ever present with him. "I have looked down into the great abyss," he said afterwards to Sir William Mackinnon, "but God has *never* left me through it all." "Name that Name when I am in pain," he once said to his wife, "it calls me back." For his wife and daughters who tended him throughout with devoted care and tenderness his constant thought was lest they should be overtasked. "I never did the slightest thing for him without his thanking me," one of his nurses said.

In March the immediate danger passed, and there was a rally of several weeks, during which he was able to see some of the many friends who called. From all sides, even from personal strangers, came overflowing sympathy and kindness. The Queen desired Sir W. Jenner to bring her the latest news of his health whenever he came. The Prince and Princess of Wales made constant inquiries, and Sir Dighton Probyn came with a message, to ask if His Royal Highness might come and sit with him; but he was just then too ill. The Secretary of the Athenæum asked for a daily bulletin. The diamond-cutters of Clerkenwell, to whom he had delivered a lecture in 1882, sent a letter of sympathy. He was able to take his usual keen interest in current events. One day Sir Henry Green called and told him—to his great gratification—that the railway to Quetta, for which he had contended so long, was now at length to be completed. He was deeply distressed at the neglect of the Government in respect to Bechuanaland; and even more at their desertion of Gordon at Khartoum. "Oh, this disgraced country!" he exclaimed.

On May 26 his weakness increased, and his thoughts seemed to wander and to be collected with difficulty. Lady Frere, watching by him in the early dawn of a May morning, heard him murmur, as he lay half-conscious, "I

they would only read the 'Further Correspondence' they would surely understand—they *must* be satisfied."

On May 29 the end came, peacefully, and he was at rest.

For one who so loved his early home, a resting-place in Bitton churchyard or at Clydach might have seemed appropriate. He himself thought to have been laid in Wimbledon churchyard. But many zealous friends were anxious to claim a place for him among the honoured dead of his countrymen. The Dean of Westminster was asked that he might be buried in the Abbey, where lie Pollock, and Lawrence, and Outram, and many another Indian worthy. But Arthur Stanley was gone, and his successor was ignorant, like too many of his countrymen, that there was a great man fallen that day in Israel, and pleaded want of space. The crypt of St. Paul's—the very central point of the vast empire on whose seething and unquiet borders Frere's life's work had been done—was therefore selected; and thither on the June morning were gathered together not only his friends, many in number, and full of personal sorrow, but also, either in person or by their representatives, an assemblage from far and near of the noblest and worthiest of Englishmen, to testify to the worth and to do honour to the memory of the great and good man who had passed away.

* * * * * *

I, too, a posthumous witness, who have gathered up these records, who never saw his face, or heard his voice, or grasped his hand, who in my youth sat at the feet of Maurice and of Kingsley, and there learnt to accept no mean standard as the measure of the stature of a strong and righteous man—I too bear my testimony.

Men and women, in numbers more than I can recall, when they knew of the work I was engaged in, have with

glowing countenances and unloosed tongues, some of them by the hour together, spoken to me of him. Amongst them were statesmen, soldiers, naval officers, civilians, lawyers, men of science, travellers, merchants, missionaries, lonely workers whom he had cheered at their toil, women to whom as children he had been kind, and whom, after the lapse of many years, he had recognized and greeted in the throng of a crowded room. In what they told me there were no contradictions, no inconsistencies to reconcile. It was like a song in perfect harmony of parts. Again and again it was said, "I have never known his like; it was impossible to talk with him for a few minutes without being the better for it." More than once old and almost dying men have roused themselves painfully from sick beds to impress upon me in faint but earnest words something that needed to be said to do justice to his memory. Amongst others came a venerable Oxford Professor. There was scarcely a man of mark in Church or State who had passed through the University, for sixty years past, whom he did not know or know all about. Each had his merits, but in front of them all he placed Bartle Frere, and to Frere, before any other man, he turned not only for personal advice, but, as he said, if, "in the cause of suffering humanity, in any quarter of the world," he had need for helpful and intelligent counsel.

All his manuscript official letters and many private ones, to the number—it is impossible to count them accurately—of at least six to seven thousand,* have passed under my eye. There is not one letter, not one sentence of a letter which could be wished unwritten, or which, if printed in these volumes, would mar the harmony of the rest. The

* Exclusive of such as have been printed in Blue-books and elsewhere, and of Minutes, reports, narratives, memoranda, and all other written documents.

letters written to him, which by the diligent and anxious care of those nearest to him have been so preserved, arranged, and catalogued as to be readily accessible, are almost as numerous. Extracts from them have been given here and there in these pages, but no printed volumes could, within a reasonable space, give an idea of the amount of gratitude expressed in them for kindnesses received, or of the weight of their combined testimony to the value of his public life.

The inner history of a good man's life is the record of the conflict in which, under the education and with the aid of God's Spirit, evil tendencies are checked, passions bridled, delusions dissipated, weaknesses overcome, the intellectual and spiritual vision cleared, the standard of right and wrong made purer, and simpler, crude theories of God's government modified and rectified. I have searched in vain in the records of Frere's life for the evidence of such a conflict. The description given me of him by those who knew him seemed too good, too faultless to be true. I asked for the reverse of the shield, for the shadows without which the lights seemed monotonous and unreal. I asked in vain. It was as though the battle had been fought and won in some previous existence. The same qualities—courage, energy, chivalry, loyalty, unselfishness, modesty, gentleness, patience, right judgment, quickened by a simple and unwavering faith in the ever-present government and guidance of God—were claimed for him from boyhood. The same sagacious and prescient qualities of statesmanship which made the veteran pre-eminent throughout India and at the Cape, distinguished the young civilian in the Deccan and at Sattara.

