

murder, and of the massacre of women and children in the camps on Bushman's River.*

Flight of
Dingaan.

Dingaan, with the remnants of his army which were still faithful to him in his adversity, was now in full flight northward, to the Swaziland frontier. Pretorius, with a commando of two hundred and fifty horsemen, followed in hot pursuit, while Nongalaza and Sapusa's Zulus, making wide detours in north-westerly and north-easterly directions, attempted to intercept the fallen tyrant at the Pongola river. The country through which the commando travelled was mountainous, and there were numerous caves, forming natural fortresses, into which small bands of the enemy were sometimes driven, and where they were

* "We have all resided in the vicinity of the Zulu capital, where Tambusa lived; every action of his is known to us; and we are prepared solemnly to swear, in the face of that Omniscient God of whom you (white men) have spoken to us, in the face of the Sun, of yourselves, and of the world, that Dingaan never orders any great deed of bloodshed without first obtaining the express consent of Tambusa as one of his Privy Councillors ('als een van zijne geheime Raden'). Tambusa always proposed to his King to cause this or that kraal of Zulus—women and children, as well as men—to be massacred for some trivial fault or misdemeanour. The suggestion was always approved by the King and Salela."

"It was the same Tambusa who urged the King to murder your Governor Retief and his men, as well as the women and children of your nation." (Diary of P. H. Zietsman in *Report to Volksraad*, dated 24th February, 1840. Evidence of Panda and his Captains before the *Krygsraad*).

"He (Tambusa) was a great instrument in the shedding of innocent blood; he instigated Dingaan to have P. Retief murdered, threatening, in case his wish were not gratified, with all his people to secede from Dingaan; he was himself at the head of the Zulu army when your defenceless pregnant women, and even infants at the breast, had to fall as hapless victims before the blood-stained weapons of the murderers." (Declaration of the Zulu Chief Matawaan, as quoted by Zietsman in his Diary; *Volksraad Report*, 24th February, 1840).

lost sight of. On the 6th of February, the anniversary of the death of Retief, Pretorius and his horsemen were approaching the Pongola river, which they reached on the 8th. There they ascertained that Dingaan had crossed the stream, and was a fugitive in Swaziland. Sickness breaking out among the horses of the expedition, Pretorius decided to return to Natal, and left it to Nongalaza to follow up the pursuit of Dingaan.

On the evening of 9th February the horsemen again reached the place where, on the upper waters of the Black Umveloosi, the waggons of the main laager had been left. The camp was situated about twenty-five miles south-east of the present town of Vryheid. There, on the following day, 10th February, 1840, Dingaan was declared deposed, and Panda proclaimed King of Zululand.

Ranged round a huge rock boulder—some twenty feet long by fourteen broad—were the indunas and delegates from the different districts of Zululand, and the entire burgher force under their Commandants and Fieldcornets. On the summit of the rock stood Pretorius, with Panda by his side. Turning towards the Chief, the Commandant-General addressed him as follows: “Chief and ally, according to the state-
ments of representatives of all the tribes of Zululand, Pretorius
Speaks to the
Zulus. you appear to be entitled to the Kingship of the country. Dingaan has fled into the territory of another nation, and, if he should ever fall into our hands, we shall inflict capital punishment on him for the horrible crimes he has committed against our people. I now

deem it right, in the name of the Volksraad of our South African Association, to appoint you King or Chief of the Zulus,—the people under your rule as well as those who, fleeing from Dingaan, may put themselves under your protection, and those whom we may be able to place under your government. I also have instructions to acknowledge you as our great ally, and to treat your enemies as ours. You will not be allowed to make war upon any nation without our consent, and we shall on all occasions help you against your foes.”*

. Then the two pieces of artillery in the laager fired a salute of twenty-one shots; and, while the echoes were reverberating in the mountains, Panda, turning to his Chiefs and followers, called out in a loud voice: “Pretorius is father of Zululand!” This, the first declaration of the new Zulu King, signified his announcement of the sovereignty of the Republic over Zululand.

And then Pretorius addressed the Zulus.

“Whose blood has made Panda King, and destroyed Dingaan’s power?”

Instantly thousands of arms were extended towards the rock where he stood, and stentorian voices echoed: “His blood!” — the Zulus remembering that the General had been wounded in the battle of 16th December, 1838.

“No, Chiefs! No, Zulu warriors!” replied Pretorius; “you err. It was the blood of the women and children

* P. H. Zietsman: “Diary of the Campaign in Zululand”: *Report to Volksraad.*

murdered by Dingaan. It is a law of all white people that the nation which kills women and children must be destroyed. Panda and his people must now know that as long as this rock remains they will not be allowed to kill a single woman or child, even in war. White nations do not act in that way. Only men must fight. Only against men must you make war. Let this matter not pass from your memory. As long as this rock stands here, our alliance will exist and remain in force. When this rock exists no longer—when it has fallen to dust—then, also, our treaty ceases.”* The Sermon on the Rock.

All the missionaries who ever went to Zululand—to preach the Gospel of Peace—have perhaps been as zealous and earnest men as are to be found in their calling; but it is questionable whether their united sermons and exhortations did as much to teach Chaka's race the true spirit of Christianity as these words from the rock. The Zulus are a nation of warriors. When the great founder of their military power was in his death agony, he foretold the advent of the white Conqueror who would vanquish their armies and humble their King. The indunas and chief representatives of the nation now stood in the presence of that Conqueror. His word was law to them. He now repeated the message he had sent them at the commencement of the first campaign against Dingaan; and once more taught them the lesson which he had made them learn all through the second campaign, when Nongalaza was leading them against

* Literal translation from J. H. Visser's oral narrative. (Schoonspruit, 26th May, 1881).

Salela's impis: "*Show mercy to the helpless and defenceless. Spare the women and children.*" The chiefs and the warriors now heard the same words from his own lips. Nongalaza and his regiments had already proved their obedience to this command of Pretorius by their conduct all through the war. In not a single instance had they been guilty of taking the life of a woman or child, or of committing any atrocities whatever.* And now the Conqueror's exhortations were repeated in every corner of Zululand: "*In future no more women or children are to be put to death.*"

While the Government of the Emigrants in Natal lasted, Panda and his chiefs remained faithful to the terms of their agreement with Pretorius. As soon as the Africander Republic was conquered by England and British rule established in Natal, there was a reversal to the old order of things on the White Umveloosi; and then the groans of the helpless victims, and the thousands of fugitives flying across the Tugela, announced to the African world that the sermon from the rock had been forgotten in Zululand—because the warrior-preacher had been vanquished.

On 13th February the Emigrant commando left their laager on the Black Umveloosi. The waggons moved in a westerly direction. That night the camp was formed at the foot of a high mountain, some six miles from the starting-point and mid-way between the Black and White Umveloosi Rivers. Here, on the following day, Pretorius issued his proclamation, by which the Republic assumed the

* *Report to Volksraad*: 24th February, 1840.

sovereignty of Zululand, the territories of which country were in future to be ruled in such a way as to ensure the safety of the adjacent white settlement. The wording of this important State document was as follows :*

“Whereas the Volksraad of the South African Association, by reason of the unprovoked hostilities which the Zulu King, Dingaan, or the Zulu nation—without previous declaration of war—began against the said Association, has been obliged to incur expenses to the amount of one hundred and twenty-two thousand six hundred Ryksdaalders † for hire of horses and waggons, besides other expenses for this and the two previous commandoes,

“And whereas the Zulu King, according to all appearances and reports, has crossed the Pongola River (the frontier), his remaining people being in concealment in numerous bands, so that there is no one to whom I can apply for payment of these and previous expenses,

“Be it, therefore, hereby known that I proclaim and announce, in the name of the said Volksraad of the South African Association, that I take possession of all the country between the Tugela and Umveloosi Umjama or Black River, by way of compensation for the above-named one hundred and twenty-two thousand six hundred Ryksdaalders; that our boundary will for the future be from the sea along the Black Umveloosi, where it flows through

Proclamation of
Republic's
Sovereignty
over Zululand.

* *Report to Volksraad* : 24th February, 1840.

† 122,600 Rs. = £9195. (The Cape-Dutch Ryksdaalder = 1s. 6d.)

the Double Mountains (near its source), and then along the Randberg, in a similar direction to the Drakensberg, the St. Lucia Bay being included in our territories, as well as all coasts and harbours which have already been discovered, or will be discovered in future, between the mouths of the Umzimvubu and Black Umveloosi Rivers.

