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A FAMILIAR TALK

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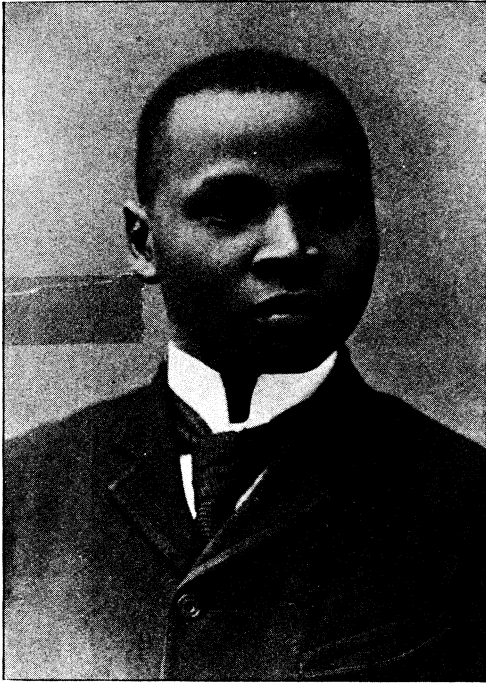
My Native Land

AND SOME THINGS FOUND THERE.

—BY—

JOHN L. DUBÉ.





Yours truly,
John L. Dube.

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PREFACE.

This little book comes before the public, conscious of all its defects and short comings. It has a mission—It appears not as an emolument of Literature, nor yet as a great contribution to the information of mankind. Its only purpose is to arouse the Christian minds of this enlightened land to the needs of those poor creatures who are stumbling and falling in a darkness worse than death.

The facts herein stated are peculiarly desirable, as coming from one who has had ample opportunity to learn whereof he speaks, and who has coursing through his veins the same blood as those for whom this little book pleads, and of one who has consecrated his life and talents, feeble though they be, to the civilization of his people.

The author sadly realizes the enormity of his task, and his incapacity to grapple with it; but he relies upon the sympathy of those whom his present effort may meet, and begs them to over-look his short comings, and bless his cause.

THE AUTHOR.



A Familiar Talk upon my Native Land.

DEAR FRIENDS :—I desire, upon this occasion, to give you a familiar talk upon the life and customs of my people—to draw for you a picture with which you can compare their life of semi-barbarism with that of yours—a life quickened by the beneficent impulse of the highest type of civilization. You may be able by this humble recital, to see more clearly their disadvantages and appreciate more fully your own blessings.

First let me tell you something of the Zulus, of a people who have but recently seen the light of civilization and felt the glorious influences of Christianity through the efforts of the missionaries whom you have sent there. I want to give you a glimpse of the Zulus—some idea of their religion and customs as they existed before being touched by the elevating influences of a higher Christian civilization, when the absence of the Bible, the school house and the Church left these people to their own heathenism and superstitions.

There is a certain snake which they believe contains the spirit of their ancestors. When such a snake comes near their dwellings they sacrifice an ox to it. They take one leg of the ox and put it back of their beer pitchers, so that the snake (or as they call it Dhlozi) shall eat its

part of the meat. This snake is not of the poisonous kind. It is a splendid looking creature, of a blue spotted color. This is the snake which the Zulus think their fathers turn to be when they die. Different from other savage people they do not worship idols, not even this snake can they be said to worship except in so far as it is held in a certain sense of reverence. Just let me give you an idea of what I mean by way of illustration. When a child is sick they go to a doctor, and inquire what the trouble is with the child. The doctor tells them that the spirit which is supposed to be in the snake is angry about something—an ox must be sacrificed to the spirit and the child will thus recover. If the child happens to die, the witch-doctor says it is because the spirit has been opposed. This is very unreasonable but they are all taught this from childhood so that they now believe in it as much as any of you believe in what your fathers and mothers taught you.

Whenever a person dies something is supposed to have caused his death. Doctors in whom great confidence is place are called together. They claim that a certain person has bewitched the dead one. They claim that a medicine can make one person love another or hate another. Young men sometimes pay from twenty to thirty dollars to procure this magic medicine that they may cause by it nice girls to love them. They get also some medicine to make the girl sick if

she does not accept their love. When their medicine fails to make the girl love them, they say the fellow who already has her, has a medicine to prevent others from taking her away from him. This medicine matter used to cause great suffering among the Zulus. Suppose that I was a chief man among them and did not like a certain person, I should send to the king and tell him that the doctors say that that man is the one that is killing my family. Then the king would send soldiers to put that man to death.

