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LATER ANNALS OF NATAL



DURBAN BAY FROM THE BLUFF

From the painting by James Harris. By kind permission of Sir Charles Smith.

LATER ANNALS OF NATAL

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PREFACE

In 1888, John Bird issued two volumes of *Annals of Natal*, embracing the period between the Portuguese discovery and the establishment of British authority. His eldest son, Christopher Bird, began to collect materials for a history of British Natal, with special reference to the immigration of settlers from the United Kingdom prior to the year 1853. These sources, together with other records, were utilised by the present writer in the compilation of *More Annals of Natal*, published in 1936. This volume covered the period of the first generation of British rule.

The present book, *Later Annals of Natal*, illustrates a period in which the interests of the community have greatly expanded. The increasing complexity of colonial government is reflected in the wide range of activities which are here illustrated. Whilst management of the native population, the opening up to European settlement of vacant land, and the participation of the colonists in the function of legislation remain major issues of policy, Natal is brought into more intimate contact with neighbouring territories, both European and native. Concern for the safety of Natal and for the peace of South-East Africa takes Theophilus Shepstone to Zululand for the installation of Cetewayo, and to Pretoria, in the hope of averting a serious native conflagration. Discovery of gold and diamonds knits closer the economic ties which connect the Colony with the largely unexplored interior, and provides the resources for a revolution in transport.

Apart from the increasing activity of the British and colonial Governments, there occurs in the second generation of British rule, a broadening of the interests of the individual colonist. In order fairly to reflect the life of Natal, it has been necessary to include sources which illustrate the growth of wealth and comfort, the prosperity of the coastal belt, the concern of colonists at the ecclesiastical divisions, their means of self-expression in press and assembly, and the activities of the younger generation.

The editorial introductions and footnotes have been intended to fill in the picture, and to remind the reader of circumstances with which he may not be familiar. The volume is submitted to the public in the hope that, by reason of the authority and the charm of the sources quoted, it may increase interest in the history of Natal. Many of the passages have been extracted from documents preserved in the archives at Pietermaritzburg. Use has been made of the recently deposited Escombe Papers, and of the diaries of Sir George Sutton. The better known, but still largely unutilised, Shepstone Collection has made it possible to throw new light on the native policy of the Colony and the annexation of the Transvaal. Other documents, such as the newly-discovered *Journal* of Thomas Baines, and the Symons account of the disaster at Isandhlwana, have come into the writer's hands through the generosity of private individuals. The whole collection reveals a story of surpassing interest, in relation to which the Editor's task has been largely that of the showman.

The extracts have been printed with some verbal changes, and modification of spelling and capitalisation. In regard to place names and the names of native persons, it has seemed preferable to utilise traditional

forms, such as Chaka and Cetewayo, rather than those supplied by linguistic experts. These more accurate renderings will, however, be found in the index. In the case of manuscript sources, it has sometimes been necessary to interpolate a phrase. One document (No. 27) is compiled from more than one source.

The Editor desires to express his gratitude for many kind suggestions to Miss K. Campbell, Sir Charles Smith and Mr. M. Basson, of the Pietermaritzburg archives.

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A. F. H.

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LATER ANNALS OF NATAL

I

DISCOVERY OF THE GOLDFIELDS AND THE LAST DAYS OF THE OX-WAGGON IN NATAL, 1865-80

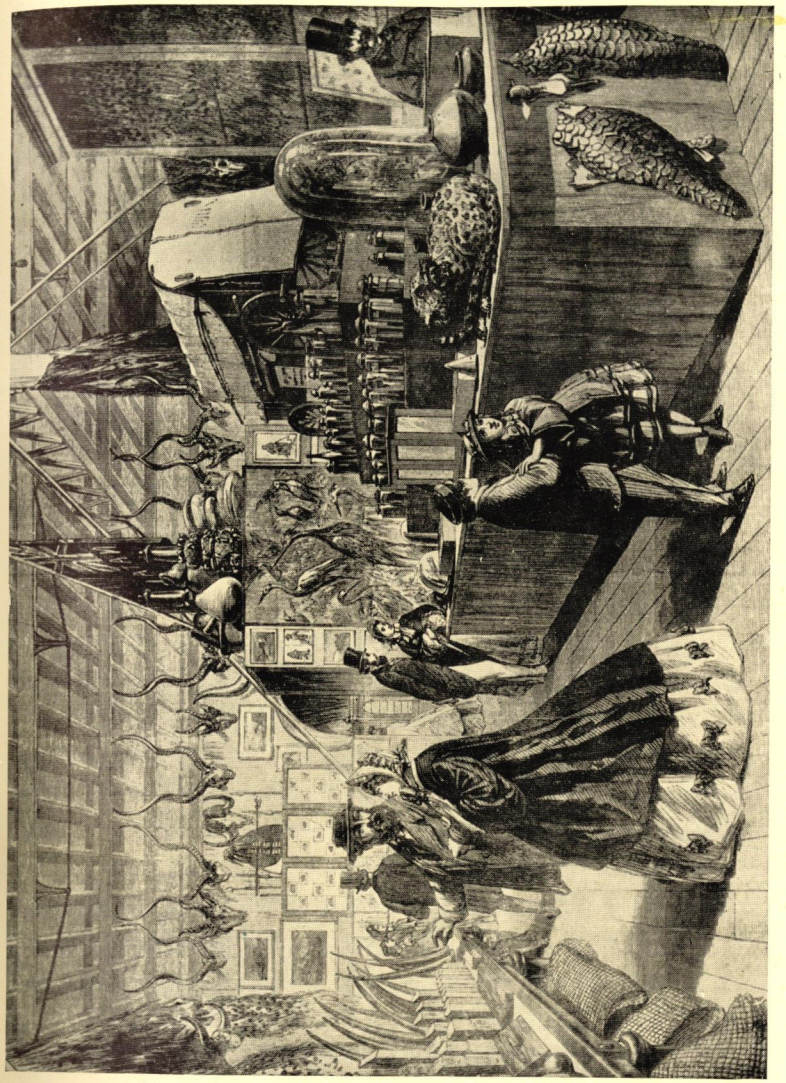
THOUGH from the earliest days of European settlement Natal had been optimistically described as a land abounding in mineral wealth, its white population prior to the 'sixties derived a living almost exclusively from agriculture and trade. The coming of Indian labour brought a modicum of prosperity to the cane fields along the coast, and compensated for the disappointment occasioned by the comparative failure of cotton, arrowroot and coffee. Inland the bustling roads were a measure of the profits to be derived from transport riding. But the countryside slumbered in dreary stagnation, and the Colony as a whole suffered from the primitive system of communication. Much had happened to damp the enthusiasm of immigrants since the days when James Methley had written of Natal as " a land where all the richest productions of the earth are centred, and which only requires European energy and enterprise to develop its immense resources." [1] But in Europe and America, there remained a staggering ignorance of the geography and

[1] *The New Colony of Port Natal*, 1849, p. 3.

local circumstances of Natal. The startling heresy of Bishop Colenso might draw fleeting attention to its ecclesiastical controversies. But it was mainly as a field for sportsmen that South-Eastern Africa attracted notice. At the international exhibition of 1862, it was the ivory of her elephants and the pointed horns of her antelope which figured prominently in the Natal court. So late as 1866, the London correspondent of the *New York Times* could write of Natal: "As game of the fiercer sort is growing scarce in America, I can recommend a good place for sporting gents to emigrate to, provided they have no political or religious scruples, and would not object to a British Colony or an excommunicated bishop. A member of the Natal Legislature has killed twenty-four tigers [1] with his own rifle, and the Government has offered a bounty to those who will shoot the remainder. Natal is in South-East Africa, enjoys a delicious climate, is inhabited by intelligent and mathematical Zulus, and is favoured with the ecclesiastical ministrations of Bishop Colenso, and the tigers aforesaid." [2]

Meanwhile in Natal developments had occurred which were rapidly to transform apathy and ignorance into alert and well-informed interest. For in 1865, Dr. Sutherland, surveyor-general, revealed a rich vein of marble in that part of Nomansland which Colonel Bissett was presently to proclaim British under the name "Alfred County." In neighbouring Griqualand and Pondoland, prospectors found indications of copper, nickel and coal. The settlement by Sir George Grey of Adam Kok and his Griquas along its western confines, together with the stubborn refusal of Faku to part with Port St. John's, excluded from this disorderly

[1] Natal leopards. [2] Quoted in the *Natal Mercury*, 17 January, 1867.



THE NATAL COURT AT THE EXHIBITION OF 1862

From the "Illustrated London News." By kind permission of the Proprietors.

land Natal's sovereignty, but not the economic penetration of her enterprising colonists. Expeditions such as that of the Umzimvubu Prospecting Company [1] promised to open up to European enterprise a highly mineralised region.

Nomansland fell into decline with the more momentous discovery of gold. For the existence of new sources of supply was of international significance at a time when European nations were contemplating adherence to the gold standard. Gold had long been known to exist in Zululand. Now auriferous quartz was picked up in the vicinity of Umzinto. Most of the rivers of the south coast were found to contain alluvial gold, though in quantities too small to admit of profitable abstraction. More hopeful was the discovery (1869) of gold a few feet below the surface at the Tugela and the Umtwalumi.

Meanwhile, Mauch had announced the presence of gold in the Tati district of the eastern Transvaal. Here was no mere sprinkling of alluvial gold in the beds of streams, but a great reef reported to be two or three miles in breadth. At once the eyes of Natalians were turned towards the brilliant attractions of the north. A second visit of Mauch, followed by careful exploration of the land in the region of the lower Limpopo by St. Vincent Erskine, filled in many of the blanks in the map of South-East Africa, and revealed the fact that a huge tract of fertile land, from which the tsetse fly was expected to disappear with the withdrawal before advancing European civilisation of the indigenous game, lay at no great distance beyond the frontiers of Natal. Almost overnight the Colony ceased to be the "land of samples," and became the gateway to the

[1] No. 1. See *infra*, pp. 20 *sqq*.

wealth of the north. Prospecting companies hastened to assemble men and material at Durban. In 1868, Sir John Swinburne led an expedition through Natal to the eastern Transvaal. Before the close of 1869 rival parties of diggers, including a score or more from Australia and California, had begun to work the Monarch mine at the Tati. Two years later, more than one thousand diggers had found employment in the vicinity of Lydenburg and Pietersburg.

Sir John Swinburne was well equipped with mining machinery, but other parties lacked both plant and capital; and, though fine specimens of auriferous quartz were sent down to Durban from the "Victoria Goldfields of Matabeleland," the early expeditions ended in financial collapse. Nevertheless the gold of the north drew Natal out of its isolation and localism. At Maritzburg, the Legislative Council turned away from its bickering with the Executive in order to debate the offer of substantial concessions for the discovery of minerals within the colonial boundaries. In February 1868, a deputation waited on Lieutenant-Governor Keate to urge the despatch of Theophilus Shepstone on a mission to the native chiefs north of the Limpopo. Though Keate replied that the matter lay within the province of the High Commissioner, he was impressed by Erskine's calculation that, owing to the superiority of the grass for the oxen, the Natal route to the goldfields was quicker and cheaper than rival roads; and he readily consented to request Thomas Baines to send down information regarding openings for colonisation and commerce. Alive to the truth that mineral wealth attracted trade, public opinion in Natal now began to press for the extension of British influence over the northern hinterland, in

disregard of the irregular expansion of the Transvaal Boers.

The enterprise of Baines, though directed from London, was truly a Natal venture. For R. J. Mann, still nominally Natal's superintendent of education, joined the directorate of the South African Goldfields Exploration Company, whose expedition Baines commanded, whilst Jonas Bergtheil, who had founded the settlement at New Germany and sat in the Legislative Council chamber at Maritzburg, provided much of the capital. With C. J. Nelson, a Swedish mineralogist as technical adviser, Baines undertook to explore the Tati fields and to endeavour to obtain concessions for the working of gold. A valuable concession was actually obtained from Lobengula, and much detailed information recorded on the subject of the Mashona workings and the most advantageous routes for the despatch of the precious metal to the sea. But the company lacked the capital resources to exploit the concession, and Baines was obliged to return to Natal and seek a precarious living from his work as an artist. His carefully compiled journal, from which extracts have been made,[1] is valuable mainly for the geographical information which it contains.

With the discovery of gold and diamonds, commodities began to flow briskly along the dusty roads between port and mining camp. The early 'sixties had been a period of somewhat deceptive prosperity. Though cotton cultivation had long been at a standstill, over 6,000 acres of coastland were now under cane, whilst sheep farming prospered steadily despite the scab.

[1] No. 2. See *infra*, pp. 33 *sqq*. Baines contributed much to botanical and zoological knowledge, and made an important study of the tsetse fly. For his career, see the memoir prefaced to his book, *The Gold Regions of South-Eastern Africa*, 1877.

But Natal could not attain a basis of stable prosperity until something had been done to correct improvident distribution of the land. The Crown had alienated no less than two-thirds of the total land area of the Colony: yet only the native locations were closely settled. The holding of vast tracts by speculators operated as a barrier against occupation of more remote land and inevitably entailed a stagnant countryside. In 1864, ominous signs portended the coming of an economic blizzard. Rash expansion of credit took no account of the real productive capacity of Natal. The outbreak of war between the Free State and Basutoland disastrously interrupted the overberg trade and threw the mercantile community into unrelieved depression. The sugar crop failed, and there was an unprecedented slump in the property market, making 1865 "the dark year." "The history of Natal," pronounced the editor of the *Natal Mercury*, "contains no record of a year of greater calamity, or more profound depression, or of wider-spread misfortune than that of 1865." In point of fact, the slump continued in full severity for another eighteen months. In February 1867, the Colonial Bank and the Natal Fire Assurance and Trust Company both applied to the Court for winding-up orders. Thereafter, exports began slowly to recover and customs receipts to rise.

