

THE RUIN OF ZULULAND.



CHAPTER I.

CETSHWAYO was to visit England. That, at last, at the end of June 1882, was settled beyond dispute. But the conclusion was not arrived at without the most strenuous opposition from all those who, apparently from the sheer perversity of human nature, chose to look upon the Zulu King as their deadliest foe.

1. What, we ask, had he ever done to earn Sir Henry Bulwer's hatred? 2. How had he personally offended Sir Theophilus Shepstone and his faction? 3. What injury had the colonists of Natal to lay to his charge?

The following incidents may be pointed to as supplying answers to two of these questions:—

1. The so-called "formidable message" of November 1876.*

But not only had that been condoned by many friendly messages between Cetshwayo and the Natal Government, from then till the end of 1878, but Sir H. Bulwer must have had strong evidence brought

* See vol. i. p. 32.

to his notice, again and again, that *Cetshwayo had never sent that message.*

2. The failure of the Blood River Meeting, and the refusal of the Zulus, and of Cetshwayo on their behalf, to give up to the Boers that "disputed territory," of which the latter had tried to rob the Zulus.

But at the Blood River Meeting Sir T. Shepstone had hoped to persuade the Zulus to give up rights which they had defended with his countenance for seventeen years, and his expectations rested mainly on his knowledge of their faith in him—a faith which he had earned to a great extent by supporting those very rights, while the decision in favour of the Zulus on this boundary question, given by the British Border Commission of 1878, entirely justified Cetshwayo in his refusal to give up his people's rights.

3. How, finally, had he offended the colonists of Natal?

It might indeed be supposed, that after the ill-treatment he had received, the public conscience would cause him to appear in an alarming light. But until the British invasion of Zululand in 1879, not one of the Natalians had even the pretence of a complaint against him, except that, although a black man, he was a king, powerful, happy, beloved and obeyed by his people, *and subject to no direct European rule.*

And, even after the Zulu war of 1879, what was there to say against Cetshwayo that any generous-minded adversary would have cared to advance? Of unreasoning spite, indeed, there was enough. The

Natal Advertiser [? *Mercury*], of June 11th, 1883, publishes a letter containing the following sentences:—
 “ . . . soon after the Zulu war Mr. Grant * received the arch-scoundrel Dabulamanzi, and treated him not only with hospitality, but open friendship; this gentleman, too, so far forgot himself as to attempt to introduce Dabulamanzi to Mr. W. Shepstone in the street, when Mr. Shepstone turned his back on them both. It must be remembered that Mr. George Shepstone had fallen at Isandhlwana,† and that

* Mr. Grant is best known as the white interpreter and secretary recommended to Cetshwayo in 1883 by the Bishop of Natal, and therefore accepted gladly by the King and Zulu people in that capacity. He was afterwards refused permission by the Natal Government to remain with Cetshwayo, after the latter took refuge from Zibebu at Etshowe, although the Zulu King earnestly entreated to be allowed to keep Mr. Grant with him.

† It must also be remembered that Mr. Grant himself had likewise lost a brother at Isandhlwana. Whether on the above-mentioned occasion he or Mr. W. Shepstone showed himself the better Christian, the reader may decide.

It may not be amiss to mention here an instance of the feeling—precisely contrary to the Colonial sentiment as illustrated in this story of one of the Mr. Shepstones—shown on a previous occasion by the noblest British soldier who fell on that fatal day at Isandhlwana. In a memoir of the late Colonel A. W. Durnford, R.E. (‘*A Soldier’s Life and Work in South Africa*,’ by Lieut.-Colonel E. Durnford; Sampson Low & Co. publishers) we find at p. 101 the following sentences, taken from a letter from Colonel Durnford to his parents in England:—“The tribe of Langalibalele has been pardoned, and the Bishop of Natal has a scheme of buying land for them in a dozen different places (as they must not live together *as a tribe*), they working out the purchase money. They say they will *all come to me* [Colonel Durnford was acting as Colonial Engineer in Natal at this time, and could employ them on the public works]; and they are right too. They stood to their chief like men, and deserved every credit for it. Have we not exchanged ‘love-tokens?’ Are not *their* dead on the field where

Dabulamanzi was the leader of the host there who massacred two thousand gallant Englishmen, refusing quarter to any."

This last allegation is a mistake, though not an unnatural one, since none but fugitives escaped that day of the British force. As a matter of fact quarter was repeatedly offered towards the end to the gallant remaining few who held the famous "neck" to the death. But our soldiers did not understand the Zulu language, or knew too little of the customs of the savage race with which they were contending to believe in the offer. The case of Grandier,* the white prisoner taken at Kambula, kindly treated, and released by Cetshwayo, afterwards proved that it might have been accepted, but no one could know it then.

It is, however, difficult to understand how we can condemn the Zulus for giving no quarter, since in our turn, we gave them none. Notably at the battles of Ulundi and Kambula.†

But such unworthy sentiments as these expressed by the Durban paper would be instantly condemned by all right-minded persons. The attack upon the camp at Isandhlwana was made without Cetshwayo's orders or even knowledge, so that, personally, he was

they fell, and am not I half a cripple yet?" And again at p. 104 he writes:—"They come to *me* for protection, which I give to all who ask. You see these Zulus, like Afghans, consider that wounds given and received are love-tokens between brave men, and that they give a claim to help if required—a true soldier's creed it is too."

* See vol. i. pp. 63-4.

† See vol. i. p. 153 *in notis*.

not responsible for it at all. Nor can any generous person blame those on the Zulu side who *were* responsible, however sadly they may lament the unhappy issue. Our British force was, alas! an army of invasion; the Zulu generals did but their duty to their King and country; and well would it have been for England had her general done the same.*

* Lord Chelmsford. This general planted his untrenched camp (Isandhlwana) in an indefensible position, neglected to reconnoitre the surrounding country, and marched away from it with half his force on the morning of January 22nd, 1879, to look for the Zulus, unaware that he left behind him, in close proximity to the camp, an army of 20,000 of them. He afterwards laid the blame of the consequent surprise and destruction of the camp upon Colonel Durnford, R.E., who had fallen in its defence. Lord Chelmsford did this on the ground that the "orders" sent to Colonel Durnford early the same day were to come up and "take command" of the camp, and that, therefore, the directions which he (the General) imagined he had left at the camp, for concentration and defence in case of attack, devolved upon, and had been disobeyed by Colonel Durnford. From positive evidence it appears that no such orders were given by the General or left at the camp at all, and it is more than doubtful whether, under the circumstances, there was any possibility of carrying such orders out, had they been given. The General, apparently, left the camp (without intrenchments or other defences) without the slightest suspicion of a possible attack; indeed he asked, when miles away from the camp, what orders had been left for Colonel Pulleine, the officer in command.

But, however this may be, it is now known that Colonel Durnford could not have been to blame in any sense, rather that he did his duty nobly to the death, and deserved all the honour his country could have shed upon his grave—honour which has been withheld from him to screen his General. Lord Chelmsford's military secretary, Colonel Crealock, has since acknowledged that *no order to take command of the camp was ever sent to Colonel Durnford*, and it would seem that the latter was sent for to *join the General with his (native) cavalry* (in accordance with previous instructions, 2252, p. 63) for the battle expected beyond Isandhlwana, and that he was merely passing through the camp there on his

Yet, although a certain number of people in Natal were worked up to take the erroneous and ignoble view of the case put forward by the writer to the

way, when the fatal Zulu assault began. The actual orders sent to Colonel Durnford were lost with him; and the one put forward by Lord Chelmsford at the time is now disproved by the very man who wrote it. When the battle-field was searched in May 1879, Colonel Durnford's remains were found undisturbed. The coat he had worn upon the day of his death was still upon him, and the Zulus had taken nothing from the pockets, as was plain from the fact that a pocket-knife (a treasure to any Zulu) was found upon him as well as other trifles. It is therefore certain that his papers—the order received that morning, after he mounted his horse, and probably that of the previous day—were still upon him on May 21st, when his body was at last discovered by members of the reconnoitring force under General Marshall. But these papers mysteriously vanished upon that day, after being seen by at least one person present, and it remains to be proved who took possession of them, and by whose orders the sacrilegious deed was committed.

At the time they were stolen it had not been confessed that the "order," recorded as the one sent to Colonel Durnford, and on the strength of which his conduct had been officially condemned, was a fabrication, written after the event, to suit the "theory of blame" which had been invented to save the reputation of the faulty living at the expense of the blameless and silent dead.

This is a matter which, although not immediately pertinent to our main inquiry as to the rights of the Zulu question, throws much light upon the ideas of honour held by some of the principal actors in it. Colonel Durnford lies in a grave honoured, indeed, by all private friends, and by all others who realise and deplore the deep injustice that has been done him, but neglected and unhonoured by the nation at large.