If it is too good to be true, I cannot help it. I cannot paint shadows which I do not see. If I am blind, at least I am blind in good company.

A last tribute of gratitude too I must pay for more than four years spent with seldom a day's intermission as in his very presence, steeped in the records and incidents of his daily life, and struggling to rise to the level and comprehension of his character and aims. It has been a rare privilege to live in such companionship. It has been a great honour to be called to assist in endeavouring to clear away the mists which have hitherto darkened the memory of the man in whom, if my judgment is right, were combined, in a greater degree than in any British statesman of his generation, mental power, sagacity, and sympathetic knowledge of men, with a simple, unselfish, and untiring devotion to duty, and who humbly, under God's guidance, used these gifts for the benefit of so vast a number of the countless millions whose lot was cast within the limits or the influence of the British Empire.

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BY SIR BARTLE FRERE,

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INDEX.

A

Aborigines Protection Society, ii. 335, 377
Abyssinian Expedition, ii. 38
Acland, Sir Henry, ii. 43, 312
Aden, i. 513; ii. 81
Adderley, Sir Charles, ii. 43
Adeane, Admiral, ii. 274
Adoption Despatch, i. 372
Affghanistan, invasion of, 1838, i. 36, *et seq.*; Frere's opinion as to our relations with, 236; ii. 437; Frere's view as to intercourse with, i. 483, *et seq.*; a barrier against Russia, 494, *et seq.*; Lord Mayo's policy towards, ii. 49; Frere's letter to Lord Salisbury as to, 145; Frere wrongly charged with advocating invasion, 436
Affghans, Jacob's opinion of, i. 142
Akerman, Sir John, letter from, ii. 399
Akhajee, i. 282
Albany Settlers, ii. 192
Annexation of Transvaal, ii. 179, *et seq.*, 361, *et seq.*
Anstey, Mr. C., ii. 17
Anstruther, Col., ii. 409
Appa Sahib, i. 57
Arabs, ii. 108
Argus Newspaper, ii. 331
Argyll, Duke of, ii. 45
Arms Bill (India), i. 328
Army Control Department, ii. 43
Arthur, Mr. John, i. 171
Arthur, Sir George, i. 42, 80
Ashburner, Mr. Lionel, i. 27
Ashley, Hon. Cecil, letter to, ii. 219
Asiatic Society, ii. 52
Auckland, Lord, ii. 77
Award as to disputed territory, ii. 241, *et seq.*
Aylward, A., ii. 175, 410, *et seq.*

B

Back-bay Scheme, ii. 3
Badger, Dr., ii. 71, 151
Balfour, Sir George, i. 319; ii. 44, 45
Banians, ii. 97
Barkly, Sir H., ii. 171, 173
Baroda, ii. 139
Barracks in India, i. 419
Bassein, Treaty of, i. 20
Basutoland, ii. 348
Basutos, ii. 379, *et seq.*
Battiscombe, Lieut., i. 208
Beaconsfield, Lord, ii. 63
Bechuanaland, ii. 423
Beila, Jam of, i. 244

Belgaum, ii. 10
Bellairs, Col., ii. 408
Bellairs' Mixture, ii. 269
Beloochees, Chivalry of, i. 154
Beloochistan, i. 154
Benares, Durbar at, i. 381
Bester, Mr. Paul, ii. 270
Bigaree Canal, i. 119
Bijapur, i. 55
Bitton, i. 6
Boadicea, the, ii. 403
Boers' Camp, ii. 286, *et seq.*
Boers' Memorial, ii. 300
Bok, ii. 257, 364
Bolan Pass, i. 77
Bombay, Frere's first arrival at, i. 16; Bank of, ii. 17, *et seq.*; Census of, i. 459; Council of, 396; Death-rate of, 463; Defences of, 464; Municipal Act, 462; Rebuilding of, 462; University of, ii. 32
Boogtees, i. 145, 163
Boomplatz, battle of, ii. 169
Bourchier, Mr., letter to, i. 325
Bowker, Commandant, ii. 271
Bradford, Sir Edward, ii. 132
Bradshaw, Capt. R.N., ii. 281
Bramshill Lodges, pensioners at, i. 481
Breakfasts, public, i. 296
British India Steamship Company, i. 298
Brownlee, Mr., ii. 194, 248, 255
Bruce, Col. Herbert, i. 314
—— letter to, ii. 23
Brunswick Rifles, i. 450
Bührmann, Mr., ii. 257
Bulgarian Horrors, ii. 55
Bulwer, Sir Henry, ii. 187, 229, *et seq.*, 245, *et seq.*, 338
Bungalows, travellers', i. 112
Burgers, President, ii. 165, 175, 176, 181
Burghash, Seyyid, ii. 83, 111, *et seq.*