The mineral discoveries in the north introduced striking changes into the economy of Natal. Gold and diamonds could not solve the problem of the land or call into existence a prosperous farming population. But in other ways economic expansion inevitably followed. A general influx of capital provided the means for improvement of transport. Lucrative trade with the interior brought ready employment on the

roads at some cost to the farms. "I have not seen one labourer working in the fields since I left Maritzburg," wrote the historian Froude. "Horse, man and ox are on the roads." [1] It was still emphatically the age of the ox-waggon. By the close of the 'sixties, the trunk route between port and capital had been sufficiently improved to admit of a regular service maintained by the speedy post cart. But systematic hardening of the roads lay in the future. In England, it was doubtless true that the Victorian Age, in the history of transport, "might be defined as the age of the eclipse of the road and therewith the roadside inn." [2] But there were still no railways in Natal outside the immediate vicinity of the port, when the Queen had been reigning close on forty years. Until very late in the Victorian era, roads were to hold their own, even if they were little more than spoor tracks beaten down by the turn of the waggon wheel, on which no springed vehicle could long survive. At the port, the hardening of the Berea road as far as the western vlei produced, at a cost of nearly £20,000 per mile, the first macadamised surface. To recover a portion of the cost, a toll gate was erected at which toll was levied at the rate of sixpence for the mounted traveller and half a crown for each ox-drawn waggon. The expedient was no more popular in Natal than it had been in the age of turnpikes in Great Britain. As foot-passengers might pass freely, travellers resorted to unsaddling in order to lead their horses through the barrier: and, in reply to a systematic campaign for the evasion of toll, the Durban Council found it necessary to close

[1] *Leaves from a South African Journal*, in *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, 1907, iv, p. 385.
[2] D. C. Somervell, *The Victorian Age* (Historical Association Pamphlet, No. 107), p. 7.

the old sandy tracks which made a connection with the main highway.

The ox-waggon was slow, expensive and unreliable. During a hard winter upland roads might be impassable, for there would be insufficient grass for the oxen. At all seasons of the year the pasture close to the highways was liable to be over-grazed. Moreover, long hauls of heavily-laden waggons overstrained the animals, and weakened them for the onslaught of redwater and lung sickness. In times of severe drought, transport became prohibitively expensive. It was never cheap. Henry Brookes, the botanist, calculated in 1876 that the average charge for transport by ox-waggon in Natal worked out at 1s. 9d. per ton per mile, "something like twenty times the amount of heavy transport by railways in England." [1] The same year Lady Barker counted 120 waggons one day on the fifty miles of road between Durban and Maritzburg, with the comment that "merchandise costs more to fetch up from Durban to Maritzburg than it does to bring out from England." [2]

James Methley's description of an ox-waggon still held good in the 'seventies. "They will travel," he wrote, with characteristic optimism, "at the rate of between thirty and forty miles per day; and will do this for some months, with proper care, on tolerable roads. All waggons are covered in with a canvas tent, which is either painted or lined, so as to be perfectly dry and comfortable in cold or rainy weather. The driver's seat is a chest in the front part, which can be removed at pleasure. It is divided into stuffed

[1] H. Brookes, *Natal* (1876), p. 317. The author showed that the charge for carriage from Durban to Maritzburg was £5 per ton, and £42 per ton for the 473 miles of the long journey to the diamond diggings.
[2] *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa* (1879), p. 84.

compartments for the reception of glass, crockery or anything liable to breakage which may be required on a journey. There is also another chest behind which also serves as a seat, containing a few useful tools, cooking utensils, etc. The body of the waggon holds heavy baggage, provisions, etc. On the top of the load is placed a stretcher on which to lay the beds, whilst the sides of the tent are occupied with guns, powder horns, shot belts etc., as well as a number of bags of books and other articles which are in constant requisition whilst travelling. At night the curtains before and behind are drawn close, the lamp lit, and you have every comfort and convenience of a more substantial dormitory. Though the wind may howl and the pelting shower rattle on your tent sail, it only increases and enhances the comfort inside; you wrap the blankets around you and may slumber fearless of wild beasts, natives or anything else more alarming than the chimeras of your own imaginations." [1]

In the 'sixties, the construction of bridges above the Howick falls and over the Mooi and Bushman's rivers prepared the way for the hum of traffic north of the capital, which followed the opening up of the gold-fields. Ferry boats hitherto used at the drifts had not proved strong enough when the rivers were in flood. After 1864, waggons bound for the Tugela drifts and the Zulu territory could use the handsome new Queen's bridge across the Umgeni: but this, and several smaller bridges, were swept away in the calamitous floods of August 1868.

Omnibus communication between port and capital dates from 1860, and preceded by more than a decade the regular service of mail post-carts. The bus was

[1] Methley, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

well patronised, though visitors might complain of the "jolting and ballooning in mid-air" to which they were subjected, especially when the driver elected to drive over all the big stones in order to show them "what our roads are like." [1] The new service brought prosperity to the roadside hotels. At the Half-way House travellers were agreeably surprised at the excellence of the fare. Accommodation for the night was another thing, especially at an inn "more like a pig-sty than a human habitation." Probably few would be likely to experience the misfortune of J. D. Holliday's traveller, who was thus accosted and received: "*Landlord*, 'Walk this way, sir, and I'll show yer yer room.' Went accordingly. 'Just put yer candle on the seat' (an inverted 56 lb. soap-box). Traveller looks round his elegant chamber: walls of sod, with here and there the grass still hanging; a hole for a window with a sheepskin tied up to answer the double duty of glass and blind; door made of reeds without hinges, just stuck up against the entrance and kept in that position by the aid of a dung-fork lodged against it. The furniture comprised a cowhide bedstead with a donkey's breakfast bed, and the aforesaid seat upon which the candle was placed, but the light of which cuts all sorts of capers from the wind which entered and retreated at its pleasure through all quarters of this very airy mansion." [2]

The swift transport of bulky goods had to await the advent of railways. It was obviously beyond the power of Government in the "dismal 'sixties" to embark on an ambitious programme of railroad construction. But private companies, attracted by the prospects of mineral

[1] J. S. Little, *South Africa* (1884), p. 243.
[2] J. D. Holliday, *Dottings on Natal*, p. 12.

wealth in the northern districts, might be induced to enter the field under guarantee of a subsidy from the local revenue. In 1862-3, David Smith visited the coalfields, and, following his report and the formation of the Natal Coal Company, a definite proposal was made to build a pier and breakwater at the port and to connect Durban with the coalfields. Meanwhile the Natal Central Railway Company, formed in London during the height of the railway mania, had come forward with a scheme for a single line between Durban and Maritzburg along a surveyed route which took in Isipingo. Agreement was reached with David Smith and his partners, and a bill to grant a concession hurried through the Legislative Council. It was however disallowed by the Imperial Government, as involving an "unprecedented sacrifice of the future interests of the Colony." For the bill made Natal liable for six per cent. of the capital expenditure on the line, and promised large land concessions to the coal company "pregnant with loss and inconvenience to the Colony." [1] And when the Central Railway Company made a further offer to build a line to Verulam without guarantee, if the Crown would grant tracts of native location land lying between the Umlazi and Umkomanzi rivers at an agreed price per acre, the Secretary of State refused his consent to the removal of the native population and suggested that the Colony should take into consideration the construction of a public line.

In the years which followed, the rapid increase of exportable produce made urgent improvement in the lines of internal communication. Revenues were

[1] E. Cardwell to Lieutenant-Governor Maclean, 27 February 1865, *Correspondence re Projected Railways in Natal*, 1865, L. (488). For the later Welborne scheme, see *Correspondence re Construction of Railways*, 1872. XLIII (C 618).

expanding, but it was realised that the colonial income was disconcertingly dependent on tranquillity in the interior. There was already a heavy accumulation of indebtedness in respect of harbour loans. Under these circumstances, the Legislative Council preferred to negotiate another agreement with a private company rather than embark on a scheme of its own.

The Welborne plan, as finally adopted by the Natal Government, provided for the construction of 345 miles of railway by the promoters, in return for an annual subsidy, a ten years' monopoly of the manufacture of iron and steel, and a grant of two-and-a-half million acres of Crown land. Welborne, for many months an impressive figure at the Victoria Club, Maritzburg, undertook to colonise the land, which was described as practically valueless by reason of its remoteness from centres of European population. But it amounted to virtually the whole of the non-alienated reserves of the Colony, whilst the powers which the Council was prepared to vest in Welborne would have made possible a considerable taxation of some thousands of native squatters to swell the dividends of an absentee company.

It was the spectre of sharp native discontent which induced the Secretary of State, though "desirous to give effect, if he can possibly do so, to the wishes of the colonists," to veto the Welborne scheme. It is clear that the railway would have been dearly bought at the cost of native unrest and the sacrifice of all that remained to the Colony of the vacant Crown lands. Thereafter railway communications were considered from the point of view of public enterprise and ownership. Mounting customs receipts encouraged the legislature to acquire the small line at the port, and to undertake the construction of a system of government

railways. In 1875 the first instalment of the main line as far as Maritzburg was sanctioned, together with coastal lines terminating at Isipingo and Verulam. When the Zulu war broke out, the main line had reached Botha's Hill. The first train to Maritzburg steamed into the city on 1 December 1880.

Another imperative need was for telegraphic communication. When Natal ceased to be a district of the Cape and entered upon its career as an independent Colony, the local authorities became directly responsible to Whitehall. But, until the 'eighties, communication with London was a lengthy process. A private telegraph line connected Maritzburg with the port in 1864. But the isolation of Natal, accentuated by the fatal drawback of the harbour bar, was not corrected until the initial disasters of the Zulu war had ominously underlined the need for swift communications. Sir James Pender's visit (1878), however, heralded the establishment of contact by telegraph with Delagoa Bay.[1] In July 1879, the shore end of the Eastern and South African Telegraph Company's cable was landed at Durban. But not until the following year, when the east-coast line was completed by the placing of the Zanzibar section, was the necessity removed for relaying of cables via the Cape Verde Islands.

The two principal towns of the Colony had now developed a civic enterprise which had been lacking in the period of the Byrne immigration.[2] Old Durban had been bounded by Smith Street, Pine Terrace and the market gardens, whilst a sandy vlei separated the village from the Point. The shores of the Bay were

[1] His wife's book, from which a passage has been extracted (No. 3), was significantly entitled *No Telegraph*.

[2] For Natal in this earlier period, see *More Annals of Natal*.

fringed with wild banana and hibiscus trees, except where giant mangroves projected far into the water, their trunks covered with sea snails and tiny crabs. The western vlei was still, in the 'sixties, the home of heron, tegwan and the brightly-plumed kingfisher. Pigs and poultry shared with outspanned oxen the grazing in the main thoroughfares. Owing to the absence of drainage, swamps and pools abounded, and children often had to wade to school through the lower portions of Smith and Field streets. The chief source of water supply was still the old pump in Smith Street, commemorated at the present day by "Old Well Court."

Visitors to Natal still found cause to regret the "venomous ticks in grass and sand," the mosquitoes, the undisputed sway of King Sand in the majority of streets and the primitive nature of the sanitation, to which was attributed the prevalence of dengue fever.[1] Not until the 'eighties did the town obtain a supply of pure water, brought in pipes from the artesian well sunk by H. W. Currie and later from the Umbilo river. But, in 1878, Lady Pender found "some capital stores, where you can get anything from a pin to a grate." Whilst the principal streets had now been macadamised and the sidewalks paved, the Berea was "dotted all over with nice little villas." Clearing of the Berea bush prepared the way for the opening of the Musgrave road, along which two-horse tramcars made their appearance in 1885, the *annus mirabilis* of the completion of the Corinthian Town Hall with its lofty clock tower. Overport House, the residence of William Hartley, with its reception rooms "lined with polished cedar,

[1] A. Douglas, *A Month's Trip to Natal*, in Cape Monthly Magazine, xiii, pp. 48 sqq.; Little, *op. cit.*, p. 235; Pender, *No Telegraph*, p. 60.

panelled and beaded with gold," and its "gothic hall, lit by a large and beautifully painted window, which once adorned an ancient manor house in England," was a measure of the prosperity which had already come to the mercantile community from cultivation of the subtropical products of the coastlands. From its tower, approached by winding staircases, visitors to Natal were allowed to enjoy the prospect of "the lake-like bay with its islands, the darkly wooded hills beyond; the foamy ocean, bluer almost than the skies above it; the jungly hills in the foreground; and behind the Umgeni winding amidst cane fields."[1]

In the 'sixties, before the advent of the omnibus and the tramcar, means of conveyance were confined to the ox-waggon and the horse. Cabs had appeared in the streets of Capetown at an earlier date. But the sandy Durban streets scarcely permitted such vehicles to ply. In 1867, the auctioneer Beningfield sold at his mart a sedan chair, locally made for carriage by coolie porters. But chairs never became popular, perhaps on account of the warmth of the climate. The sandy waste which separated Durban from the Point could be covered in the noisy little train running on sleepers which consisted of "old spars split up the middle, with the paint still on them." Men rode in from the Berea on horseback, tethering their steeds at the rails conveniently placed beneath the seringa trees which lined the business thoroughfares.

Unfortunately progress was least discernible at the Point, and in the vitally important project of harbour improvement. The earlier system of entrance works projected by John Milne and modified by Captain

[1] Sir J. Robinson, *Notes on Natal* (1872), pp. 128-9.