And why is this? Because it suited his General's convenience to throw the blame of his own errors upon his dead subordinate, who could not speak for himself, and who, being a Royal Engineer, was almost solitary in the land. Therefore Lord Chelmsford had a clear field. His military secretary writes an "order" after the event, which order is constructed to suit the case as he desired to make it

Advertiser,* it cannot have been the original cause of the popular hatred of Cetshwayo, for that feeling was as much in vogue towards the end of 1878 as it ever has been since.

Probably not one in twenty Natalians could give a distinct statement of the grounds of their objection to the Zulu King, and, of those who could, the majority would make it plain that their ideas upon the subject had been gathered from the statements of the late Sir Bartle Frere, or of some other contributor to Blue Books. Briefly the said objection has been an imaginary one, and most of those who have held it have simply followed, like sheep through a gap, in the wake of a few noisy and interested leaders, and without the remotest notion of their own of Cetshwayo's merits or demerits, or of how the case has stood for and against him from the first. A striking proof of this assertion may be gathered from a perusal of the protests sent in from different parts of Natal, in 1882, against the Zulu King's re-

appear; the battle-field is left untouched, even jealously guarded from examination, so that the actual order sent was not discovered inconveniently; one confidential officer appears to have searched for it, and another to have found and secreted it. And, to crown all, the authorities have refused to investigate the case.

So Lord Chelmsford remains, pitied and even honoured, the supposed victim of unhappy circumstances and a disobedient subordinate, while that falsely accused officer has died the death which he would have met twenty times over rather than commit the fault falsely imputed to him, and so incur the blame which England, in whose service he lived and died, still allows to rest upon his name.

* Or *Mercury*.

turn. The first of such protests came, naturally, from John Dunn, who could not expect that even Cetshwayo's magnanimity would overlook the treacherous and ungrateful part which he, Dunn, had played during the Zulu war. In this, as we are aware, Dunn was mistaken. Cetshwayo was quite capable of showing indulgence towards faults committed in a time of general excitement, and, possibly, partly under the influence of fear.* Dunn had deserted him in his hour of need, and had even assisted his enemies to capture him, but the King was just enough to remember that the man was of the same race with the invaders of the land, and kind-hearted enough to suppose that he had acted under compulsion. If Dunn had, *after the war was over*, kept in mind the interests of one who had been his benefactor for many years, and had tried then to do him a good turn, Cetshwayo would readily have forgiven him, and, as it was, he preserved a kindly recollection of him until it became evident that the man for whom he had done so much, had, purely for the sake of his own selfish interest, become a most determined and unscrupulous foe. Dunn's protest [3466, p. 1] written to Sir Garnet Wolseley in February 1882, did not receive much attention: those who make use of and reward traitors seldom having much opinion of their tools afterwards. Sir

* Dunn says himself, "It was only by hard persuasion, and not being allowed to remain neutral . . . and at Lord Chelmsford's earnest entreaty, that I consented to join him."—*Natal Mercury*, March 3rd, 1882.

Garnet Wolseley, indeed, forwarded it to the Colonial Office [*ibid.*], inclosed in a similar protest from himself, but that was to be expected, since the threatened Zulu settlement was his own latest handiwork. He writes as follows:—"I wish to place on record my strong conviction that the return of Cetshwayo to Zululand would be fraught with considerable danger to Natal, and would give rise to serious trouble and bloodshed in Zululand itself." Events have not justified his opinion, and his own "settlement" having brought about more bloodshed in four years than all that took place during the whole of Cetshwayo's reign, the perpetuation of that bloodshed has followed distinctly and undeniably—not from the restoration of the Zulu King, but from the intervention of European marauders and the foolish and inhuman manner in which his hands were tied, and his power and influence neutralised, by Sir H. Bulwer and the Natal Government. In fact it may truly be said that *Cetshwayo never was restored*, as the ensuing pages of this volume will make plain, and that to that fact is due all the disorder which has taken place since he was brought back to Zululand, but not restored to his kingship, in 1883.

As to the "considerable danger to Natal," which Sir Garnet Wolseley and others predicted, not even the most timorous alarmists in the colony suggested the necessity of making the smallest movement in the direction of defensive precautions when Cetshwayo's return was announced as about to take place [*ibid.*].

The concluding objection made by Sir Garnet

Wolseley to the Zulu King's restoration was that it would be in direct contravention of the guarantee given by himself that "under no circumstances should Cetshwayo be ever allowed to settle again in that country"; and he asserts that, without such guarantee, none of the thirteen kinglets would have accepted the position of chief. As eight out of the eleven Zulus amongst the thirteen kinglets joined in the petitions for Cetshwayo's restoration,* Sir Garnet Wolseley made a mistake in this latter assertion. It is to be hoped that by this time he and other important personages have also learnt that England will not be committed to a series of unjust actions by a few rash unauthorised words spoken by one of her servants, and that it is a mistake to suppose that she can any longer be forced into courses of which she disapproves for the sake of keeping promises made in her name *without her permission*. That Sir Garnet Wolseley *had said* that Cetshwayo should never return was actually quoted in Natal as a sufficient reason for refusing justice to the latter, whatever the circumstances of the case.

As an instance of the different light in which Sir Garnet Wolseley regards the respect to be paid to his own word and that due to the promises of other officers of Her Majesty's Government and army, it may be interesting to observe the arbitrary and inconsiderate fashion in which he set aside the decision of Colonel Durnford and his colleagues in the Zulu Boundary question, and drew a line of his own

* See vol. i. for proofs of this statement.

choosing (on the map, apparently, for he knew very little of the country), and quite independently of the rights of the case, or of anything except what he thought "a long way a better frontier" [2482, p. 258]. The decision which he thus arbitrarily set aside had been made by officers appointed for the purpose, and after thorough sifting of the evidence in the matter, and the "award" had been fully considered, and formally delivered to the Zulus, in England's name, and with her sanction. Yet the very man who thought so lightly of his country's honour, and of the "guarantee" given with her permission by *other* officers, that, on his own and sole authority he swept the whole aside, and gave the land awarded to the Zulus back to the encroaching Boers, considered it an injury to himself that when he had far overstepped the bounds of his power by asserting that England would *never do so and so*, she found herself obliged to disregard his unauthorised statement, and to remind him by act, if not by word, that Sir Garnet Wolseley is not, after all, the despotic ruler of Great Britain.

A curious proof of the hasty carelessness with which Sir Garnet Wolseley cast aside the conscientious and able work of the Zulu Border Commissioners of 1878 is to be found in the despatch which has just been quoted [No. 87, 2482].

It will be remembered by readers who have studied the subject of the Zulu War, that when the decision of the Border Commissioners was given in favour of the Zulus, Sir Bartle Frere—who had previously

entirely approved of the said commission, palpably under the impression that it would, as a matter of course, be made to turn against the Zulus, and so help to bring about the war which it was his policy to declare—was grievously disappointed, and did his utmost to reverse the decision, but failed to do so, chiefly through the determination of Colonel Durnford, R.E., that justice should be done.* Sir Theophilus Shepstone—who had anticipated the probable results of an impartial investigation of the Border question too clearly to desire, on behalf of his then protégés the Boers, that it should take place—objected to the proposed arbitration throughout, and, in the end, consented to it most reluctantly. In one of his despatches, while the subject was pending, he writes as follows, February 5th, 1878 [2079, p. 137]:—

“At present the belt of country [which Sir H. Bulwer proposed should be treated as neutral during the inquiry] is occupied solely by Zulus; the whole of it has been apportioned in farms to Transvaal subjects, *but has not been occupied by them* [author's italics]; and it comprises, in fact, the whole of the land that has hitherto been looked upon as disputed territory.”

Yet, three days later, February 8th [*ibid.*, pp. 138, 139], he writes of “the existence of a deep feeling of distrust” on the part of the Boers, in regard to the course which this Government has . . . consented to adopt [i. e. arbitration], and continues thus:—

“This is scarcely to be wondered at when it is remembered that these men are compelled to occupy with their families fortified camps [N.B.—They did so by Sir T. Shepstone's directions, in anticipation of a British invasion of Zululand—2100, p. 66], while their farms in the neighbourhood are being occupied by

* ‘A Soldier's Life and Work in South Africa,’ p. 194.

Zulus, while their crops are being reaped and their cultivated lands are being tilled by Zulus, and while the timber of their houses is being used as Zulu firewood."

Had this actually been the case, it would only have been the natural result of the "farms" having been occupied, the crops sown, the fields cultivated, the houses built by the Boers on land which belonged, not to them, but to the Zulus, but the discrepancy between Sir T. Shepstone's statements on the 5th and 8th of February, 1878, were too glaring to escape detection.

