

the senior officer who fell at Isandhlwana—with having disobeyed his orders, and so caused the disaster. This attack was followed up by Lord Chelmsford in a letter in the *Times* of August 25th, and in a speech (House of Lords) on the 2nd of September.

The statements made by Lord Chelmsford,¹ on which he bases his charge, are full of misrepresentation, and are largely contradicted by proved facts. The main features of the case, viz., the circumstances anterior to and surrounding the situation at Isandhlwana, are ignored; and he thus strives to limit the question, as he had at the Court of Inquiry, to the actions of the camp defenders.

The most cursory inquiry proves that there is not the slightest foundation for the charge Lord Chelmsford has made; and, further, that the question of "orders" in no manner covers the causes of the disaster.

It may suffice here to say that Colonel Durnford was the commanding officer of No. 2, a distinct Column, and marched into Isandhlwana camp at or soon after 10.30 A.M., finding there no further knowledge of the enemy's movements than that reported to Lord Chelmsford, and received by him between 9 and 10 A.M.

The strength of the enemy being unknown, small detached bodies only having been seen, it was Colonel Durnford's plain duty to reconnoitre, which he did with his own troops, not interfering with the camp force, who are shown to have been under the distinct orders of Colonel Pulleine.

Within one hour and a half of Colonel Durnford's arrival, his and Colonel Pulleine's forces were *suddenly* attacked by an overwhelming Zulu army, which had been permitted to approach, unseen and unsuspected, through sheer carelessness and negligence of their superior officer.

Colonel Durnford had no orders whatever regarding the camp beyond (if it were so) "take command of it." And Colonel Pulleine's orders, if assumed to have been binding on Colonel Durnford, were not departed from.

¹ Lord Chelmsford's statements compared with evidence will be found in the appendix.

Colonel Durnford's previous career may also be called in evidence. His behaviour at the Bushman's River Pass proved how unswerving he was in obedience to orders. (See Chapter II.)

Before finally leaving the events of the 22nd January, we must fully notice an important episode that occurred, and which had a serious bearing on the disaster we have to lament.

We have seen that "the guns with an escort" were ordered to retrace their steps . . . to join Colonel Glyn at the rendezvous near the Mangane Valley. We will now follow their movements.

When Lord Chelmsford discovered that the enemy he had come in search of had disappeared, 4 guns Royal Artillery, 2 companies 2-24th Regiment (Captains Church and Harvey), and about 50 Natal Native Pioneers, the whole under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Harness, R.A., were ordered to march to a rendezvous in advance by a different route to that taken by the remainder of the column; this was necessary, as the guns could not go over the ground taken by the latter. To carry out the order, they had to retrace for over two miles the route by which they had come in the morning, and then bear to the left. This was done (a short halt having first been made, to let men and horses have a rest), and about twelve o'clock they reached some rising ground, when they again halted, not being certain of the direction of the rendezvous, to await Major Black, 2-24th, Assistant Quartermaster-General, who had gone on to find it. Almost immediately after this halt the firing of cannon was heard, and looking towards the camp, about eight miles off, they saw shells bursting against the hills to the left of it. Soon afterwards a body of about 1,000 natives suddenly appeared in the plain below, between them and the camp; the Native Pioneers thought they were Zulus. Captain Church told Colonel Harness if he would let him have a horse he would go and find out. Colonel Harness at once gave him one, and sent a mounted sergeant with him. As they galloped

towards the natives, a European officer rode out, and when they met said: "The troops behind me are Commandant Browne's contingent, and I am sent to give you this message: '*Come in every man, for God's sake! The camp is surrounded, and will be taken unless helped at once.*'" Captain Church rode back as fast as he could, and found Colonel Harness in conversation with Major Gosset (aide-de-camp) and Major Black, both of whom had come up during his absence. Colonel Harness promptly said: "We will march back;" but Major Gosset ridiculed the idea, and advised him to carry out his orders. Colonel Harness then asked Major Black and Captain Church their opinions. They both agreed with him without hesitation. Colonel Harness gave the order to return, and started without a moment's delay; Major Gosset riding off in the direction of the General. About 1.30 P.M. Lieut.-Colonel Harness was on his way to the camp, and had got over about two miles of ground when he was overtaken by Major Gosset with orders from the General to march back to the rendezvous. The order was obeyed.

Now the startling reflection comes home that to this most important fact, bearing on the events of the day (for even if too late to save life, Colonel Harness would have saved the camp), there is not a hint even in the despatches of Lord Chelmsford, or the official statement of his military secretary.¹ The latter goes so far as to say, in paragraph 17 of his statement (P. P. [C. 2260] p. 100): "I am not aware what messages had been sent from the camp and received by Colonel Glyn or his staff; but I know that neither the General nor myself had up to this time received any information but that I have mentioned." This statement refers to a time *after* the

¹ The *first* official mention of this appears in a Blue-book of August, 1879, where Lieutenant Milne, R.N. (aide-de-camp), says: "In the meantime, news came that Colonel Harness had heard the firing, and was proceeding with his guns and companies of infantry escorting them to camp. Orders were immediately sent to him to return and rejoin Colonel Glyn."—(P. P. [C. 2454] p. 184.)

General had arrived at a spot about a mile from where Commandant Browne's battalion of natives were halted, *after* he had received the message, "Come in, every man, for God's sake," etc., and *after* he had met Colonel Harness on his return march to the rendezvous; and not only that, but apparently *after* the receipt of a most important message from Lieut.-Colonel Pulleine, described as follows by the special correspondent of the *Times* of Natal (Captain Norris-Newman): "We did halt there, and found the staff there as well, looking on through the field-glasses at some large bodies of Kafirs [Zulus], who were in close proximity to our camp about ten miles off. The Mounted Police were ordered to halt and off-saddle; but Captain [T.] Shepstone and his volunteers had orders to proceed back to camp to see what was up. I joined them, and we had not gone far on the road when a mounted messenger came up with a note from Colonel Pulleine to the General, saying that the camp was attacked by large numbers of Kafirs, and asked him to return with all the help at his command. With this we halted, and awaited the up-coming of the General, who came along at once, and proceeded up the valley to reconnoitre. About three miles had been got over, during which we passed the four guns under Colonel Harness, and some of the 24th . . . on their way to encamp at the new ground. A mounted man was then seen approaching, and was recognised as Commandant Lonsdale. He brought the dreadful news that, having chased a Zulu on horseback, he got separated from his men, and had ridden quietly back to camp; but on arrival there, within about three hundred yards of it (at about 2 P.M.), he found large bodies of the enemy surrounding it and fighting with our men. He had just time to discover his mistake, turn, and fly for his life, when several bullets were fired at him, and many Zulus started in chase."—*Natal Colonist*, January 30th, 1879.

The above message is undoubtedly that mentioned by Captain Gardner as having been despatched from the camp at or soon after twelve o'clock. (P. P. [C. 2260])

p. 81.) And there still remains the fact that, not only as regards Colonel Harness, does there appear to be an unaccountable omission in the "statement"¹ alluded to, but also we find mention of only *one* message from the camp; whereas other messages are *known* to have been received, and to have been in the possession of the Assistant Military Secretary.²

"Here also we must allude to Sir Bartle Frere's despatches of January 27th, and February 3rd and 12th. In the first he says: 'In disregard of Lord Chelmsford's instructions, the troops left to protect the camp were taken away from the defensive position they were in at the camp, with the shelter which the waggons, parked, would have afforded. . . .' We know that the troops did the best they could, left as they were by their General in an open camp—we know they had no "defensive position"—and we know that the waggons were *not* "parked" but drawn up in rear of their own camps.

Sir Bartle says, February 3rd: "It is only justice to the General to note that his orders were clearly not obeyed on that terrible day at Isandhlwana camp."

And on February 12th, he says: "It is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that it was, in all human probability, mainly due to disregard of the General's orders that so great a disaster occurred" (a little qualifying his sweeping assertion of February 3rd).

But yet again Sir Bartle returns to the charge, and says, June 30th: "It is difficult to over-estimate the effect of such a disaster as that at Isandhlwana on both armies, but it was clearly due to breach of the General's order, and to disregard of well-known maxims of military science."—(P. P. [C. 2454] p. 138.)

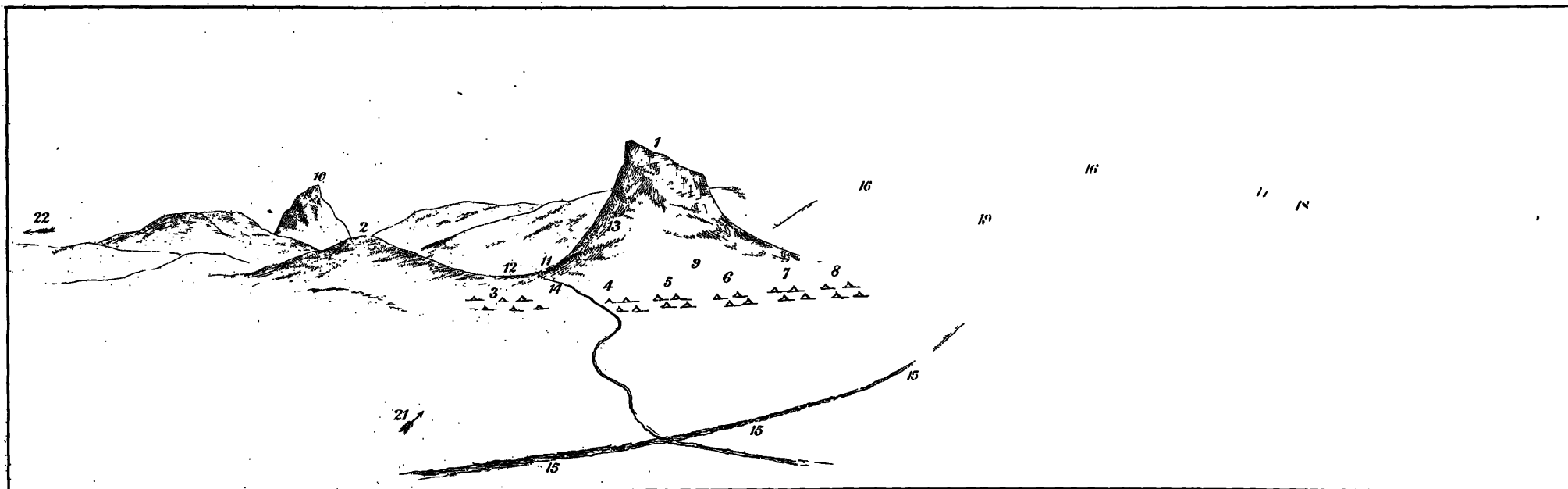
¹ By the General's directions this statement was to be "of the facts which came under his cognizance on the day in question."—(P. P. [C. 2260] p. 80.)