A man there is entitled to as many wives as he can get. As every young man has to serve a certain time as a soldier they do not marry when young, but those who distinguish themselves in battles are given wives by the king. A man gives a present of ten cattle to the father of his wife. It looks very much like selling their daughters but they do not regard it so. They think of it only as a present. No reason is given when they are asked why it is that one cannot get a wife without giving so many cattle? They say, "Well, that is a mutual benefit—we cannot get our wives without giving presents for them." Many evils arise from this custom. If a man is rich, his wealth is estimated by the number of his cattle. If this rich man likes a certain girl, he goes to her father and says "Will you let me have your girl?" Tempted by this man's wealth, the father is willing to have that man take his daughter. The father informs the

daughter that he has made a contract with a certain man whom he desires her to marry. The girl tells her father that she does not like him—that she has another whom she likes, but her father compels her to marry this man with whom he has agreed. If she feels that she cannot bear life with him she goes to other friends of hers, but her father brings her back until she is obliged to marry a man whom she does not like.

The Zulus are a war-like people. The boys are trained to use spears when they are ten or twelve years old. They take the large soft bulb of a lily, which is found in abundance there, to a sloping hill where they stand in a line. When they are all ready with their sharpened sticks, the boy at the top throws the bulb and each one throws at it as it passes by him. If the first one stabs it he keeps his place; if he misses it and the next stabs it, he takes the first place. A certain time is fixed for calling the game, and the one who is ahead when the game is called is the winner of no small present. By this exercise they become very skillful. When they are about fourteen years old they are allowed to go hunting, where they learn to use their skill at the game. All this training is to get the young people in such a condition that what they aim at they must strike. So that if war comes they will know how to fight and use their spears more advantageously. When they are about twenty they are gathered together to form a band; this band

is given a certain name at the king's headquarters. After that they are known as soldiers, who shall not marry without the king's consent. Sometimes the king's son happens to be of their number, and he wants to get married; then he asks his father to let the band to which he belongs marry, so all the boys who are able will marry before some of their brothers do, who were not so lucky as to have a king's son among their number.

The king exercises great power. He appoints chiefs all over the territory he rules, who receive his instructions and do as he tells them. The chief appoints Izinduna, who are supposed to have sound judgment, to decide on all cases which may arise among the people. The king decides on all cases in which a person is tried for his life. You may think that the heathen have no laws by which their conduct is governed—that nothing but lawlessness and crime prevail. I tell you that they do have laws. If the heathen people prove to be more cruel than those who are civilized, it is because their instructions are different from those of civilized men. The heathen do not lose their sense because of these lessons they learn from their parents. I have seen heathen people who have better judgment and live lives more consistent than a good many born and reared in civilization. The only way to make a noble man out of a heathen is to make him see that those lessons he learned when young

are false, and to tell him about pure Christian civilization, and when such an one has taken your advice, he will be a man indeed.

“THE KRAAL.”

The dwellings are made of sticks and reeds. They take these sticks and put them on the ground, and then put between them reeds, which they bend and connect at the top with the opposite side. They are about twenty feet in circumference, with a door two or three feet high, through which one has to crawl. They cover it with long African grass. When you come inside of these huts you find on one side a little place made for the pigs and calves, goats or chickens ; on the other side you will see a place prepared for people to spend most of their time. They are very dark inside. I think an American who has not seen anything of the kind before, would think he was in a hole.

“ZULU CATTLE.”

Zulu cattle are very small. It takes about sixteen oxen to draw a wagon which four horses in this country would easily draw ; and it would take about three Zulu cows to produce as much milk as one cow would in this country. Right at this juncture allow me to give my experience in trying to milk an American cow. The man with whom I was then staying asked me if I knew how to milk. I said I used to milk at home.

He took me to the barn one morning, and I attempted to milk, but the milk failed to come, and my fingers seemed to get tired in a moment. I told him it was not so hard to milk our cows—that American cows were indeed strange.