“These lands and sea-coasts shall, however, be considered as possessions of the Association, distinct from those which the late Mr. Retief acquired from the Zulu nation.

“God save the Volksraad.

“Given over my signature in my camp on the Umveloosi Umjama or Black River, on this 14th day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty.

“(Signed) A. W. PRETORIUS, *Chief Commandant.*

“H. J. LOMBAARD

“JAC. POTGIETER

“ANDR. SPIES

“MARTHINUS SCHEEPERS

} *Commandants.*”

Thus, at the end of twenty-four days after the commencement of Pretorius' second campaign against Dingaan,* the regiments of the great Zulu Chief were

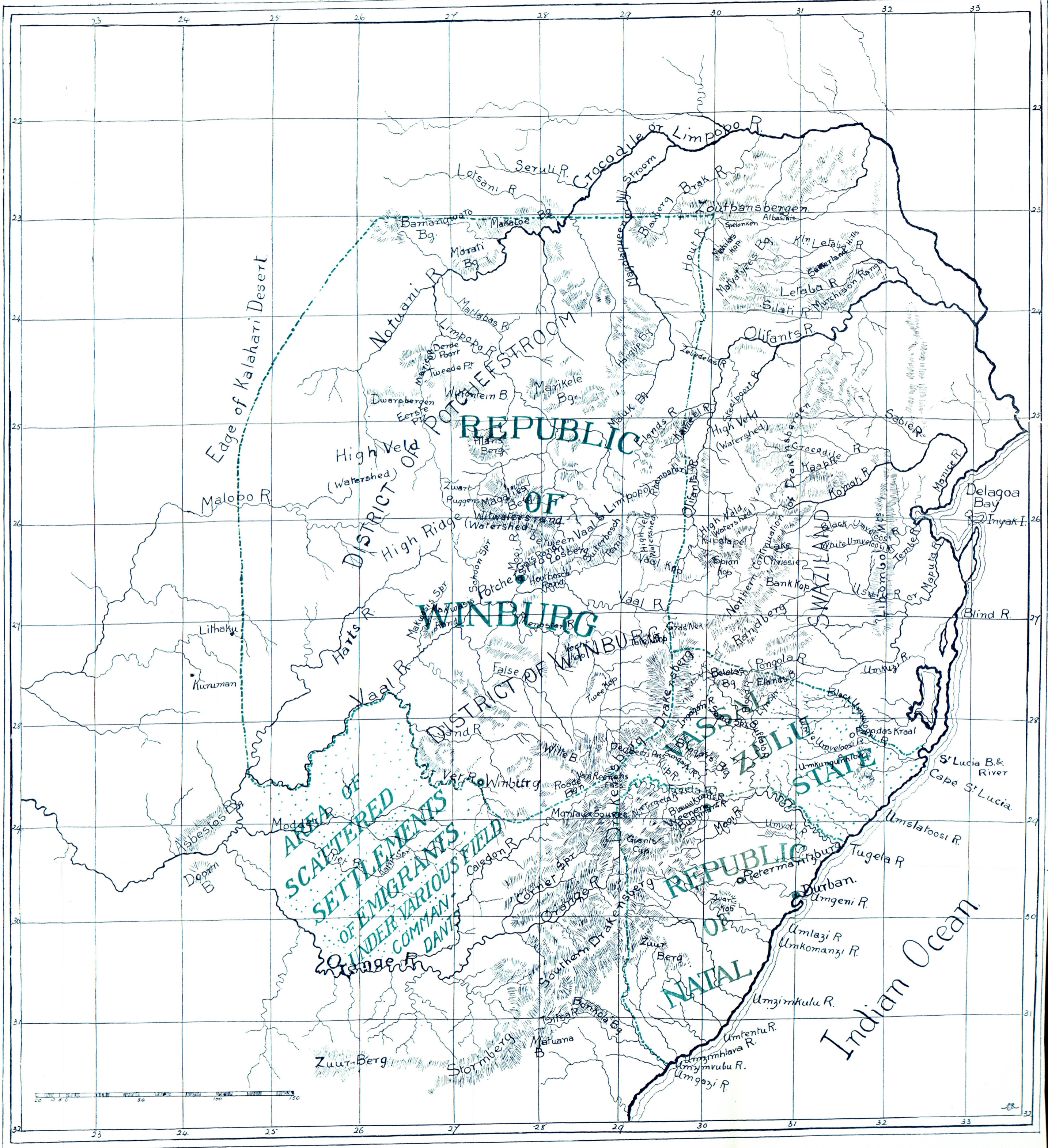
* The advance into what was then the Zulu country began on the 21st January, when the commando, under Pretorius, left the banks of the Upper Tugela, and marched towards the Buffalo River. The war was virtually ended by the defeat of Dingaan's united forces under Salela by Nongalaza on 30th January. The campaign, then, may be said to have lasted only ten days. Besides the great battle on the 30th, there was no other fight of any importance. All other engage-

defeated, destroyed and scattered, all Zululand was conquered, and a new ruler—in vassalage to the Republic—was installed on the White Umveloosi. All this was done without the loss of a single man on the side of the Emigrants. The dream of Retief was more than realised; for his countrymen now possessed not only Natal, but the entire sea-coast from the mouth of the Umzimvubu to the St. Lucia Bay.

While the expedition was on the return march to Natal, intelligence was brought to Pretorius by some of his Zulu scouts, that Nongalaza, having crossed the Pongola into the southern part of Swaziland, had followed the fugitive Dingaan northward until he came to a new kraal established in that country by the defeated despot. Here Dingaan's mother, and the few followers who had remained faithful to him in his misfortune, had surrendered to Panda's general. Their Chief himself had, some days previously, fallen by the hand of an assassin—a Swazi warrior, who had formerly served in the Zulu army.

The victorious commando was again approaching the banks of the Upper Tugela; and soon the tidings were carried to Pietermaritzburg, and to the laagers on the Bushman's River, where the widows and orphans of the fallen Voortrekkers were waiting. After two months were mere skirmishes. The small army under Pretorius himself was never attacked, because the forward movement was conducted in such a masterly way, and in such thorough preparedness for the fierce foeman's onslaughts, that Dingaan's indunas, declining to risk another defeat similar to that in the previous year, made up their minds to attempt to crush Nongalaza first. In that attempt Salela not only failed, but was himself overwhelmed and crushed through the defection of large numbers of his own followers.

years' struggle the Zulu Chief's power was shattered. Dingaan, Tambusa, and Salela—the murderers of Retief—had paid the penalty of their treachery; and the triumph of the Emigrants' arms was complete and decisive. Salvoes of musketry announced the return of the conquerors; and there was much rejoicing in the encampments of the burghers when full details of the success of the expedition became generally known.



REPUBLICS OF NATAL AND WINBURG
AND
VASSAL ZULU STATE.

Boundaries approximate only, as roughly defined by Proclamations of Hendrik Potgieter and Andries Pretorius.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FEDERATED REPUBLIC

THE VELD WHICH THE VOORTREKKERS FOUGHT FOR AND WON

Establishment of Republican Governments North of the Orange River—The Republic of Winburg—The Settlements between the Orange and Vet Rivers—The District of Potchefstroom—Settlement North of the Vaal—Boundaries and Extent of the old Potchefstroom District—Townships—Government—Franchise, etc.—Republic of Natal—Boundaries—Townships—Government—Revenue—Noble Missionary Clergymen—First Attempt at Federal Union—Comparison between the old Homeland and the New Country—What British Rule had done for the Former—What the Republic had done for the Latter—Benefits to the Natives—Saved from Destruction—Prosperity of New Settlements—The Harbour—Cape Town's Jealousy.

HOSTILITIES with the natives having ceased, it remained for the Emigrants to make arrangements for permanently carrying on the government of the territories which they had acquired by treaty and by conquest.