At this time, 1878, Sir H. Bulwer, then Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, was doing his best to prevent the necessity of war, and his despatches, in reply to or in comment upon those of Sir B. Frere and Sir T. Shepstone, display considerable acuteness, and expose the intrigues by which the war was brought about as firmly and thoroughly as could be desired. On the point above mentioned he silences Sir T. Shepstone out of his own mouth, writing thus [2144, p. 191] :—

"I do not quite understand what farms and cultivated lands are referred to ; because in a previous despatch—No. 7 of February 5th—your Excellency, in referring to the disputed territory, states, as I understand, that it '*is at present occupied solely by the Zulus,*' and that, '*although the whole of it has been apportioned in farms to Transvaal subjects, it has not been occupied by them.*'"

This would seem conclusive enough, yet eighteen months later, Sir Garnet Wolseley, laying down the law on the subject of which he knew so little, writes :—"I have also to remark that many farms which had been for more than ten years actually occupied by Dutch families were made over to the Zulu King as part of his dominions" [2482, p. 258].

It would appear from the above that Sir Garnet Wolseley had merely cast his eye over a few of the papers in which Sir T. Shepstone and others stated the *Boer* claims, and had studied the subject so little, that he was quite unaware that the ground (essentially worthless in point of principle as it was in any case) on which he elected to take his stand, had long since been cut from beneath his feet. However, the pretence of it which remained seemed to answer his purposes as well as more substantial facts would have done, for, on September 3rd, 1879, he wrote the statement given above, and acted upon it, reversing the award of the Border Commissioners.

It is not, perhaps, strictly correct to speak of the boundary line which Sir Garnet Wolseley fixed as *one of his own choosing*. He knew too little of the country and of the facts of the dispute to choose a line himself. Rather, it may easily be gathered, that the line he fixed was that long since chosen and desired by the knot of politicians who brought about the Zulu War, who looked to what they deemed *expediency* rather than to strict justice, and whose whole calculations had been upset by the decision of the Commission in favour of the Zulus.

Colonel Durnford (and his colleagues who have lost their claim to credit for the action which neither of them has lifted a voice in public to defend since the death of the one amongst them who would have protested to the utmost against such injustice), having carefully sifted all producible evidence, decided in favour of the Zulus, giving them as a boundary "*the*

line offered by Cetshwayo" [2222, p. 84], and commending the "self-restraint and moderation of the Zulus in reference to the much vexed boundary question" [2220, p. 38]. But Sir Garnet Wolseley substituted the *precise reverse* of this decision, namely, the line required by Sir T. Shepstone, &c., and says that it "will not, of course, satisfy all claims of the Transvaal Boers to land [probably not, since those claims are of perennial growth], some of which possibly rest on good grounds [the Border Commission had decided that they rested on no grounds whatever: the proofs they give [2220 and 2222] are simple and conclusive, and Sir Garnet Wolseley could have no *secret* evidence to the contrary], but it will include in the Transvaal territory most of the farms that had been longest in occupation by the Dutch farmers on the long-disputed frontier." That is to say, the land which had been "apportioned in farms to Transvaal subjects [by the Transvaal Government, in a country which did not belong to them], but has not been occupied by them."

It is very much to be doubted if Sir Garnet Wolseley's decision would not have been considerably altered could he have taken a peep into the future, and have discerned that in two years' time the Transvaal would have passed from British hands, and with it the piece of Zululand with which he had presented it while it was under England's rule. But at the time he fixed his line, the main object of British politicians in South Africa was to pacify the Boers, and probably it was thought that if anything could

have reconciled them to the loss of their somewhat misused independence, it would be the cession of the territory of which they had been trying to take possession for so many years.

But what is to be said of Sir Henry Bulwer's supineness on this occasion? He had thoroughly supported the Commissioners in their report, had boldly withstood both Sir B. Frere and Sir T. Shepstone in their attacks upon it, yet on the first sound of the general's trumpet he lays down his arms, ceases to have an opinion of his own, and meekly holds his peace when Sir Garnet Wolseley—immediately after the statement above quoted, which Sir H. Bulwer had himself thoroughly disproved on a previous occasion—writes, "Sir Henry Bulwer agrees with me, &c." [2482, p. 258].

We must now return to the subject of the protests and petitions concerning Cetshwayo. As early as October 1881, the Boer Government of the Transvaal requested Sir Hercules Robinson [3247, p. 7] to send a telegram to the Earl of Kimberley on their behalf, "soliciting Cetshwayo's release and restoration, as an act of justice, and to prevent bloodshed."

It is not necessary for our present purpose to investigate the disputed question of what feelings or motives may have induced the Transvaal Government to make this appeal. The only point which (in the present work) it concerns us to notice is that, had there been a grain of truth in the oft asserted "dangerous" disposition of Cetshwayo towards the European colonies of South Africa, his ancient

enemies the Boers would have been the very last to desire his restoration to power. They were the only European race which had had any quarrel with the Zulus before the British invasion of Zululand in 1879, and had certainly earned the ill-will and suspicion of the Zulu King and people by a long series of unscrupulous encroachments and frequent outrages.

Cetshwayo himself never concealed his dislike for the Boers,* although he never would have begun hostilities against them, as he never did through fifteen years of aggression and misconduct on their part.

Again, on August 8th, 1882, Sir Hercules Robinson transmits another request from the Transvaal Government to the same effect, urging the restoration of Cetshwayo for the sake of peace and quiet on their own eastern border, and in the interests of humanity "as speedily as possible" [3466, p. 78].*

* [1961], [1748], [2000], and other Blue Books.

† Since the policy of the Transvaal Government, in encouraging Boer aggressions (still continued in 1884) upon Zululand, and the misconduct of the frontier Boers, was undoubtedly the *first cause* of our invasion and destruction of Zululand, it is difficult to credit the good feeling now expressed for the first time towards Cetshwayo by that country and people, and it is not surprising that many should look upon this sudden change of front as rather intended to annoy England than to benefit the Zulus. But there is no reason to doubt that Dr. Jorrisen and a few others were sincere in their intentions, and whether the Boer Government and people generally were honest in their expressions of kindness towards Cetshwayo or not signifies nothing to the point under consideration. Had the Transvaal had any real grounds for the evil words spoken again and again in her name against the Zulu King, she never would have petitioned for his return, even to exasperate England, and the mere fact of her having done so sweeps away at a blow all the plausible prettexts put forward by her subjects, and on her behalf, in favour of the Zulu war.

On the same day Sir H. Bulwer sends the following telegram to the Earl of Kimberley [3466, p. 77]:—

“8th. Mayor of Durban requests that the following resolution passed at public meeting on 5th be transmitted to your Lordship:—

“That this meeting hereby records its solemn protest against the restoration of Cetshwayo to Zululand, feeling assured that such a step would be fraught with imminent peril and disastrous consequences to this Colony, and would weaken the authority of Her Majesty’s Government amongst the native tribes of South Africa, and it (i. e. the meeting) pledges continued resistance to the return of the ex-king.”

Durban had, from the first, been the stronghold of opposition to the Zulu King, and Zulu freedom, partly because it is furthest and safest from injury *in case* of a Zulu attack, partly because it had long been to a great extent, represented by a newspaper, whose editor—whether through constitutional timidity, or negro-phobia, or a keen eye to his own interests as a leader of the worst, and therefore most violent feelings of a half-educated public—has always stood out prominently in favour of every turn of policy which promised to do the most towards reducing the aboriginal inhabitants of South Africa to the condition, practically, of slaves.

Sir Henry Bulwer forwarded the Durban protest of August 5th, and sent with it extracts from the two Durban newspapers about the meeting at which it had been made.

One, from the *Natal Mercury*, Cetshwayo’s constant and bitter opponent, is simply an expression of opinions from its own point of view [3466, p. 130]:—

“The open-air meeting on Saturday,” says the *Mercury*, “was an unqualified demonstration of public opinion adverse to Cetshwayo’s restoration, and yet not quite unqualified, for there was just sufficient opposition to emphasise the force and fulness of the prevailing sentiment.” And again, “So far as the meeting is concerned, therefore, the result is this: That a formally convened assemblage of several hundred townspeople decided not only to protest against Cetshwayo’s restoration, but pledged themselves to offer continued resistance to his return. . . . The ‘premier constituency’ of this Colony was asked to declare itself upon this question, and the response has been one which no home ministry can lightly disregard or override. Durban at any rate does not want to see Cetshwayo restored, and will do its best to prevent his getting back to Zululand.”

This is decided language, but, perhaps, it rather loses its force on comparing the *Mercury’s* “several hundred townspeople,” with an item from the census for 1882, from which we learn that, in that year, the white population of the Borough of Durban numbered 7774 [*ibid.*, p. 131].