² Further remarks on the messages will be found in the appendix. "Lord Chelmsford's statements compared with evidence."

OUTLINE SKETCH OF ISANDHLWANA.

SAID TO BE "AN EXACT REPRESENTATION OF THE PLACE."

"The only part of the hill that is inaccessible is just the ledge of rocks at the very top. . . . All the base of the hill is a grassy plain, affording excellent shelter and thoroughly commanding the camp at a distance of from 150 to 200 yards"



1. Isandhlwana Hill.
2. Black's Koppie.
3. Camp 1/24 Regiment—about 100 of the 24th fell here.
4. „ Mounted Corps.
5. „ Royal Artillery.
6. „ 2/24 Regiment—about 50 of the 24th fell here.
7. „ 1/3 Regiment Natal Native Contingent.
8. „ 2/3 „ „ „ „
9. „ Head Quarter Tents.
10. Signal Hill, Rorke's Drift.
11. Where right horn of Zulu army came round the hill.
12. Neck.

13. Where 50 of the 24th fell on the steep slope of the hill.
14. Road from Rorke's Drift. Close to this spot Col. Durnford, the Viceroy's Dragoon.
15. Donga in front of camp.
16. The Ingqutu range of hills.
17. Small stony hill (Stony Koppie).
18. Where the rocket battery was destroyed at 3 1/4 miles from camp.
19. Where the two companies of the 24th went up the hills on the left, leaving only the right horn of the Zulus.
20. Where the left of the Zulus advanced on Col. Durnford's rifle.
21. Where the left horn of the Zulus worked round the right flank.
22. Position of Fugitives' Drift—in a deep valley.

On what grounds Sir Bartle Frere bases those assertions we know not—no known orders were disobeyed—and, in spite of the special pleading in these despatches, we must come to the conclusion that Sir Bartle Frere's remarks were penned in utter ignorance of facts, and that the accusations concerning "disregard of well-known maxims of military science" should have been applied, *not* to the soldiers who fell at Isandhlwana, but to those who placed them in that fatal position.

CHAPTER XIV.

RORKE'S DRIFT—HELPMAKAAR—COURT OF INQUIRY, ETC.

THE garrison of the Rorke's Drift post consisted of B Company 2-24th Regiment (Lieutenant Bromhead) and (with officers and casuals) was of a total strength of 139. It was encamped on the Natal side of the Buffalo, where there was a mission station, one building of which was used as a hospital and one as a commissariat store. The crossing of the river was effected by what are called "pontoons"—boats used as a kind of "flying bridge"—and there were drifts, or fords, in the vicinity. Major Spalding, Deputy-Assistant-Adjutant-General, and Lieutenant Chard, R.E., were stationed here. The former rode off to Helpmakaar at 2 P.M., 22nd January, "to bring up Captain Rainforth's company, 1st Battalion 24th Regiment, to protect the pontoon," leaving Lieutenant Chard in command of the post.

About 3.15 P.M., Lieutenant Chard was at the pontoons, when two men came riding from Zululand at a gallop, and shouted to be taken across the river. They were Lieutenant Adendorff, Natal Native Contingent, and a carbineer, who brought tidings of the disaster at Isandhlwana and the advance of the Zulus towards Rorke's Drift. Lieutenant Adendorff remained to assist in the defence of the post, and the carbineer rode on to take the news to Helpmakaar.

Lieutenant Chard at once gave orders to secure the stores at the pontoons, and rode up to the commissariat store,

when he found a note had been received from the 3rd Column, saying the enemy were advancing, and directing them to strengthen and hold the post at all cost. Lieutenant Bromhead was actively at work preparing for defence, ably assisted by Mr. Dalton, of the Commissariat Department, loopholing the buildings and connecting them by walls of mealie-bags and two waggons that were there. Lieutenant Chard then rode down to the pont, and brought up the guard and stores.

An officer, with about a hundred of "Durnford's Horse," now arrived, and asked for orders. He was instructed to throw out men to watch the drifts and ponts, to check the enemy's advance, and fall back on the post when forced to retire. These men had, however, been in the saddle since daylight, and had gone through a heavy engagement; they were quite exhausted (besides being dispirited by the loss of their beloved leader), and after remaining a short time, retired to Helpmakaar. A detachment of Natal Native Contingent also left the post.

Lieutenant Chard now commenced an inner work—"a retrenchment of biscuit-boxes." This was two boxes high when, about 4.30 p.m., 500 or 600 of the enemy came in sight, and advanced at a run against the south wall. They were met with a well-sustained fire, but, in spite of their loss, approached to within about fifty yards. Here they were checked by the cross-fire from the attacked front and the store-house. Some got under cover and kept up a heavy fire, but the greater number, without stopping, moved to the left, round the hospital, and made a rush at the wall of mealie-bags. After a short but desperate struggle the enemy were driven back with heavy loss into the bush around the post. The main body of the enemy coming up, lined the ledge of rock, caves, &c., overlooking the work, at a distance of about 400 yards to the south, and from whence a constant fire was kept up, and they also occupied in great force the garden, hollow road, and bush.

The bush not having been cleared away enabled the enemy to advance under cover close to the wall, and a

series of desperate assaults were made, extending from the hospital along the wall as far as the bush reached; each assault was brilliantly met and repulsed with the bayonet, Corporal Scheiss, Natal Native Contingent, distinguishing himself greatly. The fire from the rocks took the work completely in reverse, and was so heavy that about 6 P.M. the garrison was obliged to retire behind the entrenchment of biscuit-boxes.

During this period the enemy had been storming the hospital, and at last succeeded in setting fire to the roof. The garrison defended it most gallantly, bringing out all the sick that could be moved; Privates Williams, Hook, R. Jones, and W. Jones, 2-24th Regiment, being the last men to leave, and holding the doorway with the bayonet when their ammunition was expended. The want of communication and the burning of the house rendered it impossible to save all the sick.

It was now found necessary to make another entrenchment, which was done with two heaps of mealie-bags. Assistant-Commissary Dunne working hard at this, though much exposed. As darkness came on the little garrison was completely surrounded, but gallantly repulsed several serious assaults; it was, however, eventually forced to retire to the inner entrenchment, which it held throughout the night. The attack continued vigorously till midnight, the men firing on the assailants with the greatest coolness, aided by the light afforded by the burning hospital. A desultory fire was kept up by the enemy throughout the night, but this ceased about 4 A.M. on the 23rd, and at daybreak the enemy was out of sight. Lieutenant Chard at once set about patrolling round the post, collecting the Zulu arms, and strengthening the defences.

About 7 A.M., a large body of the enemy appeared on the hills to the south west, and Lieutenant Chard sent off a note to Helpmakaar asking for assistance. About 8 A.M., No. 3 Column appeared in sight, the enemy falling back on its approach. Thus ended a most gallant defence, reflecting the utmost credit on all concerned.

The loss of the garrison was 15 non-commissioned officers and men killed, and 12 wounded (of whom two died almost immediately). The attacking force was estimated at 3,000 men, of whom upwards of 350 were killed.

Lord Chelmsford, with the remains of No. 3 Column had moved off from Isandhlwana, as we have already described, at daybreak that morning. It had been thought necessary to insist upon absolute inaction through the night; no attempt was allowed at identifying the dead, or even at making sure that no life remained in the camp; and men lay down to rest, ignorant whether a careless hand might not fall on the lifeless form of a dead comrade or, mayhap, a brother. The remainder of the Natal Carbineers, as they afterwards discovered, bivouacked that night on the right of the camp, upon the very "neck" of land where so gallant a stand was made; their captain recognising the body of Lieutenant Scott, and therefore being able afterwards to identify the spot. That life might exist without its being known to the returning column is proved by the fact that a native groom lay for dead, although unwounded, in the camp throughout the night. The man had feigned death when the camp was taken, and did not dare to move on the return of the General's party, lest he should be taken by them for a Zulu, and should share the fate of the few actual Zulus found intoxicated beneath the waggons, and bayoneted by our soldiers. He crept out in the morning, and followed the retreating column to Rorke's Drift at a distance, meeting on the way with narrow escapes of losing his life from both friend and foe.

On coming within sight of Rorke's Drift, heavy smoke was seen rising from it, and Zulus retiring; this caused the liveliest apprehensions for the safety of the post. However, to the intense relief of all, on nearing the Buffalo River the waving of hats was seen from a hastily-erected entrenchment, and the safety of the little garrison was known.

Lieut.-Colonel Russell was sent with a mounted escort

to Helpmakaar, to see if the road was open and all safe there; but some officers of Major Bengough's battalion Natal Native Contingent rode in and reported the road open, Helpmakaar laagered, and no attack made on it. Some men of the Buffalo Border Guard also rode in from Fort Pine and reported all well there.

The General and staff hurried down to Pietermaritzburg *via* Helpmakaar, while the garrison at Rorke's Drift was left in utter confusion,¹ as testified by many of those present at the time. No one appeared responsible for anything that might happen, and the result was one disgraceful to our English name, and to all concerned. A few Zulu prisoners had been taken by our troops—some the day before, others previous to the disaster at Isandhlwana, and these prisoners were put to death in cold blood at Rorke's Drift. It was intended to set them free, and they were told to run for their lives, but they were shot down and killed, within sight and sound of the whole force. An eye-witness—an officer—described the affair to the present writer, saying that the men whom *he* saw killed numbered "not more than seven, nor less than five." He said that he was standing with others in the camp, and hearing shots close behind him, he turned, and saw the prisoners in question in the act of falling beneath the shots and stabs of a party of our men.² The latter, indeed, were men belonging to the Native Contingent, but they were supposed to be under white control, and should not have been able to obtain possession of the prisoners under any circumstances. Scenes like these were not likely to impress the savages with whom we were dealing with our merciful and Christian qualities, nor to improve the chances of European prisoners who might fall into their hands during the campaign.

As soon as order was a little restored, the cover round the post of Rorke's Drift was cleared away, barricades built, the thatched roof taken off the house, and the four guns placed in position within the inclosure.

¹ "The panic and confusion were fearful," says one of themselves.

² The number of prisoners thus killed is said to have been about twenty.

The General and staff reached Pietermaritzburg early on January 26th. There, as everywhere else, panic reigned, and gloom spread over all. From the city especially many a son and brother had gone out to fall upon that fatal day, and grief was mingled there with terror for what might come next. It was long before any accurate information could be gained as to what had happened, and who had fallen; and, owing to the hurried retreat of No. 3 Column from Isandhlwana before day-break on the 23rd, the great burden of uncertainty was laid upon many heavy hearts both upon the spot and at home in England.