Vetch, failed to cope with the mass of shifting sand which constituted the bar, because the timber staging of the north breakwater became worm-eaten and rotten. In 1866, the year when the lighthouse on the Bluff first flashed its warning to navigators, the harbour works were abandoned by the contractors. In the period of ensuing depression little could be done to prevent the shoaling up of the channel. The bar grew more and more irregular, whilst the formation of new sandbanks contracted the area of anchorage in the Bay. "One is forcibly reminded," wrote J. S. Little, "of grievous disappointments and shattered hopes by the melancholy spectacle of isolated piles and such-like tackle, with which the bay and its vicinity are bestrewn: the ruins of two unsuccessful attempts to construct a harbour, on the part of Captain Vetch and Mr. Milne respectively. Thousands of pounds, literally as well as metaphorically, thrown into the sea." [1] Failure of the harbour works discouraged improvement of the landing arrangements at the Point. Visitors in the late 'seventies still found reason to complain of a customs-house constructed of "old packing-cases and all kinds of odds and ends thrown together anyhow." Sir John Coode's report (1878) merely intensified the gloom by revealing how big was the expenditure which any radical scheme of improvement must involve. Victory in the long struggle against sand and current was deferred until the 'nineties, when the new breakwater, built by Edward Innes and extended by C. W. Methven, at last succeeded in deflecting the sand-bearing current and protecting the channel from damage by the heavy rollers brought up by southerly gales. In 1892 the depth of water on the bar at low tide had risen to

[1] Little, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

14 ft. 9 ins. Twelve years later, the *Armadale Castle* could cross the bar.

Maritzburg was still in large degree the city of thatched houses overgrown with flowers, its somnolent streets illuminated on moonless nights by a dozen oil lamps, known to the Byrne immigrants. The market square, utterly lacking in animation during the winter months, owing to the scarcity of grass for the oxen, assumed an aspect of bustling activity when teams of waggons began to arrive with their loads of up-country produce. But quiet as the market might normally be, its presence made meat cheaper and produce more plentiful than it would otherwise have been. For the *Natal Mercury* attributed the dearness of meat and the scarcity of vegetables at Durban to the absence of a market.[1] In the City, beef was retailed at 3d. a pound. Lady Barker however found milk and butter "scarce and poor" since transport riding paid better than farming. In the winter, it was customary to fall back on preserved milk. In the days of the discovery of gold and diamonds, Natal was not a cheap colony for residence. This was chiefly due to the primitive means of communication. Firewood cost thirty shillings a load in the towns. Hire of a carriage for a journey of little more than a hundred yards might cost the sum of one guinea. Only fruit seemed to visitors to be plentiful, inexpensive and good.

Throughout the 'sixties, water brought in furrows from Zwartkop valley continued to turn the wheel of Visagie's old wheel, much to the annoyance of Anthony Musgrave who complained of the unkempt and disorderly property which adjoined the grounds of Govern-

[1] The *Natal Mercury*, 9 June 1866. At that time, beef was sold in Durban at 5d. to 6d. a lb. Potatoes were often unprocurable.

ment House. The open sluits bordering the streets were gradually covered over with paving stone, though they remained the sole source of water supply for the town until the construction of reservoirs at Blackridge in 1880. Street lamps made their appearance in 1866.

Maritzburg in the 'eighties was not a city of fine buildings. The government offices were still housed in the low, single-storied building which Lady Barker compared to a " dilapidated barn on a bankrupt farm." The Legislative Council, on the other hand, had vacated the thatched schoolroom at the corner of Chapel Street, and was now worthily accommodated, together with the judges of the supreme court and the post office officials, in a new building, the interior arrangements of which were certainly good, whatever might be said of its architecture.[1] There it continued to meet until 1889, when the new Assembly building was completed on a site previously occupied by Bishop Colenso's native church.

Social life in Natal in the later Victorian age was inevitably conditioned by the climate. Sir Bartle Frere pronounced that there was no country in the world where a man could arrive at a comfortable living with so little energy. But Froude's description of Englishmen in South Africa as " pulpy endogens," too lazy to cultivate the soil, aroused resentment because it ignored the fact that, at the time of the historian's visit, the mineral discoveries in the north had inevitably attracted the energetic youth of the Colony to the goldfields and the diamond diggings. In any case, visitors were likely to see less of the genuine colonist whose home was on the land, than of the type of young Englishman sent out by his relatives to start life afresh, who no

[1] The building, which is now the Supreme Court, was completed in 1872.

doubt was prone to pass his time " either at the bars of the Royal, Crown or Plough hotels or in knocking about up-country, shooting or what not." [1] Except that they fully maintained the reputation of the Colony for hospitality, the two towns were inevitably less " colonial " than the countryside. In the matter of dress, they followed home fashions. Along Maritzburg's Commercial Road, in the neighbourhood of Alexandra Park, J. S. Little encountered " pedestrians in Bond Street attire, well-mounted equestrians far more fashionably dressed than one finds in Durban, and equipages well-appointed in every respect." The influx of ladies from England kept society only a season or two behind the current fashions. In 1857, Middleton and Wirsing advertised " crinolines and corded petticoats," followed next year by " the steel-spring petticoat." As clothes were still for the most part home-made, the introduction of the sewing machine in the 'sixties made it easier to keep abreast of changing fashions. In the early 'seventies, ladies who were not afraid of the epithet " fast," appeared in pork-pie hat, long nets for the hair, the crinoline and boots with spring sides.

The existence of social cliques was much more pronounced at Maritzburg than on the coast. The bitter ecclesiastical schism, caused by the Colenso judgment and kept alive by relentless activity on both sides, accentuated the cleavage in society. At Durban, division tended to follow geographical lines and thus to force up rents on the socially desirable Berea.

The cult of organised games reached Natal from the mother country in the wake of the international exhibi-

[1] Little, *op. cit.*, p. 49. The author described Maritzburg as " a rendezvous of broken-down spendthrifts, and of damaged reputations," p. 245.

tion of 1862, which many Natalians visited. Croquet parties quickly became fashionable. Lawn tennis was an innovation of the early 'seventies. Organised evening amusements were as yet rare, and were largely confined to balls, amateur concerts and theatricals and "penny readings." Despite the decline in evangelicanism, churches were still the main social rendezvous. In the country districts, amusements were riding, shooting and horse-racing.

1. A WAGGON TRIP THROUGH NOMANSLAND

From the Journal of the Umzimvubu Prospecting Company's Expedition to Griqualand, Amapondoland and Nomansland, 1867 (in the possession of Miss K. CAMPBELL).

Having heard of the great wealth that existed in the Griqua, Amapondo and Nomanslands, situated to the west and south of Natal, and no one having explored them, the above company was formed for the purpose of opening up communication with the natives there, and ascertaining if the reports that had been spread all over Natal were true.

The volunteers for undertaking the hazardous expedition were Messrs. Bromwich, Burrill, Payne and Bennett. Although unacquainted with mining operations, they trusted that energy and perseverance on their part would overcome all the incidental difficulties they would have to meet with; and, having an unlimited capital at their disposal, they started, determined that nothing should be left undone until each country was thoroughly explored and the long-talked of metal discovered in unlimited quantities.[1]

The good pioneers had other intentions in volunteering to go into these foreign parts: and they were, firstly, the civilisation of the natives; secondly, to carry evangelization amongst their vast tribes, and thus be the means of opening a good and friendly connection with their country, which would materially benefit the Colony of Natal.

[1] The Company, partly owing to the continuance of depression, but also by reason of the superior attractions of the newly discovered goldfields in the north, soon abandoned its intention to prospect for minerals in the Umzimvubu district. Its technical expert, Bromwich, a chemist by profession, left for the Tati goldfields, shortly after the return of the expedition. He subsequently opened a chemist's shop on the diamond diggings at Kimberley.

Colonists had long wished to trade in these parts, and looked forward with great anxiety to the return of the expedition.

The threatening position of affairs at this time in Natal needed something to create a sensation, and many small companies had been formed to explore different parts of the supposed mineral countries; but in nearly all cases they returned disappointed and disgusted with their unfortunate expedition. It may have been the right men were not selected for such enterprising work, or else they did not exert themselves sufficiently to produce any good results.

These companies naturally made men shy and disheartened to attempt another expedition, and at first the promoters of the Umzimvubu Mining Company found a little difficulty in floating their shares until the names of the prospecting party were made known. The manager proposed a different route to that taken by the previous expeditions, viz., by the upper road to St. John's and back by the coast, through Nomansland, thus traversing a country little known to Europeans, badly provided with roads and invested with tribes of savage peoples. When you bear in mind that they are a people over whom the English Government exercise only the slightest influence . . . too much praise cannot be given to Mr. John Payne for overcoming all the numerous obstacles that existed throughout their long journey, and conducting the whole party back in safety without any material loss. Solely actuated as they were by a desire to do good, and regardless of all the dangers that were continually around them in the different lands they passed through, they have placed us deeply in their debt as will be seen

from the following journal, which has been compiled from all their manuscripts, placed in my hands.[1] May they long live to see the results of their visits amongst the wild tribes of South Africa, which I am sure will ever be remembered by their fellow Colonists.

Thursday, 11 July.—The Kaffir driver inspanned early, and brought the waggon to the store of Messrs. Murray and Burrill, where it was loaded with provisions and other necessaries for the trip. At 10.30 a.m., the word was given by the manager to "trek," and away rolled the waggon through the heavy sand, people crowding round whilst the company, amidst deafening cheers bid adieu to all their friends. The Congella was soon crossed and the Umbilo passed at a rapid pace, as we wished to get clear of the town as soon as possible. The first outspanning place was selected under a large tree on the Clairmont coffee estate, where oxen and men refreshed themselves. After staying an hour, they pushed on again, reaching the Isipingo at five. With the light of the moon, we managed to cross the river Umbogintwini, when the tents were pitched, and all made snug for the night. Supper was prepared and the Company's success drunk with enthusiasm. The night was bitterly cold and little sleep was to be had, the wind howling and pitching the tent about a great deal, whilst the occupants were in constant dread of all coming down on them.

(The expedition struck inland beyond the Umzinto, traversed native location land, in some parts covered with fine yellow-wood forests, and crossed the boundary into Griqualand on July 19th. Thereafter, the road rapidly deteriorated.[2])

22 July.—Away from our outspan by six o'clock,

[1] The journal of the expedition remained in the hands of Mrs. John Payne, wife of the leader.

[2] The opening up of a route whereby postal facilities could be extended through Nomansland had been recommended in 1863. The south coast trek road, followed by the expedition, was extended inland from Umkomaas to Alfred County and Umzimkulu in 1867; but beyond that point there were no "made" roads at all.

Bennett and Burrill pushing ahead to find the road; sighted Mount Currie about two o'clock, but it was a long time before we could see the great laager, of which we had heard so much, as it lies behind a large hill. To our disgust and disappointment, found it a very dirty place, consisting of about 200 mud huts, a few old waggons and a lot of dirty Griquas, sitting or lying outside their dens. A small church and a fort stand in the middle of the village and Adam Kok's palace at one end. While we were in a store, one of Adam's daughters (or rather, the "Princess Royal") came to purchase a bar of soap, and she certainly looked as though the money was well invested. Adding to the miserable appearance of the laager, a number of houses are only half-built and allowed to remain with their four walls standing. It is indeed, as one of our party called it, a village in ruins before it was built.[1] After visiting a few stores and purchasing some necessary things for our larder, we passed through this wretched village and outspanned about four miles on the high road to Grahamstown, where we passed a very cold night in the tent.

23 July.—Inspanned before breakfast, and, after enquiring for the road to the copper mines, proceeded on our way. Several brooks we crossed over were covered with ice. The road from the laager is very bad, up and down hill, and obliging us to double-riem the wheels lest the waggon should capsize. At 10, we had left the land of the Griquas and arrived among the Amapondo tribe of Gojo, a petty chief under Faku. About 11 o'clock a large band of natives made their appearance at the top of a hill, armed with assegais and dressed in picturesque war costume. They had just been reviewed by their chief and were returning in joyous mood to their respective kraals. We made another long trek—the longest during our

[1] Adam Kok and his followers had only been settled in East Griqualand in 1861: and, since nothing had been done either by Sir George Grey, or his successor Sir P. Wodehouse, to delimit the jurisdiction of Griqua and Pondo, indescribable confusion followed. Moreover, raiding parties of Basuto harassed the territory, penetrating as far east as Port St. John's.

travels—in fact, we were all of opinion that we had gone 25 miles, and this under a hot sun with an exhausted team—by no means a bad day's work. We had put on this extraordinary spurt for the purpose of reaching the Ingeli Mountains, to commence prospecting the following morning by daybreak. After calling at several kraals, we got a Kaffir guide and placed the waggon as near as possible to the mines. We then outspanned, pitched the tent and formed camp.