The way we milk is not very easy. You cannot attempt to milk a cow unless you first let the calf suck; and then you take a rope and tie it around the cow's horns, and fasten its head to a post. After you have done this, you take another rope and tie it around its legs, so close that she is not able to kick; then you commence to milk. All the milk cannot be obtained at once. You may milk for a short time and let the calf suck; after a while you may find more milk. If the calf should happen to die the cows are so trained that it wont be impossible to milk the mothers.

The way they are enabled to get milk from a cow whose calf is dead, is in this way. They take the dead calf and skin it; after they have skinned it they take sticks of wood and make them in a form as you do the wooden horses for mechanical purposes. They take the skin of the calf and cover this wooden structure. After they have completed making a false calf by stuffing all around inside with hay, they take it near the mother. A little boy takes this wooden calf in his arms and puts it near the cow. This little boy has along with him a little cup of warm water, so he can wash the cow in such a way that she

will think the calf is sucking ; after the boy has accomplished his part of the work, he takes the false calf near the cow's head. The cow will begin to treat this wooden calf as though it was alive, although after a while she will discover that there is no life in it. But it is too late, for she shall so accustomed herself to this habit that she begins to think it is the general run of things. Such is the way the Zulus succeed in milking a cow which has lost its calf. Since I have been in America and have seen how the cows are trained, I have come to the conclusion that our cows may be so trained that there would be no use of going through this process I have just described. There is no use for it, since the cows can be taught better. The people in a heathen state do not desire new things as much as those in civilized lands. If they did, some of them would have discovered a better way of milking their cows and the result would be that the cows would give more milk. When I go back I shall introduce the American form of milking, which seems to me by far the most advanced. I know I shall meet with criticism, as do all who attempt at reformation.

Formerly, before civilization was introduced among the Zulus, oxen were used only for beef, but now they are used for drawing wagons and plowing. They for the most part use six oxen to plow. This is a very slow mode of working. When they begin to use horses, then will they be hustlers.

“DOGS AND CATS.”

Some people who have spent a short time in Natal or Zululand, seem to think that the Zulus do not like dogs or cats, because they always carry sticks to hit dogs if they should bark at them. It is true that they hate those dogs which bark at everybody, and want to bite. Who would not? It is a rare thing to see a Zulu pet a dog. Their reason being that the dogs and cats are dirty. They think that unless they care to wash their hands after petting them, they may. They like dogs for hunting and cats for catching rats—no more. The dogs are kept out doors at night, to watch the hyenas, foxes, and other foraging animals.

SOME NOTED BIRDS

Among the curious things we have in Africa is a little bird, called the honey guide. It takes its name from the fact that it leads people to where honey is. In some parts of South Africa honey is so plentiful that the natives only have to take a piece of tree and carve a large hole and then hang it on the top of large trees in the woods, and the bees will soon be seen there making honey. Besides they make their nest in the ground, wherever they may find a hole suitable for their home.

This little bird has a peculiar cry, which the boys recognize very easily. Suppose you were walking among the woods, and see this bird in

front of you, but you do not desire to follow it. It flies in front of you and cries, trying to show you where honey is. The boys who are always glad of the opportunity, follow this, their guide. All the way along it sings its peculiar song, and flies from bush to bush, so as not to lose sight of its followers. And when it has come to the place, it flies down and sits for a moment on top of the bee hive, and then flies off and sits on a bush near by, while the boys are getting the honey. When they have finished taking honey, they take two cakes and stick them on a small shrub near by where the bird is, and when they are gone it sucks all the juice from those cakes, or if it has more than it needs for that time, it leaves the rest for another meal.

But if the boys should be so mean as not to give it any of the honey to which it leads them, it gets angry. Some bad boys do not leave any cakes for their guide, who is so anxious to have them come and get honey, that he too may get his share of the booty. The boys who do this are very wicked indeed, because they know the outcome of this affair ; but since it may not come upon them, they do not care. If they failed to leave something for it, the next person it sees, it leads him to a snake or tiger. That shows what wonderful sense some little animals have. They will get their revenge. This is one of the most wonderful birds we have in Africa, not only for this power of guiding people, but for its beauti-

ful color also. We have another bird which the Zulus call Isipungumagati ; and when the cow boys cannot find their cattle, they meet this bird and commence to say : Sipungumangati, please tells us the direction in which we may go to look for our cattle. This bird has two long feathers on either side of his head. He turns in a certain direction and nods his head, and they go that way, because they think he is right. I do not believe in this bird. It does not possess the power which the honey-guide possesses.