C

Cadwallader, Molly, i. 4
Cairo, i. 13
Cairns, Lord, ii. 418
Coke Mount, address from natives of, ii. 397
Cambridge, H.R.H. Duke of, letter to, ii. 280
Camel-dawk, i. 191
Camels, use of, in Sind, i. 107
Canara, i. 405
Candahar, occupation of, ii. 439
Cape of Good Hope, ii. 161
Capetown, ii. 164; Meeting at, 331; Departure from, 403
Carnarvon, Lord, offers Governorship of Cape, ii. 161; First Confederation Scheme, 171; resignation, 218, 317, 320, 388
——, letters to, ii. 163, 180, 186, 190, 202, 208, 230, 238
Carpenter, Miss, i. 475
Casaria, Lodovico da, ii. 73
Cathcart, Sir George, ii. 170, 214
Cavagnari, Col., ii. 157
Censure, despatch containing, ii. 315
Centralization, i. 417
Cetywayo, ii. 182, 227, *et seq.*, 344, 429; death of, 430
Chaka, ii. 225, 232
Chamberlain, Gen., i. 365
Chandernagore, i. 323
Chapman, Lieut., i. 99
Chapman, Mr. F. S., ii. 19
Chelmsford, Lord (Gen. Thesiger), ii. 214, 268, *et seq.*, 338
Chesson, Mr., ii. 430
Chinsura, i. 324
Christianity, attitude of State to, in India, i. 259; in Government Schools, 256, 359
Church Missionary Society, i. 470
Ciskei, ii. 194

Civil War, American, i. 397
Clare, Lord, i. 17; Memorandum by, 43
Clarendon, Lord, ii. 49
Clark, Mr. G. T., letters to, i. 40, 96, 128; ii. 434; reminiscence by, i. 44
Clerk, Sir G. R., Governor of Bombay, i. 307, 394; ii. 112, 170, 372
——, letters to, i. 238, 239, 308, 314, 375, 384, 386, 402, 445, 489; ii. 7, 9, 11, 13, 434
Clibborn, Major, i. 251
Clydach, i. 1, 3
Coffey, Mr., i. 110
Coghill, Lieut., ii. 237
Coghlan, Sir W., i. 512
Colaba, ii. 2
Cold weather tours, i. 132
Colenso, Bishop, ii. 223, 247, 272, 330, 331, 336, 430
Collegio dei Mori, ii. 73
Colley, Sir George, ii. 372, 386, 407, 414. Letters to, 386, 387, 392
Colonial defence, ii. 369
Commercial Education, lecture on, ii. 36
Commondouros, Mr., ii. 134
Confederation of South Africa, ii. 161, 342
Conference of Public Works, i. 412
Coompta, i. 405
Cotton, i. 397, *et seq.*; adulteration of, 411; large profits on, ii. 1
Court-martials, native, i. 215
Courtney, Mr. Leonard, ii. 386, 391
Cradock, address from, ii. 332
Cranbrook, Lord, ii. 388
Crawfurd, Mr. W., i. 463
Crawshay, Mr., i. 4
Crealock, Maj.-General, ii. 270, 413
Cunynghame, Sir Arthur, ii. 183, 201, 214, 220

D

Daily News, extract from, ii. 313
Dalhousie, Lord, i. 66, 81, 96, 173, 484
Damaraland, ii. 190, 426
Deccan Revenue Survey, i. 25; Durban of chiefs of, 476
Delagoa Bay, ii. 371
Delhi, siege of, i. 202, 205, 224
Denison, Sir William, i. 408
Desert, transit of, i. 48
Dharwar, i. 406
Dhuleep Singh, i. 431
Dil Moorad, i. 216
Dillwyn, Mr., ii. 391
Dingaan, ii. 226, 232
Disarmament Act, ii. 381
Disintegration, ii. 389
Doombkees, i. 145
Dost Mahomed, Sir Herbert Edwardes' treaty with, i. 202; Lord Dalhousie's attitude towards, 483; death of, 487
Duckworth, Canon, i. 149
Durand, Sir Mortimer, ii. 158
Durnford, Lieut.-Col. A. W., R.E., ii. 182, 236, 272
Durryah Khan, i. 216
Dutch Church, ii. 375; loyalty of the, 373
Dwarka, i. 293
Dwarka, the, i. 104

E

Eastwick, Capt., letter to, i. 511
Edwardes, Sir Herbert, i. 202, 256, 369
Elcho, Lord, i. 316, 388, 391
Elgin, Lord, i. 386; death of, 424
——, letters to, i. 405, 412, 419
Ellenborough, Lord, i. 38, 80
Ellis, Sir Barrow, i. 123, 170

Ellis, Sir Barrow, letters to, i. 311, 328; ii. 37, 433
Elphinstone, Lord, letters to, i. 104, 193, 194, 196, 204, 226, 236, 238, 241, 252, 283, 284, 287, 307, 308
Elphinstone, Mountstuart, i. 20, 67
Emancipation Act, ii. 168
Empress of India, title of, i. 230; ii. 150
Enchantress, the, ii. 74, 89
Erasmus, Abel, ii. 177
Erasmus Farm, ii. 298
Euan Smith, Sir Charles, ii. 71
Eustace, Col., ii. 193, 200
Evans, Col., i. 282