24 July.—All our expectations of reaching the mines early were frustrated by a curious circumstance. After performing our hasty toilet and whilst enjoying the usual cup of coffee, we were suddenly and, as if by magic, surrounded by a bevy of young Kaffir belles from the neighbouring kraals. The state we were thrown into by this sudden visitation may be more easily imagined than described. With a curious combination of the timidity of the fawn and the assurance of the (bull), they assailed us on every side, jabbering a thousand interrogations in an unknown tongue, which we politely returned with a multitude of chaff. The dark maidens were accompanied by their fathers, by whom our notions of English etiquette were completely staggered; for the number of wives that were offered to each must have sufficed the most thoroughbred Turk. As we guessed at first, and found afterwards to our cost, their real object was to obtain as many presents as possible. We first gaily decorated the girls with beads and common handkerchiefs, and gave them treacle and sugar. Then we attempted a little bartering for mealies, but did not find ourselves great gainers thereby. After hastily dismissing the crowd by giving the male portion a goodly tot each, by way of parting cup, we commenced preparations for setting out for the mines. Suffice it to say that, after these were finished, we turned out as picturesque and genuine-looking a lot of miners as ever trod. With shouldered picks and spades and laden with provisions, we made in the first instance for the scene of operations conducted by Mr. Sparkes. Arriving there about noon, we were greeted by a sight

sufficient to daunt any but the most enthusiastic. The work that these indefatigable men were performing seemed herculean; and, if ever one could realise the true meaning of "earning one's bread by the sweat of one's brow," this was an example of it. Working hour after hour from sunrise to sunset, almost without interruption and without any seeming success, did these persevering men perform work, which in a colder climate would have been considered almost incredible. The dinner hour of the party being over, we were courteously conducted by Mr. Sparkes, the superintendent of this undertaking, through the underground tunnels. Our investigations, as may readily be imagined, were full and searching, and the samples of ore, rich and profitable-looking, only served to fire our enthusiasm and make us more anxious than ever to be at work. After a kind "good-bye" from these our brother miners, we were again on the march.

Our road lay through a rugged but beautiful tract of country. We were botanists enough to admire the many rare, and to us Natalians novel, specimens of the ferns, which in Natal do not at all approach the British class in size and beauty, but were here of an extraordinary growth and variety. The beautiful cactus also attracted our attention, attaining a size hitherto unknown to any of us: we saw some that could not have been less than 80 feet in height. Botany, beautiful study as it is, could not long divert our attention from the main object in view, the geological study of the country and the search for minerals. Evident traces of the latter were soon discovered; and, as one of our party was a professional man, we felt sure of success. In a deep ravine, at the bottom of a hill having a southern exposure, we made our first thorough search. Here it was that our professional member came out in full force. We were soon aware that some grand discovery had been made by the keen attention, followed by work with pick and shovel, of Bromwich. After a short period of suspense, a splendid specimen of mica was held up to our delighted eyes. We knew this of itself

to be of no great value, yet we all felt convinced that we were at work on a rich locality; and after hours of painful work, our efforts were rewarded by the evident traces of copper. Before setting out from Durban, we had seen many specimens of ore from other quarters of southern Africa, and our recollections enabled us to make comparisons highly favourable to the specimen we had now discovered. We were now in such good spirits that we would have willingly forced our fatigued bodies through another ten hours work; but the shades of night were falling fast, and joyful and wearied we returned to our waggon. We spent many hours of the night in the hopeful prospects of the morrow; and, by way of practical illustration of our joy, treated ourselves to an extra glass of—wine, it should have been, but gin, it was.

25 July.—Up with the lark to find our waggon surrounded by our former sable friends. We did not now waste much time dilly-dallying with them, as we had more important work in view. However, we hastily bartered for enough provisions to last us some days, and sent them about their business as soon as possible. I must not forget to mention however, a little incident that occurred before they left us. Our energetic Bromwich, who is generally first to see the glories of the rising sun, had this morning, overcome with the fatigue of the previous day, indulged himself with an extra forty winks. One of us cautiously entering the tent announced with some gravity, "a lady waited his commands!" And before the astonished Bromwich had time to give more than two or three yawns, open his eyes and sit up in bed, we had hastily introduced the lady in question, a swarthy matron of some fifty summers, into his sanctum sanctorum. She at once commenced a warm welcome, with many *saka bonas*,[1] but, strange to say, Bromwich pitched a Wellington boot at the head of the speaker as the most suitable reply. The lady evidently thought it a sufficient one, for she left without further parley. . . .

[1] "Good-day."

The road now extended for miles along the summit of a range of hills, the view from which was one worthy of description by a better pen than mine. The country was not unlike some parts of our Natal scenery, containing many beautifully wooded ravines; and, if seen in the summer, clad in nature's most glorious verdure, would have been a sight alone well worth travelling the distance to see. Flocks of the majestic and gaudily-coloured secretary birds, strutting about here and there, added much to the effect of the scene. These we did not attempt to shoot, but treated them with the respect which their usefulness in destroying snakes and vermin earns for them everywhere in Africa. We this day experienced that horrible and sensational deception, generally known as a "mirage." Whilst eagerly looking for water, we beheld in one of the ravines what appeared to be a clear, crystal stream. But, on close inspection, the phenomenon was found to proceed from the dry, glistening surface of rocks; and our disappointment, as may readily be imagined, was as great as our joy had been at the supposed discovery. We certainly that day experienced a genuine thirst. . . .

26 July.—Whilst descending a very nasty piece of road, our waggon nearly came to grief, being thrown almost on to its beam ends, whilst our bedding and utensils rolled out on the veld. After putting all square, we left for a Kaffir kraal, for which digression we were fully compensated, as the sight we saw on our arrival, a regular Kaffir beer-drinking party, was rather an interesting one. The custom was carried out with all state and ceremony. The drinking did not seem to be from any morbid desire for liquor, but was part and parcel of the means for carrying out this state meeting. The assemblage had been called together by one of the highest chiefs in the land, for the purpose of deciding peace or war with a neighbouring tribe. When we intruded ourselves at the entrance, we were shown, with many dignified wavings of the hand, seats on either side of the chief, where we sat throughout

their long discourse in the respectful quietness their courtesy demanded. After each speaker had had his say, a huge bowl was passed round, their courtesy again dictating that it should be first offered to us their guests. Then the chief partook, and handed it round to his assembled vassals. When the conclave had come to an end, the chief, like a well-bred host, showed us over the entire kraal and outbuildings. They were much after the usual Kaffir fashion, being however, commodious, clean and very strong. We now prepared to bid adieu to our hospitable entertainers, this act consisting as usual in presenting the chief with a blanket and a few beads for his wives, with a few dozen gun caps, which, strange to say, seemed much more highly prized than either of the former.

Our oxen were now thoroughly refreshed, and we pushed on, to reach by one vigorous trek the mission station of the Rev. T. Jenkins. We arrived there just before sundown and outspanned close to the house. . . . Mr. Jenkins is one of the oldest missionaries in South Africa and has been in Amapondoland for upwards of forty years.[1] If one may judge from the reports of his good work, he has not toiled in vain among the heathen. From him we gained much valuable information respecting the surrounding tribes and the country they inhabit. We were also indebted to him for the suggestion of a newly-discovered route, which saved us many a weary mile and took us through a most lovely country.

27 July.—Everything now seemed new to us, the climate, trees, wild flowers, birds and every feature of the country. We felt ourselves as it were in a new world. We had not proceeded far on our new route before we were enlivened by the appearance of herds of beautiful antelope, the constant companion of the traveller through the uninhabited portions of this country. We shot three, which replenished our almost

[1] The Rev. T. Jenkins, missionary in Pondoland and trusted counsellor of Faku. He was also in the confidence of the High Commissioner, who in 1866 had entrusted to him the task of endeavouring to persuade the Pondo chief to cede Port St. John's to Cape Colony.

exhausted larder, and this afternoon got our first glimpse of the much talked of Drakensberg, running down in one continuous line to the sea. The mountains form a magnificent watershed for the country, and so long as the traveller is in their vicinity, he need not fear for his supply of good water.

(The expedition reached Palmerston, the mission station of the Rev. H. Allsopp, on 29 July, and after a day's duck shooting, pushed on towards Port St. John's.)

31 July.—Very cold this morning before sunrise, but as noon approached the heat became very great, the thermometer registering 102 in the shade of the waggon tent. As may easily be imagined, we did not exert ourselves this day: but the cool of the evening saw us again on our legs. Guns in hand, we soon killed enough game to supply our wants for a day or two. The Umzimvubu was now in sight, with the port of St. John's in the distance. The road to the river is rugged and dangerous in the extreme, and the qualities of our oxen were again thoroughly tested. We had one fearful capsize into a Kaffir mealie garden, which lay some thirty feet below the road. The waggon did not break, or come in pieces, but, before we could regain the road, we had to take it to pieces. At 6 o'clock we inspanned and began to near the Umzimvubu, which in English means "sea-cow," named no doubt after the number of these animals found in the river. The approach is very steep and requires the most careful steering on the part of the driver. We managed to descend without further mishap; but, when we thought we were within half a mile of the water, a cold and dense mist came down on us so suddenly that it was utterly impossible to proceed further. We therefore outspanned for the night, but had great difficulty in procuring fresh water, the river proving brackish. However, perceiving a light at a kraal near by, we sent over and got a native to point out a place where we obtained plenty.

1 August.—On wakening this morning, we found ourselves still enveloped in a very thick mist and

everything wet through. After breakfast, we obtained a guide to take us over the great river. Though it was low tide, the water almost entered the waggon. Here we took the wrong road for Mr. Hughes' house, and only found out our mistake after going through thick bush for some distance. An old Kaffir woman directed us right, whereupon we found how difficult it was going to be to turn the waggon, surrounded as it was by heavy trees on both sides. However, there we were, and the waggon had to be got out somehow; so, with coats off and axes in hand, we commenced the attack by chopping everything away for many yards around. After some hours of toil, we managed to get our house free from all its embraces, and with a great difficulty turned on to the right path. Here, at the top of a steep hill, at the foot of which the river ran, we left the waggon to our Kaffir driver. We had walked some distance when we were stopped by a native who informed us of the waggon's predicament. Returning, we found it on the brink of a frightful precipice. It took us six hours to accomplish one mile of our journey. At five, we were on the move again, reaching Mr. Hughes' house an hour later. . . .

2 August.—Everything this morning assumed an air of intense activity. Kaffirs were running about with provisions, boats were being brought up from their moorings and guns and ammunition collected, for this our great sea-cow hunt. After a substantial breakfast with our kind host, we took our departure from the small jetty alongside his house, and, with the assistance of the tide, were soon drifting down to the mouth of the St. John's, where the sea-cow are to be found in great numbers. We had not long to wait before the cry was raised of their appearance above water. Soon the hills on both sides echoed with the shots of our rifles. Gliding along, without a ripple on the water, we neared the small cluster of rocks where they were known to lie basking in the sun. Our boats now separated, going one on each side of the river. Two huge monsters are seen asleep. "Crack" go half a dozen rifles at once, and

the beasts are seen plunging into the water. All around us the Kaffirs raise their voices as they see the blood flowing from the zimvubu's head. We soon discover that he is severely wounded, by his frantic plunging.

The chase now became most exhilarating. Away we dashed in the boats after our wounded quarry, now exhausted, so that we soon dragged him ashore, leaving his carcase in charge of some of our Kaffirs. We now proceeded a few miles further down to the gates, or mouth, of the river, and anchored as near as possible to the shore. Here we unloaded, erected the tent and made all snug for a few days' stay. The rocks here are famed for the superiority of the oysters, and we were not long in gathering sufficient to satisfy our cravings for this delicacy. Dinner was prepared and eaten, after which we separated, some going up the river in search of the ottodore,[1] and others fishing. At sundown, we all met at the camp, and, over a cup of coffee and some cold fowl, related each, no doubt with some exaggeration, his own exploits.

3 August.—The cries of the ottodore awoke us early this morning. The place seemed literally swarming with them and several, in passing over our tents, fell to our guns. On going to the beach to bathe, we came on the fresh spoor of some sea-cow, and immediately took it up, going for some distance along the coast, then inland, until we eventually lost it in a lagoon. After breakfast, our fishing lines were got ready and all went over to the far side of the river to fish. Returning at 2 o'clock, we struck tents and prepared all for our homeward trip up river. It was nearly sundown when we passed the rocks favoured by the zimvubu. By the dim light we could perceive a monster dashing into the water. Unfortunately, we were too late to fire, and the animal diving under our boat slipped from us. The wind being fair, sails were hoisted and the little craft glided beautifully up the river. Loud cheers greeted us, as we stepped on shore, from the natives

[1] The green ibis, or hadada, a South African veld bird, which, however, generally nests in trees overhanging a river.

along both sides of the river, so delighted were they at our shooting the zimvubu for their benefit. It appears that, after we left, they captured the second cow which we had wounded, so that they enjoyed a fine feast. . . .

5 August.—A sultry morning with not a ripple on the expansive waters of the Umzimvubu. A plunge revived us a little. Soon the boat was manned by a crew of Pondos and we proceeded to the mouth of the river. Forcing a landing among the reeds, we took a Kaffir path and were soon on the top of some crusted earth formed by many sulphur springs. We examined many interesting caves, and, after collecting specimens of petrified tree roots, ferns, etc., retraced our steps and proceeded up the Umzimvubu again, well satisfied with the morning's excursion.

6 August.—The time had now arrived when we had to take farewell of our friends. The waggon we dispatched by the road, and went ourselves by water in Mr. Hughes' boat. We had not gone far when two sea-cow were observed ahead. We soon had our rifles ready for them and tracked them for miles up river, gradually forcing them into shallow water, until they found out their mistake and turned round sharp into deep water, where they slipped from our sight. We consoled ourselves by shooting a few geese and duck. The boat could only go to the drift, where we joined our waggon and were soon on the homeward trek.

(The return trip was made with some haste to avoid having to cross the coastal belt after the commencement of the rains. On 9 August, the party encountered a Griqua mission, headed by the "minister of war" on its way to Faku's kraal, to settle a cattle dispute. Returning to the Pondoland coast, the waggon was caught in quicksand.)