We have Izinsingizingi, which feed largely on snakes. It is interesting to see them fight a snake. They do not have any difficulty in killing a small snake, but once in a while they meet with larger ones, which make it interesting for them. This bird has a long bill and very strong wings. When the snake is met by these birds, which go in herds about thirty feet apart, it commences to strike, and then the bird puts its head under its mighty wings, its turn for striking comes, and it makes its mark, and the snake strikes again. They keep on that way until the nearest bird comes. As soon as the snake makes an effort to strike this bird, the other gets hold of it right in the neck and they succeed in killing the snake.

WEATHER OF NATAL.

It will perhaps not be inappropriate for me to speak right here of Natal's weather. It is considered one of the best climates in the world. All

the missionaries who have spent a few years there, prefer to stay there rather than in this country. It is very healthy. It is neither very warm nor very cold. In summer it is about as warm as it is in America, but it does not change much for the winter. It is dry and windy in winter. We have no such weather at my home as you have here in winter. I remember the first snow-storm I ever saw. I had never seen anything so beautiful and so wonderful. I did not understand it at all. I still like to look at a snow-storm, but I do not like the cold.

A peculiar experience was mine when I first came to this country. It was at a hotel. Ice cream was served, and I much admired it, so far as looks were concerned, thinking what a lovely pudding it must be. It smelt delicious, too. I took a large spoonful and then jumped out of my chair. I had never in all my life tasted anything so cold. I do not know that anything could be so cold. I was very angry with the waiter whom I thought had played a trick on me. I have learned since to be very fond of ice cream.

OUR FAMILY'S HISTORY.

My grandfather was a powerful Zulu chief ; so powerful that he excited the jealousy and hatred of the king. This was because my grandfather was kind and just to his men, while the king was very cruel. So it came about that many people flocked to the support of my grand-

father, and had he so desired he could have taken his men and defeated the king, and taken his place. And the king knew this ; so he said to himself : "Unless I do something, Dube and his men will come some day and sweep me away, and Dube will be king." So he thought he would accomplish by treachery what he dare not attempt by force. It is the custom of our people in a heathen state to live in kraals, which are surrounded by a fence made by driving poles into the ground, and intertwining bushes between them. The king commanded to have a fence built for him, and sent to my grandfather to contribute some of his best men to the work. My grandfather suspected no treachery, and sent many of his best warriors. When they came before the king, he commanded them to lay down their arms and weapons, and go down to the forest to procure trees and bushes for building the fence. They did so. Around this wood the king had placed large numbers of his men in ambush, and when the last one of my grandfather's men had entered the forest, the king's men fell upon them and killed them. Others of the warriors of the king were sent to my grandfather's kraal, and in the absence of his best soldiers, succeeded in killing him and many of his wives and children. But my grandmother escaped with my father, then a child in her arms, and fled to Natal, where Rev. Mr. Lindley had just commenced his work among the natives. There she was converted,

and my father was taught Christianity, and became the first native Zulu minister, doing great good among his people. But his sister, by the customs of the country, belonged to his brother, so he gave up all he had to buy her so she would not have a heathen marriage. His chief aim was that she too might have a chance of becoming a Christian.

I was born in Natal, and educated at the mission schools. Then I became a Christian, and God put into my heart to become a teacher of my people. I resolved to go to America to perfect my education, so that I could do better work among my people. I learned some English in the mission schools at Natal. First they teach in Zulu and afterward in English. Those who heard me talk English when I first came here, cannot see now how I have so improved in the use of English words. I came to this country and at Oberlin, in Ohio, attended school. Having been self supporting three years at school, I deliver my lecture in various places to obtain means to continue my education.

In order that the readers of this little book of mine may know something of my father, I quote the following article from the *Missionary Herald*, written by one who knew him well. The writer compared his life with that of king Cetywayo.

TWO NOTED ZULUS.

BY REV. S. C. PIXLEY, INANDA, NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA.