At first all who had had friends at the camp hoped they might be amongst the saved, since it was known that some had escaped by "The Fugitive's Drift," a spot some five miles from Rorke's Drift, where those flying from Isandhlwana crossed the river; and day by day the lists of killed and missing appeared with the names gradually removed from the latter to the former. Well had an hour's daylight been spent that morning to spare the uncertainty that hung over many an English and South African home for days and weeks, and even months.

No time was now lost in making such preparations for defence as the principal towns afforded. An invasion of the colony by the victorious Zulu army was hourly expected, and with some reason, since retaliation for our invasion might naturally be feared. Sir Bartle Frere himself remarks, on February 12th (C. 2269): "It has become painfully evident that the Zulu king has an army at his command which could almost any day unexpectedly invade Natal; and owing to the great extent of frontier, and utter helplessness of the undisciplined hordes of Natal natives to offer effectual resistance, the Zulus might march at will through the country, devastating and murdering, without a chance of being checked, as long as they abstained from attacking the entrenched posts of Her Majesty's troops, which are from 50 to 100 miles apart. The capital and all the principal towns are at this moment

in 'laager,' prepared for attack, which even if successfully resisted, would leave two-thirds of them in ashes, and the country around utterly desolated."¹

Whatever reasonable fears of retaliation were entertained by the people of Natal, they soon rose to panic-height in consequence of the great alarm displayed by the chief authorities, both military and civil. By their orders, the central part of 'Maritzburg, including the Court House, was barricaded with loopholed boarding, as a refuge for the citizens in case of attack, wells were dug inside the Court House, and notice given that the usual guns, announcing the arrival of the English mails, would be discontinued for the present, but that three guns would be fired as a signal for the citizens to go into the laager within three hours, while four guns would signify that the danger was urgent, and they must fly into it at once, taking stores of food, which they were to have ready beforehand, besides what the borough council had provided, and they must then comply with an elaborate series of rules, which was published in the *Government Gazette*. So great indeed was the scare that some of the citizens of 'Maritzburg did actually take refuge one night in the laager, and others hurriedly left the colony, while many natives, living near the city, slept out, with their wives and children, some nights in the open field. On that night, when terror was at its height, it is said that the bedding of the Governors and their staff, together with the official records of Government House, was removed to the neighbouring gaol, a strong stone building, just under the guns of Fort Napier, which was chosen as a place of refuge for their Excellencies. It is also said that Lord Chelmsford's horse was kept saddled and bridled all night;

¹ Yet Sir B. Frere, on the 30th of June, writes: "The position of Wood's and Pearson's columns effectually checked the execution of an attempt at invasion." These two columns, being some ninety miles apart and secure in their own positions *only*, would have been of little avail had the Zulu king desired to make "an attempt at invasion." It needed no better strategists than Cetshwayo and his chiefs to have masked each of the posts at Kambule and Etshowe with some 5,000 men, and then "the Zulus might march at will through the country."

and a stretcher was placed, by express order, outside the window of a lady in delicate health, without her knowledge, so as to be ready in case of emergency—as if a Zulu impi could drop suddenly, at a moment's notice, into the middle of the city, the frontier, at the nearest point, being sixty miles off.

Whether or no the High Commissioner was really in such a state of alarm as he appeared to be, the existence of such a scare in Natal would, no doubt, help to support his policy in the eyes of those at home, as an actual inroad of Zulus at that time would have still more effectually justified the charges he had made against Cetshwayo, and the strong measures he had taken in invading Zululand, for the good of the Zulus themselves and the safety of the colony. After the disaster at Isandhlwana, Sir B. Frere of course reiterates his charges against the king of intending to invade the colony (C. 2269). But these charges are sufficiently answered by the mere fact that although, as Sir B. Frere himself points out, Natal lay at his mercy for some months after the disaster, he made no attack whatever either upon Swazis, Boers, or English. After Isandhlwana, if ever, such invasion was to be dreaded, yet not only was none attempted, but even the Zulus who, in the flush of victory, crossed into Natal at Rorke's Drift on the 22nd, were called back by their officers with the words, "Against the orders of your king!"

In startling contrast to the panic which reigned after the 22nd January was the ignorance and carelessness shown by the authorities beforehand. At the very time of the disaster to No. 3 Column there was a train of fifteen waggons, with sixty-five boxes of ammunition each, moving unguarded up to Helpmakaar, upon a road eight miles from and parallel to the Zulu border!

With the exception of Rorke's Drift, no military station was at this time more open to attack than Helpmakaar, distant from it about twelve miles. The fugitives from Isandhlwana, Captains Essex and Gardner, Lieutenants Cochrane, Curling, and Smith-Dorrien, with about thirty others, reached this place between 5 and 6 P.M., and at

once set about forming a waggon-laager round the stores. The garrison of two companies of the 1-24th Regiment had marched towards Rorke's Drift during the day; but Major Spalding says: "On reaching the summit of a hill from which the mission-house is visible it was observed to be in flames; this confirmed the statement of the fugitives that the post had been captured. This being the case, it was determined to save, if possible, Helpmakaar and its depôt of stores" . . . and the column reached Helpmakaar by 9 P.M.—(P. P. [C. 2260] p. 88.) Captain Gardner, soon after reaching Helpmakaar, left for Utrecht, it having occurred to him to carry the news of the disaster himself to Colonel Wood, to whom, however, he sent on the message. Our loss at Isandhlwana is given as 689 officers and men Imperial troops, and 133 officers and men of Colonial Volunteers, Mounted Police, and Natal Native Contingents—Europeans (P. P. [C. 2260] pp. 93-98); but the actual loss was slightly in excess of those numbers.

The Zulu army appears to have consisted of the following regiments:—'Kandampemvu (or Umcityu), 'Ngobamakosi, Uve, Nokenke, Umbonambi, Udhloko, Nodwengu, and Undi (which comprises the Tulwana, 'Ndhlonhlo, and Indhluengwe), whose full nominal strength reaches a total of 30,900 men; but the actual numbers are estimated at from 20,000 to 25,000.

The Zulus acknowledge to having suffered heavily, and their loss is estimated at 3,000.

Cetshwayo's younger brother, Magwendu, who surrendered on 27th April, said he was present at Isandhlwana. That the front and left flank attack was beaten, and fell back with great loss until the fire of the white troops slackened; the right flank entering the camp, the attack was renewed, the English being unable to prevent their onset from want of ammunition. The Zulu army, he says, numbered 20,000 of the king's best troops.

A court of inquiry, composed of Colonel Hassard, C.B., R.E., Lieut.-Colonel Law, R.A., and Lieut.-Colonel Harness, R.A., assembled at Helpmakaar on the 27th January, when the following officers gave evidence: Major Clery; Colonel

Glyn, C.B. ; Captain Gardner, 14th Hussars ; Captain Essex, 75th Regiment ; Lieutenant Cochrane, 32nd Regiment ; Lieutenant Smith-Dorrien, 95th Regiment ; Captain Nourse, Natal Native Contingent ; and Lieutenant Curling, R.A.

The evidence taken consisted of statements made by the above officers, not one of whom appears to have been questioned. The (so-called) inquiry seems to have been strictly limited to the occurrences at the camp, as we find Major Clery's evidence finish abruptly, "I saw the column out of camp and accompanied it." Colonel Glyn merely corroborated Major Clery's statement ; and the other officers gave their respective versions of the occurrences at the camp ; Captain Essex giving a very clear and detailed account of the movements of the 24th Regiment.

The proceedings were forwarded on the 29th, with these remarks :—

"The court has examined and recorded the statements of the chief witnesses.

"The copy of proceedings forwarded was made by a confidential clerk of the Royal Engineers.

"The court has refrained from giving an opinion, as instructions on this point were not given to it."

The proceedings were forwarded from Durban to the Secretary of State for War on February 8th by Lord Chelmsford, who said : "The court has very properly abstained from giving an opinion, and I myself refrain also from making any observations, or from drawing any conclusions from the evidence therein recorded."

He regrets that more evidence has not been taken, and has directed his military secretary "to append a statement of the facts which came under his cognizance on the day in question."—(P. P. [C. 2260] p. 80.)

On this officer's "statement" some remarks have been made in the previous chapter ; and we must now quote one or two passages from the public prints, which appeared when Colonel Harness's share in the proceedings of the 22nd of January first came to light.

The *Daily News* of April 8th, referring to this episode

and the court of inquiry, says: "Lord Chelmsford seems to have been as unfortunate in the selection of his staff-officers as he was in everything else."

Lieut.-Colonel Crealock's "statement" is stigmatised as "palpably written to establish a preconceived theory;" and the *Daily News* says most justly that "Colonel Harness should not have sat as member of the court of inquiry. How it could have been supposed that an officer who had taken so prominent a part in the doings of the 22nd January was a fit and suitable member of a court assembled even to take evidence merely, is more than we can understand. Besides, the very fact of his being a member, we are told, precluded Colonel Harness from giving his own valuable evidence."

The *Natal Witness* of May 29th, 1879, makes some reflections on the same subject, which are very pertinent. We need not repeat its criticisms on the court of inquiry, &c., but it says: "It is notorious that certain members of Lord Chelmsford's staff—there is no need to mention any name or names—came down to Maritzburg after the disaster, prepared to make Colonel Durnford bear the whole responsibility, and that it was upon their representations that the High Commissioner's telegram about 'poor Durnford's misfortune' was sent."

How a court of inquiry thus assembled was to throw much light on the causes of the disaster does not appear. Its scope was expressly limited to the doings at the camp; and under any circumstances it could not well criticise the faults of the General. The proceedings of this court of inquiry can therefore only be considered as eminently unsatisfactory.¹

¹ Lieut.-Colonel Harness says that "instructions were given to the court to inquire into the 'loss of the camp on January 22,' and not 'into the circumstances of the disastrous affair of Isandhlwana.' To a careless or indifferent reader (he says) there will not appear much difference between these two heads of instruction; but a little consideration will show that there is a wide distinction, and that the 'disastrous affair of Isandhlwana' offers a much wider field of investigation than the 'loss of the camp.' The duties of the Court were, I hold to be, to ascertain what orders were given for the defence of the camp, and how these orders were carried out."—*Fraser's Magazine*, April, 1880.

We might here leave this painful subject, were it not for the undisguised attempts that have been made to throw the blame on the dead.

In considering the question of blame, we must first put before us the circumstances in which the camp defenders found themselves when they were required "to defend the camp."

Now the orders given to Lieut.-Colonel Pulleine are stated by Major Clery, senior staff-officer of No. 3. Column, thus:

"Before leaving the camp I sent written instructions to Colonel Pulleine, 24th Regiment, to the following effect: 'You will be in command of the camp during the absence of Colonel Glyn; draw in (I speak from memory) your camp or your line of defence'—I am not certain which—'while the force is out; also draw in the line of your infantry outposts accordingly, but keep your cavalry vedettes still far advanced.' I told him to have a waggon ready loaded with ammunition ready to follow the force going out at a moment's notice, if required. I went to Colonel Pulleine's tent just before leaving camp to ascertain that he had got these instructions, and again repeated them verbally to him."¹—(P. P. [C. 2260] p. 81.)

