within the square, and within half an hour the Zulus were in full retreat. The army then advanced to Ulundi, burnt it and other military kraals, and by evening were safe back in camp on the Umvolosi. Our force numbered 4,062 Europeans, and 1,103 natives, with twelve guns and two gatlings. The number of the enemy was computed at 20,000. Our loss was ten killed; the Zulus lost about 1,000. This victory, the credit of which belongs to Lord Chelmsford, did much to reverse the tide at that time running against him. Sir Garnet Wolseley had arrived, but the battle was fought and won before he could reach the camp.



VIEW ON THE TUGELA RIVER.

CHAPTER XXII.

TO THE KAAP GOLD FIELDS.

MUCH as I would have liked to linger at Pietermaritzburg, the time at my disposal would not allow of it. So preparations were made for a move next morning still farther up-country. Starting soon after breakfast for Howick Station, and then on to Estcourt, the first stage of the journey was accomplished about four in the afternoon.

Along the line, which still rises and falls and curves, though in a far milder way than below, we passed over sheets of green, sometimes grass and sometimes maize,

while in the distance to the left we beheld the grand outlines of the long and lofty Drakensberg Range. At some distance away I was told to look out for Meurd Spruit, a scene of murder, where the Zulus slaughtered the Boers who had invaded Zululand. At another spot, known as Veghtlaager, the Boers slaughtered the Zulus; and to the right, down the Bushman's River, is the place—Weenen or Weeping—where emigrant Boers were massacred by the Zulu chief Dingaan.

Estecourt is a corrugated iron town built upon the grass—not very attractive, it must be admitted, but withal a kindly disposed, hospitable town one would like to visit again. After a night's rest we made an early start for Newcastle. This time in a cart of the country. We had six horses; and the driver—a Kaffir—fairly won our admiration by his skilful driving over roads of unexampled roughness. At about six in the evening we came to the Biggarsberg Range, where we passed the second night; and starting betimes on the following morning, arrived at Newcastle about two in the afternoon, very weary and all but famished.

The next day I drove out to see the coal field, from which it is said the town derives its name. The coal lies near the surface, being in some cases only twenty or twenty-five feet below, and it is reported to be uncommonly good burning coal. I am not, however, a judge, and have only said what I was told. Newcastle is another of the corrugated iron towns, with wide, open roads and

plenty of green spaces separating the erections. It is found a relaxing place by some visitors, while others declare that they never have neuralgia until they visit Newcastle. I heard rather a good story there, which, if I can remember it, will bear retelling. At a station some little way in-country, a man was brought before the district magistrate charged with horse-stealing. The evidence was conclusive ; but as the case was proceeding the magistrate stopped it with these words : "Prisoner, it is quite clear you are guilty, and I shall have to commit you if the case goes on. But there are no public funds to keep you alive in prison; therefore I should have to keep you myself, which I cannot afford to do. Therefore I discharge you." I fancy this must have been before the gold discoveries in the Transvaal.

I fell more into contact with Zulu and Kaffir service at Newcastle than anywhere, and was struck by their curious manners. Whatever may have been the case while they were serving in warfare under their chiefs against the white-skinned strangers who had come to invade them, they are in peace very ready and obedient as a rule, treating the white man as their natural superior. The Zulu is constitutionally jocose, and hails you with just so much jocosity as he feels your bearing towards him will permit of. One arm is thrown up in the air straight, and the word pronounced is "Cose," an abbreviation of "Eccosi," or lord and master.

The next stage of our journey was by mail-cart. We left

the Salisbury Hotel at Newcastle at four in the morning. There was a faint moon, and a lantern swinging beneath the lofty post-cart served to make a fair light to travel by. The driver and the horses know the road well, so that there is not so much danger in travelling in the night-time as might be supposed.

When we reached Ermelo, we had an ample opportunity of seeing the sights. The town consists of a baker's dozen of stores, dotting the veldt at irregular intervals. A handsome white stone church, used by the Boers, showed that they were not mean in their outlay on places of worship, whatever they may be in other matters. After some trying experiences of spruit-jumping and rough-road driving, we had our first glimpse of Barberton. It was from Groenewaldts, at the top of the Berg. Looking across the fair but sometimes deadly valley of the Kaap beneath us, we saw nestling up in the grand mountainous amphitheatre the town about which so much has been said. Barberton showed white on a red patch in the distance, but enough was to be seen to almost bewilder the man who had been some little time away from the spot.

We had now to purchase alpenstocks, and proceed on foot. The baggage and the mails were transferred to another cart; and leaving this vehicle to follow, we sauntered leisurely by a short cut to the foot of the Berg. For some distance the path led through dells of tree ferns and pretty wild flowers, but any admiration of Nature's beauties was soon disturbed by the discordant

yells and shrieks of the native waggon-drivers. One by-path led us to a craggy height overlooking the first bad bit of the "Shoot," and certainly that place deserves all the abuse that has been heaped upon it. Four or five waggons were stuck on this descent, and the sufferings of the cattle as they were thrashed into a last effort must have been great indeed. One villainous-looking native belaboured an ox so unmercifully over the head with a stout stick that it fell several times. On the ground it was beaten again to compel it to rise. We shouted to the fellow to stop, and while our party was in sight there was no more of it. Another ox a little farther down had fallen out of the hard line of march, and was resting by the roadside, awaiting the end which the vultures overhead knew was there. It was certainly the most dreadful bit of road I ever witnessed. After a tedious ox-crawl across the valley, we reached Barberton about ten o'clock at night. We were all too weary to do anything, and turned into our beds quickly enough. Getting up next morning when the town was stirring, we were surprised at the growth and bustle of a place which only a few years before had been nothing more than a collection of mud and thatch dwellings. It had so expanded that its circumference was about a mile; but beyond there were many dwelling-houses and other buildings, dotted at irregular intervals over a large area. Rising ridges branch out from each end of the town, and along these spurs some very commodious and elegant residences have

been erected. An inverted Ω , says Mr. Mather, will give some idea of the shape of the town. The left prong may be taken to represent the Berea, where many of the suburban houses are situated ; the top, the town at its most densely populated portion ; the right prong, another ridge with several lower levels, along which houses of varying degrees of pretentiousness are built ; and the centre, the various roadways descending to the Kaap valley.

Barberton, which lies about three thousand feet above the level of the sea, is laid out into erven, a block of these consisting of ten. These are again subdivided into lots of five, back to back, in the manner familiar to South Africans. The town has two public squares—the Market Square and President Square—and is cut by well laid-out streets, which in course of time, it is to be supposed, will be levelled and kept in decent repair. Tiny cottages and huts are perched on escarpments in the hills immediately above the town. Some very good buildings which catch the eye are an imposing two-storied, red-brick pile in the Market Square. The Bank of Africa occupies a portion of the ground floor. Among other buildings of importance may be ranked the two Exchanges. That first put up is a fair-sized erection, the stoep of which is utilized as a lounge by the brokers. The Exchange itself consists of a long, narrow, well-lighted chamber, in which, on tables, are spread the latest newspapers. This Exchange was not, at the time of the “boom,” thought good enough for the growing wants of Barberton, so a company was