15 August.—We were very pleased to reach the hard sand of the coast of Amapondoland. It was a glorious sight. The moon was shining in all its nightly splendour. On one side of us, the rocks inclined majestically over our heads; on the other, we had the broad waters of the Indian Ocean, rolling in and

occasionally splashing the oxen. The waggon trembled like a huge ship out of her element, the wind howled around us, and at times we felt a little anxious, naturally so, I think, seeing that we were risking everything we had to the skill of our almost savage guide, who stalked ahead with a large stick in his hand. Enjoying this style of travelling as we did, we had to leave the now impassable beach, about three o'clock in the morning and get the waggon up a small bush path pointed out by our Kaffir. The road had been made some years ago by the then Governor of this Colony,[1] Sir Harry Smith, whilst coming from the Cape; but had since become almost impenetrable from the growth of trees. Before we could get through, many had to be cut down, and it was nearly daybreak before we outspanned, congratulating ourselves on getting again on British territory, viz., Nomansland, or, as now named Alfredia. We drank the health of the Queen in a cup of coffee without milk, after which we were right glad to turn in, following an exciting night's labour.

(Continually inconvenienced by early rains, and not without anxious moments, as when, approaching the mouth of the Umzimkulu—"the finest river in Natal, were it not for the bar"—the waggon was nearly carried out to sea, the travellers reached Durban in safety on 29 August.)

2. THOMAS BAINES SETS OUT FOR THE GOLDFIELDS

From the unpublished Journal of Baines, 1869-70.

On the morning of Sunday, 14 February 1869, we gradually neared the land of Natal. We had been going slow all night, but increased our speed as daybreak appeared, and glided on over the gentle swell past the

[1] Doubtless a confusion with Captain T. Smith, who had led a British force from the neighbourhood of the Umzimvubu to occupy Durban in 1842. Smith cut the first practicable road for loaded waggons through the sub-tropical vegetation of the coastlands. Sir Harry Smith, when he visited Natal in 1848, came via the Orange River Sovereignty and the Drakensberg passes.

wooded Bluff, with its tall, white light-tower on our left hand. Rounding this, we anchored off the low point, near a full-rigged English ship, our draught of water which was still 19 or 20 feet not allowing us to cross the bar. The usual information had already been conveyed by signal, and we had only to await the coming off of the harbourmaster.

No movement in the port took place in consequence of our arrival, and we had ample time to observe the surrounding scenery. On our left was the Bluff, a headland 200 feet high, the shape of which is best described by its name, not precipitous on any side but simply very steep, and densely covered with dark-green bush with occasional patches of grey rock or red soil. The white light-tower, which shows a revolving light visible thirty miles, and the flag-staff stood near the end of it. Below this, appeared the narrow entrance of the river, with the mail steamer *Natal* and a group of other vessels lying near her. In front of them, the surf was rolling on the bar, or dashing against the outwork stretching from the Bluff. More to the right, was the long low point that forms the northern bank of the river, covered with bush and small trees and studded with houses and stores, the roofs of which were visible here and there above the bush, while the masts of eight or ten barques, brigs and schooners, moored in the inner bay, also appeared above them.

Further to the north were the rounded, undulating hills of the Berea, luxuriously clothed with wood, except where the works of civilisation, roads, white-roofed houses, gardens, fields of maize, or light-green coffee bushes, contrasted with the dark forest: the whole reminding us rather of the fertile shores of England than of the grand, though wild and savage, precipices that guard the south-western extremity of the coast of Africa. . . .

In the afternoon the steam tug *Pioneer* [1] came out,

[1] The *Pioneer*, an iron paddle-boat of 92 tons register, was purchased in 1859. As it drew only six feet of water, it could cross the bar.

bringing the harbourmaster, who informed us that about one hundred and thirty Australian diggers had arrived from Melbourne, in consequence of the glowing terms in which the gold discoveries had been spoken of; and, not finding the result equal to their expectation, were talking of returning. A small detachment of troops had been ordered down lest the diggers should become riotous; but they appeared to be on the whole a very decent and orderly set of men, more likely to be irritated by being thus watched, than spontaneously to do any mischief.[1]

Monday.—In consequence of unfavourable weather, boats could not come off to land cargo; but, on Tuesday 16, our captain returned in a cargo boat, large enough to receive all the passengers' luggage. We took leave of our friends with mutual regret; but sailors and travellers, though they feel a parting, are not much given to brooding over it; and, after a hearty grip of the hand and exchange of good wishes, we saw, as our boat payed off, the ship's crew mustering forward. Three ringing cheers were given and returned, and white handkerchiefs waved from the quarterdeck, as we left the good ship *Asia*. We passed the bar safely, ran in with the woody Bluff rising high upon our left, rounded to under the low point to the right, and landed at the customs wharf, where Mr. Behrens, the son of C. Behrens, Esq., agent of the expedition, was waiting for us. The laws respecting the importation of firearms are very stringent, but it is due to the officers to say that they gave us no unnecessary trouble. Our guns, rifles or revolvers were set aside and declared to be personal property, and our word was taken that no others were concealed in our baggage.

We took our places in the next train, carrying with us a rough little terrier, the gift of Captain and Mrs.

[1] Karl Mauch's discovery of gold had been reported in optimistic terms in the *Natal Mercury*. Its reports, which were read in Australia, did not make clear the fact that the new fields were situated many hundred miles from Port Natal. Resentful diggers threatened to wreck the offices of the *Mercury* and to plunder the local banks. Some were induced to prospect for gold in Natal, whilst a small party found its way to the Tati fields. But the majority returned to Australia.

Blaxell, in remembrance of whose friendship "Jack" is to hold the post of watch dog to the expedition. This railroad is, I believe, the first ever opened in South Africa, and is also, I believe, the shortest.[1] At all events, we were not long in reaching Durban, the long streets of which, with considerable gaps to be hereafter filled by houses, extend nearly east and west on the sandy northern shore of the inner bay—a broad and beautiful sheet of water, though the sight of ox-waggons travelling only knee-deep, where imagination would rather have pictured pleasure yachts or cargo boats, reminds us rather unpleasantly of the narrowness of the channel and the expanse of sand to be uncovered at low water.

We put up at Mr. Winder's "Marine Villa," where we found an attentive host, a good table and fair charges. . . .

I was asked whether I had seen the Tati, or the goldfields reported to exist to the southward of the Zambesi. I answered that I had not; but that, from my general knowledge of the country, I believed there was every probability of the reports being true, especially as it had long been known that various native tribes possessed, or traded in, gold; also that, though the Natal and colonial papers might have expressed their ideas in glowing terms, I could not believe that they would wilfully promulgate a falsehood, or that Mr. Carl Mauch would say anything he did not believe to be true.[2] It appears however that terms have been used in the colonial papers in a general, and perhaps somewhat indefinite, sense, which, when they were read in Australia, were understood to bear a definite meaning. Thus, when the papers spoke of a payable goldfield, meaning a country in which it was likely that gold enough would be found to pay the workers, they understood it as a goldfield already in active operation and already paying those who worked it.

[1] The original Durban-Point line was opened in 1860, and extended to Umgeni in January, 1867.

[2] Mauch's discovery of gold at the Tati, close to the border between Matabeleland and the Transvaal, was announced in 1866.

My time was fully occupied with collecting and purchasing stores, tools, provisions, etc., for the service of the expedition; and in this I was greatly assisted by Mr. C. Behrens, Mr. Tatham and Mr. Cottam. In fact, the colonists generally, in addition to their usual hospitality, seemed every one to feel a personal interest in the success of our expedition, and were ready to help me. We had some little trouble with half a dozen muskets which were supplied by the Company for the general use of the servants of the expedition; and we could only obtain leave to pass them by each of us taking over two of them as personal property and necessary for our defence. Our breech-loading cartridges also were confiscated, as being contraband; but were reissued on payment of the duty, private persons not being allowed to import gunpowder. This part of the work fell to the share of Mr. Jewell, whose business habits as clerk to the Natal Colonisation Company fully prepared him for such work. . . .

On Wednesday, February 25, we left Durban at 6 a.m. in the "Omnibus," which, however, bears no resemblance to the London vehicle of the same name, but is in fact a light springed waggon with a tented canvas roof, and drawn by four horses. Among our passengers were Miss Hartley, daughter of the well-known elephant hunter of that name, and Mr. Gallwey, attorney-general of Natal. . . . We halted at Pine Town for breakfast, and for lunch at the "Halfway House" . . . (after which) the road, which had been gradually ascending all the way, brought us to a higher level. We held on a tortuous and redoubling course along such ridges as permitted our passage, without ascents or descents too steep for horses to encounter, although occasionally by a hint from the driver that we had arrived at "walkers hill," we all, excepting the remaining lady, got out to lighten the vehicle. The African roads are well enough made for vehicles drawn by sturdy horses or oxen, which may, for half an hour now and then, be called upon for strenuous exertion that would kill them, if continued through the whole day: but they are not

fit for traction engines, which, though they may travel up a gradient of one in 25 on a perfectly smooth road, are not fit for one in which, though the general slope may be only one in 50, there may be nasty little bits of one in 5, or even one in 2 or 3. In fact, while in England, I had warned an intending explorer, Sir John Swinburne, of this: but he thought that he could overcome the difficulty, and accordingly brought out a traction engine, which has been carried by bullock waggon from the Point to Durban, and now lies there awaiting the decision of the Cotton Company, who may probably purchase it, to convey produce from their farms to the shipping wharf.[1] We changed horses for the third time at Mr. Pedder's hotel, a building of thin plank and galvanised iron, looking as light as a house of cards, but capable, as I was informed, of furnishing as good a table as one could wish to sit down to. Along the whole road we were continually passing or overtaking heavily laden transport waggons, drawn by long spans of oxen, and mostly using in bad places, instead of a drag chain, a screw brake, by which on turning a handle behind, a heavy log of wood is pressed against the hinder wheels. Towards five o'clock we came in view of the town of Pietermaritzburg, so named after the gallant emigrant leaders, Pieter Retief and Gert Maritz.

The town, or rather city as we must call it, having a cathedral church and a bishop, is pleasantly situated on ground sufficiently rising to ensure a tolerable drainage, near the little river Umhlatoosi,[2] over which a suspension bridge was built, which was never actually required until one day the river rose so high as to sweep it away bodily, and it has never been required since. Maritzburg, for so the name is now contracted,

[1] Dr. R. J. Mann had suggested the use of traction engines to convey goods between Durban and Maritzburg, so early as 1859. Sir John Swinburne's engine was eventually purchased by a firm of sugar merchants, and used to bring sugar to Durban from its plantations on the south coast. The firm had some difficulty in persuading the Durban Town Council to sanction this arrangement inasmuch as "the apparition of such a novel machine in our streets might endanger the public safety by frightening horses."

[2] Umsindusi river.

is surrounded by rounded grassy hills over which a thunderstorm seemed gathering as we entered; and the white walls and red tiled roofs of its houses contrast well with the dark foliage of tall Australian stringy bark and gum trees. According to the custom of the Dutch, the streets cross each other at right angles, and a sluit or channel of pure water runs down each side of every street; or rather did run down, for since the city has become British, many of these sluits have either been choked up or covered in, and the pleasant murmur of the water is no longer heard.[1]

Friday 26.—Mr. Jewell and I called upon Mr. Runciman of the Colonisation Company, who acts as our agent here and who kindly accompanied us to the store in which our waggon was placed. . . . I went with Mr. Runciman to visit Mr. Forster, in the house of Dr. Mann, for the correction of our astronomical instruments, also Dr. Sutherland, the surveyor-general and Mr. Henderson. Neither of these gentlemen were in town[2]; and we next visited Mr. Shepstone, the commissioner for native affairs, whose father and brother I had known in the Cape Colony, the former as the Wesleyan minister of the mission station at Kamastone, and the latter during the war of 1850-3, as commander of a native levy of Kama's friendly Kaffirs.[3] He received me gladly and readily promised me all the assistance in his power. I told him I wanted a Zulu Kaffir of sufficient standing to be an interpreter and respectable upper servant—to be respected by the natives, and yet not of such rank as to lead him to think that he was taking us under his protection. He said such a man would be rather difficult to choose, and I then told him that one of my cousins, William

[1] There were still many open sluits in 1869.

[2] R. J. Mann, who came to Natal in 1857 on the invitation of Bishop Colenso, was appointed two years later superintendent of education. He had been asked by Sir J. Herschel to carry out a series of meteorological observations, and the early records of climatic conditions were made by him. In 1866, he returned to England as emigration agent for Natal. J. A. Runciman was manager of the Maritzburg branch of the Natal Land & Colonisation Company, whilst James Henderson was Chairman of the Natal Bank.

[3] Kama, brother of the Gqunukwebe chief Kobe, not to be confused with the better known Khama of Bechuanaland.

Watson, spoke the Zulu language perfectly and was also a good blacksmith and something of an engineer. He considered that such a man would be invaluable. . . .

I listened with much interest while Mr. Shepstone told me of a native who had come down to work, and who had asked him in his capacity as native commissioner for a pass to enable him to return, with the cattle he had acquired, through the Dutch, or Transvaal, Republic, to the country beyond the Limpopo. Mr. Shepstone warned him that, though the pass would secure him an unmolested passage as an honest and *bona fide* traveller through the Boers, it would not guard him against the tsetse fly or the fever, in crossing the forests of the Limpopo. He answered that *he* would guard against these dangers; for he was a doctor among his own people, and he would make a medicine of some crushed herbs, mingled with the "fly" for the cattle, and would find a leaf that would secure man against the fever.

Next year, or the year after, the man came again for a pass to take more cattle in the same direction, and Mr. Shepstone in granting it asked particularly, about his last venture. He learned that it was not only successful, but that the man, confident in the power of his medicine, anticipated no chance of failure. There were many useless ingredients; but they were most likely added to prevent others from finding out the doctor's real secret. I have asked Mr. Shepstone to find out for me, if possible, where I can meet this man, or one equally gifted.