F

Fair at Kurrachee, i. 115
Fairfax, Capt., R.N., ii. 71
Falkland, Lord, i. 83, 96
——, letters to, i. 91, 108, 113, 117
Famines, ii. 56, *et seq.*
Fannin, Mr. J. Eustace, ii. 398
Ferguson's Hotel, ii. 293
Fergusson, Sir James, letter to, ii. 49
Feroze, the, i. 293
Fife, General, i. 120, 413; reminiscences, 120
Fife Lake, i. 416
Fingoes, ii. 193, 199
Fitzgerald, Sir Seymour, i. 442
Foodthelee tribe, i. 514
Forbes, Mr. Kinloch, i. 447
Forjett, Mr. C., ii. 443
Franciscan Nuns, school of, ii. 78
Frere, B. C. A., i. 127; ii. 71
Frere, Edward, i. 3, 49
Frere, John, i. 1
Frere, John Hookham, i. 3, 35; ii. 51
Frere, Lady, i. 47, *et seq.*, 178, 200, 387
Frere, Lady, letters to, ii. 74, 86, 90, 93, 104, 263, 311
Frere, Richard, i. 8, 35, *et seq.*; ii. 141
Frere, Sheppard, i. 2
Frere, Sir Bartle, birth, i. 1; childhood at Clydach, 5; school-days at Bath, 6; Haileybury, 8; goes overland to India, 12; arrival at Bombay, 16; appointed assistant to Mr. Goldsmid, 22; Assistant Revenue Commissioner, 26; Private Secretary to Sir George Arthur, 44; marriage, 47; goes to England on sick leave, 48; returns to Bombay and is made Assistant Commissioner in the Customs, 50; Resident at Sattara, 50; Commissioner at Sattara, 70; Commissioner in Sind, 83; arrives at Kurrachee, 84; promotes the improvement of Kurrachee harbour, 94; the making of roads, 107; travellers' bungalows, 113; fairs, 114; canals, 116; the study of the Sindi language, 122; letters to his children, 125; his person and character, 129; his "cold-weather" tours, 131; warmly defends Jacob, 163; goes to England on sick-leave, 170; returns to Kurrachee, 171; prompt action on outbreak of the Mutiny, 177; despatches European troops to the Punjab, 180, and to the Deccan, 192; deprecates cession of Peshawur to the Affghans, 201; deals with the mutineers at Kurrachee, 210; desires the proclamation of the Queen as sovereign of India, 230; his policy in Beloochistan, 143, *et seq.*; views on the true attitude of Government to Christianity in

India, 257, *et seq.*; on centralization, 265; on the organization of the Indian army, 270; leaves Sind, 291; goes to Calcutta as Member of Council, 295; supports proposed income-tax, 303; on Wilson's death, takes charge of financial department, 312; his friendship with Sir Robert Napier, 317; reconciles difference between Balfour and Napier, 320; pilots Government measures through Legislative Council, 327; correspondence with Sir Charles Wood as to changes in constitution of Council, 334, and as to governing India in India, 349; protests against policy of Punjab border retaliatory raids, 362; his satisfaction at Lord Canning's Adoption-Despatch, 372; intimate relations with Lord Canning, 386; goes to Bombay as Governor, 393; promotes cultivation of cotton, 397; summons a conference of engineers and officials, 412; his difficulties with the Calcutta Government, 417, *et seq.*; writes minute on frontier policy and sends it to Lawrence, 427; his relations with Lawrence, 443; organizes the rebuilding of Bombay, 459; promotes education, 470; his antagonism to the doctrine of "masterly inactivity," 483, *et seq.*; letter to Sir John Kaye on Frontier Policy, 491; favours Pelly's action in the Persian Gulf, 509; urges raising of civil servants' pay on account of high prices, ii. 11; endeavours to restrain speculation, 13; his relations with the Bombay Bank, 17, *et seq.*; his manner of dealing with applicants, 27; leaves Bombay, 33; on the Indian Council in London, 36; correspondence with Miss Nightingale as to a sanitary department for India, 38; organizes an Army Control Department, 44; correspondence with Lord Mayo, 46, *et seq.*; his work on the Geographical Society, 52; lecture on Famines, 57; goes on a mission to Zanzibar, 71; his interviews with the Khedive, 74; arrives at Zanzibar, 82; leaves for the South, 88; returns to Zanzibar, 99, and takes stringent measures, 101; made a Privy Councillor, 115; views on Indian Missions, 119; goes with the Prince of Wales to India, 125; describes Peshawur, 141; his views as to how to deal with the Ameer, 147; is made a baronet and G.C.B., 152; meeting and correspondence with Lord Lytton, 154; goes to the Cape as Governor and High Commissioner, 164; receives news of annexation of Transvaal, 179; vainly urges the declaration of a protectorate of Damaraland and Namaqualand, 191; goes to King William's Town, 193; dismisses the Molteno Ministry and sends for Mr. Gordon Sprigg, 210; returns to Capetown, 214; goes to Natal, 237; his difficulties as to the Disputed Territory Award, 241; despatches ultimatum to Cetywayo, 249; his calmness during the panic after Isandhlwana, 275; has an interview with Joubert, 284; travels to the Transvaal, 286; visits the Boer Camp, 294; sends

home the Boers' memorial, 300; virulent attacks on him by British Press, 313; the Government censures him, but begs him not to resign, 316; his return journey to Capetown, 334; he is partially superseded by Sir Garnet Wolseley, 337; his difficulties in Pondoland and Basutoland, 348; his views as to African missionaries outside British territory, 358; correspondence as to Staff Correspondents, 365; Mr. Gladstone's Government coming into office give him no instructions to change his policy, 376; the Radicals continue to attack him, and the Government yields and he is recalled, 395; general indignation in South Africa, 396; his return to England, 433; visits the Queen and the Prince of Wales in Scotland, 434; his correspondence with Mr. Gladstone, 436; writes letters as to the occupation of Candahar, the Ilbert Bill, and the suppression of agrarian crime in Ireland, 440, *et seq.*; his last illness, 449, and death, 451
Frere, William, i. 16, 17
Froude, Mr. James Anthony, ii. 172, *et seq.*, 367, 369
Fynn, Mr., ii. 255
Fynney, Mr., ii. 232