To the north of the Orange River there was the country (between the Vet and Vaal) which Potgieter had purchased from Makwana. This region, corresponding in area to what is now about half the Orange Free State, was then known as the district of Winburg, and formed, with Potchefstroom, a Republic, ruled by a Volksraad of twelve members and by a Chief Commandant (Andries Hendrik Potgieter). The rest of the country which afterwards became the Free State Republic, the land to the south

of the Vet River and lying between that stream and the Orange, was partly occupied by scattered sections of Emigrants under the leadership of different Commandants. These small settlements were independent of the Republic of Winburg, and had primitive governments of their own. In the localities where they established themselves, along the Lower Vaal and Caledon, on the Orange and on the Modder and Riet Rivers, the Pioneers who founded these outlying colonies entered into arrangements with various native and half-breed tribes (Korannas and Griquas). These agreements were generally of the nature of permanent or temporary cessions of territory to the Emigrants. The establishment of these different settlements to the south of the Vet River, outside the limits of the district of Winburg, was a further departure from Retief's policy of centralisation—which Potgieter and his followers had been the first to ignore when they separated themselves from the main body of the Emigrants, and decided in favour of a Government distinct from that to be formed to the east of the Drakensbergen.

The Old
Potchefstroom
District.

North of the Vaal River was the territory of Mooi River or Potchefstroom, the country conquered from the Matabele. Its boundaries were very different from those of the present district of that name. It represented the Transvaal of those days. Its western frontier was the edge of the Kalahari Desert, or, in other words, a line running between the 24th and 25th parallels of East longitude. On the south was the Vaal River. The eastern boundary line was roughly as

follows:—From a point on the Vaal River near the present town of Standerton, northwards to Rhenoster Poort, and from there on to the Zoutpansberg Range. The natural physical features of the country—the mountains and rivers—along this eastern frontier were Boundaries. the Olifants River from its source to the junction of the Zebedelas River; then the Zebedelas River to the Strydpoort Berg; and from there along the Strydpoort, Houtbosch Berg, Matyatyes Berg, and Spelonken Berg, to the Zoutpansberg Range.* The northern boundary was (approximately) the Zoutpansberg, Makatoe Berg, and Bamangwato Berg. None of these frontiers were accurately defined, and in 1840 there were already many farms further to the east than the 30th parallel of East longitude.

The district of Potchefstroom, bounded as above described, formed with the district of Winburg (the country lying between the Vet and Vaal Rivers) the Republic of Winburg, in which there were then two

* The old district of Potchefstroom, therefore, included all the modern Transvaal, with the exception of Lydenburg, Pieter Retief, Ermelo, Standerton (a portion), Wakkerstroom, Utrecht, Vryheid, and large parts of Zoutpansberg and Middelburg districts. It also included the territories afterwards occupied by Sechele's Bakwana and by Montsiwa's Barolong. All the country subsequently known as Goshen and Stellaland belonged to it. Potgieter's policy was to keep open the road to the interior of Africa, in order to safeguard the subsequent northward expansion of the Republic. Pretorius also attached great importance to this matter, and the sum and substance of the treaty of Sand River, by which Great Britain guaranteed the independence of the South African Republic (Transvaal) in 1852, was that there should be no British territory to the north of the Vaal. After Majuba, however, English diplomacy succeeded in detaching from the Transvaal that large portion—along the western border—which was afterwards to be utilised for the British advance to the north, and which then became British Bechuanaland.

- Townships.** townships, that of Winburg, the capital, near the Vet River, and that of Mooiriviersdorp or Potchefstroom, on the Mooi River. The State Volksraad consisted of twelve members. There was a Court of Landdrost and Heemraden, and the principal burgher officials were the Chief Commandant, Andries Hendrik Potgieter, and the Commandants and Fieldcornets under him. Every white inhabitant had the franchise, and all white emigrants who settled in the country received a free grant of land for a farm. There were no taxes, and the officials were unsalaried.
- Government.**
- Natal.** East of Drakensberg were the Republic of Natal and the subject Zulu State under Panda. The first formed a triangular area, bounded, on the east, by the Indian Ocean; on the west, by the Umzimvubu River and Drakensberg range; and, on the north, by the Tugela River. The Zulu State was a quadrangular-shaped territory, bounded, on the south, by the Tugela River; on the north, by the Black Umveloosi; on the east, by the Indian Ocean; and, on the west, by the Drakensberg. In the Republic the townships were Pietermaritzburg, on a tributary of the Umgeni; Durban, on the Bay of Natal; and Weenen, near the Bushman's River, a tributary of the Tugela. This last-named township was founded in 1840. In divisional relationship to each of these towns, respectively, were the districts of Pietermaritzburg, Port Natal, and Weenen.
- Townships.**
- Government.** The Volksraad of Natal, which met at Pietermaritzburg, the capital, four times every year, consisted of twenty-four members. It combined both legislative and executive functions. For the Chairman of each

session acted as President* or head of the Government for the next three months, and the other members of the executive during that time were the Commandant-General and the representatives of the *Commissie Raad*. These representatives were members of Volksraad, chosen (with the chairman) to form the Executive for three months. All appointments were made by the Volksraad.

Elections took place yearly, and were managed as Elections. follows:—Each burgher handed in to the Fieldcornet of his *wyk* or ward a paper, signed by himself and having over his signature the name of the representative whom he wished to be elected. The twenty-four members of Volksraad for the next year were those who had received the highest number of votes. There were Courts of Landdrost and Heemraden, as in the Republic of Winburg.

There was no direct taxation, with the exception of a land tax (eighteen shillings per year on farms not over three thousand *morgen*. On farms larger than three thousand *morgen* a higher tax was paid). The revenue Revenue. was derived from this tax; from transfer charges, which Government obtained on purchases of land; from port dues, paid by ships in the harbour; from duties levied on wines, spirits, and imported tobacco; and from *ad valorem* duties on timber, wooden materials, and general merchandise.

As was the case on the other side of the mountains (in the Republic of Winburg) free grants of land were

* There was as yet no separate office of State President. Nor was there a Vice-President.

given to all white emigrants who settled in the country. The franchise, also, was free and unrestricted to all white inhabitants. The Commandant-General or Chief-Commandant, the Commandants, the Fieldcornets, and the members of the Volksraad, had no salaries whatever. The Landdrosts, the Secretary to the Volksraad, the Port Officers, and the clergyman of Pietermaritzburg, were in receipt of small stipends.

The clergyman — the Rev. Daniel Lindley — was one of the American missionaries whom the Farmers under Maritz and Potgieter had found at Mosega in 1837. In the winter of 1839 he settled in Natal, and, finding that the Emigrants had established congregations in all three of their townships, but could prevail on no minister of the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape to come and reside among them, took upon himself the duties of their clergyman. He lived at Pietermaritzburg, and travelled from there, not only to Durban and Weenen, but also on the other side of the mountains, to Winburg and Potchefstroom, to preach to the members of all the five congregations, to visit their sick, and to do what he could to educate their children. The name of this noble, self-denying man is still remembered with affection and held in high esteem in Natal, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal. Erasmus Smit, the missionary teacher who, in 1837, had been made chaplain by Pieter Retief, was in receipt of a small pension, as his health had broken down. He, also, will be remembered as one who shared their sufferings and hardships with the Voortrekkers, when, among

all the many clergymen of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape Colony, not one could be found to brave the privations and the dangers of the wilderness, and to speak words of comfort, encouragement, and consolation to some ten thousand of their own congregations.

Many of the Emigrants saw the advisability of Closer Union. union between the two Republics, and in September, 1840, Potgieter and Pretorius entered into an agreement by which the members of the Raad of Winburg were also acknowledged as members of the Volksraad of the Republic of Natal. The Volksraad of Winburg, The Volksraad. however, retained for itself complete local autonomy in the country to the west of the Drakensbergen, and the alliance was followed by no permanent tangible results. For Potgieter's adherents do not seem to have availed themselves of their right to take part in the deliberations of the Volksraad of Pietermaritzburg. Nor could they have done so without much difficulty and inconvenience, considering the expense, trouble, and hardships of travel in those days. Their twelve representatives would have been under the necessity of constantly journeying backwards and forwards through the mountain passes, in order to attend the sessions of the Natal Volksraad every three months. The alliance was of a vague, indefinite, and impracticable nature, and brought about no effective union. In reality, there was nothing whatever to prevent such union, excepting factious differences between the leaders of the two parties; and it soon became apparent that the time was badly

chosen for allowing such differences to stand in the way of a step which was absolutely necessary for the common cause.

Extent of
degraded
Republic.

The territory which was under Republican rule now reached from the Orange River, in the south, to the Zoutpansberg, in the north, and from the Indian Ocean, on the east, to the border of the Kalahari Desert, in the west. Its seaboard extended from the mouth of the St. John's River (Umzimvubu) to the St. Lucia Bay.

The Old
Country and the
New.