I then called, with Mr. Shepstone, upon His Excellency, the Governor,[1] who expressed himself much gratified on hearing that our Company had taken up the investigation of the goldfields in so practical a manner; and promised me all the help that, as a private gentleman, he could give me, though he could not officially assist me. He is also an amateur artist of, I understand, considerable merit, but I have not yet seen his work.

[1] Robert W. Keate, Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, 1867-72.

Mr. Shepstone showed me a sketch on Hall's map of South Africa, by which it appears that the Limpopo and Lipalula, or Olifants river, after passing through the Drakensberg or Quathlamba range, turn south and reach the coast a short distance north of Delagoa Bay. There is a break of a few miles in the delineation of each of these rivers, after they pass through the mountains, but not enough to create any doubt that the young traveller, Mr. Erskine, is correct in supposing them to be the rivers he explored. I cannot, however, express a more decided opinion, as I have not yet seen his narrative.[1]

I learn also that at Inhambane, Dr. Wilson found the river a considerable, continental stream, apparently coming from a great distance. It was one and a half miles broad at its mouth, with no perceptible bar. At the town, it is as broad as the Bluff channel of Natal, perhaps 1400 feet wide. He went seventeen miles up, finding deep water all the way. He thinks perhaps it is the Saabi or Sabea. I met also Mr. Wilson, an experienced traveller, who had been in Australia and who thinks that the gold country is to be found along the ridge of the Drakensberg, more to the eastward than Matjens or the Tati. In fact, almost everything seems to confirm the opinion I had formed before leaving London, that it is along this range, instead of the common road, we ought to seek. We could go by the road of my former fellow traveller, the late Joseph McCabe,[2] through the Transvaal; but there is time enough to gather more information and decide before the waggon leaves. I also met Mr. Gladstone, nephew of the Premier, who joined in the general good wishes for our success.[3]

I next met Mr. Jewell and we were going to the

[1] St. Vincent W. Erskine, a son of the colonial secretary of Natal. His journey into Portuguese East Africa was described in a paper which he read, 14 June 1869, to the Royal Geographical Society, entitled "A Journey of Exploration to the Mouth of the River Limpopo," *Journal of the R. G. Soc.*, xxxix, pp. 233-276.

[2] Pioneer of the "missionary road" which led to the Zambesi along the western border of the Transvaal.

[3] R. S. Gladstone, who resided at 22 Church Street in 1868-9.

"Plough" for lunch, when we saw Nelson ahead hurrying on, and others gathering towards a light cloud, apparently of dust or smoke issuing from a building, which I soon recognised as the store in which our waggon stood, with part of our goods already arrived. We ran forward, and, a young man helping me to lift a heavy stone, we battered at the door . . . I got a crowbar, and with this and an axe, the door was soon forced. Volumes of dense vapour rolled out. I tried to enter, but could not, for the vapour was dense and heavier than air, so that I could not find air by stooping below it, as with the smoke of fire. I ran to the back, climbed a wall and found that men were trying to get out the carts and waggon. Jewell and Nelson had entered from the front, and called to us that the danger was past. A fire engine was at the front door, but water was not required, for there had been no actual combustion. The bottles in a case of assaying materials had leaked and two acids, which would have done but little harm separately, had mingled and generated this offensive vapour. This is evidently the result of insufficient packing on the part of the manufacturers. . . .

Sunday 28.—Mr. Jewell and I went to the cathedral, where Bishop Colenso the first of Natal preached a plain, practical sermon from the words "Be ye followers of God as dear children." It was an earnest and simple exhortation to a good life, and contained no controversial matter whatever.

In the afternoon, we saddled our new horses and rode out to see our American friends, who are encamped near the ruined suspension bridge of the Umsindusi river. They have a tolerably strong waggonette, which, with a light load of about 1500 lbs., will, I have no doubt, carry them safely enough, though there are defects in its construction that will unfit it for heavier work. And indeed it can hardly be too widely known among intending explorers that they had much better save their money and buy a colonial vehicle, than bring one out either from England or America.

For, in the first place, nothing can be better for this country than the ox-waggon or the light waggons and carts made here; and, in the second, wood seasoned and put together in England is sure to shrink and require all its joints and bands tightened up, when it comes to the drier climate of South Africa. They intend to hold still more to the eastward, passing by Utrecht, and New Scotland, on the sea side of the Drakensberg, keeping upon the "foothills," as they call them, about the sources of the rivers that run into the Indian Ocean; but not going low enough either to expose themselves to fever or to come in the way of streams large enough to give them trouble in crossing. They expect in this manner, from Californian experience, to find the richest gold country, and will afterwards cross the Drakensberg near Origstadt or Lydenburg, and proceed north to the Limpopo.

They have a very excellent Henry rifle, the peculiarity of which consists in a charging tube extending like a second barrel below the real one. This holds 15 cartridges, the whole of which may be fired in rapid succession without taking the gun from the shoulder. Their ideas of precaution against the natives partake as yet rather largely of the extreme watchfulness necessary in California, where the Indians, either singly or in hundreds, by treachery or force, are always ready to take advantage of an unguarded moment; and they cannot yet enter into or understand the confidence with which we go into a native village, followed by a little boy who, when we greet the chief, remains with our gun at a sufficient distance to intimate that our visit is friendly.

In the evening, we attended the neat little church built by the congregation of Bishop Macrorie, and recently consecrated by the Bishop of Capetown and the other bishops of the province to the see of Natal; but we were rather disappointed in not hearing the Bishop himself preach. However, as we heard him in Capetown, we were able at least to form a tolerable idea of the rivals in the unfortunate dispute which

has divided the Church at Natal.[1] Macrorie has a fine commanding voice and an impressive manner. Colenso seems more earnest and persuasive; and the impression on my own mind was one of sorrow that two such excellent men should thus be placed in opposition to each other, instead of labouring with one accord for the common interest of the Church. . . .

Tuesday, March 2.—I met Major Erskine, the colonial secretary, who was much interested in the success of our expedition. His son, St. Vincent William Erskine, the young man who has succeeded in tracing the course of the Limpopo, was expected to join us. At present, he is up country, but may meet us, at least for a visit. Major Erskine showed me his map which seems very well constructed. His observations of longitude place Lydenburg several miles further east than the present maps, i.e., in 31° 30′, its latitude being 25° 2′. I understand that he proceeded eastward to the place where the Lipalula or Olifants river joins the Limpopo, after passing through the Drakensberg, and thence traced the united stream down to the sea. The river is not of great magnitude; and I think he is of opinion that a boat could not pass any considerable distance up or down it. Its current is about 3½ knots. In some places, it is a broad deep stream, in others a broken torrent. The mouth is wide and shallow, with several small channels and a bar. It comes out by the Inhampura, north-east of Delagoa Bay. . . .

Thursday 4.—As our proposed waggon driver has left town, Mr. Shepstone has looked out for one who, he thinks, will do. This day we obtained the government permit to purchase 125 lbs. of powder for shooting and mining purposes, entering into a bond not to sell it within the Colony. Major Erskine and Mr. Shepstone told me that it had been proposed that I should communicate to the Government of Natal a report on the general condition of the goldfields, with a

[1] For a full account of the ecclesiastical controversy in Natal, see Brit. Parl. Papers: 1867. XLVIII. (307). *Colonial Chaplain, Natal*; and 1867-8. XLVIII. (454). Judgments in *Bishop of Natal v. Dean of Pietermaritzburg*; also A. T. Wirgman, *Life of James Green, Dean of Maritzburg*, 1909.

view to their capacity for profitably employing the immigrants who are expected from Australia and other countries, promising me in return letters to field cornets and native chiefs, who could facilitate the progress of the expedition. I explained the object of our journey, i.e., to discover and acquire for the Company an available goldfield; and said that, from the liberal spirit shown by the directors, I thought they would not object to my communicating such general information as would not injure their interests. . . .

Friday 5.—Mr. Shepstone has found a waggon driver and leader, and will most likely engage them. He introduced me to the native doctor who wishes to travel with us, with his party, to the Limpopo. They are to provide their own food, and I shall be glad of their company. Mr. Shepstone thought at first Monomotapa meant Munna wa-thaba, or man of the mountain; but he thinks it may very probably mean munna wa-matapo, or man of the mines.[1] The natives say that their forefathers told lies, for they pretended to have fought with men who wore iron jackets, most probably the early Portuguese pioneers, especially as it is said old wheel-lock firearms have been found.

In the afternoon, I went home with the Governor, and saw several excellent views of Africa, India and Seychelles by him, and showed him some of mine. I visited the Daumas family[2] and dined with Major Erskine. . . .

Sunday 7.—Mr. Purcock has arrived from the country between the Limpopo and Olifants river, on the sea side of the mountains. He said that indications of gold were stronger there than elsewhere. The natives there objected to white men picking up a stone. Purcock was confined and disarmed for doing so. Mauch was said to be a prisoner, but other

[1] According to sixteenth-century Portuguese records, Monomotapa was the inland empire of the federated Makalanga tribes. The word is also used to designate the paramount chief of the territory, and its meaning is generally accepted to be "chief of the mountain."

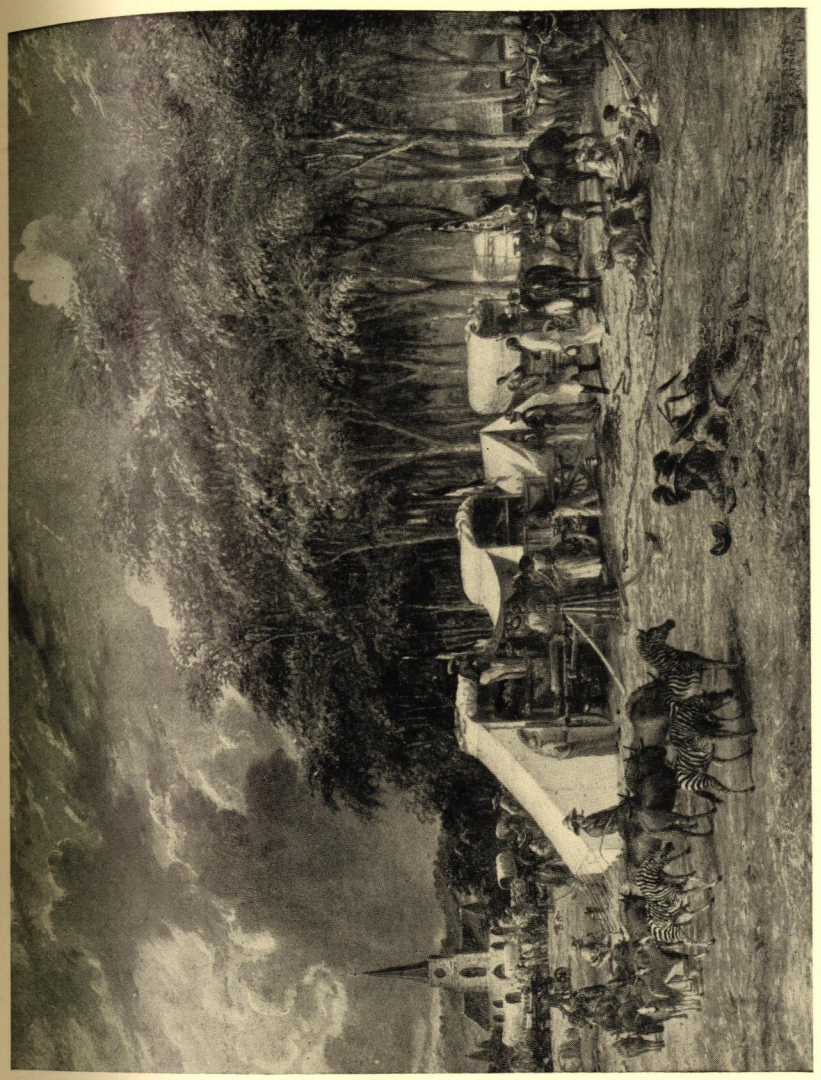
[2] The Rev. F. Daumas, one of the French missionaries whose expulsion from Basutoland by the Free State Volksraad was resented by public opinion in Natal.

accounts say he is staying to learn the language; probably he is watched and under a system of espionage, and not allowed to proceed. Some natives say he is bound; but this is believed to be only a figurative way of saying it. They say he got his specimens out by telling the natives they were toys for his children. They are afraid that the white people will come and take their country for the sake of the gold, and are angry with him for telling about it. . . .

Tuesday 9.—Heavy rain to-day. Our forelooper, Jan, sheltered himself and neglected the oxen, which, of course, strayed. I wrote to the directors at home, briefly stating our proceedings and the reasons for them. Also to Sir John Swinburne, who is going the usual western road by Potchefstroom and Bamungwato. It is said his oxen are dying very fast of heavy work and probably lung sickness. I have informed him that, on my own judgment, formed before leaving London and confirmed by everyone I have met in the Colony, I intend to take the road by Pretoria and thence northwards through the Transvaal country to the Limpopo, crossing it probably at my former friend McCabe's drift; and, by thus working on a course parallel to his own but more easterly, co-operate with him better than I could by following his track.

Saturday, March 13, 1869.—About 3 p.m., our waggons were packed ready for the journey, the oxen sent for and divided so as to make a span of 14 for each waggon. At this time, the scene on the market square of Maritzburg was picturesque enough. The red ensign of old England, made for me by Mrs. Noble of Capetown and which I had already carried to the falls of the Zambesi and to Otjimbengue, as the flag of our volunteer artillery,[1] was hoisted on our no. I waggon. Alongside us were the vehicles of Messrs. Mohr and Hubenaar, the Prussian travellers, bound on an expedition not very divergent from our own, and carrying the black, white and red horizontally

[1] Baines' activities at Otjimbengue, a Rhenish mission station in Damaraland, are referred to in J. P. R. Wallis, *Fortune My Foe* (1935), pp. 317-8.