“Here are two pictures of Zulu men, James Dubé and Cetywayo, whose names will not soon be forgotten. In some respects they much resembled each other; in other and more important characteristics they were widely separated.

Both were born in heathenism, of the same race, about the same time, on the shore of the “Dark Continent.” Both were of royal blood, descendants of chiefs noted in war, with no written history indeed, but whose names are household words in Zululand. Both by nature were well endowed, of large stature, of commanding appearance, fitted to control others, and bidding fair to live many years.

But, while they were so much alike in these respects, in other and more important points, in their aim of life, in character and work, they differed widely. Dubé died some six years ago, beloved and respected by all who knew him. And now comes a report that Cetywayo has died, a previous rumor to the same effect having proved false. The contrast between the two men is interesting and instructive.

James Dubé, upon the death of his father by violence, while yet a child, fled with his mother from his early home in Zululand to Natal, to escape from the persecutions of the tyrannical king of the Zulus. Providentially he arrived there at the time when the pioneer missionary, Rev.



REV. JAMES DUBE.

Daniel Lindley, commenced his labors at the Inanda station. The mother of James, Dalida Dubé, early become interested in the truth, and was one of the first converts among the Zulu people. She still lives, showing, in her old age, the power of the gospel to elevate and save heathen women.

Her son James was placed in the family of the good missionary, where he enjoyed the instructions, and came under the influence, of the now sainted Mrs. Lindley. He early gave evidence of having become a true Christian. He improved his privileges so well, and made such good progress in gaining knowledge, that he was soon employed in teaching the station school. In this useful work he continued some years, spending his time during the week in teaching, and going out on the Sabbath to teach and preach among the kraals away from the station. Occasionally, when the missionary was obliged to be absent from the station on the Sabbath, he was engaged to preach at home. In this work he was so successful, and so acceptable to the people, that, when the missionary was called to leave the station altogether, Mr. Dubé was unanimously chosen to be their pastor. Having been ordained, he labored zealously for more than seven years, not only for the good of the station people, but for the salvation of his countrymen.

After a short but most useful career, beloved and honored by all, in the midst of his usefulness, he was suddenly called away to his home above. Devotedly attached to his work, wise in winning souls to Christ, he died lamented alike by Christian and heathen, native and foreigner. Never shall we forget the lamentations made at his funeral. One after another, as they ap-

proached the house after his death, falling to the earth on their faces, exclaimed, in the bitterest tones: "Ubaba wami, ubaba wami, u file!" (My father, my father, is dead).

Upon his monument, erected by the united gifts of loving hearts, are inscribed these words of the wise man: "Ukukunjulwa kolungileyo ko busiswa" (The memory of the just is blessed). The affection of many a Christian, saved by the labors of James Dubé, will not suffer his memory to perish.

Now comes the report that the second of these men is dead, not having died as James Dubé did, at home, surrounded by loving friends, but an exile, driven from his kingdom, with none to care for him. Cetywayo, having secured his title to the government by compassing the death of a more worthy brother, aspired, even before the death of his father, to the exercise of supreme power, without a single effort to improve his own condition, or the condition of his people; his greatest ambition apparently having been to imitate and, if possible, to surpass, in deeds of blood, his uncle Chaka, the Nero of South Africa. Cetywayo has ended his brief reign of ten years, hated by his own people, who wished to free themselves from his tyranny.

What a contrast his life and death afford to those of James Dubé! Cetywayo, by birth as well as by position, had equal, and even greater, opportunities than the humble pastor had, to



CETYWAYO (in English dress)

benefit his people and to elevate the Zulus over whom he was king. He willingly neglected these opportunities ; missionaries would gladly have made known to him the news of salvation, but he wilfully refused to hear them. Good

men, like Sir Theophilus Shepstone and Sir Bartle Frere, sent him, once and again, messages of peace and goodwill, advising him to make his reign beneficial to his people, worthy of himself and of the age in which he lived. He scorned their advice. He was repeatedly warned that the course he was pursuing would, if persisted in, bring war, and result in ruin to himself and to his people. He despised these warnings. Defeated in battle after his warriors had given fearful evidence of their valor, and carried into captivity, it was hoped he would learn some lessons of wisdom by adversity. He was carried to England that he might see what Christianity has done to make a nation truly great, and learn how he might make himself a blessing to his people. He was sent back, and reinstated as king in Zululand, that he might have one more opportunity to do something worthy of his position. So far as is now known, he has only used this opportunity to resume his former career of tyranny and oppression. In his life like Nero, his death, like the hated old Roman's, will not be mourned. One report says that he died of a broken heart.