In four years' time the Emigrants had transformed the wilderness into what would soon have grown into a flourishing state. The Voortrekkers had created a country of their own, about as large as that which they had left and which still owned the sway of England. The new land was more beautiful and more valuable than the old. The old country had taken one hundred and eighty-eight years—nearly two centuries—to grow to the size it then was, and to attain to the condition in which it then existed. And what was that condition? Its frontiers ruined, depopulated, abandoned to barbarians; its inhabitants discontented and unhappy; its commerce, its prosperity, vanishing; its Government vacillating, unpopular and incapable; life and property unsafe, murder and pillage going unpunished in its dominions.*

Condition of the
Cape Colony in
1840.

* By the terms of the Stockenstrom treaties of 1836, no farmer could claim compensation from Government for losses sustained from Kaffir depredations unless he employed armed herdsmen to guard his flocks and herds. The British Government thus admitted its incapacity to protect the property of its white subjects. During four years (1836-1840) forty-nine of those unfortunate herdsmen were murdered by the Kaffirs. And this was at a time when there was

And how was it at that time in the new land which the Emigrants had created, to which they had brought their flocks, and in which they had built their homes? From the banks of the Orange River to the Zoutpansberg range, from the shores of the Indian Ocean to the great Kalahari Desert, there was not a single native tribe which defied the power of the Pioneers. The great military despotisms which had sought to destroy them had been humbled and shattered. The Matabele had fled far to the north. The hostile Zulu Power was broken. Its place had been taken by a friendly subject State. There was no further danger from hostile native tribes. Towns and villages were being built both east and west of the Drakensberg mountains. Flourishing farms and homesteads had been established in the basins of the Umgeni, Umvoti, Umlaasi, and on the Upper Tugela tributaries, as well as along the Vaal, Mooi, and Vet rivers. Large numbers of stock farmers continued to leave the British Colony, because they saw better prospects for themselves and their children in the new territories occupied by the Emigrants,

Condition of the Republic.

supposed to be peace. In September, 1840, the Governor, Sir George Napier, who had come to South Africa a believer in Lord Glenelg's views, wrote to the authorities in England, urging on them the necessity of taking steps to ensure the safety and security of the frontiers, pointing out that, after four years' trial, the treaties which had been concluded with the Kaffirs had proved utterly inadequate to meet the requirements of the country. Something, he said, would have to be done at once, as there seemed every probability "of the plundered, harassed, and justly irritated farmers taking the law into their own hands and suddenly entering the Kaffir country with commandoes, to retake their cattle by force, if not to revenge by bloodshed all their wrongs."

Another great Kaffir war was already certain.

Peace and
Prosperity
Assured.

where life and property were safe—thanks to the energy and perseverance of the Voortrekkers—and where the further development and progress of the country were not, as in the Colony, menaced by hostile natives and unwise legislation. Peace and prosperity were assured, not only for white settlers, but for the numerous native tribes which previously had been subjected and oppressed by the Zulu and Matabele Powers.

Then, as now, the Republicans had many enemies at Cape Town, where missionary and merchant politicians and the so-called negrophile party were doing their utmost to persuade the British authorities to annex Natal. The Empire-extendors were active. Their views were that the Emigrants had carried on unjust and aggressive wars against the Matabele and Zulu nations, and that England should not allow the establishment of an independent white Government in South Africa. They found support from many writers and orators in Great Britain. But, while the faddists and the self-styled philanthropists in England were reviling and libelling the South African frontier farmer, holding him up to public censure as an unattractive type of cruelty and savagery, a very remarkable movement was in progress among the natives to the east of the Drakensbergen and to the north of the Vaal River.

The scattered remnants of conquered nations which were hiding in the forests and mountains, where they had sought refuge from the spears of Dingaan's and Umsiligaas' warriors, soon recognised that the establishment of the Emigrants' Government meant safety

and security for themselves. They returned to the regions where they had formerly dwelt in Natal and in the Transvaal, and where the white men had now taken the place of the savage rulers whose marauding raids formerly depopulated the land. Many of those who had been driven south-westward out of Natal, by the tribes which fled before the advance of Chaka's armies, now returned from the country beyond the Umzimvubu. From Zululand, where the different contending factions had exercised a disturbing influence, many refugees came to Natal. From the central and southern part of the present Orange Free State, the Barolong, who had previously lived in dread of the Matabele Power, removed to the south-western Transvaal region. In the west of the old district of Potchefstroom, also, tribes which had formerly fled into the Kalahari Desert now settled. Thus, great streams of native immigration were pouring into the territories of the newly-established Republics, where the aborigines found protection and safety. And, while the missionaries of Cape Town were telling the people of England that Pretorius and Potgieter and their followers were the oppressors and exterminators of the native races, those natives themselves regarded the Voortrekker Commandants as deliverers, under whose rule they came to place themselves in thousands and tens of thousands.

The Republic
the Protector
of the Natives.

Very few, if any, events in the history of South Africa ever benefited the aborigines so much as the Great Emigration movement to the North, and the conquest by the Emigrants of the Zulu and Matabele systems. The remnants of tribes which had been swept

How the Great
Emigrat'on
Benefited the
Aborigines.

from the land by Umsiligaas' impis returned to their old homes, and, receiving considerable accession of strength from the tide of black immigration now flowing in, re-peopled the once desolate regions. Where the native population had been barely a few hundreds, and these starving and in hiding among the rocks and in the forests, there were now thousands of prosperous Kaffirs planting their own crops and herding their own cattle. Flourishing kraals and maize gardens soon took the place of the many ruined native villages in the southern and western Transvaal. The huts were rebuilt. The cattle grazed in security on the lands where the Matabele war-cry was no longer heard. The birth of the Republic saved from annihilation all the numerous tribes which had been conquered by the Zulu and Matabele nations. Under the protection of the Government of the Emigrants, the races which had been threatened with extinction found safety and security. They were no longer subject to being chased and hunted like deer, to be stabbed and clubbed for mere sport by the raiding parties of their savage foes. Their lives were under the protection of European laws and institutions. Their property was their own. Their crops and their cattle were no longer interfered with. They were not even required to pay taxes or rent for the land on which they built their kraals, planted their crops, and grazed their herds and flocks. Within a very few years after the establishment of the Emigrant Government, the aborigines had attained to a degree of prosperity unknown to them since the days preceding the Zulu and

Matabele conquests—when they were governed by their own chiefs. During the few years that the Republic of Natal was in existence, the native population increased at an enormous rate. In 1837 and 1838, when Retief and the Emigrant Farmers under his leadership came into the country, they found in it a black population which, at the very outside, numbered ten thousand men, women, and children. Indeed, it seems probable that there could not have been many more than five thousand; for we know that that was the total number of natives whom Dingaan had placed under the chieftaincies of Farewell and Cane. These white chiefs were then the only rulers in the land, and the number of natives who wandered about in the forests without acknowledging the authority of these headmen under Dingaan must have been small and insignificant; for the armies of the Zulu King had frequently raided the land, and driven away nearly all its former inhabitants. When, in November, 1843, at the fall of the Republic and the annexation of Natal, the British Commissioner Cloete gave an estimate of the number of black inhabitants, the figures were between eighty thousand and one hundred thousand, at the very lowest. Even if we subtract from this total some fifty thousand, representing the Zulu refugees who had then but recently fled into the country for protection, the fact still remains that in the four years during which the Emigrant Farmers governed the country, the native population of Natal had become fully quadrupled in numbers.

Native
Population of
Natal, etc.

While this remarkable and extraordinary influx of

White
Population.

Kaffirs into Natal and the Transvaal was in progress, the white inhabitants of the Republics also were increasing in numbers; for the tide of the Great Emigration from the Cape Colony northward showed no signs whatever of abatement till after 1840. It has been estimated that, between the years 1836 and 1840, some ten thousand Colonists crossed the Orange River, to take up their abode in the new countries which were then being founded. The vast majority of these were frontier farmers with their families. But, as soon as the country had become settled, and hostilities with the natives had ceased, traders and shop-keepers also found their way to the new territories, where they established themselves in the townships and villages. More substantial houses than the dwellings which had first been erected at Winburg and Potchefstroom were built at both these places. Pietermaritzburg, also, grew rapidly, and this town, and the little village of Weenen were already the centres of flourishing, although somewhat primitive, agricultural districts.

Townships, etc.

Commerce.