THOMAS BAINES ON THE MARKET SQUARE, PIETERMARITZBURG

From the painting by Baines. By kind permission of Sir Charles Smith.

striped flag of the North German Confederacy. The white tilts and sloping side-tents of the waggons, the detached tents and coloured blankets and drapery, with the costumes of the attendants, both black and white, were brought into strong relief by the brilliant sunshine against the double row of dark green seringa trees bordering the square. The waggons and the busy groups of buyers and sellers, a herd of young gnus with a few quaggas, springboks and blesboks, brought in for sale, kept up the African character of the scene, while the presence of coolies in their turbans and Indian costumes supplied to it a more oriental air. The neat but sufficiently ornamental Dutch Church, with its slated roof and tapering tower, preserved at the same time the home associations.

We remained in town an hour to close accounts and take a parting glass with our friends, and then rode after the waggons, which had outspanned on a grassy slope beyond Fort Napier, about a mile outside the town. It rained heavily, but we soon extemporised a fire under one of the side tents, and in good time served up beef steaks and tea. . . .

Sunday 14.—Fine weather. A gun from Fort Napier, in addition to the usual 9 o'clock gun, announced that the English mail had arrived off the port of Natal. Nelson and I rode into town to learn when our letters would arrive; and, as we passed along the streets saw the name of "Eyre" painted in black letters four feet high upon the front of the court house, colonial office and other buildings, evidently the work of some nocturnal amateur, but what moral or satire was intended by the use of that name we could not learn.[1]

Mohr and Hubenaar, who are living at the Crown, showed us a very simple and complete little azimuth compass working on a tripod. Mr. Mohr's calculation

[1] The reference is probably to Governor Eyre of Jamaica, and intended to be a warning to Lieutenant-Governor Keate, then very much at loggerheads with the elective majority in the Legislative Council. Eyre had been recalled in consequence of his severity in the suppression of a rising (1865). In 1869, civil proceedings brought by aggrieved colonists against Eyre attracted wide publicity. See *More Annals of Natal*, pp. 189-93.

of the variation of the compass here is 26° 2′ West. The longitude of Durban is given as 31° 2′ 45″, and Mr. Mohr makes that of Maritzburg 30° 22′ 30″.

During morning service, the Governor and his staff were called out of the Cathedral, but no one could tell what for, except that the captain of *H.M.S. Petrel* had come up, and that, in consequence of some disturbance she would probably be sent to Delagoa Bay. It may be in consequence of the proclamation, issued by the Transvaal Republic that it claims the country between the Pongola and Umzutu rivers, and their embouchure in Delagoa Bay, which last, I believe, is claimed by the British Government in virtue of a former purchase.[1]

I followed the waggon and found them outspanned just beyond the summit of the Town hill, about 1,500 feet above Maritzburg, which is itself 2,090, and about 7 or 8 miles from town, with the dark Zwartkop towering still higher under its canopy of cloud. Green valleys, with patches of Indian corn, forest trees and Zulu villages sloped away on every side; and to one of these a party of about 60 horsemen, in every variety of half-civilised costume, came, apparently on their way to Mr. Shepstone respecting the death of Goza, a well-known chief in the Colony of Natal. They were received with due honours by a dancing minstrel, and soon off-saddled and found shelter in the huts.

Wednesday, 17.—The mist driving up from the valley of the Umsindusi, on which Maritzburg is situate, rolled grandly over the rounded hills; detached and fragmentary clouds, followed by heavier masses, sailing onward, enveloping forest, detached bush, cornlands and villages in misty obscurity, while our waggons, which had already started, were chased by a thin grey cloud, which sometimes partially veiled and at others revealed them to our view. A native, the owner of a very decent looking homestead, with huts and kraals well stocked with cattle, and a couple of good double-

[1] Britain had claims to the southern shore of Delagoa Bay, based on the annexation of Inyaka Island to Natal in 1861. President Pretorius's proclamation of March 1868, purported to annex to the Transvaal a strip of territory extending down the Maputa river as far as Delagoa Bay.

barrelled guns hanging in his house, gave Jewell and Watson a draught of milk, charging nothing, but of course expecting a more than equivalent present in tobacco. He said the Umgeni river was low and the drift passable; but, as I knew the drift to be only 100 yards above the falls, and could not tell what our yet almost untried drivers might be able to do with oxen to which they had not yet time to become accustomed, I determined to take the road to the left, and cross the river by the bridge about two and a half miles above the falls. Somewhat to our surprise, we found no toll-house, nor receiver of any kind; and therefore supposing that there must be some unavoidable pass in front of us, where the toll-house would be placed, we chose a grassy hill and yoked our cattle. . . .

Riding at an easy pace with the turbid stream upon our right, sometimes flowing smoothly between its low banks and sometimes rushing in little rapids over rocky shallows, we came to the pretty little township of Howick, with its neat substantial little church, its inn and other houses showing here and there through the dark foliage of tall Australian gum trees. . . . Waggons were arriving from the interior, bound probably for Maritzburg; and they crossed without much difficulty. Still a few inches more would have made all the difference between safety and danger, and I did not regret having gone round. There had been a bridge just below the falls, but it had been washed away, I believe, in September last, and only one of the piers was standing. A short walk brought us to the edge of the cliff overlooking the fall, which appeared to me very much like one of the smaller cataracts of the Victoria. The fall seemed about 20 yards in width, and is said to be 350 feet in depth. The waters, first forming a few short rapids, are launched over the edge of the precipice, breaking during the descent into flaked and tongue-shaped snow wreaths, only that the last comparison was somewhat vitiated by the tawny tint imparted to the water by the red clay over which the stream had run.

The effect of the stream first breaking into tongue-shaped flakes and finally separated into impalpable spray, as it neared the bottom, was very fine; but there was nothing of the dense volumes of spray cloud which, rising from the abyss of the Victoria Falls, hangs like a lofty canopy above it, and forms a ground on which to display perhaps the most splendid rainbow in the world. Instead of this, a light almost imperceptible mist drifted gently from the bottom of the Umgeni, barely dense enough to enable it to refract a partial rainbow. I spent all the time at my disposal in sketching the fall from an overhanging cliff, while Jewell took a photograph, and then, with Nelson and Watson, found a passage down to the foot to make another. I should have been glad, had time permitted me, to join them, for though after having seen the magnificent falls of the Zambesi 400 feet in height and 1,900 yards in width, I am not easily astonished in this way, I have always seen them from above, and have never yet looked up at a waterfall of any magnitude.

A somewhat melancholy interest attaches to these falls; for, owing to the proximity of the drift, and its occasionally dangerous condition, persons who once miss their footing have little opportunity of recovering it and none of swimming out, before they are at the verge of the fall. Several have been swept over within the last few years; and a pile of stones at the bottom marks the grave of a lad who, notwithstanding his fears, was forced by his father to attempt the passage and perished in consequence. I believe alligators are occasionally met with, and lives have been endangered, if not actually lost, by their attacks. . . .

27 March.—In the afternoon, we had proceeded only about a few hundred yards when a heavy thunderstorm forced us again to pitch our camp by the roadside, and halt until the moon shone. But, in the evening, when we were preparing to start, we were overtaken by a Dutchman named Van Nelson, who said that, while hunting forty or fifty miles north-east of Mose-

likatse's place,[1] he had picked up a stone containing gold. This he had given or shown to Sir John Swinburne, who had hired his son to point out the way to the locality. The stone was on its way for exhibition in Maritzburg.

We took the road again by moonlight; and, passing through Colenso, where Mr. Mohr's waggons were outspanned, we halted just beyond at the drift of the Tugela river.

Sunday, 28 March.—Van Nelson followed and took breakfast with us, and related many interesting particulars of his travels. He had been down to Inhambane and the coast near Delagoa Bay to the country between the Limpopo and the Zambesi. I asked whether he had seen the great falls, and he said "yes," and remarked upon the number of "zee-koes" (hippopotami) there and their marvellous agility in swimming up the falls. Now, knowing that the Victoria Falls are 400 feet in perpendicular height, I questioned the possibility of the feat and the identity of the falls. But, being assured of both, I could only say that, if I were fortunate enough to witness such a thing I would certainly make a picture of it, though I feared my own countrymen would hardly believe that such marvels were to be seen in Africa. I afterwards found, however, that he meant not the Victoria Falls, but some other, perhaps Chicova or Kebra Basa lower down, which are in fact very steep rapids, sometimes becoming cataracts. . . .

Monday, 29.—I rode over to the farm of Mr. King, the brother-in-law of Mr. Watson, and was pleased to find that the Australian gum, besides being highly ornamental, is very useful, not only for sheltering crops from the wind, but for house and waggon building.

The Australian gold diggers were working on the same river, the Tugela, at the junction of the Umzinyati river about sixty miles below. In the afternoon, one of the youngsters rode with us up a bridle path that reminded me of the very roughest travelling in north

[1] Chief kraal of the Matabele king with whom the Voortrekkers had come into contact on the high veld.

Australia. He said he had seen the high waterfall of the Tugela, which was in or near Bezuidenhout's pass —a road only used for light waggons as being not good enough for regular traffic. He described the fall as looking like a long white rope coming from the top of the mountain, and dispersing into a white cloud at the bottom.

Tuesday, March 30.—Reached Dodds' Hotel, at Sand Spruit, entitled the "Dew Drop Inn," a name which the reader will see conveys also an invitation to the passer-by, the host having rather a varied talent in the line of catchword advertisements. Mr. Dodds had a young baboon, tame enough to drink beer for the entertainment of visitors, of course out of *their* glasses. His walls were hung with about a dozen chromo-lithographs, and some oil paintings not by any means second-rate, and decidedly not first. These had cost him, if I remember rightly, £470; and I offered to stay a fortnight and paint him a dozen more for the same amount, but soon found, as indeed I had guessed from the first, that his picture gallery was all he had been able to get in payment of a bad debt. We bought a pig and three fowls, which one of our boys brought after us. During the morning, William Watson had a glimpse of the thread-like waterfall in the distant ridge of the Drakensberg; but in the afternoon, when I asked him to show it to me, an alteration of the light, on our change of position, prevented his catching a glimpse of it. In the evening, we came to the Tent Hotel, at the foot of the Drakensberg.

On Wednesday we began the ascent of the mountain, which is reckoned at ten or eleven miles, the mist clearing and breaking up as we advanced and the rugged peaks of the mountain, tinted with the first beams of the sun, appearing here and there through the temporary openings. The long road, winding up the spurs and ridges, was rendered more apparent by the white tented waggons along it. We halted at noon on a little grassy slope, after ascending for the last half-mile by a road running along the summit of

a narrow ridge; and met a Dutchman coming down, with the fore-axle of one of his waggons broken. He was naturally anxious to dispose of as much of his cargo as possible. I bought a bag of corn meal and some preserved fruit; and, in answer to his pressing request that I would take more, reminded him that our waggons were going up the hill; and that, if I lightened his, I might so overload mine that they also might be unequal to the burden. . . .

Thursday, 1 April.—As the rain had made the road slippery, we waited for the sun to shine and dry it. Meantime, a couple of waggons coming from below attempted to pass us, but stuck fast, and we had to lend one span of oxen to help them out, then wait until the cattle had rested. By lifting our own waggon with the screw jack and building up a stone causeway under each of our wheels, we got out of our difficulty, and brought Nelson's waggon alongside ours. Here, as the stunted patches of forest which had speckled the mountain side entirely ceased, I sent the boys to gather dry wood and load it up behind the waggons; and spent the interval in sketching the picturesque range to the north-east. Of these the principal hill is called "Nelson's Kop," and is a table mountain of considerable extent, crowned by a layer of sandstone of immense thickness, with precipitous faces all round and deep fissures, cleft straight down like the narrow portals of some immense fortress. The other hills were smaller, but capped with masses of the same rock, forming them into conical peaks of uniform height with the table hill; suggesting the idea which has been so often impressed on my mind while travelling in South Africa, that the country was once covered with a thick layer of sandstone of uniform height, and that valleys have been formed by denudation, leaving masses of the original rock to form, according to their size, table or conical tops to the remaining mountains.

After moonrise, we inspanned and travelled till one waggon stuck in a little hollow, and had to be drawn out backward by four oxen, after which the double span

took it out by another path. It is to be remembered here that, though we have completed the ascent of the Drakensberg, and are therefore nominally on the plateau of the interior, the roughness of the mountain edge runs inland for several miles, as if determined that we should not pass to smooth roads all at once. Besides this, so long as the waters run toward the sea, I believe we have not crossed the boundary of Natal, and are not really in the Orange Free State till we strike the spruits of the Wilge Rivier (willow river), which runs into the Vaal, or yellow dun river. . . .

Saturday, April 3.—We crossed the Wilge Rivier, and, following its course northward with the lofty slopes and precipices of the Platberg on our left, halted at noon for breakfast and reached the town of Harrismith after dark. We chose the most level spot we could find, and pitched our camp compactly and neatly, spreading one side tent as an awning between the waggons and bringing the door of our house tent quite up to it, so as to have the advantage of a kind of fore-house, or portico, in which to receive visitors. . . .

Sunday, April 4.—Walked to the butcher's, and bought beef at fivepence per pound. We passed the church, a low white-washed building with zinc or galvanised iron roof. A number of waggons were outspanned around it, belonging to Dutch families who come from great distances to attend the periodical nachtmaal or Lord's Supper. . . . The church was surrounded by a high wall of mud and stone, loopholed so as to form a kind of citadel in case of danger. A small six-pounder carronade was mounted in a bastion; and, outside the town, was a platform, with a well-appointed nine-pounder on an iron carriage, ready to sweep all the surrounding country. . . .