While the memory of Pastor Dubé shall be blessed and his name had in lasting remembrance, the name of Cetywayo, like that of his uncle whom he sought to imitate, shall be accursed.

The only opportunity the writer ever had of personally visiting this remarkable man was in

1881, when Cetywayo, after his war with the English, was held as a captive at Rondebosch. This place is near Cape Town, the port near the Cape of Good Hope at which all the vessels carrying our missionaries to and from South Africa always trade. Learning that we had just arrived at Cape Town from Natal, a country so near his own land, Cetywayo was delighted to hear from us every item of news relating to the Zulu people, and finding that we could communicate with him in his own language, without an interpreter, he was quite pleased to talk with us. But when I remarked that I hoped he was quite well and that results of the war would ultimately prove beneficial to his own people, by introducing to them the arts of civilization and the blessings of Christianity, he sighed and said : "A ngazi lapa ngi nga hlala kahle kanjani? ngi botyiwe nje" (How can I be happy while I am a prisoner? I do not see how my people can be benefited in that way). How the gospel could help him or his people was a mystery to him. It would, as he thought, make brave warriors "abafazi nje" (women only).

Shall we not all learn from his sad history the lesson God is often teaching us, that greatness of birth and of position is of little worth unless accompanied by nobleness of character?"

MISSION WORK.

Having given you but a rough sketch of the Zulu in his heathenism and ignorance, in the first

few pages of my little book, I must now speak of the great work that the civilized world is carrying on to redeem this benighted land, to rescue it from bonds of ignorance and superstition. What has the missionary enterprise done, and what is it doing to-day in this great work?

It was in the year 1834 that the first American missionaries came to Natal, but owing to the wars between natives and Boers, they were not able to go on with their work. After this, in 1835, they commenced to labor among the Zulus who had just come over from Zululand on account of the cruel treatment of that savage king who was then ruling.

The beginning was a very discouraging one. They labored ten years without a single convert. This would discourage any person whose purpose is not inspired by the great spirit. These people found it hard to believe, but the Christian doctrine was at last received. The first converts were taught to read and write. A small school was then formed by the missionaries, from which many good schools originated. The scholars who were sent from those first schools, were told to go and teach their people this new religion which they now possessed. In this way they soon spread the glorious news. It was not an easy thing to do this, because those who were not converted, thought that others were crazy to believe these foolish teachings. But the people having discovered the true and better way of

living, could not be induced to renounce their new religion. So they went to proclaiming the Christian religion among their heathen brothers. Many of them came to their schools and churches, which the missionaries had already established. The light kept on increasing ; the more the people were taught, the more they understood what great importance civilization was to them.

They established the first high school, in which they educated those young men who were to be leaders among their fellow men. Some who proved to be true Christians, received theological instruction from the missionaries, which enabled them to be preachers among their own people. This was one of the grandest accomplishments the world ever produced. Now they have higher institutions of learning in Natal, which are connected with the American Board. These institutions are for young men and women, who go to them after they have finished studying, in smaller schools. They are prepared for teachers, not only, but for many other enterprises which are of great importance to their civilized state. There are printing offices, carpenter shops, shoe making and blacksmith shops. Since most of the students are selfsupporting, they choose a trade which they want to learn, when they first come. By working at this trade three hours every afternoon, they are able to pay for most of their expenses, and have the advantage of knowing a trade besides. Those boys who have

money to pay their way, are obliged to work a certain time during the day, because they are being prepared to be leaders of their people, which work they cannot very well accomplish unless they themselves understand what work is. To teach them to work is more needful than anything else, because the natives in their heathen state do not have many wants, and what little wants they have are easily supplied. So it is important to teach them to work, so they will first change that state of laziness before they become leaders, which is both beneficial to their common interest and to that of their race. When people become civilized, they need clothes and comfortable homes which are good for civilized people. In this school, young people are taught manners and other good things, which make them good, civilized citizens; great pains are taken to make those who have come to be civilized, exactly what they ought to be, so that they shall be of great use to their countrymen. If these are well taught, their light shall draw others. There are many other things which are useful in the civilization of Africa. The towns and railroads which the English colonists have made, have no small influence in making heathen people wish they were also civilized, that they too might be able to accomplish so great a wonder. The first cars that ran through that uncivilized part were a source of great amazement to them; they said "white men are capable of doing everything ex-

cept raising one from the dead." Such was the expression they gave to their wonder in seeing what they called "fire wagons."