The second extract given in the Blue Book is taken from the *Mercantile Advertiser*, and is a more careful report of what occurred at the meeting. It runs as follows [3466, p. 131]:—

Natal Mercantile Advertiser, August 8th, 1882:—“The open-air meeting held last Saturday afternoon for the purpose of protesting against the return of Cetshwayo to Zululand at one time appeared likely to become a complete failure. At the beginning of the meeting, and when Mr. Robinson rose to propose the protest, there could not have been more than between 150 and 200 people present. There was no sign whatever of enthusiasm, the meeting opening very flat indeed. Even Mr. Robinson failed to raise a cheer in the earlier part of his speech, though the great bulk of those present were undoubtedly his personal supporters. It seemed to be taken for granted that the protest he had to propose would be passed without opposition, and as a matter of course. But presently it

got whispered about that an amendment was to be proposed, and this whisper awakened an interest that had previously been lacking. When Mr. Escombe made his appearance, and it became known that he was to move the amendment this interest increased, and as the ordinary Saturday sales concluded, the people left them and came over to the meeting. Thus the numbers of those present were, towards the end, considerably increased, though still there was a conspicuous absence of very many of our leading townsmen. Comparatively few of these were, in fact, present, even some of those who had signed the requisition to the Mayor asking him to call the meeting, not putting in an appearance. The platform was occupied only by the two Members for the Borough, the Messieurs Escombe and Hartley, Mr. Robinson, the Mayor, and ex-Mayor, and the Town Clerk. The resolution moved by Mr. Robinson and the amendment proposed by Mr. Escombe, together with Mr. Pinson's revolutionary motion, appeared in the report of the meeting published yesterday, so that our readers have already been able to form their own opinion upon them. Mr. Robinson did not support his resolution by any arguments. In fact he stated at the opening of his address that the meeting was not a meeting for argument. It was called simply in order to make a protest, and Mr. Escombe was perfectly right when he pointed out that the bulk of those present had come there for that set purpose, that is to make a protest. Mr. Escombe evidently did not expect to get any support for his amendment. When he rose to speak, the tactics adopted by Mr. Robinson's supporters at the late election were repeated. Mr. Escombe was interrupted at every sentence; a few of Mr. Robinson's friends making themselves conspicuous by the open manner in which they kept up the interruption. They did not gain much by this line of conduct at the late election, and they gained nothing more by it on Saturday than to disgust those who had gone to the meeting prepared to listen quietly to what had to be said on the one side or the other. Of course they carried their protest, and it was quite right that they should do so. They were there for the purpose, and they had a perfect right to protest. But Mr. Escombe also gained his point, which was to show that there is a difference of opinion in the Borough on the subject in relation to which the meeting was called, and to prevent, as far as he could, misleading telegrams in reference to the meeting being sent to England. Our own opinion of the meeting is that it will not have much effect one way or the other on the question at issue. It was not a meeting of a kind calculated to create an

effect. It was too noisy, and the spirit of intolerance of opposition was too much manifested by those who went there to support the protest. The references made to England, both in some of the speeches made and in the interruptions of the hearers, were such as loyal Englishmen should never have uttered. They were not only disloyal and discreditable to Englishmen, but were lowering to the character and prestige of the people of that nation. Had they come from the mouths of avowed Fenians they could not have been more anti-English or seditious. 'What is England's guarantee worth?' 'How can we trust England?' were the common exclamations made by the crowd. Derisive laughter greeted every reference to the honour or the good faith of England, and if there were any foreigners present they must have been profoundly impressed with the strange exhibition of disrespect for their own nation and Government made by the British colonists assembled. Could a faithful report of the meeting reach England it would destroy any little effect the passing of the protest might otherwise have, because no one could attach any importance to a gathering where so partisan and one-sided a feeling was exhibited. It is to be regretted that the meeting was of that kind. It is to be regretted that a fairer hearing was not given to the speakers who were opposed to the protest. They had a right to such a hearing, and nothing was to be gained by attempting to hoot them down, or by interrupting them because what they said was not palatable to the majority of those present. The object of the meeting, however, was so far gained that the protesting resolution was passed, and it remains now to be seen what will follow. A poll of the borough was demanded by the mover of the amendment; but the Mayor, instead of at once granting it, said he would take time to consider.* We do not suppose it will matter much whether the poll takes place or not, but we repeat that it would have greatly added to the effect of the meeting, and more favourably impressed those who went there as spectators, had a more tolerant disposition been manifested by the supporters of the mover of the protesting resolution. Nothing, in the end, is ever gained by intolerance."

From this account it would seem that the *Mercury* assumes more in its last sentence, "Durban at any rate does not want to see Cetshwayo back, &c.," than

* The Mayor was, perhaps, wise from his point of view.

it had grounds for, and that even Durban public opinion was by no means unanimous.*

Again, on August 16th [*ibid.*, p. 133], Sir Henry Bulwer forwarded a memorial from the people of

* The editor of the *Natal Mercury* has always arrogated to himself the right of representing the general opinion of the Natal colonists, yet he lost his seat in the Legislative Council in 1882, when this question of Cetshwayo's return had been made, as it were, the watchword of his party. His right to figure as the representative of colonial feeling had previously been disputed on more than one occasion. A letter from the present writer, which appeared in the *Times* of September 6th, 1881, contains the following paragraph:—

“Mr. Robinson strikes the favourite key-note of that portion of the colonists whom he represents when he recommends that a hut-tax should be imposed on the Zulu people to satisfy their ‘eager craving . . . to pay tribute,’ of which unnatural appetite no one, I think, ever heard before, unless it is a new version of their earnest entreaty to be allowed to ransom their King. A certain part of the colonial community cannot endure the notion of a black man who is not obliged to pay hut-tax to the whites, and before the Zulu war the imposition of such a tax upon the free Zulu people was one of the special advantages counted upon by colonial ‘Jingoes.’ But if Mr. Robinson really believes that he represents colonial feeling and opinion on the subject of the Zulu King and the future settlement of Zululand, he will find, on his return to Natal, that he has slipped behind his age. When one of the most influential colonial journals can express itself as strongly on behalf of Cetshwayo as did the *Natal Witness* of the 23rd of July—speaking of such restoration as the victory [to be] of ‘truth and right’—it is time for the editor of the *Natal Mercury* to leave off informing the British public that he represents colonial feeling.”

Without supposing that Mr. Robinson's electoral defeat a year later was *caused* by his Zulu policy, or proved any particular desire on the part of the electors to support the Zulu King's cause, it cannot be doubted that, if their feeling on this point had been as strong and unanimous as he makes out, they would not have rejected as a legislator the man who had been, throughout, Cetshwayo's most persistent opponent.

Newcastle to the effect that, in their opinion, "the past history of Cetshwayo affords no guarantee of future peaceable government by him, that any pledges given by him in this respect cannot be relied upon, and that his return to Zululand will be detrimental to the peace of this colony, and the adjoining states. We feel assured," they continue, "that such return must lead to the organisation of a Zulu army which would, as before, be a standing menace to this colony, the population of which is wholly inadequate to cope with such a force." In conclusion they "therefore respectfully beg that Y. E. will be pleased to convey" these their views to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State to the Colonies, &c."

This protest, coming from people so much nearer to possible danger from the Zulus, is proportionately more temperate in its form, and although distinctly expressing the opinions of those who sign it, it bases its objections to the Zulu King upon his "*past history*." This circumstance, and the prophecy that Cetshwayo's return would lead to the organisation of a Zulu army which would be a "standing menace" to the colony *as before*, at least leaves others to judge of the said "past history" for themselves, and to form their own conclusions as to the reality of the supposed "standing menace" to Natal.

Meanwhile, it is a curious fact that from Greytown, the place, perhaps, more than any other in Natal which would be exposed to danger in the event of a Zulu attack upon Natal, no protest against Cetsh-

wayo could be obtained at all, and a correspondent, writing from Natal [*Daily News*, September 3rd, 1882], says, "You will see that the public meetings against Cetshwayo's return cannot be considered successful, and that people really seem to be making up their minds to it. Of course, the Jingoës have met together at different places, and resolved and protested, but at Greytown they stopped their own meeting lest it should bless Cetshwayo altogether;" and the editor adds, "It appears that the projected meeting was not held at Greytown because the groups of Dutch farmers and others who had assembled outside the hall gave emphatic expression to their opinion that it was desirable to restore the ex-king."

On August 26th, 1882, Dunn sent another protest to Lord Kimberley on the same subject, in which he kindly offers to instruct the Home Government on the subject of *British prestige* in South Africa [3466, p. 154], and predicts that bloodshed will follow Cetshwayo's return, enforcing his meaning by the remark that "*your Lordship can hardly expect us to relinquish our claims.*"

The *Natal Mercury* of December 20th, 1881, says, "He (Dunn) affirmed emphatically that, so far as he and his people were concerned, Cetshwayo should not come into Zululand across the Tugela, and that, having possession of the country, he meant to stick to it," and the editor of that paper said at the Durban meeting before mentioned, that Dunn would "resist the landing of Cetshwayo"; but all this was idle boasting, since the people under Dunn would

welcome, and not "resist" Cetshwayo's return, while of Dunn's personal adherents, renegade or refugee Zulus, aliens and whites, he could not have raised a band worth mentioning, unless assisted by the Natal Government, i. e. (to the minds of the Zulus) British influence.* Dunn said openly to a gentleman in Durban, "as soon as I get sight of Cetshwayo, I'll shoot him."