Lieut.-Colonel Crealock states: "Soon after 2 A.M. on the 22nd January I received instructions from the Lieutenant-General to send a written order to Lieutenant-Colonel Durnford, R.E., commanding No. 2 Column, to the following effect (I copied it in my note-book, which was afterwards lost): 'Move up to Isandula Camp at once with all your mounted men and Rocket Battery; take command of it. I am accompanying Colonel Glyn, who is moving off at once to attack Matyana and a Zulu force, said to be twelve or fourteen miles off, and at present watched by Natal Police, Volunteers, and Natal Native

¹ In the *Times of Natal*, January 5th, 1881, Mr. Hugh L. Carbutt writes: "I was told by a gentleman living in the Umsinga Division, that he had, presumably many months before my visit, picked up on the battlefield Lord Chelmsford's written orders to Colonel Pulleine."

Later information says that the finder of the written orders is Mr. Fynn, Resident Magistrate at Umsinga, and that he has recently sent the document to Lord Chelmsford.

Contingent. Colonel Glyn takes with him 2-24th Regiment, four guns R.A., and Mounted Infantry."—(P. P. [C. 2260] p. 98.)

But with regard to these orders there is strong evidence of error in Lieut.-Colonel Crealock's statement, and that Colonel Durnford did *not* receive any such order as "take command of" the camp. This is plainly proved by the fact that Colonel Pulleine's orders fixed the term of his command—"during the absence of Colonel Glyn"—and that the orders sent to break up the camp were addressed to Colonel Pulleine (reaching him about noon, when the action was commencing).¹

Colonel Durnford, too, appears to have acted quite independently of the camp force prior to the engagement.

Lord Chelmsford's contention is that the camp was lost "because the strict orders for its defence which had been given had not been carried out."

Now there is no evidence whatever that "strict orders for its defence," were given or even thought of, or that any given orders were departed from. And it must be remembered that "the camp" consisted of *a line of six camps*, with a front of half a mile, the waggons of each corps drawn up in rear of its respective camp; and that the position was commanded by higher ground on the immediate right and rear—a situation wholly inconsistent with defensive action within the camp limits.

Not only were no "strict orders" for the defence of the camps given, but no defensive precautions of any kind were taken by Lord Chelmsford, or permitted to be taken when suggested.

As regards the force left to defend the camp, there were no instructions to form a defensive post; the General did not think it necessary, though to him was the almost prescient remark made—"We should be all right if we only had a laager." He saw no danger; he was about to move his camp on, and a laager would be useless work, so he put the suggestion on one side with the remark: "It would take a week to make." Thus Lieut.-Colonel Pulleine was

¹ For further evidence, see Appendix.

left, and he had no reason to anticipate danger, till, almost without a moment's warning, he found the camp threatened by an overwhelming force; he then endeavoured to hold the broken ground close in front of the camp, where his men found some cover; the camp itself being absolutely indefensible. Colonel Durnford, as we have seen, reached the camp about 10.30 A.M., before which time Major Chard says: "The troops were in column . . . out of camp," and he saw Zulus "on the crest of the distant hills," and several parties moving to the left towards Rorke's Drift. Colonel Durnford takes out his mounted men to (as he thinks) assist his General, and to see what the enemy is about.

Again, some assert that the action was brought about by Colonel Durnford's Native Horse in the Ingqutu Hills. Even had it been so, yet this officer's duty distinctly was to feel and reconnoitre the enemy.¹ When the Zulu army moved forward to the attack, he, with his handful of men, fell slowly back, gaining all the time possible for the camp defenders.

Taking the whole of the circumstances of the day, we may conclude that, had the enemy remained hidden on the 22nd, we should probably have lost the entire column instead of part; but the account given by an English Officer with one of the troops that first saw the enemy, and other accounts from Zulus, seem to make it clear that the Zulus were moving to surround the camp when they came in contact with the horsemen.²

Now, whether these defenders did or did not take the

¹ With respect to this, Lord Chelmsford lays down a principle (relative to the border raids, but even more strongly applicable here) that if a force remains "on the passive defensive, without endeavouring by means of scouting in small bodies or by raiding in large ones, to discover what the enemy is doing in its immediate front, it deserves to be surprised and overpowered."—(P. P. [C. 2318] p. 80.)

² The Zulu army bivouacked on the 21st of January behind the hills on the left-front of the camp—the extreme right three miles N.N.E. and almost in direct prolongation of the line of the camps; the left about five miles to the left-front, and E. of the camp. The orders given to the Zulu army were to completely encircle the British camp before any attack was made.

best measures "to defend the camp" when it was attacked, the primary causes of the disaster were undoubtedly these:

1. The fatal position selected for the camp, and the total absence of any defensive precautions.

2. The absence of systematic scouting, whereby an army of upwards of 20,000 Zulus was enabled to approach Isandhlwana on the 21st, and remained unobserved till the 22nd, although their mounted scouts were actually seen by the General and staff on the 21st, watching *them*.

3. The subdivision of the force, and the absence of proper communications by signalling or otherwise.

4. The neglect of warnings given by the events of the day, and messages from the camp; also the withdrawal of a force actually on the march to the relief of the camp.

For these principal causes of the disaster, none of those who fell were responsible.

That Lord Chelmsford was shaken by the tragic events of January is evident from his letter to the Secretary of State for War, dated "Durban, Natal, February 9th, 1879," and which ran as follows: "I consider it my duty to lay before you my opinion that it is very desirable, in view of future contingencies, that an officer of the rank of Major-general shall be sent out to South Africa without delay. In June last I mentioned privately to His Royal Highness the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief that the strain of prolonged anxiety and exertion, physical and mental, was even then telling on me. What I felt then, I feel still more now. His Excellency Sir Bartle Frere concurs in this representation, and pointed out to me that the officer selected should be fitted to succeed him in his position of High Commissioner. In making this representation, I need not assure you that it will be my earnest desire to carry on my duties for Her Majesty's service up to the fullest extent of my powers."—(P. P. [C. 2260] p. 79.)

The exact meaning of this letter has never been made clear. No doubt Lord Chelmsford was feeling "the strain of prolonged anxiety and exertion, physical and mental,"

but His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief said that he had no previous knowledge of it. Students of Greek history will note the striking parallelism of this case with that of Nicias, who, when commanding before Syracuse in the year 414 B.C., applied to be superseded. "Such was the esteem which the Athenians felt for this union of good qualities, purely personal and negative, with eminent station, that they presumed the higher aptitudes of command," and "the general vote was one not simply imputing no blame, but even pronouncing continued and unabated confidence."—Grote's *History of Greece*.

But of all the strange and incomprehensible circumstances connected with that sad time, the one which struck Natal as the strangest was the utter desertion of the battle-field and the long neglect of the dead who lay there. On the 4th February Major Black, 2-24th Regiment, with a small party, found the bodies of Lieutenants Melville and Coghill about 300 yards from the river on the Natal side, near the Fugitives' Drift, and they were buried on the spot, the colours which they had striven to save being found in the river, and returned next day to the Regiment at Helpmakaar.

The fatal field of Isandhlwana was not again seen till the 14th March, when Major Black, 2-24th, with a small mounted party, paid a flying visit to the spot, a few shots only being fired at them from a distance. No attempt was made to bury the dead, and until the 21st of May that ghastly field remained as it was left on the 23rd of January, although there does not appear to have been any period since the disaster when a moderate force might not with perfect safety have done all that was necessary.

On the morning after the return of Colonel Glyn's Column to Rorke's Drift, "Commandant Lonsdale mustered the Contingent and called out the indunas, and told them in the hearing of all that he wanted to find out the men who were courageous and would stand by their officers and die with them if necessary, and that those who were willing to do this were to come forward. At this time the

mounted infantry and volunteers were moving off to Helpmakaar. The general reply of the Contingent was that they were willing to go over to fight along with the white people, their shield against Cetywayo; but that now that they saw their shield going away they would not go over by themselves, and that no one could say he was not afraid." ¹

"They were then dismissed, but in the afternoon they were all disarmed (of their guns), and their belts and puggaries and blankets taken from them by their officers. Each company had a flag, which they asked to take home with them; some were allowed to do so, but others were not. They were then all told to go home, and to keep together till they reached the Umsinga, and then to divide each for his own home."

On January 24th, Colonel Glyn wrote to Lord Chelmsford: "The whole of the Native Contingent walked off this morning. Their rifles were taken from them; all the hospital-bearers then went, and now the Native Pioneers are going. I am now left without any natives." The General immediately forwarded Colonel Glyn's letter to Sir Henry Bulwer, with the remark: "Unless these men are at once ordered back to their regiments, or punished for refusing to go, the most serious consequences will ensue" (*ibid.* p. 3).

Sir Henry Bulwer very properly abstained from taking any strong measures as to punishing the men until he had inquired into the causes which led to their desertion. Eventually, indeed, he discovered that most of them had not deserted at all, but had been disbanded by their leader, Commandant Lonsdale. But meanwhile there was a great deal to be said, and on January 29th Sir Henry writes, pointing out that "the great disaster which happened to our force at Isandhlwana Camp on the 22nd inst., the circumstances under which these men passed the night of the 22nd, and the retirement of the remainder of the column on Rorke's Drift and back into Natal, were all calculated to have their effect on the natives who belonged to this

¹ P. P. (C. 2318) p. 12.

column ;" and proceeds : " I am told, too, that whilst the European force at Rorke's Drift on the night of the 23rd were entrenched, the Native Contingent was not entrenched ; and further I am told that, on an alarm being given that night, the European officers and non-commissioned officers who were with the Native Contingent left their men and took refuge within the entrenchments. On the following morning, the 24th, the General and his staff left the camp ; and this circumstance, those acquainted with the native character tell me, may very probably have had a further depressing effect upon the natives."—(P. P. [C. 2318] p. 4.)

On February 7th, Sir Henry Bulwer writes again that he has received answers from the magistrates whom he had directed to make inquiries into the causes of the dispersion of the men. These reports speak of the cheerful spirit and loyal tone of the chiefs, and of very many of the men having reported themselves to the magistrates on their return from the front. The accounts given by the different magistrates are unanimous as to the causes of the dispersion. Some of the men declared that officers of the Contingent told them to return home and await further orders, as provisions were short ; others, to use their own words, said : " We saw that the Government was driven out of Zululand, and the wind blew us back also." They thought also that the Commander-in-Chief's hasty departure from Rorke's Drift was a flight from the enemy. Another reason for their retreat, and to them a very strong one, was the necessity of going home and performing the rites of purifying after shedding blood.¹ It was also stated that some of them were led by their officers in their retreat. Others saw their officers killed, were left without control, and fled. Their friends were now laughing at them, and they were eager to return to the front under proper guidance.