There are now several high schools for boys and girls. Most of those who graduate from the schools become teachers. It would be interesting to some of you to see a station girl, well dressed, teaching half-dressed children under a tree in that sunny African land. All that is the means of bringing about greater results for our race and country. You see young Christians holding services under those great African trees, where you would never think it possible for a civilized man to be found. They start from home Saturday, that they may reach these, their brothers, who have not heard of the blessed news of salvation. The white missionaries do the same, although they most generally preach at the mission station, where they give a greater and broader understanding of the Bible to the already civilized people. I tell you friends, this missionary work of our time is doing more for the evangelization of the world than any other the world has ever seen. Dark Africa is being opened up ; all along the coast you find here and there places where the light of God has touched. It makes one's heart rejoice. But we are not satisfied with this, we want more men ; for the half of this people have not heard the news of salvation. There are many who would be glad to have you tell them about the Saviour, that

they may better understand this life and the other life. I appeal to the Christian religion, which has for years been the stronghold of civilization, and to the Christian church, for the advancement of this cause which has already been begun in Africa. All great nations are claiming Africa just for mere selfishness, but the church must do its share in proclaiming to the people the religion it professes.

The work of the African missions has been by no means a failure. We know that people think it is a greater sacrifice to go there than anywhere else, because the climate of Africa is not a good one for white people ; although the gold seekers never complain about this. Why should soul seekers complain ? I guess we need a little more electric charge applied, then would we be glad to go and work for our Master. It may be taken into consideration, the fact that some parts of Africa are not healthy. Many great people have sacrificed their lives for the redemption of Africa; it is true that their lives have not been lost in vain. Livingstone's heart was given up to that African work ; he died in hope that his friends will advance the work he begun for the people whom he loved. Shall we not have more ? God knows, and in His own time will yet make Africa one of the noblest countries the world has ever witnessed. It is a matter of great importance with me, and it gives me comfort to think about it, that Africa is being opened at this time, when

the civilized world is in a better condition than it has ever been before for evangelizing it. When we hear of the reports of the Young Men's Christian Association, and see that it is the right time, that Stanley has just opened this country to its heart, and that the nations are considering the question of stopping the human traffic which always has been a hindrance to this work. This is sometimes my thought : that I would be running wild in Africa, myself, if it had not been for missionaries. We who know what heathenism is, and have many of our friends in that state, greatly appreciate mission work. We are thankful that we are made to see better times than our grandfathers did. I was born of Christian parents, but back of them there is no one who had heard of God and His Christ. If God is able to raise a civilized generation in our time, Africa will soon be filled with the knowledge of God. I think you will agree with me from what I said before that missions ought to be encouraged in their work. The condition our people are in is enough to make any person's sense of justice feel an interest in those who take this people from such a condition, and place them in a state of civilization.

We are looking forward to the time when Africa shall be indeed a blessed country : when commerce shall not be limited in those splendid lakes ; when the waters of the Congo, in their majestic splendor, shall be covered with ships

and commerce which shall make it a civilized land ; when that rich country shall be joined with civilization and Christian influences, for I believe it is true that no nation can ever be well civilized unless its civilization is founded on God. As it is stated in the Scripture, "Blessed are the nations whose God is the Lord," I think that had we had God as our Lord long before this time our country would not be in such a condition to-day. If such can be the beginning of this country in its civilization, then shall all wickedness and slavery cease.