A protest from the "Lower Tugela Division, Planters' Association" [*ibid.*, p. 165], forwarded by Sir Henry Bulwer on September 2nd, is to the effect that "This Association feels certain that the break up of the Zulu power and removal of Cetshwayo was in all respects necessary, and consequently the return of Cetshwayo is unrighteous and dangerous," which opinion, as it had long been generally decided in England that the said "break up" and "removal"

* For evidence of the King's opponents in Zululand being in the minority before British influence was thrown into the scale against him by Sir Henry Bulwer, take the following sentence from a letter to the *Mercury* of January 16th, 1882, written by one whom that inveterate opponent of Cetshwayo calls a "well-informed correspondent":—"What was the use of appointing chiefs over subjects who were sure to set their authority at defiance? Ntshingwayo could not raise more than 50 followers, Mgojana 100, and Mfanawendhlela about 100. They have each thousands in their districts, consisting of Mnyamana's, Ndabuko's, Ziwedu's, Masipula's (&c., &c.) people," i. e. all people who desired Cetshwayo's return. And a trader in Zululand writes to the *Mercury* (same date): "I have in Dunnsland inquired privately from the people whether they would be pleased to receive their King back again, and they one and all, without exception, say 'Yes.' Ask them 'Why?' and the general answer is simply because he is their hereditary King, and their hearts are with him wherever he may be, and they would like him to be again at the head of the country."

had been quite unnecessary and most unjust, was not likely to produce much effect. The petitioners in this case requested Sir H. Bulwer "*to refuse permission for Cetshwayo to land in Natal,*" thereby showing a singular ignorance of the limited extent of the Governor's (direct) powers * in supposing that he could openly refuse to permit anything that England might order.

Next in order followed a protest from "the undersigned inhabitants of the city of Pietermaritzburg, and its vicinity" [3466, p. 170], signed by 425 people, and forwarded by Sir Henry Bulwer on September 5th. This, again, dwells upon the "ideas of military aggression and conquest which for years" had, they said, made the Zulus under Cetshwayo "a source of disquietude and dread to the neighbouring territories," of all which there is no trace until 1878, and then only in Sir Bartle Frere's despatches.†

* Unhappily the Governor's *indirect* powers have been made only too manifest by the manner in which he has thwarted England's good intentions, and practically prevented Cetshwayo's restoration, even after it had been ordered by the Home Government.

† Sir T. Shepstone wrote in 1874 [1137, p. 6], that since the nomination of Cetshwayo as his father's successor the benefits of "quiet to the Zulu country, and relief to this colony from the continual apprehension of fresh disturbances," had, "with the exception of a serious alarm, which turned out to have no real foundation, continued to this day," the Natal Government having been able "to arrange amicably every difficulty, and to maintain peaceful and even cordial relations during twenty-seven years' close contact with the Zulus" [*ibid.*, p. 18]. While Sir Bartle Frere, writing of the state of things on the Natal border in 1878, says, "Few things struck me more than the evident haste and temporary character of the defensive measures undertaken by the English

Again, on October 23rd, the Governor forwards the same memorial, signed this time by "a number (396) of the inhabitants of the colony of Natal" [*ibid.*, p. 215].

On November 4th Sir Henry Bulwer sends another from "the inhabitants of Alexandra and Alfred Counties"* [*ibid.*, p. 222], who, being a long way from the border, and well out of the way of the supposed danger, write of course "in great consternation," 101 persons being found to express themselves thus forcibly out of a white population of 1166.

On December 28th Dunn writes another appeal, which is only worth mentioning on account of two singular and untruthful statements which it contains. The first is that "a few months since a few of the people residing in my territory *were persuaded by emissaries of Bishop Colenso* to go to Natal and agitate for Cetshwayo's return," and the second runs thus: "For myself I may say that in good faith of my position I have been too liberal, and saved nothing." The first assertion is in allusion to the great deputation [see vol. i. chap. vii.], and, in

part of the population" [2318, p. 32], the fact being that for many years past the border farmers had been so undisturbed that they never thought "defensive measures" necessary until it was put into their heads by Sir Bartle Frere.

* Sir H. Bulwer's covering despatch mentions Alexandra County only, but the petition itself is from "the undersigned inhabitants of the counties of Alexandra and Alfred." These two counties are the furthest removed from Zululand, "Alfred" especially being a corner which runs down into (free) Kaffraria, to the south of Natal.

reply to it, it is only necessary to remind the reader that the Bishop never sent any emissaries to Zululand for that or any other purpose, and to refer to his own answer to that accusation [Appendix C. to vol. i.].

As to the second statement—Mr. Osborn, the British Resident in Zululand, writes to Sir Henry Bulwer on August 2nd, 1882 [3466, p. 165], that Chief Dunn had reported to him that “the total amount of hut-tax received by him from the people in his territory,” was, for the year 1880, at 5s. a hut, 2468*l.*; for 1881, at 10s. per hut (which was to be the permanent rate), 5101*l.* Supposing, therefore, that he received the same in 1882 as in 1881 (after which latter date his chieftainship came to an end), he had obtained from the Zulus the sum of 12,670*l.* Added to this large amount—in itself a fortune to a man in Dunn’s class of life—would be the cattle which he frequently levied by fines, and the full value of the large herd of magnificent animals, “royal cattle,” which he was allowed to purchase from Government at a very low rate * after the Zulu war [*ibid.*, p. 233].

As to the “building, tree-planting, and other improvements” on which he declares that he had “expended large sums of money” [*ibid.*, p. 270], they do not appear ever to have been visible to the naked eye, and in reply to the Resident’s question on the subject, Dunn says, “Particulars as to the purpose to which the revenue so obtained is applied

* It is said of his own fixing.

over the total annual expenditure under each head of appropriation I am unable to give,* as I have used the same as a general fund for salaries, general expenses, and for road-making;” while his warm supporter the *Natal Mercury* is only able to harp feebly on the said “roads.” The “salaries” of his few white underlings and personal followers, and such rough dwelling-places for them as the habits and resources of the country would admit of, or render necessary, can have made but a small hole in over 5000*l.* a year, while the term “general expenses” has a vague

* The wording of this sentence, except the last five words, would appear to have been taken from the Resident’s own question.

The *Natal Witness*, June 27th, commenting on this reply, remarks:—

“A delightful account, reminding one very much of the statement made by Sir Epicure Mammon in the ‘Alchemist,’ after he was asked how he intended to apply the money he obtained, after all his pots and pans had been turned into gold; he should spend it, he said, ‘in marrying poor virgins, building almshouses, and now and then a church.’”

“And now and then a road,” says John Dunn.

“But” continues the *Witness*, “what more concerns us is Sir H. Bulwer’s comment on John Dunn’s statement. . . .

“‘With reference to this tax, your Lordship will have learned from my General Report on the Zulu question that it is not one which, in my opinion, the chief John Dunn had any power to levy under the terms subject to which he received his chieftainship.’ This was Sir H. Bulwer’s deliberately stated opinion. The question will be asked—Did the Colonial Office venture in any way to censure John Dunn for thus acting? The reply must be—No! not so much as by a word.”

N.B.—But John Dunn by his massacre of Sitimela’s people, Hamu by that of the Aba Qulusi, and Zibebu by that of the Usutus, forfeited their chieftainships far more flagrantly than by any taxes, yet Zibebu was left in possession when Cetshwayo was—*not* restored.

sound of importance, for which, however, there is nothing to show. Possibly the introduction of the word "household" would make it more comprehensible, Dunn's households being numerous and large, though their members can hardly have been accustomed even to such luxury as is obtainable in Natal. A really detailed and accurate account of what Dunn has done with the 12,670*l.* to which he acknowledges would be interesting, and, probably, instructive.*

The number of the Durban petitioners is not given in the Blue Book, their "resolution" being passed at a public meeting, and, therefore, signed only by the chairman, but the *Mercury*, which was sure not to understate it, speaks of "several hundred" townspeople as agreeing to it, and the *Advertiser* says that, during the earlier part of the meeting, "there could not have been more than between 150 and 200 people present," but that when it "got whispered about that an amendment was to be proposed" a fresh interest was awakened, and that "as the ordinary Saturday sales concluded the people left them and came over to the meeting." This does

* The *Natal Mercury* of December 20th, 1881, says, "Quite a little commotion was caused outside the Standard Bank in Durban yesterday morning by the arrival of a consignment of cash from Chief John Dunn's territory. The money was contained in a large iron safe, which lay on the top of a bullock waggon, and was carefully wrapped round with canvas and blankets. It had been well guarded all the way *through the colony* [author's italics] by Zulus armed with assegais. . . . The safe contained between 5000*l.* and 10,000*l.*, and this was tax money."

not look like a very eager interest on the part of the townspeople, and probably the "300," roughly guessed as the number actually present, will cover the whole.