¹ Had Lord Chelmsford been acquainted with this peculiarity of the Zulus, he might not have thought it necessary to hurry away from Isandhlwana on the 23rd. There was no fear of the same force attacking again for some days to come.

These, indeed, were ample explanations for the fact of the dispersion of the 3rd Regiment Natal Native Contingent, but they were followed by many and serious complaints, made by the men and reported by the magistrates, of the manner in which the former had been treated since the campaign began. These complaints comprised insufficiency of food, floggings for disobedience to orders which they had either never heard, or had not understood, and bad officers.¹ These were the most important items, the rest referring to their preference for their own methods of fighting, to which, as we have already shown, there were the strongest objections.

These reports referred solely to the Contingent attached to Colonel Glyn's column, with the exception of one, which was concerning the remnant of the Zikali men, escaped from Isandhlwana.

It was finally decided that the men of the Contingents belonging to No. 1 Column might "be allowed to leave in batches, but they must be made to understand that they are required for the defence of Natal" (P. P. [C. 2260] p. 22). The Contingent forming No. 2 Column remained steadily serving throughout the war. Major Bengough's battalion had a narrow escape of sharing in the disaster of Isandhlwana, and the men were somewhat shaken and disheartened at seeing the Contingent of No. 3 Column dispersing; but this ill-effect soon passed away.

Colonel Pearson's remarks on the company of Native Pioneers belonging to his Column are concise and valuable. He says: "The men worked cheerfully. They had eyes like hawks, and they did all their scouting to perfection. It convinced me that the Natal Zulus, under proper management, would make excellent troops."

¹ P. P. [C. 2318] pp. 11-17.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SIKUKUNI.

WE have already, in a previous chapter, explained the circumstances which led to the war between the Transvaal Boers and Sikukuni, independent chief of a mixed race of natives commonly called the *Makatisi*, more properly the *Bapedi*, tribe. The immediate cause of the war was a border dispute between some of the gradually encroaching Boer farmers and the natives whom they had displaced, which ended in the latter taking possession of some cattle belonging to the former.

This affair took place during a temporary absence of Mr. Burgers (then President of the Republic), who, on his return, demanded the cattle at the hands of Sikukuni, and the restraint of his people within the limits assigned to them by their Boer neighbours. Sikukuni expressed his willingness to make the required restitution, but took the opportunity of reminding the President that he laid claim to a considerable piece of territory already occupied by Boers, to whom he denied having ever willingly relinquished it. This reply was the signal for a declaration of war against Sikukuni on the part of the President and Volksraad, and a large "commando," or volunteer force, was called out to attack him early in July, 1876.

This force, consisting of some 3,000 Boers and over 4,000 of their Swazi allies, made its way through the country, ravaging and destroying as it went, until it reached the famous stronghold known as "Sikukuni's

Town," upon which it made an unsuccessful night attack on August 2nd.

A single reverse was sufficient to dishearten the gallant Boers, who immediately discovered various reasons which made their return to their homes absolutely necessary. The commando dispersed, leaving a force of volunteers composed of stray Englishmen, Germans, and half-bred natives to occupy a couple of posts (Fort Burgers and Fort Weber), which they built for the purpose. From these posts they carried on a system of raiding expeditions upon Sikukuni's people, which effectually prevented the cultivation of their land, and finally produced a scarcity of food amongst them. This state of things was too harassing to last, and Sikukuni sued for peace, which was granted him early in 1877, conditionally upon his paying a heavy fine in cattle.

A month later, and before the fine had been paid, Sir T. Shepstone had annexed the Transvaal, and, as we have already described, took over, with the country, its quarrels and demands. He tried to enforce the fine imposed by the late Boer Government upon Sikukuni, while remitting the war-tax levied upon the whites. After having been subjected to so long a course of marauding on the part of the Dutch, it is not impossible that the chief really had some difficulty in procuring, at a moment's notice, the 2,000 head of cattle demanded by Sir T. Shepstone.¹ At all events, the fine was not paid so promptly as the administrator expected; and the whole country being in an unsettled condition, perpetual disturbances still took place between Sikukuni's people and the border farmers, and also between the former and petty chiefs who had placed themselves under British protection.

The most restless of the independent native rulers seems to have been a woman, Legolwana, a sister of Sikukuni's, who had her own clan, and whose headquarters was a mountain stronghold, called Masellaroon. In February, 1878, her people had a quarrel (nor was it

¹ Who, it is said, insisted upon the animals being fine and in good condition, returning some which were sent in below the required mark.

for the first time) with a neighbouring native chief under our rule, from whom they took some cattle. Whether or no there were two sides to the question, the despoiled chief was our subject, and so it happened that Legolwana's people were met in the act of driving off the cattle by a patrol of Transvaal volunteers, who promptly interfered. This occurrence led to a general outbreak of hostilities. Legolwana's men attacked the two forts simultaneously, and the officers in command, Captain Clarke and Lieutenant Eckersley, with their men, escaped from them, and retired to Lydenburg. From thence Captain Clarke sent embassies to the Swazi king and another independent chief, asking for assistance against Sikukuni. His invitations, however, were politely declined, the chiefs in question not caring to interfere, although wishing to remain upon friendly terms with the English.

Having obtained reinforcements from the gold-fields and Pretoria, Captain Clarke marched back to Fort Weber, and re-occupied it with a force consisting of 40 mounted volunteers under Captains Van Deventer and Ferreira, 150 Natal Zulus under Lieutenants Lloyd and Dacomb, and 300 Bechuanas under Mr. Tainton.

Captain Clarke's first intentions were to attack Legolwana and reduce her to submission. Captain Lacon Harvey, 71st Regiment, gives the following description of her stronghold in his account of *The Secoceni War*:

"The town, or kraal, of Legolani consisted of a number of straw and wattle-and-daub huts, beehive-shaped, situated at the base and on the terraces of a mountain of rocks and huge boulders 700 feet high, covered over with thick clumps of bush. The huts at the base of the mountain were surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of prickly pear; a single entrance, barricaded with timber, led through an avenue of prickly pear and cactus into the group of huts surrounded by palisading, wattle screens, and stone walls. Each group of huts was commanded by the rocks above; from behind these a direct, flanking, and enfilade fire could be poured on the attacking party, which, on account of the intricacy of the ground, would be

compelled to advance in single file along the tortuous goat-paths leading up to the mountain. In addition to the cover afforded by the caves and fissures in the rocks, schanzes, or low stone walls, were built up wherever favourable positions with safe means of retreat presented themselves. The paths leading from one rock entrenchment, or terrace, to the one above it, were so concealed by rock and bush as to be difficult to find. Finally, the Kafirs' most valued treasure, the cattle, was placed on the summit of the mountain, on a level plot of ground, surrounded by a stone wall."

This stronghold was attacked by Captain Clarke's orders on the 5th April, and, "after about two hours' sharp work, the north of the hill was carried."¹ The fighting force not being sufficient to complete its work, was ordered to withdraw, after having swept all the cattle from that side of the hill (277 head of cattle and 211 sheep and goats). A considerable number of Legolwana's people are supposed to have fallen in this assault, the loss on our side being 10 killed and 12 wounded, amongst the latter Captain Van Deventer slightly, and Lieutenant Lloyd severely. These two officers are reported as having led the attack with great gallantry.

The partial success gained by the storming of Masel-laroon (with the loss of life on our side—considerable under the circumstances) was not such as to encourage Captain Clarke in the tactics with which he had commenced his operations. He therefore abandoned all idea of seizing the native strongholds, and "established a cordon of forts, about twelve miles from each other . . . with a view of harassing the Kafirs by preventing them from cultivating the Indian corn."

"Legolwana had sued for peace, but Captain Clarke would not listen to anything except unconditional surrender, with the guarantee that all life should be spared."²

Thus, with the usual notion that "no terms can be

¹ Captain Clarke's report (C. 2144), p. 37.

² Sir T. Shepstone to Sir H. Bulwer, April 16th, 1878 (C. 2144.)

made with savages," which has again and again produced such disastrous consequences for them and for us, a system of petty warfare was kept up, tedious, unnecessary, and by which no good could be done nor honour gained. To the volunteers, many of whom, says Captain Harvey, were "gentlemen by birth and education," there may have been some amusement in what that officer speaks of as "actions of daring individual enterprise," and which he describes as follows: "Volunteers went out and lay ambuscades at night, to surprise and cut off Kafirs proceeding from kraal to kraal, or to cultivate their fields, and 'cattle-lifting' expeditions were planned and boldly carried out;" but the life must have become monotonous in the extreme before July, when the native auxiliaries became so discontented with it that some of them were allowed to return to their homes, while a troop of mounted infantry was summoned from Pretoria to keep order amongst those who remained.

It was about this time that Colonel Rowlands, V.C., came upon the scene. This officer, of whose services in 1878-79 so little mention has been made, was sent out on "special service," and was for a short time attached to the staff of Lord Chelmsford (then General Thesiger) during the Kaffrarian war. He was subsequently sent by the High Commissioner to Pretoria, which he reached on May 6th. He employed the two following months in an inspection of the northern and eastern frontiers of the Transvaal,¹ and by dint of considerable personal exertion was enabled to supply valuable information to headquarters. Towards the end of July, Colonel Rowlands was appointed Commandant of the Transvaal. At this time the regular forces in the Transvaal consisted only of the 13th Light infantry, a few engineers, and departmental staff—quite inadequate for the work required of them; but the Commander-in-Chief, in signifying his approval of the manner in which Colonel Rowlands proposed to distribute the troops already under his command, informed him that he was about to reinforce the Transvaal with the

¹ Upon the Zulu border.

80th Regiment and Frontier Light Horse, with a view to active operations against Sikukuni.

The promised reinforcements arrived by degrees from Natal, and meanwhile there were Pretoria, Middleburg, Lydenburg, and Standerton, where considerable stores of ammunition, &c., were collected, to be garrisoned, as well as the cordon of forts, already mentioned, along the Lulu mountains, which left no large proportion of the troops—about 800 of the 13th, and under 300 volunteers and Zulu police—for service in the field.

However, by the 29th August, Colonel Rowlands found himself in a position to leave Pretoria for the confines of the Transvaal, and reached Fort Weber on the 13th September. From thence to Fort Burgers was a long and tedious march through a difficult and trackless country. The column was forced to make its own road as it went, and had several skirmishes with Sikukuni's people *en route*. Reinforced by the Frontier Light Horse under Major Buller, and a party under Major Russell from Pretoria, Colonel Rowlands at last reached Fort Burgers, and, after a few days' halt for repairs, patrolling, and scouting the country, recommenced his march towards "Sikukuni's Town," distant about twenty-five miles.