G

Gaikas, ii. 204
Galekas, ii. 193, 199, 202
Galle, i. 294
Gallwey, Mr., ii. 235
Gell, Rev., i. 257
Geographical Society, ii. 52
Gibbs, Mr., i. 196
Gladstone, Mr. W. E., ii. 376, 390, 408, 418; correspondence with, 436
Glyn, General, ii. 199, 201, 213, 272
Goldsmid, Mr., i. 22
Goldsmid, Sir Frederic, reminiscences, i. 135
Gordon, General, ii. 443, 450
Gore-Browne, Sir Thomas, reminiscences, i. 32
Goshen, ii. 425
Grahamstown, ii. 193
Grant-Duff, Sir M. E., ii. 385
Granville, Lord, ii. 69, 70, 101, 113
——, letters to, ii. 81–84, 96, 102, 103, 107
Green, Colonel Malcolm, i. 488
Green, Sir Henry, i. 134, 147, 243, 246 *et seq.*; ii. 33, 61, 153, 450
——, letters to, i. 240, 244, 248, 368
Greenwood, Mr. F., letters to, ii. 410, 441
Grey, Mr. Albert, ii. 138, 434
——, letters to, ii. 328, 419
Grey, Sir Charles, ii. 71
Grey, Sir George, ii. 170, 171
Grey, Lord, ii. 169
Griquas, ii. 171
Gungaram, i. 235, *et seq.*
Gurdon, Mr. Brampton, letter to, ii. 420

H

Haden, Mr. Seymour, ii. 430
Haggard, Mr. Rider, letter from, ii. 415
Haileybury, i. 8
Hart, Mrs., i. 200
Hay, Lord John, letter to, i. 511
Henderson, Sir Edward, ii. 412
Herat, siege of, by Dost Mahomed, i. 485
Herbert, Sir Robert, ii. 180

Herbert, Sir Robert, letters to, ii. 187, 211, 223, 238, 265, 279, 285, 306, 309, 311, 325
Hill, Sir Clement, ii. 71
Hicks-Beach, Sir M., ii. 217, 260, 315, 393
——, letters to, ii. 217, 245, 259, 260, 263, 267, 268, 277, 302, 305, 323, 327, 344, 346, 351, 358, 363
Honorary Magistrates, i. 376
Hooghly, description of, i. 322
Horsford, Sir A., letter to, ii. 268
Hovas, the, ii. 90, 93
Howard, Monsignore, ii. 72
Hübner, Baron, ii. 422, 449
Huguenots, ii. 167
Hussan, Mahomed, i. 155
Hutt, Sir William, i. 188, 191, 209
Hyderabad, battle of, i. 81; mutiny at, 208

I

Ilbert Bill, ii. 440
Imam, H.M.S., i. 501
Income-tax in India, i. 302, *et seq.*; discontinuance of, 452
Indapore, i. 23
Indian missions, ii. 119
Indigo-planters, i. 360
Indus flotilla, i. 180
Ireland, criminal societies in, ii. 442
Irrigation, i. 420
Isandhlwana, ii. 273

J

Jackson, Sir C., ii. 26
Jacob, General John, i. 108, 109, 121, 138, *et seq.*, 170, 175, 181, 206, 220, 241, *et seq.*, 251, *et seq.*
Jacob, General John, letters to, i. 177, 246
Jacobabad, i. 147, 251
Jamieson, Col., i. 319; ii. 45
Janadeyra, i. 145
Jekranees, i. 150
Jellalabad, siege of, i. 38
Jenkins, Mrs., ii. 185, 198
Jeremie, Dr., i. 9
Johnstone, Capt. Bob, i. 209
Jorissen, Mr., ii. 181, 406
Joubert, Mr. Piet, ii. 258, 284, 296, 299, 377, 385

K

Kahun, i. 251
Kama, ii. 225, 423
Kambula, battle of, ii. 289
Kattywar, i. 447
Kaye, Sir John, letters to, i. 173, 483, 491, *et seq.*
Keatinge, General, i. 448; ii. 31
Kelat, Khan of, i. 127, 226, 234, 242; ii. 61
Khedive, interviews with, ii. 74, *et seq.*
Khojas, ii. 105
Kilwa, ii. 95
Kimberley, ii. 171; meeting at, 332
Kimberley, Lord, ii. 376, 383, 390, 420. Letter to, 394
Knollys, Sir F., letter to, ii. 131
Koopmans de Wet, Madame, letter from, ii. 401
Kossier, i. 14
Kotree, railway to, i. 99
Kreli, ii. 193, 200, 204, 213, *et seq.*, 225
Krüger, Mr., ii. 181, 258, 270, 299, 308, 377, 385, 406
Kurrachee, i. 84, 93, *et seq.*, 285

L

Lahej, chief of, ii. 81
Laing, Mr., i. 326
Lanyon, Sir O., ii. 187, 236, 400, 407
Lawrence, General George, i. 231
Lawrence, Lord (Sir John), i. 167, 203, 283, 369; ii. 40, 45
——, letters to, i. 428, 432, 434, 488, 507, 509; ii. 15, 16
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, ii. 391
Laxuman, Mr. Narso, i. 34
Le Caron, Major, ii. 413
Legislative Council at Calcutta, i. 334
Leicester Smyth, General, ii. 384
Leith, Capt., i. 211
Leith, Dr., i. 460
Lester, General, i. 87
Letsea, ii. 383
Linsingen, Capt. Von, ii. 401
Littleton, Hon. W., ii. 194, 237, 255, 286
Livingstone, Dr., i. 505; ii. 67, 115; death of, 117
Local taxation, minute on, i. 454
Long, Mr., i. 360
Lumsden, Major, i. 238
Lüneberg, ii. 244
Lushington, Mr., ii. 19
Lytton, Lord, ii. 150, 154, *et seq.*
Lytton, Sir E. Bulwer, ii. 171