The Newcastle petition appears also signed by the chairman of the meeting only, and the address of the Planters' Association the same, and the proportions in these two latter cases of petitioners and inhabitants can only be inferred from that in all other cases. The following table of comparisons will give a clear result, the "populations" being taken from the *Natal Almanac* for 1884, which gives the results of the census for 1882, the year in question, and the total population of the Colony being returned as 30,296.

<i>White Population 1882.</i>		<i>Petitioners against Cetshwayo.</i>	
Durban (borough of)	7,774	Durban, "several hundred,"	300
Maritzburg (borough of)	} 9,278	Maritzburg, and its vicinity	425
Maritzburg (vicinity of)			
Alexandra and Alfred			
	<u>18,218</u>		<u>826</u>

Taking, therefore, the sum of petitioners given, against that of the corresponding "populations," and leaving out on both sides the separate counties whose petitioners are not numbered, we find that not 4.54 per cent. of the colonists feared Cetshwayo enough to try and prevent his return.* And it is not to be supposed that the 396 *inhabitants*

* These calculations are entered into because so much capital has been made, throughout the Zulu difficulty, by politicians adverse to Cetshwayo, of the supposed *universal fears* of the colonists, an argument, of all others, the most likely to influence

of *Natal* (mentioned on p. 27 *supra*) are over and above the 300 Durban and 425 Maritzburg people, for this is plainly not the case. The signers of this third indeed can hardly be reckoned separately, since most, if not all of them, must either have signed the Maritzburg petition, or have been amongst those who attended the Durban meeting. The seven names given in the Blue Book as attached to the memorial of the "Inhabitants of Natal" [3466, p. 214], are those of Durban men, well known as Cetshwayo's opponents, the first mentioned being that of the editor of the *Mercury*, who was the prime mover in the matter of the Durban meeting, and another is the Mayor of Durban, mentioned in the extract from the *Advertiser*. The fresh style and title of "inhabitants of the *Colony*" gives the impression of a fresh petition from a new set of people, but plainly the impression is erroneous.

But the above calculation gives, after all, a very unfair advantage to the petitioners, since it includes just those towns where their proportions were largest.

Victoria county has a white population of 2024, and, although the members of the "Planters' Associa-

the kindly British breast. But the argument is a fictitious one. The majority of the Colonists had no genuine fears at all (except just *during* the war, which was a matter of course, and hardly the fault of the *Zulus*), and of those who really were afraid the greater part were so because they had been told that there was cause for fear, and without one grain of reason, proof, or justification.

tion" who protest from thence are not given, they cannot be very many. Umvoti county numbers 1600 Europeans, and, although the part of Natal most exposed in case of a Zulu invasion, it was silent altogether, its capital, Greytown, declining to protest. Klip River county, again, of which Newcastle is the capital, has 2908 white inhabitants, and, although we are not given the number of Newcastle petitioners, we may readily suppose it to have been much in the same proportion as in the other districts of Natal. There remain, unrepresented, two counties, Weenen, containing 1510 European souls, and the Umsinga division, which only numbers 524 whites.

But in spite of the necessary incompleteness of these calculations (since the author has no means of learning the number of names signed to some of these petitions), the main point appears to be amply proved, namely, that only a most insignificant minority of Natal colonists had sufficient genuine fear, or hatred* of the Zulu King to cause them to exert themselves in the smallest degree to prevent his restoration to the position which he had held before the Zulu war.

It will be seen then at a glance how small a proportion of the colonists after all had any active feeling against Cetshwayo, although every possible recruit to the number of his opponents was beaten up by those who headed the movement. On the other hand, it is probable that had petitions in his favour been prepared, and ably worked, quite as

* In this case frequently an entirely different thing from fear.

many Natalians would have signed them, while there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that if all those who knew, or cared, too little about the subject to have any opinion of their own upon it had been counted, they would have proved to be a very large majority, which could not possibly have been the case had there been any real grounds for public dread of Cetshwayo's return.

But the King's friends trusted to the sense of justice of the Home Government, and made no attempt to produce any popular demonstration on his behalf; those who agitated against Cetshwayo were the comparatively few who are rightly termed the "noisy party," and who apparently express public feeling because, as a matter of fact, the majority are too busy, too ignorant, or too indifferent to contradict them.

Even amongst those who signed these protests against the King's restoration it may be safely asserted that a considerable number could give no clear account of the reasons for their objections, while it is equally probable that most of those who could do so, if pressed to substantiate their accusations, would have to fall back upon Sir Bartle Frere's long-exploded indictment, or else upon stories gathered from traders in Zululand, and either dating back to the time before Cetshwayo's reign, or, if referred to a later date, travellers' tales unsifted and unproved, perhaps pure inventions, or, more often, monstrous distortions and exaggerations of actual facts.

A few extracts from the local papers at the time will show the feeling which the editors endeavoured to keep up amongst the colonists, of whom those who had the sense to think for themselves were too indifferent or too timid to express themselves in public.

The *Natal Mercury*, always foremost in mischief, contained the following on May 20th, 1882:—

“The mind of Parliament had doubtless been disturbed by the news of the Zulu invasion,* which was so promptly repelled by his Excellency the Governor, and a question was asked . . . in the House of Commons on the subject of the proposed visit of Cetshwayo to England. . . . The Hon. Evelyn Ashley answered the question, and said that the visit would be postponed, as its projection had led to intrigues in Zululand.† . . . The Colony is probably indebted to Sir Henry Bulwer’s representations for this change of front. . . . If this surmise be correct His Excellency will have earned the most sincere gratitude of all classes of the people.”

Again, the *Natal Witness* of June 20th says that—

“It is satisfactory to learn that Sir Henry Bulwer’s action has been successful (in putting off the King’s visit to England), and, if report be true, Sir Henry is now convinced that it would be most undesirable to restore the ex-King to power. We hope, for the sake of the Natal colonists, as well as for the future of the Zulu country, that this is the case.”

Again, the *Times of Natal* (the Government organ and “brother” to the *Mercury*) says, on May 22nd:—

“We believe that we are indebted to the foresight of His Excellency Sir Henry Bulwer for the cheering news received

* This absurd expression alludes to the quiet and unarmed Great Deputation (see vol. i. p. 187).

† This statement has been contradicted, and, it is thought, confuted, in vol. i.

yesterday respecting the postponement of Cetshwayo's visit to England. . . . The visit of Cetshwayo to England will undoubtedly prove the spoiling of an already spoilt man.* Cetshwayo will come back from England—if he ever goes there—more impressed with the supreme importance of Cetshwayo than the importance of the English nation.† Any delay, therefore, is an admirable arrangement, profitable alike to Cetshwayo and to the Colony of Natal, to the Transvaal, and to Zululand. Sir Henry Bulwer in representing this matter in its true light to the Home authorities has earned the gratitude of three communities,‡ and distinctly deserves their thanks. Could His Excellency persuade the Imperial Government that the best and safest, and, in fact, only reasonable course to pursue towards Cetshwayo is to keep him at the Oude Molen [his Capetown prison] for life, and permit those who admire the bloodthirsty old reprobate to visit and bow the knee to, and pay their homage to his ex-majesty, Sir Henry Bulwer would gain the unbounded gratitude of the Zulus, Boers, and Natalians.”

It is needless to repeat, what must be well known to every reader, that the coarse abuse of the *Times of Natal* quoted above was utterly undeserved by the unhappy but noble-minded Zulu King. Upon that subject England has been thoroughly undeceived, and no longer needs to be told that Cetshwayo was *not* a “bloodthirsty old reprobate.”

Some of the English papers at the same time displayed a very different spirit, and one of them,

* The history of the Zulu war and of Cetshwayo's captivity furnishes a strange picture of “spoiling,” truly!

† There is not the faintest ground for this sneer beyond the popular resentment that a “black man,” of whatever rank and worth, should ever be treated as anything but a “nigger.”

‡ This is a rash statement since Zululand persistently cried for the King's return, and the Transvaal Government had asked for it “as an act of justice and to prevent bloodshed,” urging that for the sake of peace and quiet on their own eastern border it should be brought about as speedily as possible.

after quoting a dozen touching passages from his letters, concludes—

“But we have quoted enough to show what manner of man Cetshwayo is. Comment is needless. The disgraceful intrigues which led to the Zulu war are known to all. No member of the present Government, at all events, will deny that the ex-King was treated shamefully at our hands. And no one who reads the correspondence now published can deny that that shameful treatment did not end with his hunt and capture after Ulundi.”*

* No! indeed, for it ended only with his life.

CHAPTER II.