On the 3rd October he advanced with 338 mounted men (Mounted Infantry, Frontier Light Horse, and Transvaal Volunteers), 130 infantry, and two 7-pounder mountain guns; his intention being to establish himself before Sikukuni's Town, thoroughly reconnoitre it, and, should he find that there was a chance of success, and that the position could be afterwards held, to attack it when he had brought up reinforcements.

The position was one of extreme difficulty, greatly increased by the singular drought which was experienced at the time, both in the Transvaal and Natal.

From Fort Burgers to Sikukuni's Town, the approach lay chiefly through a defile commanded by "kopjes" (piles of rock and boulders, often some hundred feet in height), of which the enemy did not fail to take advantage. The weather was intensely hot, the thermometer

standing daily at over 100 in the shade, and the unusual drought had dried up the springs and small watercourses to an extent previously unknown.

The camp was fired into on the night before the force sighted Sikukuni's Town, but from a considerable distance, causing no damage beyond one horse wounded, and a general stampede of the slaughter cattle; a determined advance of the piquets, reinforced by their supports, quickly driving back the enemy, who did not advance again.

The stronghold was sighted upon the following day, but it soon became apparent to Colonel Rowlands that, under the existing circumstances of absolute want of water and forage, he could neither venture to attempt its capture, nor to carry out his original intention of establishing himself before it. Deeply disappointing as was this discovery, Colonel Rowlands was convinced that his only course under the circumstances was to retire, and, his opinion being confirmed by the senior officers present, he reluctantly commenced his return march on the 6th October.

Encouraged by the retreat of the force, the enemy, now in large numbers, followed and harassed it, almost until it reached the bivouac, eight miles from Fort Burgers. Thirteen thousand rounds of ammunition were expended in keeping off the foe during the march, and both man and beast suffered severely from want of water and the intense heat of the sun. The force reached Fort Burgers the following day, with the loss of 1 man wounded; 5 horses were killed, 10 died of horse sickness, and 4 horses and 1 mule were wounded. Here they remained for several weeks, in hopes that the summer rains, which it was natural to expect should fall at this time of year, would enable them to make a second advance upon Sikukuni's Town. Meanwhile mounted patrols, under Major Buller, Major Russell, Captain Clarke, and Lieutenant Eckersley (in command of Swazi levies), swept the country in every direction, harrying the natives and capturing their cattle, but without meeting with any

armed opposition. Horse sickness now set in—that South African scourge, from which the force had hitherto suffered but slightly, and in single cases, but which at this time became an epidemic, deaths occurring daily, sometimes but a few hours after the animal was attacked by the disease. This unfortunate circumstance added greatly to the difficulties of the situation.¹

After the retreat of the force from before Sikukuni's Town, the enemy made several determined attacks upon the forts in the Mamalubi Valley, especially upon Fort Faugh-a-Ballagh; and although these attacks were in every case successfully resisted, they necessitated the strengthening of the garrisons of the forts along this line.

Lord Chelmsford (then General Thesiger) had previously given notice to Colonel Rowlands that a column from the Transvaal, under the command of the latter, would be required to co-operate with the Ama-Swazi in the invasion of Zululand. The 13th Regiment, Frontier Light Horse, and Lieutenant Nicholson's guns, were all to be available for that purpose as soon as the Sikukuni affair (which was then lightly considered) should be settled. By this arrangement, the 80th Regiment and volunteers alone were reserved for the defence of the Transvaal. As the season was now far advanced, Colonel Rowlands was obliged to make the best arrangements he could for the defence of the border with the force—an absurdly small one, considering the disturbed state of the country—which would be left after the withdrawal of those intended by the General for the Zulu invasion. His chief adviser, Captain Clarke, was of opinion that a precipitate retirement from the valleys of the Steelpoort and Speckboom rivers would be unadvisable. These valleys contained large numbers of Kafir gardens, and, by holding them a little later, the natives would be prevented from sowing their crops for another season, and starvation

¹ Sir Garnet Wolseley, at the close of the Zulu war, led a force against Sikukuni, which stormed and captured his stronghold on the 28th of November, 1879.

would ensue. With this object in view, Fort Burgers was garrisoned with 100 of the 13th Regiment, and some 50 mounted volunteers, while Colonel Rowlands himself retired to Speckboom Drift, about thirteen miles from Fort Burgers, where he constructed another fort in such a position as to cover the junction of four important roadways. Having completed this work, he determined to attack some native strongholds in the Steelport Valley, into which he marched, with 3 guns, 140 mounted men, 340 infantry, and 250 natives, on the 26th October. Moving before daybreak the following morning, he commenced the attack, at 7 A.M., upon Tolyana Stadt, a spur of the Lulu mountains. Here there was some sharp work, difficult positions stormed and seized, and the valley finally cleared. Several kraals were burnt, about 12,000 lb. of grain destroyed, and 100 head of cattle taken. Sixteen of the enemy were "accounted for," the loss on the side of the attacking party being 1 killed and 10 wounded. At 10 o'clock the same morning the Commandant returned to his camp on the Steelport, and, a few days later, to the new fort at Speckboom Drift. Despatches from headquarters awaited him here, instructing him to withdraw altogether, and as speedily as possible, from the enemy's country.

Arrangements were immediately made for the evacuation of Fort Burgers, which was the advanced post on the direct road to Sikukuni's Town, the withdrawal of troops and stores being masked by a strong patrol under Captain Carrington, composed of mounted volunteers and native foot levies, who were sent, *via* Fort Burgers and Origstaadt Valley, to the Oliphant river. The head-quarters of the 13th Regiment (340), Russell's Mounted Infantry (63), and Lieutenant Nicholson's two mountain guns, left camp for Lydenburg—the whole under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Gilbert, 13th Light Infantry—immediately; and in a few days' time Fort Burgers was emptied and demolished. Captain Carrington's patrol having returned, after capturing 345 head of cattle, and meeting no enemy except a small guard and the cattle-herds, Colonel

Rowlands marched from Speckboom about the 7th November, leaving at that fort a sufficient force to guard the ammunition and stores which remained there. About thirteen miles from Lydenburg he halted and constructed a small fort, to cover the principal road leading to that town, and which he purposed to garrison with a detachment of volunteers.

Considerable difficulty was now experienced by Colonel Rowlands in arranging the small force to be left at his disposal, so as to efficiently protect the great length of frontier, extending from Fort Mamalubi (under the west side of the Lulu range, and about twenty-five miles from Oliphant River) to Kruger's Post on the east, besides garrisoning Pretoria, Middleburg, and Lydenburg, in which were large quantities of supplies and war *matériel*. His plans were laid with due consideration for the nature of the country and the enemy, and after careful consultation with those officers who were supposed to be most fully acquainted with both. Nevertheless they did not meet with full approval from head-quarters, from whence Colonel Rowlands finally received orders to remain where he was, and be responsible for the arrangements he had made, instead of proceeding at the head of No. 5 Column to the eastern border for the invasion of Zululand, as originally intended. Shortly afterwards Lieut.-Colonel Gilbert was directed to proceed with the 13th Light Infantry and Lieutenant Nicholson's guns to Derby, Lieut.-Colonel Buller having preceded him to that place, which was now removed from under Colonel Rowlands' command and placed under that of Colonel Wood.

The attention of the former officer was now turned to the disposition of the force that remained to him, and to the raising of new corps of volunteers and strengthening those already formed, which he deemed necessary for the security of the Transvaal. To this work he set himself with great energy and considerable success, stifling thereby the disappointment which it was but natural that he should feel at being excluded from the Zulu campaign. Towards the close of the month, however, he received a letter from

the General, asking him to spare two companies of the 80th Regiment to take the place of the force under Colonel Gilbert, which had been moved to Lüneburg, and which shortly after joined Colonel Wood's column. Somewhat to his surprise, he was reminded that Derby was *in his command*, and was told that the General commanding would be glad if he would proceed there in person to *reassure the Swazis*. That same day the two companies of the 80th, under Major Creagh, were put in orders to march as directed, and Colonel Rowlands followed a week later, leaving the forces defending the northern border under the able command of Major Carrington, who, however, took such instructions from Captain Clarke as he considered necessary to give as Commissioner of that district under His Excellency the Administrator of the Transvaal.

At Derby there was, not unnaturally, some slight confusion owing to this double appointment of officers in command; but having overcome this difficulty, Colonel Rowlands set himself seriously to consider the situation, which was by no means a promising one. A force composed of two companies of Europeans and 250 natives, collected from the neighbouring country, was clearly useless for any aggressive purposes, while the Swazis, though ready and willing to co-operate with an English force large enough to support them, were evidently far from satisfied with the number collected at Derby. That town, or hamlet rather, consisting of but two houses in point of fact, is situated from twenty to five-and-twenty miles from the Zulu border of a part of Zululand peopled by some of the most warlike tribes of that nation, and so small a garrison as the above did but invite attack and disaster. Upon these considerations Colonel Rowlands determined to reinforce himself from Pretoria and Lydenburg. He sent instructions to Major Tyler, 80th Regiment, to send him three companies of the 80th, two Armstrong guns, and a troop of Weatherley's Border Horse, but directing him to consult the colonial authorities as to whether the troops could be safely spared, before complying with the order.

At this time, in the beginning of January, the Zulus

throughout this northern and thickly-populated part of the country were perfectly quiet and even friendly. There was still a possibility that the difficulty between their king and the English might be settled without bloodshed, and the people were evidently anxious to avoid giving cause of offence. Colonel Rowlands, who employed his time while waiting for his reinforcements (which would take some weeks to arrive) in reconnoitring the country, found the roads open and the inhabitants inoffensive. At this period he also attempted to organise a frontier force of farmers—Englishmen, Boers, and Germans—whom he summoned to a meeting for consideration of the question. From fifty to sixty attended, and, after hearing his address, their spokesman responded to the effect that they were willing to take service for the defensive object proposed, but that it was to be clearly understood that by uniting themselves to a common protective cause (course?), they did not thereby acknowledge allegiance to the British crown. But a committee, subsequently formed to consider details connected with the proposed force, fell out amongst themselves, and the scheme was abandoned.