Since I have been in this country that I may get an education that will fit me for work among my people, I have met with discouragement, suspicion and prejudice on the part of those who have been misled by the missionaries that they do not approve of the natives from foreign fields to come in this country, because after being in America they become so attached to the country that they do not desire to go back and that even if they do go back, they are not satisfied with the condition of things there. Friends, this is not so. There has been some Zulus in this country who have gone back as soon as they completed their education. We have no schools in the Zulu mission to fit us for that education which is the victorious antagonist for the formidable foes, heathenism and ignorance which is dragging down our people. What made the first missionaries find it difficult to make our people accept the Gospel? They did not understand their nature, customs and habits. A Zulu can have more influence

among his people than a white man upon whom the Zulus first look with suspicion as though he is coming to claim their land as do the English Government agencies. So kind reader understand that we come here for the purpose of improving ourselves with the intention of returning to elevate our people. I think you grasp my meaning. Do not discourage those who fully understand the nature of their people. A Zulu pastor can easily detect an evil in the church where a white missionary could not.

Oh ! how I long for that day, when the darkness and gloom have passed, and the sunshine of a new civilization shall rise upon a land teeming with commerce, where upon every hill top shall be seen the school house and the church. Then indeed will Africa be a nation among nations. I say I long for that day when heathenism shall have been done away with.

Thus have I tried, by this little rambling talk, to give you just an idea of the life of our people—to show you just what is needed. We want earnest men and women to become interested in this people. Here is a work to do. The harvest is ripe, the reapers are few. Do you not hear Christ question, “Where are the gleaners?”

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN :

During my stay at Oberlin College, I have had the opportunity of becoming, not only well acquainted, but much attached to John L. Dube. I was much impressed with his earnestness to obtain an education, and with the noble aspiration which seemed to permeate his whole being. He is here, relying wholly on his own resources for that education which will fit him for the regeneration of his people in the dark continent.

He is a bright, intelligent, and above all, *Christian* boy. No one can help from seeing this who converses with him. His ability as a lecturer upon his native land has long since been proven. I commend him to any pastor, as the best means he can secure for arousing the dormant missionary spirit in the hearts of his congregation.

PROF. W. B. CRITTENDEN.

A graduate of Oberlin College 1890, and Prof. of Greek, Latin and Mathematics in St. Augustine College, Raleigh, N. C.

Oberlin Ohio, Jan. 11, 1891.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN :

The bearer, Mr. John L. Dube, is a native of Natal, South Africa, and the son of Rev. James Dube, first native minister of the Zulu Mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. He is in this country for the purpose of securing an education with the intention of returning and devoting himself to work for his people. My brother-in-law, Rev. Wm. Ireland, missionary in that mission was an instructor of John's in his boyhood, and we have known him personally in Oberlin ever since he came to this country about three years since. I cheerfully recommend him to any one to whom he may apply for favor or help, as having proved himself an

earnest, capable, upright and religious young man. We confidently expect that when he has finished his education and returned to his home, he will perform services which will be of great importance to his people and to the world.

F. H. FOSTER.

Prof. of Church History, Oberlin Theological Seminary.

Covert, Michigan, Dec. 10, 1890.

I have pleasure in stating that John Dube, a colored young man, is a Zulu from Natal, South Africa. He was born and lived at the Mission Station Lindley (formerly called Inanda) till he came to this country. His father, James Dube, was one of the early converts of the late Rev. Daniel Lindley. And he, the father, having received instruction in the mission schools, was ordained pastor of the native church at Lindley, but died after a few years of successful service, greatly lamented.

John, being desirous to obtain more education than he could get in the mission, came to this country a few years ago, in company with Rev. W. C. Wilcox, who was connected with the East Central African Mission near Inhambane. He has been attending school at Oberlin, Ohio. But being obliged to support himself, left to seek means to continue his education. I saw him at Oberlin. Those acquainted with him gave me excellent report in regard to him. His conduct in every respect was commendable, and his standing in his classes creditable. He, in connection with Mrs. Prof. Foster (a daughter of Mr. Grout, one of the old Zulu missionaries) gave me assistance in revision of the New Testament in the Zulu language.

I write this letter without request, but thinking it may assist him as an introduction among strangers, knowing that in this large country he will meet difficulties and temptations, and in the hope that some good people will show him favors and assistance when he needs.

I have been a member of the Zulu mission forty years and have been intimately acquainted with the young man's family and their history. I returned to this country in 1888, and am living in this place.

DAVID ROOD.

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