ON the 12th of July, 1883, Cetshwayo was allowed to leave Capetown on his visit to England. He was accompanied by three chiefs, Umkosana, Ungobazana, and Ngcongswana,* and two attendants, his new interpreter, Mr. R. Dunn,† and Mr. H. Shepstone as custodian during his journey and stay in England. The Union Company steamer *Arab* conveyed the King and his party from Capetown, and considerable public interest was shown in the ship and her important passenger. His departure was witnessed by a large number of persons, most of whom had assembled on the wharf at an earlier hour. The crowd, which was every moment increasing, waited patiently for about an hour and a half, and as the time for the steamer's departure approached, it was feared that there might, after all, be some truth in a rumour that Cetshwayo would not embark at the docks, but be taken quietly round to the steamer by boat, after she had got outside the Bay. The arrival of the

* In vol. i. will be found an account of these chiefs, *vide index* to that vol.

† Mr. R. Dunn is no relation to Chief John Dunn, but was a stranger to the King, who would much have preferred his old friend, Mr. Samuelson.

King's luggage excited fresh interest, and at four o'clock the carriages containing the party appeared, escorted by a guard of honour furnished by the Cavalry Volunteers. One is glad to learn from the local papers at the time that there was good feeling enough in this Capetown crowd to elicit a cheer as the Zulu King passed through it. The newspapers, unwilling, as usual, to accord anything more than half sarcastic respect to a *coloured* man of any rank, used the expression, a "most *good-natured* cheer," but one may believe that there were men present who were really capable of appreciating the true nobility and undeserved yet bravely borne suffering of the Zulu King, and cheered him with honest enthusiasm, and not merely with "good-natured" indulgence to the feelings of a savage, or "half savage, half child," as Cetshwayo has been called by some ill-informed persons.

The Capetown press, indeed, was terribly afraid of committing itself to anything beyond half-contemptuous tolerance, such as a man might render not only to the child or savage, but even to the intelligent brute; but there was little or no active enmity to Cetshwayo at the Cape. The majority were indifferent to his fate; others, while secretly acknowledging his claim to both pity and respect, had not courage to espouse an unpopular cause (i. e. that of the black man), and thereby to lay themselves open to the contemptuous charge of negrophilism. A carefully aimed sneer has extinguished many a good but weak sentiment of humanity in foolish shame,

and no doubt there were such influences at work in Capetown against the Zulu king at this and other times, or surely he would not have spent three long years in miserable and neglected captivity, close to a populous and wealthy town. The newspaper accounts of the care taken on board the *Arab* to render Cetshwayo's voyage as comfortable and pleasant as might be, contrast singularly with the absence of all ordinary consideration for him during his long captivity. Lady Florence Dixie writes of the latter as follows: *—

“Surely it is something more than negligence that this unfortunate man should be denied common necessities of comfort. I was informed by one high in official quarters not long since that 1200*l.* a year was expended on the maintenance of Cetshwayo. If this is the case the King surely receives no benefit from it; a due inquiry should be made as to the manner in which his wants are supplied. It is not the first time that I have called attention to the disgraceful neglect of this unfortunate man, whose location would hardly be fit for the meanest pauper—dismal, dark, and bare rooms, without any ornaments of any kind. The room allotted to the women is a disgrace, and this I can affirm, having seen it with my own eyes. That the King has no friends in the Office for Native Affairs is well known, his requests are shamefully neglected, and if he asks for anything, weeks, and even months, elapse before he can obtain it. The women are kept in a kind of imprisonment; permission has been refused them to visit Capetown, although they offered to pay their own expenses out of their earnings; and when some pitying friend wished to enliven the dreary solitude of Oude-Molen by a display of fireworks—a pleasure to which the King, his women, and Langalibalele looked forward with expectation and eagerness—permission was refused by the Under-Secretary. The objections given were that they did not want recreation, and they had freedom enough. Cetshwayo's daily life at Oude-Molen is full of annoyance, his requests are unheeded, and his wants unattended to.”

* *Vanity Fair*, reprinted *Times of Natal*, March 29th.

There have been many contradictory reports published about the treatment of Cetshwayo during his captivity, some asserting, as above, that he was neglected and ill-used, others declaring that he was better off than he had ever been in his life before, and that his prison-house was in every respect luxurious in comparison with his habitations in Zululand. The present writer visited him at the end of 1882, and confirms in every respect Lady Florence Dixie's account of the wretched accommodation afforded him. The house at Oude-Molen was a rough farm building, of the sort put up by early settlers in a new country, and very different from the comfortable Anglicised dwellings of well-to-do people in Capetown. Yet, such as it was, some expense in furnishing, &c., would have rendered it habitable enough, but nothing of the kind had been attempted so late as November 1882. Four bare walls,* a bare floor, and bare window, a rude table and one or two hard chairs, was all the furniture possessed by the king's reception room, while the women's apartment boasted even less. Not the faintest attempt had been made at comfort, decoration, or anything but the barest shelter, and nothing could well be more forlorn than the appearance of the whole place within and without, if the *distant view*, of which so much is said by some reporters, be left out.

The stories making out that the king was well off, in all respects compatible with his exile from Zulu-

* Bare except for the Queen's portrait, so frequently mentioned by visitors to Oude-Molen.

land, have been somewhat deceptive to the English reader on the following account. Those who have given them have chosen to regard a Zulu—any Zulu, even the King—as essentially inferior in every respect to the lowest white man, and have therefore declared that what would be sufficient for the wants of the latter must of necessity mean luxury to the former, and they have supported their theory by reference to the habits of even the greatest Zulus in their own country. The man who has been used to creep into his hut on all-fours, and to sit in an atmosphere dim with smoke for want of a chimney, who never handled a fork in his life, and knows no more of the use of the ordinary necessaries of civilised existence than do the Transvaal Boers,* must, it is argued, fancy himself in Paradise on being transferred to the humblest European dwelling. But this is a mistake, and one showing great ignorance of the immense variety in ideas of comfort which exists even amongst the civilised inhabitants of the globe. The Scotchman is starved at an English breakfast, the Englishman for lack of one in France or Italy; the Frenchman or Italian thinks tea and coffee, port and sherry a poor substitute for the copious draughts of thin light wine which form the beverage of his first meal in his own country. How much more, then, must such differences exist between English

* Who are reported, by some of those present, to have been greatly puzzled at the first British Government House dinner-party in Pretoria, as to the proper use of their table-napkins, and finally, with one accord, to have used them in lieu of pocket-handkerchiefs.

and Zulu notions? Yet it is not, therefore, to be supposed that the height of Zulu comfort must necessarily be inferior to the poorest European style.

The door of the royal hut may be low, but the abode within is roomy and scrupulously clean.* The floor is smooth and polished; on every side are spread fine white mats, and thick, soft blankets lie at hand ready for use, something after the fashion of a Turkish divan. Again, the diet of a Zulu chief might seem plain and monotonous to the European palate, but it is, at all events, the best of its kind. Cetshwayo's wants might be few and simple in his native land, but at least they were instantly supplied. The bare rooms and little wooden chair at Oude-Molen were a poor exchange for the simple comfort and entire ease of Ulundi; and since it was not possible to reproduce the latter at the Cape, those who held the King captive should surely have endeavoured to replace them by something of the luxury of civilisation enjoyed by the superior portion of the European inhabitants of Capetown, such as curtains, carpets, lounges and easy chairs, bright pictures, and the like.

That Cetshwayo's wishes were little considered may readily be gathered from official behaviour on the subject of his visitors. A great show was made, indeed, of consulting his feelings by careful exclu-

* It is said that, during a visit from Sir B. Frere to his victim, Cetshwayo, being repeatedly pressed by his visitor to say if he wished for anything, at last remarked, looking round upon the bare boarded floor, that he would like it to be made *a little cleaner*.

sion of all mere sightseers, and this was right, of course, the King having the greatest aversion to being made the object of idle curiosity. But the rule, enforced with so much parade on this account, was allowed to cut both ways, which would not have been the case had the motive been really consideration for Cetshwayo's feelings. The very friends who, it was well known, would have been his most welcome visitors, were excluded from his presence on the pretence of strict adherence to the rule laid down, while some of his bitterest foes—for instance, the editor of the *Natal Mercury*, who had not the smallest claim to an exception in his favour—were admitted.

On the 25th of September, 1879, Sir Bartle Frere personally refused Mr. F. E. Colenso and his sister, the present writer, permission to visit Cetshwayo, although the High Commissioner knew what a pleasure such a visit would have been to the prisoner in his great misery, nor, indeed, was the King even told that they had asked leave to see him, but was left to suppose himself neglected. "I heard of your passing through Capetown," he said on a later occasion, "and as you did not come to see me, I thought that even the children of *Sobantu* * had forgotten me."

The following is the "minute" sent by Sir Bartle Frere, in reply to Mr. Colenso's request:—

"*Minute.*

Government House, Sept. 25th, 1879.