M

Macauley, General, i. 233
Macgregor, Major, i. 211
Mackinnon, Sir William, i. 297; ii. 99, 450
Macnaghten, Sir William, i. 288
Maculla, ii. 102
Madagascar, ii. 90
Mahabuleshwar, Frere's visit to, to see the Governor, i. 58; the climate, 410
Mahomed, Dost, i. 201, 234, 483; death of, 487
Mahratta Confederacy, i. 18
Majuba Hill, ii. 415
Majunga, ii. 90
Malays at Capetown, ii. 164; address by, 397, 403
Malta, i. 12, 49; ii. 35
Manchester Cotton Company, i. 408
Mansfield, Sir William, i. 420; ii. 14
Markham, Mr. Clements, ii. 52
Marriott, Gen., i. 439; ii. 34, 154. Letter to, i. 312
Massacre of Zulu girls, ii. 228
Massey, Mr., i. 454
Matchett, Mr., i. 257
Mayo, Lord, ii. 45, 49, *et seq.*
——, letters to, ii. 46, 48
Mayotte, ii. 95
Meeanee, battle of, i. 79
Mehemet Ali, i. 49
Mehrab, Khan, i. 155
Melvill, Sir Melvill, i. 83
Merewether, Sir William, i. 147; defeats Boogtees, 152; guards frontier during Mutiny, 206, *et seq.*; urges occupation of Quetta, 238; commands at Aden, 512, *et seq.*; commands cavalry in Abyssinian expedition, ii. 38; as to frontier, 62; letter as to censure, 321
——, letters to, i. 286, 514; ii. 38
Merivale, Rev. Charles, letter to, on Sinceritism, i. 472
Merriman, Hon. J. X., ii. 194, *et seq.*; correspondence with, 202, *et seq.*; dismissed, 210
Midlothian speeches, ii. 375, 432, 437
Military expenditure in India, i. 101
Military Finance Commission, i. 318

Missionaries in South Africa, Frere's opinion of, ii. 358, *et seq.*
Mitchell, Sir Charles, ii. 238
Mocha, i. 15
Mohurrum, festival of, during Mutiny, i. 195, 216
Molteno, Mr., Colonial Secretary, ii. 189, 191; is dismissed, 210
Moore, Major, ii. 212
Morad, Ali, i. 85, *et seq.*
Morier, Sir Robert, his indignation at Frere's treatment, ii. 321; efforts to secure treaty as to Delagoa Bay, 371
Morley, Mr. John, ii. 388
Morosi, ii. 348, 382
Mozambique, ii. 90
Municipalities, introduction of, by Frere at Sattara, i. 74; at Kurrachee, 137; at Bombay, 463
Mure, Col., i. 319
Murray, Dr., i. 59
Murray, Mr. R. W., ii. 179; distress at surrender of Transvaal, 416
Murrees, i. 145; Major Green's expedition against, 242, *et seq.*
Muscat, ii. 103
Myers, Mr., ii. 11
Mysore, i. 406; grant to princes of, 332

N

Namaqualand, ii. 190, 426
Naomul, Shet, i. 136, *et seq.*, 489; receives Star of India, ii. 31
Napier of Magdala, Lord (Sir Robert Napier), i. 317; regret at Frere's departure from Bombay, ii. 33; commands Abyssinian Expedition, 38; as to relations with Persia, 62; refuses to supersede Frere, 337
Napier, Sir Charles, i. 78, *et seq.*; stays with Frere at Kurrachee, 84
Napier, Sir George, ii. 169
Naples, ii. 73
Napoleon Buonaparte, i. 19
Narra, River, i. 19, *et seq.*
Natal, ii. 237
Newcastle (Natal), ii. 288
New York Herald, correspondent of, ii. 84
Nightingale, Miss, ii. 38, *et seq.*
Nixon, Mr. H., ii. 379
Norman, Mr., ii. 24
North, Miss, extract from journal, ii. 330
Northbrook, Lord, ii. 107, 129
Northcote, Sir Stafford, ii. 39
Nott, General, i. 39
Nubar Pasha, ii. 135
Nuffoosk Pass, i. 251
Nuggur Parkur, i. 277; outbreak in, 279

O

Orange Free State, ii. 170
Osborn, Mr. (resident in Zululand), ii. 428
Osman Effendi, i. 13
Outram, Sir James, i. 78, *et seq.*; commands in Persia, 177; at Alexandria with Lord Canning, 389

P

Paarl, ii. 334
Palgrave, Mr. Coates, ii. 190
Palgrave, Mr. Gifford, i. 510: ii. 67
Pakington, Sir John, ii. 43
Palmerston, Lord, ii. 66

Panda, ii. 226, 232
Panic, commercial, at Bombay, ii. 23
Parr, Col. Hallam, ii. 237, 286
Parry, Sir Edward, i. 6
Parsees, i. 393
Pasley, Capt., i. 506
Peacock, Sir Barnes, moves amendment on Arms Bill, i. 328; on certain titles to land, 331
Pears, Rev. James, i. 6
Pearson, Sir Charles, ii. 272
Pelly, Sir Lewis, perilous journey from Persia, i. 484; in the Persian Gulf, i. 503, *et seq.*; with Zanzibar mission, ii. 69, 71, 89; Frere's letters to, i. 504; ii. 69
Persia, expedition against, i. 170, *et seq.*; seeks friendly relations, ii. 62; bad government in, 108
Peshawur, to be held to the last, i. 203, *et seq.*; description of, ii. 141
Peshwa, the, i. 19, *et seq.*
Pietermaritzburg, ii. 239; letter from mayor of, 335
Politics, Sir Bartle Frere's, ii. 54
Pollock, General, i. 38
Pollock, Sir Richard, ii. 145
Pondoland, ii. 348, *et seq.*
Ponsonby, Sir Henry, letters to, ii. 138, 197, 231, 374
Poole, Capt., ii. 344
Poona Collectorate, road to, from Sattara, i. 55
Poona, Conference at, i. 412
Pope, interview with the, ii. 53
Postage-stamps in Sind, i. 111
Press, native, i. 196, *et seq.*
Press, virulent attacks of, on Sir Bartle Frere, ii. 313, 446
Pretoria, public meeting at, ii. 333; convention of, 420
Pretoria, the, ii. 402, 433
Pretorius, ii. 293, 364, 407
Prices, great rise of, at Bombay ii. 9
Pringle, Mr., i. 83
Probyn, Sir Dighton, his estimate of Sir Bartle Frere, ii. 444
Pulleine, Col., ii. 273
Punjab frontier system, i. 166, 425; Frere's minute on, 427
Punjab Report, i. 164