On the 26th January, Colonel Rowlands received from Sir T. Shepstone the news of the disaster at Isandhlwana; and from this time nothing but contradictory orders and impossible commands seem to have reached him at his distant post. He heard of the troops he had intended for special purposes being ordered elsewhere; he was directed by Lord Chelmsford to take orders from his junior, Colonel Wood; he received different instructions, entirely opposed to each other, concerning the calling out of the Swazi allies; nevertheless, in spite of the confusion which reigned at that unhappy epoch, he kept his head, and went steadily on with the plans he had formed. By the second week in February he had, with some difficulty, collected a force of something under a thousand Europeans and natives, and was prepared to operate. It seemed, however, impossible to get any distinct orders or definite instructions from those in command, either military or civil; and representations having been made to him by the border Boers that

a Zulu impi was about to attack them from the Tolaka Mountains, he marched out with a portion of his force in that direction, leaving Major Tucker (80th) in command of the rest. While halted at the Assegai River upon this expedition, he received a despatch from Colonel Wood, requesting him to march his force from Derby to Lüneburg to his support. Sending a note to Major Tucker, directing him to start for Lüneburg next morning, he continued his march, attacked and took the Tolaka Mountain, and then proceeded towards Lüneburg with his own force. He was now about eighteen miles from where his head-quarters camp under Major Tucker would be, with a broken and hilly country to pass through, over which he had great difficulty in conveying his wounded (fortunately but few), and the captured women and children. These captives were, on this account, offered their freedom, but refused to accept it, which, perhaps, was not unnatural, seeing that their homes and crops were destroyed, and they had no longer any means of livelihood.

The force passed through the Intombi Valley, laying the country waste for miles on either side of the road as it went, and met on its way messengers from Colonel Wood, requesting the immediate presence of the mounted corps. But upon the 23rd February, Colonel Rowlands received a memorandum to the effect that the Lieut.-General, by desire of the High Commissioner, wished him to proceed at once back to Pretoria, to prepare some defence against the Boers, who had assumed a threatening attitude. Upon the receipt of this order he quitted the Lüneburg district, and arrived on the 6th of March at the capital of the Transvaal. Here there were but 200 infantry and some few mounted volunteers; but by Colonel Rowlands' exertions the number was soon swelled to 600 or 700, by the addition of city corps and other volunteers.

A considerable number of Boers who had never willingly accepted the annexation of their country by the English, had taken the opportunity, offered by the general confusion which reigned after the disaster of the 22nd

January, of endeavouring to regain the independence of their state. Mass meetings were held to discuss the subject, and finally a large body of armed men formed a camp at no great distance from Pretoria. The situation appeared a very serious one; and the High Commissioner himself travelled to Pretoria to endeavour by his honeyed words to calm an agitation which might prove so singularly inconvenient should the angry feelings of the indignant Boers find vent in blows. On the 12th of April, just two years from the day of annexation, Sir B. Frere met a deputation of the Transvaal farmers at Erasmus Spruit, about six miles from Pretoria, and held a long discussion with them upon the subject of their rights and wrongs. They repeatedly and plainly asserted that Sir T. Shepstone had coerced the people into submission by threatening them with the Zulus, and declared unanimously that nothing would satisfy them but the recovery of their liberties. Sir Bartle Frere gave them to understand in return that this was the only thing for which they might not hope, but that he would recommend their statements as worthy of serious consideration. He assured them that he looked upon the *voortrekkers* as an honour to their race, and that he felt proud to belong to the same stock. The Queen, he told them, felt for them "as for her own children;"¹ and he hoped to tell her that she had "no better subjects in her empire," than amongst them. The committee, however, retired in complete dissatisfaction, and addressed a petition to Her Majesty, in which they remark, "unwilling subjects but faithful neighbours we will be;" and more than hint that they are prepared to "draw the sword" to prove how much they are in earnest. The excitement, however, calmed down for the time being, and Sir Bartle Frere departed.

During his stay in Pretoria, he desired Colonel Rowlands to make preparations to resume hostilities against Sikukuni, and accordingly, by the end of May, that officer had increased the number of his mounted volunteers by 450. He then made a vain attempt to induce Lord

¹ C. 2367, p. 90.

Chelmsford to spare him another regiment of regular troops ; but finding that this was decidedly refused, and that no operations were likely to take place in the Transvaal for some time, he accepted the General's offer of a brigade in the lower column.

On the arrival of Sir Garnet Wolseley at Port Durnford, he applied to that General for the command in case operations should be resumed in the Transvaal. To this he had a strong claim, both on account of his experience and of his laborious services there ; but the request was refused.

CHAPTER XVI.

NO. 4 COLUMN—INTOMBI—INDHLOBANE—KAMBULA—KING'S MESSENGERS.

ON January 6th, No. 4 Column, under Colonel Wood, V.C., C.B.—strength previously detailed—crossed the Blood River (the Zulu boundary according to the award of the Commission) and advanced to Bemba's Kop.

Colonel Wood induced the petty Zulu chief Bemba to give up his arms and come in, which he did on the 10th, bringing with him about eighty of his people and 1,000 head of cattle, sheep, and goats; they were sent to Utrecht.

On the 11th, Colonel Wood, in accordance with previous instructions, moved with a portion of his force towards Rorke's Drift to meet the General. He received orders to "occupy himself with the tribes on his front and left flank, notably Seketwayo," until No. 3 Column was "ready to advance to Isipezi Hill," when he was to "advance to Ingwe Mount," both columns to establish themselves, bring up supplies, and then move forward.

On the march Colonel Wood seized about 2,000 head of cattle, the owners of which were quietly tending them as usual (these were supposed to be Sihayo's), and next day attacked a petty chief, who was said to have "given considerable trouble to the Transvaal farmers," with the result of seven Zulus killed and upwards of 500 head of cattle captured.

Some 2,000 to 3,000 head of cattle were also taken from

the Tondolozu tribe,¹ a slight resistance being offered by the Zulus, of whom one was killed. The cattle were kept in the vicinity of the camp, in order that they might be returned to their owners in the event of Seketwayo coming in.

Personally, Colonel Wood was "most anxious to refrain from taking any steps which might discourage these men from coming in"—as to which he quaintly remarks, "it is cheaper and quicker to accept Zulus as refugees than it is to fight them."

The General, on entering Zululand, finding the difficulties greater than he had anticipated, instructed Colonel Wood "to act altogether independently, about the head waters of the White Umveloosi River," and when Seketwayo had either surrendered or been defeated, to "take up a position covering Utrecht and the adjacent Transvaal border, wherever he considers his force can be most usefully employed," and not to "attempt to advance towards the Inhlazaty Mountain until an advance by the other three columns across the Umhlatoozi River has become possible." (P. P. [C. 2252] p. 63.) These instructions appear to form the only communication between Nos. 3 and 4 Columns from the 11th to the 24th of January. Lord Chelmsford writes on the 14th (of the 11th): "Colonel Wood returned to his camp the same day. I have not heard from him since, but I sent him an express yesterday, the 13th" (P. P. [C. 2242] p. 46). No. 4 Column did not hear of the disaster to No. 3 Column until the 24th. Colonel Wood, from Bemba's Kop, communicated with Uhamo—a brother of Cetshwayo—who, in consequence of previous communications made to him, had asked for a way to be pointed out by which he might escape.

No. 4 Column now moved towards Intemgeni (? Umtungweni) River, and encamped there on the 18th January, Colonel Wood reporting "many of the natives are giving themselves up to me; I have captured about 4,000 head of cattle." On the previous day a party of Wood's "irregulars" attacked some Zulus, killing 9, wounding about 20,

¹ Tondolozu, deceased brother of Seketwayo.

and taking 5 prisoners and 100 sheep; with a loss to themselves of 2 wounded (*ibid.* p. 66). On the 19th and 20th there were skirmishes with some of Tinta's people, of whom about 12 were killed. A prisoner was brought in by the Native Contingent on the 19th, whom they gravely asked permission to kill in the evening, "thinking they had done their whole duty in obeying orders and bringing the man in."

The column encamped at Tinta's kraal, on the left bank of the Umvolosi River, and a stone fort was commenced. A reconnaissance across the Umvolosi to Zinguni Mountain met the Zulus in force, and was compelled to retire with a loss of two wounded, the enemy not being checked until the river was recrossed. January 22nd, the Zinguni Mountain was patrolled by a strong force, the enemy retiring hastily, and leaving about 600 head of cattle. In the distance, a large force, estimated at 4,000, was seen, and it apparently ascended the Indhlobane Mountain. The column had a smart engagement with the enemy on the 24th, and drove them off with a loss of about fifty killed; but, on receiving intelligence of the disaster to No. 3 Column, retired to Fort Tinta.

At Lüneburg a laager was formed by the Dutch farmers, under Commandant Schermbrucker, and Colonel Wood moved his force to Kambula Hill, to cover Utrecht and the neighbouring border, and there firmly entrenched himself. The situation chosen was a commanding and central position between the Umvolosi and Pevana rivers on the Jagt-pad (Old Hunting path), covering the country northward to Lüneburg, eastward to the Aba-Qulusi, southward to the Umvolosi, and westward to Balte's Spruit and Utrecht.

The Zulus abandoned the open, and remained in the mountains and broken country, where rocks and caves afforded them secure positions.

On February 1st, Lieut.-Colonel Buller, with 140 irregular cavalry, made a dash at the Aba-Qulusi kraal, thirty miles distant. This was a military stronghold, deemed by the Boers to be impregnable. It was situated in a

basin at a distance of nearly two miles from the summit of the rugged heights by which it was surrounded, and almost hidden from view, although about 300 yards in diameter, and containing at least 250 huts.

Leaving thirty men as a covering party, Colonel Buller moved with the remainder down the almost precipitous slopes, the horsemen frequently obliged to dismount and lead their horses. However, the kraal was not occupied in force, and, after a few shots, the inmates fled. Six Zulus were killed, 270 head of cattle taken, and the kraal burnt, the force returning from this daring exploit without casualty, after a hard day's work of twenty hours.

A small fort was finished and armed on February 3rd, and, on the 10th, Lieut.-Colonel Buller, with 400 irregular cavalry, reconnoitred the Indhlobane Mountain, and, after a slight skirmish, captured 490 head of cattle.

A new fort was commenced at Kambula, about two miles higher up the spur, and the camp moved to this spot on the 13th, the fort being garrisoned by two companies of infantry and two guns.

It was reported that Manyonyoba (an independent native chief paying allegiance to Cetshwayo) had been killing and plundering in the Intombi Valley, so Colonel Buller was sent with a force to the spot. The Swazi chief Umbilini was also reported by Commandant Schermbrucker to have raided, in combination with Manyonyoba, and done much mischief to life and property; however, a force sent from Lüneburg had a successful skirmish with them.

The king's brother, Uhamo, came in to Captain MacLeod from the Swazi border with 300 of his people and 1,000 cattle, and reached Derby on February 4th, his following increased to about 600, and was moved down to Lüneburg, where he arrived on March 7th.