At Durban some Cape Town merchants built quite an important trading establishment. The town was growing rapidly in size, and both here and at Pietermaritzburg recent arrivals from Cape Colony had settled in considerable numbers. In August, 1841, the harbour was entered by the American ship *Levant*, with a cargo of merchandise for the Emigrants. This vessel was the first harbinger of the opening up of a new commercial pathway to the interior of Africa. Its arrival in Port Natal caused a flutter in the dove-cots

of those enterprising and enthusiastic Empire-extenders, the Cape Town shop-keepers. They had the ear of Government House, and it was arranged that British dominion and the Queen's authority could not tolerate a free harbour in South Africa. Then, as now, a so-called South African Association was formed—in London. To suppress the Africanders, and to paint the map red, were the objects of that agitation, as of to-day's.

Prosperity and
Progress for
South Africa by
Means of British
Bayonets.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SMITH RAID

ANOTHER PLOT AND PLAN

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE NAPIER, K.C.B., MISSIONARY JENKINS,
AND KAFFIR FAKU, PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER

The Plot—The Cape Town Merchant—The British Government—The Uitlander—The Missionary—The Governor's Message to Faku—Ncapayi—Mr. Jenkins with the Pondos—The Troops on the Frontier—The Letter of Invitation—Correspondence between Sir George Napier and the Volksraad of Natal—Despatches from Downing Street—The Governor's Proclamation of 2nd December, 1841—Captain Smith's Movements—Henry Ogle's Spies—The Volksraad Protest—Unpreparedness for War—Clever Missionary—The True Protectors of the Aborigines—The *Brazilis*—Alarm of Cape Town Merchants—Smellenkamp—The Old Fatherland—Two Pictures—Magnificent, but not Diplomatic—Treaty of Commerce—Arrest of Smellenkamp.

The Cape Town
Merchant.

FIRST in the field was the Cape Town merchant. Sincere and honest enough in his protestations of loyalty and attachment to the British Crown, he was, at the same time, sufficiently shrewd and far-seeing to understand that Natal—made an English Colony by force of arms, and with a discontented white population—would be a far less dangerous commercial rival to the Cape than the prosperous free Republic, which would grow up on the Indian Ocean's shores, were the Emigrants to be left unmolested and unassailed by Britain.

In close alliance with the Cape Town merchant, was

the British nobleman. Younger sons could find preferment and promotion when an expeditionary force was sent to Natal to extinguish the "Boer"; or could obtain civil appointments in the new Colony—after the war.

It was in 1840 that the British Secretary of State for the Colonies allowed himself to be persuaded, by the British-born South African Association and their aristocratic backers in London, to sanction the annexation scheme which the Cape Governor had been urging The Scheme Elaborated. for some time. This sanction, however, was conditional on the expense being limited. Downing Street was not prepared to embark on a costly military expedition. It was, therefore, stipulated that the Emigrants should be dealt with in a conciliatory spirit. First, there was to be an occupation of the Bay of Natal by a British force. Then, in the event of no determined resistance by force of arms, the Emigrant Farmers were to be allowed a sort of limited autonomy under a President and Legislative Council chosen by the Cape Governor. This wonderful scheme of aggrandisement was elaborated and explained in two despatches, dated 18th June and 5th September. The contents of these important State Despatches. papers were, of course, not made public until long afterwards, when they appeared in the Parliamentary Blue-Books. Meanwhile, the other agents in the plot set to work. They were the Uitlander and the Missionary.

The Uitlanders in the Republic of Natal were the The Uitlander. Cape Colonists and English traders who had arrived in the country and settled in the towns after the Emigrant Farmers had broken the power of the Zulus and

made the land safe and habitable. They enjoyed equal civil and political rights with the original founders of the Republic. But a pastoral State, where the highest officials were content to serve without salary, did not suit the tastes of the new arrivals; and their remedy was—to call in the British Government. Henry Ogle and some of the other English settlers who had been chiefs in Dingaan's time, and who now also had a grievance—one solitary grievance—in the diminution of their own importance and dignity, took an active part among those who attempted to bring about a change in the rulers of the country.

Let us pause, to glance, for a moment only, at some of the chief actors on the stage of History—more than half a century later than the Napier-Jenkins-Faku-Smith Jameson Raid.

Exaggerated self-esteem is a leading characteristic of many Cape Colonists. Nearly every one of the financiers, lawyers, and parsons from the South, who recently led the Uitlander hosts and beat the Uitlander drums north of the Vaal, had a real grievance—a very real one, and, therefore, one not included in Mr. Charles Leonard's list—against Paul Kruger. The grand old Statesman of South Africa had had the execrable taste not to abdicate and make way for each and every one of those superior persons to become President of the South African Republic.

Their self-esteem having been thus grievously wounded, these modern Knights of the Rueful Countenance mounted the shadowy and somewhat shady Rosinantes of the Johannesburg grievances, and ran

full tilt at the innocent windmills of conservatism in a pastoral State. The wind-bag Sancho Panzas of Cape Town and London announced to the world that these windmills were the castled strongholds of the tyrant.

The opera-bouffe revolution was advertised as the sacred cause of reform. The union of South Africa was to be brought about by force of arms. Recruits were plentiful—at a pound a day—and “heroes” were imported. But when it became apparent that the Cape Town wire-pullers of the agitation meant to seize the Republic for the English, then it was also seen that the Uitlander had not forgotten how poverty and distress had been his hard lot in Natal after he had helped to call in the British Government to annex that country; how prosperity had not followed the change of rule east of Drakensberg; and how the extinction of the Republic had brought retrogression instead of progress into the land. Knowing the history of South Africa, and remembering all this, the Cape Colonists among the Uitlanders also remembered that they were Africanders, and refused to assist in handing over the soil which was the heritage of the Voortrekkers to the greedy Rhodesian Empire-builders and the Imperial schemers of Downing Street.

In Natal, the Uitlander of yore was poor and tried to better his condition by the help of British bayonets. He found out his mistake when it was too late; but his sons have not forgotten the lesson taught by the history of those days.

In 1840, the missionary was a power in the land, not The Missionary. only in South Africa, where he ranked as an equal with

the chiefs in the numerous independent native territories, but also in Downing Street, where the friends and supporters of the Rev. Dr. Philip exercised almost unlimited power in the councils of the Government.

The southern boundary of the Republic of Natal was the Umzimvubu or St. John's River. For several miles inland from its mouth, this stream cuts its way to the ocean through high precipitous banks of rock—steep and rugged cliffs: in some parts covered with dense vegetation, in others bleak and bare; gigantic masses of stone walls. More inland from this picturesque region of the *Gates of the St. John*, the course of the river is through a broad and fertile valley. This valley was the home of the Pondo nation at the time when the Emigrants were crossing the Drakensberg into Natal. Chaka's wars and the devastations caused by the numerous fugitive tribes which came from Natal had dispossessed that people of the land which they had formerly occupied to the north of the Umzimvubu. At one time one of the main divisions of the Abantu race, the Pondos, under their chief Faku, had become reduced to a comparatively insignificant and weak tribe. Their principal kraals were on the Umgazi, and none of these were then to be found to the north of the St. John's river.

Pondoland.

The Pondos.

The Bacas.

Nearer to the Drakensberg, on the upper and inland part of the Umzimvubu, dwelt the Baca tribe. They also had come from the north. Fleeing before the assegaes of Chaka's regiments, they had established themselves in the mountainous country along the Tsitsa and Tina tributaries of the Upper Umzimvubu, and

there made themselves a terror to the surrounding nations by their depredations and robber raids. Their chief was called Ncapayi.

In the Pondo country there were at that time ^{The} several English missionaries. ^{Missionaries.} They were, most of them, earnest, zealous, and well-meaning men, actuated by what they themselves and their admirers regarded as high and noble motives.

Unfortunately, however, their zeal was not confined to civilising and christianising the heathen; for they were all keen politicians, and their policy was the same as that of the Rev. Dr. Philip—to champion the cause of Native rulers and Native states against those whose motto was—South Africa a White Man's Country. Consequently, they differed from the American and from many of the English Wesleyan missionaries in being bitterly opposed to the Emigrant Farmers and their Republic.

In 1838, Faku and his people, having received details of the contest which was then in progress between Dingaan's legions and the Emigrants, and having made up their minds that the Zulu power, which they had always dreaded, would now be broken, removed from their kraals on the Umgazi to the country north of the Umzimvubu.