Q

Quarterly Review, Sir Bartle Frere's articles in, ii. 55
Quetta, reconnoitred by Malcolm Green, i. 158; its occupation urged by Frere and Merewether, 238, *et seq.*; peremptory refusal by Government of India, 490; occupied and fortified, ii. 157; connected by railway, 450
Quintana mountain, fight near, ii. 212

R

Raikes, Capt., i. 177
Rawlinson, Sir Henry, ii. 437
Recall of Sir Bartle Frere from Cape, ii. 395
Rémusat, M. de, ii. 71
Residents, British, in Zululand, ii. 355
Retief, Piet, ii. 287
Rhodes, Mr., ii. 432
Ribi, ii. 102
Rind, Sunjur, i. 157
Ripon, Lord (Goderich, Lord; De Grey, Lord), letters to, i. 260, 261, 265, 295, 358
Roberts, Lord, ii. 412, 418
Robinson, Sir Hercules, ii. 401, 416

Robinson, Sir John, ii. 429, 430
Rome, ii. 71
Rorke's Drift, ii. 277
Rose, Sir Hugh, i. 252, 453
Roychund, Premchund, ii. 20, *et seq.*
Roydon Hall, i. 2
Rudolph, Mr., ii. 244
Runjeet Singh, i. 77
Russia, true danger from, i. 496

S

Salary of Governor of Cape, settled, ii. 162, 163; docked, 392
Salim, the parricide, i. 507; ii. 103
Salisbury, Lord, ii. 64
——, letters to, ii. 141, 145, 146
Sand River Convention, ii. 170, 174
Sandford, Sir Herbert, reminiscences by, i. 62–64, 71–76
Sandilli, ii. 204, 213, 214, 225
Sanitary department for India, ii. 39
Sattara, Frere made Resident at, i. 50; annexation of, 68; Frere made commissioner of, 71; conspiracy at, 75
——, Rajah of, i. 50, *et seq.*
Sausse, Sir M., ii. 14
Scapegoat, demand for a, ii. 312, *et seq.*
Schlickmann, von, ii. 176
School Kaffirs, ii. 215
School of Art, i. 472
Schreuder, Bishop, description of Chaka, Dingaan, Panda, and Cetywayo, ii. 232
Schultz, Mr., ii. 84
Scott, Mr. Michael, ii. 14
Secocoeni, ii. 176, 235, 363
Sedashegur, i. 407
Serapis, the, ii. 133
Service, Indian Civil, candidates for, i. 269
Seton-Karr, Mr. W. S., i. 360
Seymour, Mr. Danby, letters to, i. 285, 299
Seyyid Said, i. 501
Shahabudin, Kazi, ii. 71
Share-jobbing, minute on, ii. 13
Shaw Stewart, Mr., i. 401
Shenandoah, i. 464
Shepstone, Mr. J. W., ii. 236, 255
Shepstone, Sir Theophilus, ii. 178, 180, 188, 227, 240, 241, 304, *et seq.*
Shere Ali, i. 487; ii. 145
Shikapur, meeting at, i. 218
Simons Bay, ii. 166
Sinceritism, i. 472
Sind, annexation of, i. 77; Ameers, 79; Frere Commissioner in, 83; geographical features of, 90; backward condition, 91; roads, 107; postage-stamps, 111; fairs, 113; canals, 116; language, 122; Sind Irregular Horse, 138, *et seq.*; frontier system, 164; mutiny in, 208; Frere's departure from, 291
Sindia, i. 378
Singh Doorgah, i. 153
Slave-market, ii. 86
Slave-trade, ii. 65–69
Smith, Sir Harry, ii. 169
Smith, Sir Sidney, i. 6
Smythies, Bishop of Zanzibar, ii. 449
Soldiers, comparison between British and Asiatic, i. 271
Solomon, Saul, ii. 331, 382
Somali Coast, ii. 103
Special Correspondents, ii. 129
Spectator, extracts from, ii. 46, 446
Speculation at Bombay, ii. 7

Speed-money, i. 110
Spider, ii. 286, 334
Sprigg, Sir Gordon, ii. 211, 220, 221, 276, 322, 382, 398, 419
Staff, special correspondents, ii. 365
Standard plans, i. 429
Stanley, Lord, letters to, i. 97, 258
Stanton, Col., i. 74
Star of India, institution of, i. 377
Stegmann, Rev. George, ii. 237, 251, 255, 270, 286, 294, *et seq.*
Stellaland, ii. 425
Stockenstrom, Mr., ii. 206
Storks, Sir Henry, ii. 44
Strachey, Gen. Richard, i. 418, *et seq.*
Strahan, Sir George, ii. 401
Suez Canal Shares, British purchase of, ii. 151
Sullivan, Admiral, ii. 275
Sydenham Cottage, i. 6