A sad disaster occurred on the Intombi River to a detachment of the 80th Regiment on the 12th March. Captain Moriarty, with 104 men of the 80th, was escorting a convoy from Derby to Lüneburg. On reaching the Intombi Drift (about four miles from Lüneburg) the river

was found to be rising, and by the time the advanced guard (thirty-five men, under Lieutenant Harward) had crossed, it was impossible to take the waggons over. They were therefore laagered on the river-bank in the shape of a triangle; and there they remained for the night. About 4 A.M. on the 12th a shot was fired, and the troops turned out, remaining under arms for half an hour, when, all being quiet, they returned to their tents (it transpired afterwards that the outlying sentries had been surprised and killed by the enemy). Suddenly the fog lifted, and a large body of Zulus, without any warning, rushed on and took the laager, driving the troops into the river. The party under Lieutenant Harward, which was encamped on the opposite bank, opened a brisk fire, but were soon broken, and obliged to fly towards Lüneburg; Lieutenant Harward, galloping in, gave the alarm. Only forty-four men of this detachment survived.

Major Tucker sallied out from Lüneburg, when the enemy slowly retreated. The waggons were saved, and the bodies of Captain Moriarty and his unfortunate men buried.

The comparatively quiet time at Kambula was passed thus: Colonel Wood was up with the first in the early morning, and often out with the patrols who daily scouted the country round for miles; his force securely entrenched; himself a very strict but kind commander, who had the full confidence and goodwill of his troops. Sports were got up for the amusement and occupation of the men. A band played in the evening, and the singing and laughter in camp showed that all were in excellent spirits. The daily business was cutting wood from the mountain-side some three miles distant, escorts, patrols, and piquet-duty. One of the night piquets (eight men) posted at some distance from camp was termed "the forlorn hope;" its special duty was to give early warning of an enemy's approach. But the most unpleasant feature in this camp-life was the absence of comfort at night. The troops necessarily "turned in" dressed, armed, and ready for

instant work, with the *personal* discomfort illustrated by this soldier's joke—that it was “Cetshwayo outside and Catch-away-o! inside.”

Lieut.-Colonel Buller, having returned to Kambula, patrolled Uhamo's district, and in the direction of the Indhlobane range; and on the 16th brought into camp 958 of Uhamo's people.

On March 28th a reconnaissance by the whole cavalry force was made towards Indhlobane. The Zulus¹ were in possession of the mountain, which was ascended in skirmishing order as rapidly as possible, the enemy keeping up a heavy fire from caves and from behind huge rocks. The summit was reached with the loss of one officer—Lieutenant Williams—and serious fighting was kept up for some time in the endeavour to dislodge the Zulus from their secure positions. Captain the Hon. R. Campbell was killed, also Lieutenant von Stietencron, and Colonel Wood himself had a very narrow escape.

Whilst engaged in this struggle a Zulu army was moving up to seize the approaches to the mountain, and cut off the force from the camp. Immediately on this being observed a retreat was made in rapid but good order, until a very steep and stony krantz was reached, where the men could only move in single file; here the enemy got in amongst the troopers, causing utter confusion. The officers did their best to steady their men, but it became a case of *sauve qui peut*.

Captain Barton's troop was sent down the mountain to recover the body of Lieutenant Williams, and returned, having been joined by Mr. Uys. On the flats they came up with Colonel Weatherley's troop, and found the enemy in front and on the right and left. Retreating a short distance they were surrounded, so, opening out, they charged through the enemy and over the neck, which was lined with Zulus. But few were enabled to win their way through this perilous pass, and of those who did many were overtaken and killed on the plain. Of Captain Barton's troop but eight men returned to camp that night,

¹ Aba-Qulusi and people of Manyonyoba and Umbilini.

and the gallant Colonel Weatherley's "Border Lancers" were almost annihilated.

The broken force fought its way to the camp, followed by the enemy for several miles. Many a man's life was saved by a comrade halting and taking him up on his own horse, a personal instance of which Captain D'Arcy gives. His horse had been killed under him in the descent of the mountain, and he ran for his life for some 300 yards, when a man named Francis caught a horse for him, which, however, he shortly relinquished to a wounded comrade, running on himself on foot. Colonel Buller picked him up when nearly exhausted, but when he recovered his breath he dismounted; he was a second time in difficulties, and assisted by Lieutenant Blaine, and again, a third time, by Major Tremlett, R.A. Indeed, most of the men got into camp with comrades mounted behind them.¹ The loss was 12 officers and 84 non-commissioned officers and men killed, and also Colonel Wood's staff-officer, Captain the Hon. R. Campbell; Captain Barton, Coldstream Guards; and Mr. Lloyd, Political Assistant. Colonel Wood's horse was shot under him.

Colonel Weatherley, his young son, and Mr. Piet Uys, the leader of the Burgher force, were likewise amongst those killed in action this day.

Small patrols were sent out next morning to endeavour to find any men who might have escaped.

Warning of an intended attack on Kambula was brought in by a native—one of Uhamo's men—and, about 11 A.M., dense masses of the enemy were seen in the distance, when all the force was assembled and the cattle driven into their laager. This defensible camp was thus arranged:—a fort with ditch, the main laager (waggons, surrounded with a light earth-work), and the cattle laager (waggons) formed a triangle—a shelter trench connecting

¹ Lieut.-Colonel Buller thus rescued no fewer than three of his comrades, and well earned his Victoria Cross.

Major Leet 1-13th Regiment, and Lieutenant Browne 1-24th Regiment, were also decorated for similar gallantry on the 28th and 29th of March.

the fort and laagers. The fort mounted 2 guns (7 pounders), and was garrisoned by 2 companies of the 13th and 1 of the 90th Regiments, under the command of Major Leet. 4 guns of Major Tremlett's battery were placed between the laagers and fort: and the cattle laager was held by one company of the 13th (Captain Cox): the main laager being under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Gilbert. At 1.30 P.M. the action commenced by mounted troops, under Colonels Buller and Russell, engaging the enemy on the north of the camp. They were speedily forced to return into the laager, followed by the Zulus until they were within 300 yards, when a heavy fire from the 90th Regiment checked their advance, and they opened out round the camp.

At 2.15 the right front and rear of the camp were attacked by heavy masses of the enemy, who, apparently well supplied with Martini-Henry rifles, occupied a hill commanding the laager, enfilading it so that the company of the 13th posted at the right rear of the inclosure had to be withdrawn. The cattle laager stood on the edge of a steep slope, which afforded cover to the Zulus, who collected here for a determined assault; the laager was however stoutly held by the company of the 13th; but the Zulus coming boldly on, Major Hackett, with two companies of the 90th, was directed to clear the slope. They sallied out into the open, driving the Zulus back in a gallant manner under a heavy fire, until ordered to retire by Colonel Wood.

While bringing his men in, Major Hackett was dangerously wounded. Captain Cox also was seriously wounded, and obliged to withdraw the remnant of his company from the cattle laager.

The two guns in the redoubt were admirably worked by Lieutenant Nicholson, R.A., until he was mortally wounded; when Major Vaughan, R.A., replaced him.

Major Tremlett, R.A., with four guns, remained in the open during the engagement.

The infantry at length cleared the space between the fort and laagers, and the attack began to slacken

about 5.30 P.M., enabling Colonel Wood to assume the offensive; the Zulus were driven from the cattle kraal into which they penetrated, and from the immediate vicinity of the camp, the infantry doing great execution among the retreating masses.

The pursuit was taken up by the mounted men under Colonel Buller, and continued for seven miles, "killing great numbers, the enemy being too exhausted to fire in their own defence." All agreed in admiring the pluck of the Zulus, who, "under tremendous fire, never wavered, but came straight at us."

The loss of No. 4 Column was 2 officers killed, 5 wounded, and 80 men killed and wounded. The strength of the enemy was thought to be about 20,000, of whom 1,000 are supposed to have been killed. Colonel Wood's operations at Indhlobane were for the purpose of "making demonstrations against the enemy," as directed by the General, who had reason to believe at that time, that he should find the whole Zulu army between his force and Etshowe. (P. P. [C. 2367] p. 35.) One trooper, a Frenchman named Grandier, had a very remarkable escape from Indhlobane, of which the following is his account: "On coming down the mountain we were met by a large Zulu force, and fell back across the neck assailed on all sides. I was about the last, having put a comrade on my horse whilst I ran alongside, when a Kafir caught me by the legs, and I was made prisoner. I was taken to Umbilini's kraal and questioned; after which, I passed the night tied to a tree. Next day I was taken into the middle of a large 'impi,' where I was threatened with death, but the leader said he would send me to Cetywayo. Next day I started for Ulundi, in charge of four men, who were riding, but I had all my clothes taken from me, and had to walk, carrying their food. On the evening of the fourth day we reached Ulundi, and I was kept tied in the open till about noon next day, when Cetywayo sent for me, and questioned me about what the English wanted, where Shepstone was, &c. A Dutchman acted as interpreter, and I saw a Portuguese, and an

English-speaking Zulu, who could read.¹ Cetywayo had a personal guard of about one hundred men, but I did not see any large numbers of men at his kraal, but there were two small cannons there. During my stay I was fed on mealies, and frequently beaten. At last messengers arrived reporting the death of Umbilini, and Cetywayo said he would send me to his Kafirs to kill. On the 13th April I started in charge of two Kafirs, one armed with a gun and both with assegais. About midday we were lying down, the Kafirs being sleepy, when I seized an assegai and killed the man with the gun, the other running away. I walked all night guided by the stars; next day I saw an impi driving cattle towards Ulundi, so had to lie still. After this I saw no Kafirs, and walked on at night. On the morning of the 16th I met some of our own people and was brought into camp." Trooper Grandier, when brought in, was dressed in an old corduroy coat, cut with assegai stabs, and a pair of regimental trousers cut off at the knee; these he had picked up on the Veldt. He had strips of cloth round his feet.

The independent chief Umbilini, who was such a thorn in the side of the Transvaal, was killed early in April. Small parties had raided into the Pongolo Valley from Indhlobane, opposite Lüneburg, until they were said to number some hundreds, when they came upon two companies of the 2-24th on the march; these at once laagered, and the enemy moved on: Umbilini, Sihayo's son, and four horsemen, going back with twenty horses. They were pursued by Captain Prior, 80th Regiment, with seven mounted men (80th), and another European, when Sihayo's son was killed, and Umbilini mortally wounded.

The raiders were attacked by some parties of Transvaal Government natives, but went off to the Assegai River with several beasts and sheep.—(P. P. [C. 2374] p. 51.)

Meanwhile many attempts were made by the Zulu king

¹ Trooper Grandier's story of ill-treatment has since been contradicted by this Dutchman (Mr. Vijn) and others. Grandier was well treated, and sent back on horseback, with plenty of good food.