In the following year, a Mr. Jenkins, one of the missionaries whose wife was such an enthusiastic partisan of the Pondo chiefs that she was afterwards ^{The Pondos.} known as the "Queen of Pondoland," visited Faku at his new residence on the Umzimhlava, and conveyed to ^{Missionary} the chief a message from the Governor at Cape Town. ^{Jenkins takes a} ^{Message.}

The Kaffir ruler was told that all the country as far northward as the banks of the Umzimkulu river—in other words, a great deal more than had ever been owned and lost in war by his ancestors—was to belong to him and his people; that the British Governor guaranteed the possession of all this land to him; and that, if molested or disturbed in the occupation of the new territory, he was to apply to Cape Town for protection.

To the historian it is of the greatest importance to determine whether any such construction could be put upon the language which the Governor used when sending this message. Theal says it could not. In relation, however, to the effect desired by the plotters in London and Cape Town, it really mattered very little whether the words were actually those which the messenger of the Gospel of Peace delivered to the Kaffir Chief. British diplomacy in South Africa knew, then, as well as now, how to convey a hint and how to choose its messengers. Mr. Jenkins seems to have interpreted Sir George Napier's instructions quite as cleverly as Mr. Lionel Phillips recently understood Sir Henry Loch's veiled suggestions.

Faku and the Pondos had been hitherto on very friendly terms with the Emigrant Farmers. They had often suffered from the depredations and cattle-thieving raids of Ncapayi. They had asked permission of the Government at Maritzburg to be allowed to make war on the Bacas, and to ally themselves with the neighbouring clan of Fodo for this purpose. When, towards the end of 1840, the Bacas carried off some

cattle belonging to Farmers in Natal, Pretorius determined to punish the raiders, and was authorised by the Volksraad to lead a commando into the valley of the Upper Umzimvubu. Two hundred and sixty burghers, under him and Commandant Lombaard, assisted by some of Fodo's native auxiliaries, attacked Ncapayi's stronghold, took it, and broke up the robber clan. By this expedition the Emigrants not only protected the interests of their own settlers in the Republic, but also rendered a great service to Faku and his people, who had suffered much from the Bacas, and who had but recently applied for assistance. The missionaries, however, thought otherwise. From the 1st to the 5th of January, 1841, three of them were in conference at Faku's new kraal on the Umzimhlava, within the territory of the Republic of Natal. A letter was drawn up to the British Governor of Cape Colony, *who, as it happened, was then not at his usual residence in Cape Town, but on the eastern frontiers of the Colony, and therefore conveniently near.* British troops were also at hand. The document set forth that all the country between the Umzimvubu and Umzimkulu—all the southern part of the Republic, in fact—belonged to Faku, that the Pondos dreaded being attacked by the Emigrant Farmers, and asked for British protection. It was put before the Chief, whose mark was duly affixed. Two minor Pondo captains also made crosses on the paper. The Revs. Thomas Jenkins, Samuel Palmer, and William Garner signed *as witnesses.* Having sent off this letter on the 5th of January, Faku's advisers travelled south-

Expedition
against
Ncapayi.

The Mission-
aries and Faku.

Missionary
Jenkins and
his Mission.

westward with the Chief and all his followers. Having again crossed the Umzimvubu, they proceeded to the old Pondo kraal on the Umgazi.

To this point British troops were already on the march from the south. The plot was succeeding admirably for the Empire-extenders.

In the Volksraad at Pietermaritzburg there was more enterprise than statesmanship, and more talk than wisdom. In September, 1840, it had been resolved Correspondence. to enter into correspondence with the British Government, in order to obtain an acknowledgment of the independence of the Republic. Under date Pietermaritzburg, 4th September, 1840, the Secretary to the Volksraad, J. J. Burger, wrote to Sir George Napier, proposing to send Commissioners to Cape Town, with the view of arranging the future relationship of the new State towards the Colony and the British Empire. The Governor was requested to represent to the Queen's Ministry that the Emigrants desired a recognition of their complete independence and autonomy. But the letter was ambiguously worded, and actually became a formidable weapon in the hands of the Governor and those who sought the downfall of the Republic.

The words "*erkenning van onze onafhankelijkheid met de rechten van Britsche onderdanen*" ("acknowledgment of our independence, with the same rights as British subjects," or "with the rights of British subjects"), were afterwards referred to, by the apologists for England's action, as a justification for Sir George Napier's military movements and Empire-extension arrangements.

The meaning really intended to be conveyed by the writer of the sentence quoted was that the Emigrants desired complete independence from England, under the continued Government of the Republic, with an arrangement by which reciprocal commercial and customs relations should exist between their State and the British Colony, so as to secure to subjects of the Republic the same trade privileges as British subjects enjoyed. A subsequent despatch explained all this in detail. Sir George Napier sent his reply to the first letter in November, but in June he had already received discretionary authority from England to take military possession of the Bay of Natal.

Instructions
from England.

On the 14th of January, 1841, the Volksraad, in answer to a request of the Governor, formulated the terms and conditions of the agreement which was desired with England:—

The independence of the Republic of Natal was to be acknowledged by Britain. In case of war between England and other countries, the Republic was to be neutral, and no aid of any kind was to be given by the Emigrants to the enemies of the Queen's Government. Further, in case of any native war in South Africa, outside the borders of Natal, free passage was to be allowed to British troops, and permission to traverse the territory of the Republic. Reciprocal customs duties were to be established in Natal at the same rates as in the British Colony, but wines and spirits to be taxed differently and at higher rates. No war was to be undertaken against the Kaffir nations southward of Natal without notice having previously been given to

Conditions of
Treaty proposed
by Volksraad.

the Government of the Cape Colony, and any such war to be entered into by the Emigrants only in self-defence. Civilisation and Christianising of the natives to be encouraged, and no slavery to be allowed by the Republic.

Such were the terms of the alliance proposed by the Volksraad, the members of which now began to suspect that they had made a great mistake in asking at all for England's recognition of their independence. For something of what was going on in Pondoland and at Cape Town, though by no means everything, soon became known. Sir George Napier had already received the Jenkins-Faku letter of 5th January, and the troops were moving. No reply was sent to the Volksraad's despatch of 14th January, until June. But meanwhile, on 28th January, 1841, Captains Smith and Warden, with two companies of the 27th regiment of the line, fifty Cape Mounted Rifles, and a small detachment (consisting of two officers and twelve men) of the artillery and engineers, had started from Fort Peddie, on the eastern colonial frontier, with about fifty waggons. Their destination was the Pondo head kraal on the Umgazi, where Faku and the missionaries now were.

Captain
Smith's Force.

The correspondence which had been commenced by the Volksraad, instead of averting absorption and annexation by England, in reality favoured and helped the plans of the plotters. Besides, there were other weapons against the Republic which the diplomatic British Governor did not neglect to make use of. In the expedition against Ncapayi, the burghers under Commandant Lombaard, after the robber-clan had been

scattered and driven from their kraal on the Tsitsa, had found several Baca children wandering about on the veld, without food. Instead of allowing these little Kaffirs to starve and die of hunger in a fruitless attempt to reach the encampments of their tribe, the farmer commando had taken them back to Pietermaritzburg, given them food, and provided for them by apprenticing them to white settlers in Natal. This, according to the philanthropists, was slavery.

The same system of apprenticing is still in vogue in every British Colony in South Africa. After every native war, captive children are thus dealt with. It is a far better and more humane method than the alternative one of leaving the deserted and homeless native waifs to die of famine, or be killed by wild beasts, and, therefore, it is still countenanced and even practised by British officials. Where the "Boer" was concerned it was, of course, inexcusable; and so it was made a further pretext for his country being seized by the self-righteous Government of the Cape, which itself, only quite recently, resorted to apprenticeship on a far larger scale, and under much less justifiable circumstances, in the case of the vanquished and famishing Bechuanas.

Another excuse was found, or supposed to be found, in a resolution of the Volksraad (in August, 1841), to form a large native Location in the south—between the rivers Umtamvuna and Umzimvubu—where the great numbers of refugees from beyond the Tugela, who had been flocking into Natal ever since the Emigrants had established their Republic, were in future to reside. The Cape Government argued that this collection of large

Apprenticeship
of Native
Children.

The Southern
Location.

numbers of natives in the southern part of the Republic would create disturbances on the *adjacent* (!!) Colonial frontiers, where the tribes would become involved in war, and get restless and unruly.

