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South Africa - Missions

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign  
Missions.

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# ZULU MISSION.

A CONDENSED SKETCH.

1835—1886.

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1886.

Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto  
God. — PSALM lxxviii, 31.

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## THE ZULU MISSION.

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LOCATION. — Confined at present to the Province of Natal, Southeastern Africa. Area, 18,750 square miles. Coast line, 150 miles. Natal is separated from Basutoland and the Orange River Free State, on the west, by the Drackenberg Mountains, 9,000 to 10,000 feet high, and from Zululand (wild tribes), on the north, by Tugela River. Durban, the only port, is 1,000 miles from Cape Town. Pietermaritzburg is the capital. The country is undulating, well watered by streams from the Drackenberg Mountains.

CLIMATE AND PRODUCTS. — The climate is delightful and invigorating. Monthly mean temperature varies from  $56^{\circ}$  to  $82^{\circ}$ . The coast region is semi-tropical, producing the sugarcane, pineapple, banana, and coffee. Even toward the interior the orange, apple, and peach flourish. Cotton and indigo grow wild. Wool, corn, and sugar are the staple products. The elephant, lion, tiger, and rhinoceros have only recently been driven from Natal, but hippopotami, monkeys, baboons, and crocodiles are to be seen, while antelopes of various

kinds abound, with many poisonous serpents. In 1878 the revenue of Natal amounted to \$1,846,915; its imports to \$5,837,010; its exports to \$3,449,085.

POPULATION. — About 405,000 (English, Dutch, and Germans, 25,000; Zulus, 360,000; Asiatic Coolies, 20,000). The Zulus are a branch of the Bantu or Kafir race, distinct from the Hottentot, but of kin to all the other tribes south of the Congo. They differ from the negroes proper, though in color and hair like them. They are usually tall and well formed, many of them showing fine muscular development.

HISTORY OF NATAL. — Discovered in 1497 by Vasco da Gama, on Christmas (Natal) Day: hence its name. In 1823 an English lieutenant landed where Durban now is, and found a few people, the region having been desolated by Chaka, the great Zulu warrior, who had turned all his subjects into soldiers, and conquered the country from the Ampondo country to the Limpopo. Some of Chaka's generals carried his method of warfare to the Zambesi and northward. In 1828 Chaka was assassinated and succeeded by his brother Dingaan, also a fierce warrior. Dutch Boers, who had begun to come across the mountains from Cape Colony in 1834, settled in large numbers in 1838, and after long conflicts defeated and deposed Dingaan in 1840, making Panda, a brother of Chaka and Dingaan, king of

the Zulus. After three years of struggle between the Boers and the English, Natal was proclaimed a British colony in 1843. It has since been under the charge of an English lieutenant-governor. The Zulus who would not submit to this rule retreated to Zululand, north of Tugela River, where Cetywayo reigned until his defeat and capture by the British, in 1879.

THE ZULUS: THEIR HOMES AND HABITS. — The *kraal*, or village, is made up of a series of huts like huge beehives, placed in circles, the cattle-pen being in the centre. The huts are about ten feet in diameter and five feet high. The single hole through which entrance must be made serves for door, window, and chimney. Neither tables nor chairs nor beds are to be seen, only a few mats and pots and blankets. The men and women sit and sleep on the ground. The usual clothing of the wild natives consists of a slight covering made of skins worn about the loins. They sometimes ornament themselves with beads and skins and necklaces of lion's teeth or claws. The women wear an apron or a skin tied about the waist.

All menial work, such as digging, carrying burdens, and cutting wood, is done by the women. The men hunt and fight and take care of their cattle. The wealth of the Zulu consists of his cattle and his wives. He exchanges from ten to twenty cows

for a wife, and sells his own daughters for cattle. His wives, of whom he has as many as he can afford, are simply slaves.

RELIGION OF ZULUS. — Their superstitions hardly deserve the name of a religion. Their ideas are extremely low and debased. Their chief faith is in witchcraft, in goblins to be feared and appeased, and in ancestral spirits to be worshiped. They use charms and exorcisms; the witch-doctor, who is supposed to discern evil spirits, has terrible power. The rain-doctor, who claims to bring showers, is also a noted character among the Zulus.

THE MISSION OF THE AMERICAN BOARD — the first among the Zulus — was begun in 1835. The people were savage, without sign of civilization; their language unwritten and unknown. Two expeditions were organized, each consisting of three missionaries and their wives. Messrs. Lindley, Venable, and Dr. Wilson went in wagons to Mosilikatzi's people in the interior, 1,000 miles from Cape Town and some 400 miles westward of Natal. Messrs. Grout, Champion, and Dr. Adams established what was then called the *maritime mission* in Natal. The wars of Mosilikatzi were so fierce, and the disturbances so many, that the first-named party broke up their station at Mosika, and after a journey of 1,300 miles in ox-wagons, going around the Drackenberg Mountains, joined their