I regret I cannot at present give any one permission to visit Cetshwayo. He is, as Mr. Colenso is aware, a prisoner of war, and,

* *Sobantu*, "the Father of the people," i. e. the Bishop of Natal.

until proclamation of peace,* or her Majesty's pleasure regarding Cetshwayo be otherwise known, all intercourse with him must be regulated by the orders of the General Commanding Her Majesty's Forces in the Field, to whom all application to communicate with the prisoner should be referred.

(Signed) H. B. E. FRERE,
Governor."

Since, by the "General Commanding Her Majesty's forces in the field" Sir Bartle Frere meant Sir Garnet Wolseley, then in Zululand or Natal, and since Sir Bartle was perfectly well aware that Mr. and Miss Colenso were on their way to England, merely remaining at Capetown for the few days' delay necessitated by the arrangements of the mail steamers, the above suggestion was a mere farce, and the "minute" meant nothing less than a flat refusal to the individual applicants. But were this fact not sufficiently palpable, it is distinctly stated in a despatch which Sir Bartle Frere had occasion to write at a later date (May 1880), giving some explanations on the subject of visitors who had "been refused admission to see Cetshwayo." On the 18th of May, 1880, he writes to Lord Kimberley as follows [2695, p. 50]:—

"Occasionally admittance is claimed by persons professing to be friends, or well-wishers of Cetshwayo. When the reason assigned is other than sympathetic curiosity, the authorities in charge are necessarily guided by the spirit of their instructions regarding Cetshwayo's safe custody.

"It would obviously be inconsistent with their duty at present

* Sir Garnet Wolseley's interview with the thirteen chiefs whom he had chosen as kinglets took place on September 1st, 1879, when the chiefs in question signed the conditions he offered them.

to give facilities for intercourse with those whose purpose is to embarrass the Government by obstructing his further detention.

"I know, however, of few such instances of refusal. One was that of Mr. Mullins,* a notorious gun-runner, who had been convicted in Natal, and suffered a term of imprisonment with hard labour, for smuggling guns and selling them to Cetshwayo. On being refused permission to see him he attempted to elude the sentry, and to communicate with Cetshwayo on the ramparts of the castle ditch.

"The other case related to members of Dr. Colenso's family.† One of them applied to see Cetshwayo just after his arrival, and was referred, like all other applicants, to the military authorities. I am not aware whether any further application was made, in consequence, to the General or any of his officers;‡ but on a subsequent occasion, I am told another of Dr. Colenso's family applied to see Cetshwayo without obtaining permission, and the result was, I think, inevitable. It will be in the recollection of Her Majesty's Government that some time before the Zulu War Sir Henry Bulwer declined to permit Mr. Colenso, [an English barrister and] an advocate at the Natal bar, to interfere in his communications with Cetshwayo, and his refusal was, I believe, entirely approved by Her Majesty's Government. Whether what has since been done by Dr. Colenso and members of his family in matters relating to Cetshwayo is or is not of a nature to induce any reasonable person to suppose that their interference in any question affecting Cetshwayo would conduce to his happiness, or to harmonious relations between him and the Government, I must leave to Her Majesty's Government to decide." §

* An account of the real facts of this case from the pen of Mr. Mullins' counsel will be found in the Appendix to this volume.

† Sir Bartle Frere here alludes to the Bishop of Natal, not to his son, Dr. R. J. Colenso, M.B., who, on his way from England to Natal, tried in vain to see the King on the second occasion mentioned.

‡ Sir Bartle Frere could hardly have been unaware that application to the General was impossible under the circumstances, and if the words "any of his officers" meant to imply that application might have been made to officers on the spot, at Capetown, it will be observed that there is no hint of the sort in the "memo." sent to Mr. Colenso.

§ Her Majesty's Government did decide it, though not as Sir

Upon this remarkable document several comments will occur to every reader. In the first place it is freely acknowledged that, in the case of the Colensos, referring them "like all other applicants" to the military authorities was a mere pretence, and that it was "inevitable," i. e. especially intended, that they should be excluded. Secondly, it may be observed that Sir Bartle Frere openly classes a man of whom he speaks as a "notorious gun-runner," smuggler, and convict with the Bishop of Natal and his family as being alike dangerous and untrustworthy characters. What had "since been done by Dr. Colenso and members of his family" does not appear, but the expression can only apply at that time (May 18th, 1880) to the following facts. The Bishop had caused a prayer to be read in his churches during the war, which asked for God's mercy for the Zulus as well as for ourselves,* and which possibly was an

Bartle Frere desired. The facts concerning the above refusals were laid before Lord Kimberley, in consequence of which he sent out directions which effectually removed all official opposition to visits from the Bishop of Natal, or members of his family, to the captive King.

* Prayer written by the Bishop of Natal to be used during the continuance of the Zulu war:—

"O Eternal Lord God, through whose inscrutable Providence it has come to pass that the terrible scourge of war is laid by our hands upon a neighbouring people, we humbly commend to Thy mercy all those whose office it is to rule at this time, and all who shall be called to take part in the conflict. Thou knowest, Heavenly Father, what lessons we Christians need to be taught, though it be by suffering even unto death, as well as the ignorant heathen with whom we fight. We pray that in our different stations we may lay to heart Thy Divine teaching, and do our duty

unpatriotic petition in the eyes of some. Again, he had asked permission, in April 1879, to go up to Isandhlwana and bury the dead left upon the battlefield since January 22nd, and had offered to go without armed force, and under a safe-conduct which he would himself obtain from Cetshwayo.* And, finally,

in all things as in Thy sight. O Thou, Who alone art just and right, a God of truth, and without iniquity, watch over, we beseech Thee, all near and dear to us, and all our fellow-men, whether white or black, engaged in this deadly struggle. In Thy wisdom, we pray Thee, Merciful Father, overrule Thou all events for good, and in Thine own time restore to us, and to those whose land we have invaded, the blessings of peace, for Thy Name's sake declared to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

* Lord Chelmsford writes to the Bishop from Utrecht on May 12th, as follows:—

"My Lord,—With reference to our conversation held at Government House, Pietermaritzburg, on the 20th April last, regarding your Lordship's proposal to ask permission of Cetshwayo to be allowed to bury the bodies, or rather bones, of those who fell at Isandhlwana, I have the honour to inform you that I referred the question, according to our agreement, to H.E. the High Commissioner. Owing to both H.E. and myself being on the move, the reply, dated May 1st, only reached me a few days ago.

"Sir Bartle Frere considers that a request such as your Lordship proposed would not be advisable at the present moment, and I cannot help expressing my entire concurrence in that view.

"I need hardly assure your Lordship that the question of burying those who fell so nobly has been continually in my thoughts, and that I am most anxious to have it done as speedily as possible. From reports that I have received I do not believe the work could have been done without risking the health of those employed in the task, until quite lately [N.B. It could have been done safely, in every sense, immediately after the battle]. And now I feel that I could not detach the requisite number of troops without seriously interfering with the operations now going on. I should feel much obliged if your Lordship would explain to any whom you may meet who are interested in the application which your Lordship

he and his had published various statements of facts tending to show that the invasion of Zululand had been unjust and unnecessary. The first great Zulu

made to me, how much I regret that political and military considerations prevent its being complied with.

I remain, my Lord, very faithfully yours,

(Signed) CHELMSFORD, L.G."

It is hardly necessary to point out that the above is a string of weak and worthless excuses. It is a matter of history now that nothing but the utter panic which seized upon the leaders of the remaining British army, upon discovering the destruction of the camp and troops at Isandhlwana, prevented their finding out that the superstitious and national customs of the Zulus rendered that dreadful battle-field safe from them for many days after the battle. Lord Chelmsford might have formed an intrenched camp hard by, and buried his dead at once in perfect safety from attack. It may also be remarked in passing that there was no "requisite number of troops," as the Bishop had offered to go with a native working party only. But the refusal is not surprising. Sir B. Frere would naturally resist any attempt to *treat with Cetshwayo* according to the honourable customs of more chivalrous warfare, or to consider him in any light but that of a wild beast to be hunted down. The decision of the High Commissioner and the General is deeply deplored by many on a special ground; for the discovery of Colonel Durnford's papers (still upon him at that time) by the Bishop of Natal, would have revealed the fact of the false-witness borne against the Colonel, and would have proved that no order to "take command" was ever sent to him, and that the one put forward by Colonel Crealock, and upon the strength of which Lord Chelmsford laid his accusation, and obtained Colonel Durnford's condemnation, was a fabrication after the event. Lord Chelmsford's friends maintain that he himself was unaware of these facts, that he believed he had sent the order to "take command," and acted in good faith in asserting it in the House of Lords. So be it. His Lordship is said to have had a severe fall from his horse, upon his head, a day or two before the disaster, and it may be that some consequent confusion of his faculties had more to do with the fatal mistakes of that unhappy day than has ever