Sir George
Napier.

On the 10th of June, Sir George Napier had sent his answer to the Volksraad's letter of 14th January. The Government of the Queen could not acknowledge as being independent some of her own subjects who had left the Colony and settled in Natal. If the Emigrant Farmers were willing to receive a British military force into their country, then all commercial privileges enjoyed by British colonists would be guaranteed by England, but no further negotiations could be carried on unless the sovereignty of England was recognised. Such was the reply. Then, over the signature of Joachim Prinsloo, President of the Volksraad, and Jacobus J. Burger, Secretary, and under date 11th October, 1841, the following rejoinder was sent * from Pietermaritzburg.

Volksraad's
Despatch.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We are of opinion that both her Majesty and yourself are misinformed concerning us, our claim to independence, and the right which we have to the country now in course of occupation by us. We are by birth Dutch-Africanders (Hollandsche Afrikanen). Immediately after we had left Her Majesty's territory in South Africa, we published our declaration of independence, and from that time until this day we have acted as an independent nation, governed ourselves according to our own laws, and, consequently, ceased

* A portion only of the despatch is here quoted.

to be British subjects. We have obtained by lawful means the land now inhabited by us, and it has never at any time been a British Colony or province. Notwithstanding Your Excellency's repeated declarations that we are British subjects and colonists, we must affirm that, by the laws of all civilised nations, we are neither the one nor the other. Furthermore, we must courteously decline to accept Her Majesty's military forces. We are at peace with all nations, and require no protection."

A despatch from Downing Street, bearing date 21st August, now also reached the Governor, authorising and ordering him to occupy the harbour of Natal. On 2nd December, 1841, he issued a proclamation announcing the intention of the Queen's Government to refuse to acknowledge the independence of Natal, and claimed justification for proceeding to send British troops to occupy the country. The district between the Umzimvubu and Umtamvuna rivers was referred to in this proclamation as part of Faku's territory, and the resolution of the Volksraad declaring this district a native Location was termed an unjust and illegal proceeding from which there was reason to fear that warfare and bloodshed would follow.

To reinforce Captain Smith's troops in Pondoland, Captain Lonsdale marched towards the Umgazi river. He took with him a hundred and twenty-five infantry, Cape rifles, engineers, and artillery, with two guns. Sir George Napier, like Sir Bartle Frere at a later

Sir George
Napier's
Proclamation of
2nd December,
1841.

Captain
Lonsdale's
Force.

date, firmly believed in the helpfulness of artillery when arguing with Africander Republicans.

Henry Ogle, who was then living about thirty miles from Durban, made himself useful to Captain Smith, as a spy. The Uitlander residents of Durban promised their assistance, and despatched secret messages to the English officer, assuring him of their help, and offering him a hearty welcome. Captain Smith himself sent several messages by way of preparation. Letters and messages were all conveyed to and from Durban by Kaffir runners in the service of Ogle. Meanwhile, Captain Smith awaited the arrival of his reinforcements under Lonsdale to commence his march from the Umgazi camp to the Bay of Natal.

In the Volksraad there had been a good deal of discussion, and party feeling ran high. When it was too late, it was recognised that a great mistake had been made in entering into correspondence with Sir George Napier, and that the faction which favoured this course had, in reality, though unwittingly, played into the hands of the Cape Town plotters.

J. N. Boshoff, who was then Landdrost of Pietermaritzburg, was requested by the Raad to draw up a despatch by way of protest against the Governor's proclamation of 2nd December. That able man had already rendered great services to the young Republic. His legal training, his knowledge of office work and of all formalities relating to the administration of justice, had enabled him to lay the foundation of the judicial department of the State, and to place the first courts of law established in the country on a good

footing. Now he had to voice the new nation's sense of wrong and injustice, to proclaim to the world the perishing Republic's accusation against England. His despatch was a masterpiece. It is a valuable historical document.

The Perishing Republic's Accusation against England.

* " *To His Excellency, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE THOMAS NAPIER, K.C.B., Governor and Commander-in-Chief, etc., etc., of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope.*

" PIETERMARITZBURG, NATAL,
21st February, 1842.

" SIR,—Assembled in our Council at this place, we, the undersigned, President and Members of the Volksraad, deem it right to inform Your Excellency of the receipt of your proclamation, dated 2nd December, 1841, in which it is announced that Your Excellency, in consequence of instructions received by you, has seen fit to resume military occupation of this country, and that we are considered British subjects, and cannot be acknowledged as a free and independent nation by Her Majesty the Queen of England, etc.

Protest.

" Seeing that the friendly negotiations which we initiated with Your Excellency, and the representations made by us with the view of securing a lasting peace and alliance with the British Government, conditional only on our having an administration entirely our own—a privilege which has not been refused even to the Griquas resident on the frontiers of your Colony, although that nation, like ourselves, is entirely composed of emigrants from the Colony—that these

* Translated from Stuart's "Hollandsche Afrikanen," now out of print.

representations are now being made use of as a cause to overwhelm us with the most dire results, we, in order to become thoroughly acquainted with the opinion of our fellow-emigrants, have had the above-mentioned proclamation circulated among them, and have invited them freely to discuss this matter at public meetings, and to acquaint us with the result of their discussions.

“We can now inform Your Excellency that the general opinion of our fellow-emigrants is, and that they have requested us to declare, as we hereby do declare, that we regard your above-named proclamation as unjust in the extreme towards us, and as calculated, if brought into operation, to bring about what it states is its main object to avoid, viz., war and bloodshed.

“As this may possibly be the last communication which we shall have the opportunity of addressing to Your Excellency, we deem it necessary to treat of the subject more in detail.

“Especially, we wish to be well understood that it is not our object to insult, or make reproach, or in any way to give occasion for hostile acts, as it is our heartfelt wish and desire to preserve the peace with all people. Nothing shall induce us to take up arms and shed the blood of fellow-men,—nothing but the firm conviction that we cannot avoid doing so, when the protection of our property—possession of which has, in our opinion, been secured to our people by their fortitude and endurance—and of our national existence, demands such action on our part, or when

we see that might and not right are the weapons of our adversary.

“We know that a God exists, who rules Heaven and Earth, that He is powerful and willing to protect the wronged, even although they are weak, against oppressors. In Him and in the justice of our cause we trust; and if it be His will that total destruction fall on us, on our wives and children, and all that we have or possess, we shall submit, and acknowledge to have deserved it of Him, but not of men.

“We know the power of Great Britain, and it is by no means our object to challenge that power; but, at the same time, we cannot in the least allow that violence instead of justice should triumph over us, without having tried all in our power to combat such violence. We do not accuse the British Government of being disposed as above indicated; but experience has taught us that false and unfounded representations (such as are, evidently, now once more in circulation with regard to ourselves), originating in a far-distant country, have but too frequently given rise to measures and enactments which have been both oppressive and unjust.

“We likewise deny most emphatically that we are actuated by an inveterate hatred of the English people. Every one is, naturally, more partial to his own than to other nations; but, as Christians, we have learned to cherish regard and affection for all men; and although we—South African peasants—have often been treated by the English with haughty disdain, yet, let many English people (among whom we also

include the Scotch, with whom we were personally acquainted in the country of our birth, and some of whom were our ministers of religion, always held in high esteem by all of us), bear witness; let the officers and men, side by side with whom we have stood under arms, bear witness; let our former regents, judges, and local authorities, bear witness; and let even all respectable Englishmen, of those who at this present moment dwell and reside here amongst us in safety and security, bear witness whether it is a fact that such hatred is nurtured in our bosoms against the English people. But we shall not deny that the resolutions arrived at from time to time, with regard to ourselves, by the English Government in the Colony, as well as the proclaimed laws relating to us, have been the sole cause of our having left our native land and our kinsmen, and casting ourselves, as it were, on the waves of the wilderness, in order to be free from the rule of that Government. To refer to some examples of our grievances: Who was it that forced on us the growing evils and evil consequences of slavery? Who assured us of the right of ownership? Was it not the same Government which afterwards again deprived us of that right in such a manner that we ourselves had not the least voice in deciding as to the best or most suitable means to bring about the alteration? Who assured us of full compensation for our slaves? Was it not the same Government which palmed off on us a third of the true value of our property, and even then left us as a prey to greedy and grasping traders, who have been enriched

at our expense? Who employed us, without reward, and at our own cost, for the protection of the frontiers of the Colony against the hostile, warlike, and plundering Kaffirs? Was it not the same Government which afterwards denied us all claim to compensation, falsely pretending that we ourselves, by robbing the Kaffirs, had brought down their just vengeance on our heads? Who took from us the best Governor we had ever had, simply because, as a man of conscience, he defended the wronged Cape Colonists, and, by punishing their marauding foe, sought their true safety and protection? Who then sent us political speculators—tied, hand and foot—whose dispositions as to our frontier line exposed us to be robbed and threatened by the Kaffirs unceasingly and with impunity, while the enormous expenses incurred by the country would ultimately be put to the cost of the ruined farmer? Was it not the same Government which left all the land free to wandering vagabonds, who followed an idle and savage course of life, and actually existed on the flocks and other property of the grievously oppressed peasant, so that the farmer—deprived of labourers, or, even if he had them, without all needful authority—lost heart, and, finding his repeated remonstrances and petitions unanswered or ignored, saw before him a dismally dark prospect?