T

Tambookies, ii. 208
Telegraphs, mismanagement of, in India, i. 438
Temple, Sir Richard, i. 285; letter to, on sanitary matters, ii. 41
Termini, of railways in India, ii. 3
Tewfik, ii. 135
Thouaini, i. 505
Thule, the, i. 465
Time Bargains Bill, ii. 14
Todleben, Gen., ii. 36
Toorkee, ii. 105
Transkei, the, ii. 194
Transvaal, the, made an independent State, ii. 170; hopeless condition of, 175; annexation of, 179, *et seq.*; opinion in, 250; discontent, 258; Frere's journey to, 286, *et seq.*; the Boers' Camp, 294, *et seq.*; Frere's proposals for administration, 309; popularity of Frere at Pretoria, 333; Sir Garnet Wolseley supersedes Frere, 337; Sir Garnet declares annexation irrevocable, 361; signs of wavering, 361; Bok and Pretorius arrested and charged, 364; Pretorius promoted to Legislative Council, 365; Mr. Gladstone's speeches fan the discontent, 376; Sir George Colley succeeds Sir Garnet Wolseley, 386; preparations for rebellion, 406; the republic proclaimed, 409; Aylward, 410; Majuba Hill, 414; the penalties of loyalty, 417; convention of Pretoria, 421; Boer filibusters in Bechuanaland, 424; Sir Charles Warren, 427
Trevelyan, Sir Charles, i. 295; publishes Minute against Income-tax, 305; recalled, 307; financial secretary at Calcutta, 402; his budget censured by Sir Charles Wood, 453
Tugela-drift, meeting with Zulu envoys at, ii. 255
Turner, Major Blois, R. E., i. 95
Turon, loss of the, i. 395
Tyrwhitt, Lieut. George Booth, i. 189, 277, *et seq.*

U

Ultimatum to Cetywayo, ii. 248; delivery of, 255
Ulundi, battle of, ii. 344
Umbelagi, ii. 226
Umbelini, raids by, ii. 244; destroys mission-station, 281
Umhala, ii. 215

Umquikela, his insubordination, ii. 349
Unity of Liberal party, South Africa sacrificed to the, ii. 391–405
Upcher, Capt., ii. 212
Uys, Piet, serves under Col. E. Wood, ii. 283; his death, 289

V

Verney, Sir Harry, invitation from, and reply, ii. 448
Vibart, Mr., i. 32
Victor Emmanuel, Frere's interview with, ii. 71
Vienne, M. de, ii. 87
Villiers, Sir Henry de, ii. 416
Volksraad, ii. 184

W

Wahabees, i. 500
Wales, H.R.H. the Prince of, visits India, ii. 125, *et seq.*; received Frere on return from Cape, 433
Walfisch Bay, ii. 191
Walker, Col. Forestier, ii. 237, 255
Waller, Rev. Horace, letter as to Zululand, ii. 430
Warren, Sir Charles, at Kimberley, ii. 280; clears Bechuanaland, 427
Webb, Mr., ii. 84
Wellesley, Lord, i. 19
Wellington, Duke of (Sir Arthur Wellesley), i. 20; ii. 59
Widcombe Cottage, i. 6
Williamson, Mr., i. 22, 26, 31
Willock, Sir H., i. 115
Wilson, Rt. Honble. James, i. 302; death of, 312
Wingate, Sir George, i. 25
Wodehouse, Sir Philip, ii. 171
Wolff, Dr. Joseph, i. 12
Wolseley, Lord (Sir Garnet), Administrator of Natal, ii. 237, *et seq.*; supersedes Frere in Natal, etc., 337; arrives at Capetown, 344; refuses assistance in Pondoland, 349; his settlement of Zululand, 352, *et seq.*; in Transvaal, 361, *et seq.*; his staff correspondents, 366; leaves Capetown, 373
Women, education of, i. 474, 479.
Wood, Sir Charles, letters to, i. 287, 313, 331, 336, 350, 352, 378, 383, 403, 408, 413, 414, 425, 427, 428, 440, 441, 445, 449, 452, 466, 470, 471, 485, 486; ii. 4, 5, 8, 11
Wood, Sir Evelyn, addresses Boers, ii. 258, 264; in command of fourth column, 273; at Kambula, 289; at Convention of Pretoria, 416; Frere's letters to, 244, 282
Wressil Lodge, i. 170; ii. 433
Wuzzeerees, expedition against, i. 363

Y

Yule, Col. Henry, R.E., Frere visits him at Palermo, ii. 35; his indignation at Frere's treatment, 321; meets Frere at Southampton, 433

Z

Zambesi, British Protectorate to, advocated by Frere, ii. 431
Zanzibar, arrival of *Enchantress* at, ii. 82; consuls at, 84, *et seq.*; *Enchantress* departs for the south, 88; returns and leaves again, 99.

Zanzibar, Sultan of. *See* Burghash.
Zulus, origin of, ii. 225; hostility to Boers transferred to British, 230; ultimatum to, 248; the celibate army, 253; meeting at Tugela Drift, 255; Lord Chelmsford enters Zululand, 272; Isandhlwana, 273; Natal Zulus remain loyal, 281; battle of Ulundi, 344; Sir Garnet's thirteen kinglets, 353; British Government refuses to govern them, 427; Cetywayo restored, 429; anarchy and bloodshed, 430; Zululand annexed, 431

THE END.

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