brethren at Natal in 1837. Dingaan, the chief of the Zulus, received the missionaries, and schools were opened and a printing-press set up. The conflict between Dingaan and the Dutch Boers interfered so seriously with Christian efforts that several missionaries withdrew from the country. After Dingaan's overthrow, Panda, his successor, favored for a time missionary efforts, but subsequently, becoming suspicious, he slew many who seemed inclined to lead a Christian life. This was in 1842, and up to that time two congregations had been gathered, one of 250, the other of 500, with two schools, each having 50 pupils. The disasters had been so many, and the unsettled state of the country offered apparently so little encouragement, that instructions were forwarded to close up the mission. But before the letters reached Natal brighter prospects were witnessed. Natal had become a British colony. The missionaries wished to remain, and the plan was changed. Instead of discontinuing the mission, it was reënforced. By 1849 nine new missionaries, with their wives, had sailed for Natal. A year later six churches had been formed, with 78 members, and eight schools had 185 pupils. The missionaries at that date dwelt much upon the moral degradation of the people. In 1859 there were 7 churches, with a membership of 186. In 1869, 11 churches, with 448 members, the Sabbath congregations amounting to 1,456. At the

close of the last decade (1879-80) there were 15 churches, with 610 members; 64 native teachers and helpers, besides 2 native pastors. The present missionary force from America consists of 10 ordained missionaries and 16 females. A theological school at Adams has at present 17 students, and a training school at the same place has 46. Two boarding schools for girls, one at Lindley and the other at Umzumbi, have an aggregate attendance of 88 pupils. There are in all the schools of the Board 1,700 pupils under instruction, from which number it is believed will come Christian preachers and teachers not only for Natal, but for the regions northward and toward the interior where the Zulu language is understood. The 9 stations now occupied, with the most of the 11 out-stations, are within 25 miles of the coast. In 1879 a plan was formed for the enlargement of the mission in the direction of Umzila's country, about 500 miles north of Natal, where the Zulu language is spoken. Mr. Pinkerton had started for that region, but, detained by unpropitious circumstances, fell a victim to fever in November, 1880. After Mr. Pinkerton's death, Mr. Richards visited Umzila at his kraal, but the way did not open for the establishment of a mission there. In 1883 a beginning was made by Mr. Wilcox at Inhambane some 550 miles north of Durban, and a new mission, the East Central African Mission, was established in this region.



The Jubilee of the Zulu Mission was celebrated at the close of 1885, and a new memorial building for the use of the Amanzimtote Seminary was dedicated. The first fifty years of the mission closed amid the rejoicings of both missionaries and natives over a gracious outpouring of the Spirit, with tokens of a great advance in all directions.

GENERAL RESULTS. — Natal may properly be called civilized, though there are sections where the old heathenism, with its accompanying degradation, may still be seen. But wherever the gospel has been preached the manner of life among the people has greatly changed. Houses have taken the place of kraals. Polygamy is frowned upon. The people wear decent clothing. The Zulus have found a Yankee plow to be “worth more than six wives.” Education of the natives throughout Natal has been entirely under the direction of missionaries chiefly of the American Board and of the English Wesleyan Society, though government grants amounting to nearly \$10,000 a year have been received in aid of the work. The translation of the Scriptures into Zulu was completed in 1883. Many of the converts are models of Christian character. (See notice of Rev. James Dubé, *Missionary Herald*, June, 1879, page 240; also *Missionary Herald*, December, 1867, page 395. For a graphic account of the contrast between the heathen and the Christian Zulus, see *Missionary Herald*, April, 1865, page 118.)

OTHER MISSIONS IN NATAL. — The English Wesleyan Mission, begun in 1841, combines work for Europeans and natives; only three or four of its missionaries give exclusive attention to the native population. The Free Church of Scotland occupies three stations. Before the late Zulu war the Norwegian Mission had 7 stations in Zululand, with one in Natal. The Berlin Mission, begun in 1847, at latest reports had 5 stations in this province connected with its flourishing mission in the Transvaal.

The Hermannsburg Society has had a mission among the Zulus which has been largely industrial in its character. The missions of the Church of England in Natal are conducted by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, with a bishop resident at Pietermaritzburg. The oldest of its stations was occupied in 1856. The Roman Catholics have of late established themselves at Durban and are attempting some work among the heathen.

AUTHORITIES. — Grout's *Zululand*; Carlyle's *South African Mission Fields*; *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*, by Leslie; *Natal*, by Henry Brooks; *Africa*, by Keith Johnston; Bartlett's *Historical Sketch of the Missions of the American Board in Africa*; *Umzila's Kingdom, a Field for Christian Missions*; also a valuable *Sketch of the Zulu Mission*, by Rev. William Ireland, now out of print.

*For latest and most interesting information from the Zulu and other Missions be sure and read regularly THE MISSIONARY HERALD and LIFE AND LIGHT, published monthly, the former at \$1.00, the latter at 60 cents, per year, postpaid. THE MISSION QUARTERLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, designed for Sabbath-schools and Mission Circles, is offered at the low price of \$4.00 per annum for fifty copies to one address, postpaid. Address CHARLES HUTCHINS, No. 1 Somerset Street, Boston, Mass.*

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MISSIONARY ROOMS, BOSTON,

June, 1886.



East from Greenwich.