“All these evils we ascribe to this one cause, namely, the want of a representative Government, refused to us by the executive authority of that same nation which regards this very privilege as one of its most sacred rights of citizenship, and for which every true Briton is prepared to give his life. And what did we do,

suffering from all these acts of oppression? Did we, as the Canadians acted recently, take up arms, demanding that justice be done to us? No; we gave the coat also to him who had taken from us the cloak. After having disposed of our landed property at a ridiculously low value, we openly announced to the Government that we would leave its dominions—our country. We were allowed to leave; at least, we were not prevented. We were even surprised to receive information of a most fair and just declaration on the part of the Lieutenant-Governor,—that it was an indisputable right that any one, dissatisfied with the rule of his Government, was at liberty to leave its territory. Immediately after our exodus we declared our independence; we established our own Government; we waged war against those who had treacherously attacked us; we concluded peace; we took possession of uninhabited regions — those which we had acquired by friendly negotiations with savage tribes, as well as those which we had bought with our blood.

“Meanwhile, what action did the Colonial Government take during the course of all these events? Did it cause us to be informed that we could not rid ourselves of our obligations as subjects, wherever we might be? Or did it offer us any help when we were in distress, and saw before us the prospect of at any moment being destroyed by savage, bloodthirsty heathens—when already over six hundred of our people had been most treacherously massacred, without having been guilty of any provocation? Or did it, as long as they were threatened with total annihilation

and destruction, regard with indifference the great misery of its pretended subjects? But, what is more, were not their murderers assisted and helped as soon as the emigrants appeared to have some chance of gaining the victory? Was this not done by prohibiting our importation of weapons and ammunition? Yes, even by threatening us with a military garrison; by confiscating our own arms and munition of war; and this, at the same time, under pretence of philanthropically wishing to avoid further bloodshed, when there was no question of shedding Christian blood, but when vengeance was to be dealt out to those whose hands were still stained with it! Further, by restricting trade, so that many of the emigrants, during a visitation of infectious disease, died from want of the necessary remedies or of food which was necessary and indispensable at such a time! Has not the same Government invariably treated us as aliens, even in relation to our trade over sea? How, then, is it possible, that, with all such justification on our side, Your Excellency can expect that we should regard ourselves as transgressors or rebels against our lawful Government? We declare that we cannot see how the British Government can, under the above-mentioned circumstances, with any shadow of justice or fairness, claim us as subjects; unless it is that this only happens from other political motives, or that on account of jealousy, reasons are being sought for to bring under the yoke once more the despised emigrant, abandoned to misfortune. We doubt much whether, if we had moved towards the interior of Africa, or to

Delagoa, we should have been molested there also. But we still cherish the hope that, when the present Government of Her Majesty the Queen of England, and the British nation, have become fully and accurately informed of all the circumstances of the case, other means than by the sword and by bloodshed will be found to give satisfaction to both sides. We, therefore, pray your Excellency to further consider the matter, and not to resort to any measures by which we should be compelled to take—however much against our inclination, and however painful they may be to us—such steps as would become unavoidable for our life and security, and as would bring on Your Excellency a responsibility which, sooner or later, might become burdensome.

“As regards the pretext for this military occupation mentioned in your proclamation—namely, our resolution concerning the Kaffirs, which was passed here on 2nd August, 1841—we only wish to say that, as is generally the case, Your Excellency’s informants either themselves did not know the true state of affairs, or intentionally concealed it from you. We are in a position to be able to convince any real philanthropist that our policy in respect to the Kaffirs—both old inhabitants and more recent arrivals—when we made our arrangements for removing and locating them (by the resolutions already referred to, as well as by another resolution which, since then, we have passed in relation to the same subject), is founded on true humanity, inasmuch as we have by these measures attempted to prevent and to avoid the probability of hostilities and bloodshed, which

otherwise would have been the inevitable consequence, had we allowed Zulus and other natives to continue to leave their old homes in thousands and to settle amongst us—as is now the case; for, first made secure by us against their enemies, and, thereafter, having become strong and powerful, they could have had the finest opportunity in the world to exterminate us, only in order to become possessed of our cattle; or, their plans being discovered, they would have placed us under the necessity of at once attacking and repelling them by force of arms.

“We have therefore taken measures to guard against the possibility of such an event, in time, as far as we are able, so as not to let the evil grow and increase, or become quite irremediable, and then to bestir ourselves. A statement now of all we have to say on this point would become much too lengthy. We shall thus pass on to indicate that, even if Faku had any claim to that part of the country mentioned in Your Excellency’s proclamation, he alone would be to blame had we made use of the land. In the first place, we have proofs that he himself, already in the year 1834, had declared that he had no claim whatever to that country, and that, as far as we have been able to find out, his people never inhabited it, if we except a few small scouting and spy kraals. We have also had published the agreement entered into with Dingaan by the late Mr. Retief, as well as our proclamation fixing our frontiers as far south as the Umzimvubu. Besides, Faku himself came to a friendly agreement with us, and we obtained from him, and gave him in return, assurances of

friendliness, and even of protection, so that nothing stood in the way to prevent him from protesting, had we disposed of any of his territory for ourselves; but, in addition, he himself voluntarily acknowledged to our delegate that the country, as far as the Umzimvubu, had lawfully belonged to Chaka and afterwards to Dingaan, and that he admitted our claim to it as founded on justice and right, both by reason of the contract or agreement above named, and because of our victory over the nation (the Zulus).

“He went further, and said that Chaka and Dingaan had conquered even the country beyond the Umzimvubu, and that he regarded himself and his people as being there by our permission. May we not then ask where, among the colonies and territories at present in the possession of Great Britain or of any other Power, is there one to which ownership can be claimed with more right? We are convinced that there is none; but if Faku can prove that neither Chaka nor Dingaan ever had any claim to the land in question, and that this desert and uninhabited tract of country has always been in his own possession, who can convince us of our having, notwithstanding this, insisted on the occupation of the land for ourselves, and that thus, on the ground of such action on our part, any shadow of reason for the threatened military occupation of our harbours and our territory can be advanced?

“We are free to admit, further, that we cannot by any possibility of means, as far as the matter relates to us, understand the law of subjects by birth and otherwise, as brought forward by Your Excellency in your proclama-

tion. But, putting aside this question, we are bound to state our conviction that we should not be able to be secure, or even to exist, in this country, were we once more to place ourselves under the jurisdiction of Colonial rule, as formerly. The land, over which Your Excellency already disposes in anticipation, threatening to deprive us and our children of it, would then also be of no value to us. What prospects have we of obtaining better protection than that which is now enjoyed by the inhabitants of the frontiers of the Colony, and by reason of which many of our number have been under the necessity of leaving that country? What prospects have we of even enjoying that amount of protection?

“Your Excellency’s actions give us more than reason to suspect that your concern and care exist only for uncivilised nations, and that, were we, our wives and children, and our servants, to be slaughtered by them like sheep, no great concern would be caused to any one; that even then the present-day philanthropists would discover false accusations enough to inform the world that we had richly deserved our lot, and that we were ourselves to blame for what had happened.

“Fate, then, seems to drive us to the choice of one of two alternatives: either to bow our necks to the yoke, willingly—like patient beasts of burden—to bear the load which is laid upon us, until, as before, finding its weight too heavy, we begin a new emigration, when we shall have to leave here all that we have in the world;—or, in defence of our just rights, of our possessions, yea, even of our existence, to grasp our rifles, do battle