One little peculiarity took the attention of my friends. All the congregation going to church carried their own veld stools with them, seats, as is frequently the case, not being yet provided. Another subject of interest was the price of goods. When

we asked for milk or butter or other things, the answer would be: "One shilling in bluebacks,[1] or ninepence in cash." As we had taken care to bring what little we have in gold and silver, having as much as possible of the smallest coins to avoid trouble in changing, our orders are everywhere welcome; and even Jack, the little black boy, finds himself treated with the respect due to one whose master pays in cash. It is said that at one time a pound note, blueback, would buy only half a pound of raw coffee; and that pound notes were put up for sale and brought two shillings each. But since the settlement of the Basuto question, the paper currency has risen to 75 per cent. of its nominal value. It is thought probable that the Free State will refuse the £50,000 offered by Sir P. Wodehouse, and will claim the land conquered from the Basutos instead. . . .[2]

Many persons think that the best thing would be for England to take over the country entirely, and I understand this feeling also extends to the Transvaal Republic. I believe that, if this could be done amicably, as I think it could, it would be much cheaper for England, and beneficial to South Africa, that there should be one strong Government from the Cape of Good Hope as far as the colonists have extended themselves, rather than a few semi-independent communities and several petty half-caste tribes, each asserting its independence, but in reality maintained by the subsidies and protected by the power of the British Government.

It is said Sir John Swinburne has offered to buy all the paper money of the Transvaal for two shillings and sixpence in the pound, cash, and instalments in future on the agreed price, if they give him security on the

[1] The paper money of the Free State depreciated rapidly after the issue of paper with a compulsory five-year currency, on the security of the annexed Basuto lands. Its *greenbacks* fell to 8s. in the pound, but recovered parity in the 'seventies with the cessation of native wars. Transvaal *bluebacks* were on occasions almost worthless.

[2] In February 1869, following the annexation of Basutoland by Britain, Sir P. Wodehouse and President Brand agreed upon a revised Basuto frontier which restored the greater part, but not all, of the cornlands conquered by the Free State. Wodehouse agreed to pay Boer farmers £50,000 which was to be raised by quit rents levied in the restored territory.

land and a right to all the precious metals in it. He has already bought Van Rensburg's farm [1] so that the mud-hole in which we stuck was on his property. It is said that another diamond has been discovered, valued at twenty or thirty thousand pounds; and that it has been bought by a firm in the Cape for a large sum, about £18,000 or £20,000.

(Baines remained a few days at Harrismith, then proceeded via Potchefstroom to the Tati. A brief account of his experiences there is to be found in his book, *The Gold Regions of South-Eastern Africa*, London, 1877.)

3. TO MARITZBURG BY THE OMNIBUS (1878)

From *No Telegraph*, by Rose Pender (London, 1879).

We started on our journey to Pietermaritzburg at seven o'clock on the morning of the 11th of July, in the omnibus—a very uncomfortable conveyance meant to carry twelve inside and three on the box. J—— [2] and I had engaged the front seats, and we took four seats inside as well for our servants and two portmanteaus, as fourpence a pound is charged for excess of luggage over twelve pounds, and it was our only chance of getting them taken with us. We had six horses, which we changed often, but even then the stages were very severe, as we had to climb up such high, long hills. The distance from Durban to Pietermaritzburg is fifty-six miles, and there is a choice of two conveyances, one our omnibus, the other the post-cart; but as the post-cart very frequently comes to grief, we were strongly advised not to venture by it. [3]

[1] Now the village of Swinburne, named after the explorer.

[2] Sir James Pender, a director of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, which proposed to lay a cable from Aden along the east coast of Africa to Natal. These reminiscences are from the pen of his wife.

[3] In 1873, the Natal Government decided to replace native messengers by mail carts in the conveyance of letters between Maritzburg and Durban. A contract was entered into with Messrs. Collins and Murray, which took effect on 7 January 1874. The contractors used two-wheeled Cape carts, drawn by four horses, with relays every ten miles.

It certainly does the journey in a wonderfully short space of time; leaving at twelve, it gets to the end of its journey by five, and even earlier. Eleven miles an hour over the terrible road it has to traverse is marvellous going, indeed they keep at a hard gallop the whole way, regardless of the danger to life and limb. The country for the first few miles from Durban is pretty and tropical, but then it becomes very dried up and uninteresting; indeed, except the Inchanga Pass, which looks as if waves had rolled over the mountains and left their impress on them, there is nothing to interest the traveller the whole way. The Inchanga extends for miles, but the fault in the scenery is a want of foreground.

Half-way we halted for lunch at Mrs. Welch's. She is known all over Natal as having one of the cleanest and pleasantest inns in the Colony, and certainly her lunch looked very tempting, spread on a clean cloth—a luxury you do not often meet with in South African hostels. The down omnibus meets the up one at Mrs. Welch's, and we had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Bishop Colenso, who was going down to Durban; but, as only half an hour was allowed for refreshment, the time soon passed and once again we got into our purgatorial conveyance. The sun was very hot and right in our eyes; the dust flew in clouds, and whenever we passed the huge waggons, drawn by from fourteen to twenty oxen, we could not see at all. The omnibus was crowded inside, and altogether the journey was most uncomfortable. We had changed our driver at the half-way house, and the new one was a cheeky young fellow, entirely devoid of manners, and, what was worse, not nearly as good a whip. However, the first stage was mostly up the steep Inchanga hill, and all went well; but at the next change of horses the leaders were evidently young and unbroken and very timid. There was some trouble to get them in, and then to lead them off. Our driver seized his whip and commenced flogging and yelling, which of course so frightened the already nervous

team that they bolted, got off the road, and made across the plain which descended a very steep hill-side a little further on; and, to add to the danger, the leaders' reins broke.

We all behaved very well, and sat quite still. Luckily the sand was deep, and we were heavy, so after a brief gallop they stopped, and J—— was down and at their heads in a moment, the driver sitting very sulkily on his box till fresh reins were brought. I remarked to J—— that I wished we had our old driver again, as I did not think much of this one. A pert young woman from the inside, overhearing this remark, took it upon herself to expatiate upon the driving qualities of our Jehu, declaring he was the best driver in the colony, and a son of Mrs. Welch. This, she seemed to think, was an unanswerable argument in his favour, and she ended by saying if I was afraid she would change seats with me. I told her, far from being afraid, I was much amused by watching the driving of the best colonial whip, though I had not been greatly impressed in his favour by what I had seen, and I added, "If he brings us safely to our journey's end—which I much doubt—I shall then be able to judge by him of colonial drivers." She was very angry, but the reins being renewed, we again started on our mad course, avoiding large holes in the road by a hair's breadth; in short, how we escaped being upset a hundred times, I know not. But the end was to come; and, just in sight of our next relay, going full speed down the last hill, with loose reins, and flogging with one hand, our driver let first the off and then the near wheelers down, without an effort to save them, or even to pull up for some yards. Such a smash it was; there lay the poor brutes under the heavy omnibus, kicking and struggling for their lives, and of course making matters worse. The men sprang down, F—— and the driver to the leaders, and J—— to the head of one wheeler. I turned to the now very white and scared-looking young woman inside, and told her to get out with the rest, but I could not forbear remarking

to her that, as this was the best driver in the colony, the worst must be a very poor specimen indeed—if a worse one was conceivable. With some trouble, the poor bruised and bleeding horses were extricated from under the omnibus, and to show the state of unsafety in which we travelled, I may as well remark that every bit of harness was broken. The leather went like cotton at each plunge, even the very head-pieces came to bits in our hands; there was not a sound piece in the whole of it. The fresh relay had now come up, and the driver, in a great rage, as soon as we had taken our places again, wished to know who had dared to say he could not drive. I acknowledged to having made the remark, and said that the fact had proved it. J—— added that he begged he would be careful for the rest of the way, so as not to bring about another accident.

"Accident?" jeered our driver. "Call this an accident; why, who is killed? I don't call this an accident."

"You are quite right, my good man," I said. "Far from being an accident, it is the greatest piece of carelessness I have ever seen."

This shut him up completely for some time, and when he would have begun to discuss the matter again, J—— told him, firmly but kindly, to hold his peace, and attend to his driving. By way of punishing us, he did the rest of the journey, all down hill, so slowly that we were nearly two hours late, and it was quite dark when we drew up at the Plough, where the omnibus puts up at Maritzburg, choked with dust and cramped with sitting in a constrained attitude for so long.

We were very glad to be greeted on our descent by Mr. F. Colenso,[1] who had come to show us our hotel, and it was truly pleasant to find that we had really comfortable quarters provided for us at the Crown, a nice sitting- and bedroom on the ground floor, *en suite* and a dressing-room above. After a bath and some tea, I began to feel better; but a more disagreeable, dangerous and painfully-jolting journey I never wish to go

[1] Son of Bishop Colenso, and an advocate of the Supreme Court.

again. The sun was scorching all day, and yet ten minutes after it set, the temperature became bitterly cold; the dust was horrid, penetrating everywhere, and there was nothing in the scenery to repay one in the least for the discomfort. The railway now in progress ought to be finished in two years,[1] and a merciful boon it will be to the inhabitants of Maritzburg.

4. DRIVING TO TOWN

From *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa*, by LADY BARKER, 1879.

My mind is like a balance with storms in one scale and roads in the other, and roads are uppermost now. I only wish anyone who grumbles at rates and taxes, which at all events keep him supplied with water and roads, could come here for a month. First he should see the red liquid mud which represents our available water supply out here; and next he should walk or ride or drive, for they are all three equally perilous, down to the town, a mile or two off, with me of a dark night. I say with me, because I should make it a point to call the grumbler's attention to the various pitfalls on the way. I think I should like him to drive, about seven o'clock say, to dinner, when one does not feel particularly inclined to struggle with a broken carriage, or to go the remainder of the way on foot. About 7 p.m. the light is peculiarly treacherous and uncertain, and is worse than the darkness later on. Very well, then, we will start: first looking carefully to the harness lest Charlie should have omitted to fasten some important strap or buckle. There is a track, in fact there are three tracks, all the way down to the main road, but each track has its own dangers. Down the centre of one runs a ridge like a backbone, with a deep furrow on either hand. If we were to attempt this, the bed of the pony-carriage would rest on this

[1] The railway to Maritzburg was opened in December 1880.

ridge, to the speedy destruction of the axles. To the right, there is a grassy track, which is as uneven as a ploughed field, and has a couple of tremendous holes to begin with, concealed by waving grass. The secret of these constantly recurring holes is that a nocturnal animal, called an ant-bear (*aard vaark*, is the Dutch name), makes raids upon the ant-hills, which are exactly like mole-hills only bigger, destroys them and scoops down to the very foundation in its search for the eggs, an especial dainty hard to get at. So one day, there is a little brown hillock to be seen among the grass, and the next only a scratched-up hole. The tiny city is destroyed; the fortress taken and razed to the ground; all the ingenious galleries and large halls laid low, and the precious nurseries crumbled to the dust.

If we get into these, we shall go no further—a horse broke his neck in one last week—but we will suppose them safely passed, and also the swamps. To avoid this, we must take a good sweep to the left over perfectly unknown ground, and we shall be sure to disturb a good many Kaffir cranes, birds who are so ludicrously like the black-headed, red-legged, white-bodied cranes in a Noah's Ark that they seem old friends at once. Now there is one deep, deep ravine right across the road, and then a steep hill, half-way down which comes a very pretty bit of driving in doubtful light. You've got to turn abruptly to the left on the shoulder of the hill. Exactly where you turn is a crevasse of unknown depth—originally some sort of rude drain. The rains have washed away the boarding, made havoc round the drain, and left a hole which is not pleasant to look into on foot and in broad daylight. But, whatever you do, don't, in trying to avoid this hole, keep too much to the right; for there is what was once intended for a reasonable ditch, but furious torrents of water racing along have seized upon it as a channel and turned it into a river-course. After that, at the foot of the hill, lies a quarter of a mile of mud and heavy sand, with alternate big projecting boulders and deep holes, made by unhappy waggons having stuck therein.

Then you reach, always supposing you have not broken a spring, the Willow bridge, a frail little wooden structure, prettily shaded and sheltered by luxuriant weeping willows, drooping their trailing green plumes into the muddy Umsindusi,[1] and so you get on to the main road into Pietermaritzburg. Such a bit of road as this is. It ought to be photographed. I suppose it is a couple of dozen yards wide (for land is of little value hereabouts and we can afford wide margins to our highways), and there certainly is not more than a strip a yard wide which is anything like safe driving. In two or three places it is deeply furrowed for fifty yards or so by the heavy summer rains. Here and there are standing pools of water, in holes whose depth is unknown; and everywhere the surface is deeply seamed and scarred by waggon-wheels. Fortunately for my nerves, there are but few and rare occasions on which we are tempted to affront these perils by night, and hitherto we have been tolerably fortunate.

5. DURBAN ON A WET NIGHT

From *South Africa: A Sketch Book*, by J. S. Little, 1884

Let me now pass from the animal, and return to the physical world, and see what further trials it may call upon us to bear. None that I have mentioned in detail can compare with that which sand supplies. I have already referred to the sand-banks at the mouths of the rivers. Upon arriving at Natal, anything but a contented frame of mind is produced when the announcement is made that it is necessary to remain quiescent until the mail-bags are off. This being accomplished, a barbaric scene follows, which by no means allays that

[1] Actually this was the Dorp Spruit. The house occupied by Lady Barker and her husband, F. Napier Broome, colonial secretary under Sir Garnet Wolseley, was situated on the Town lands in what has since become the suburb of Mountain Rise.

feeling. One's luggage is shoved—for there is no better word to describe what actually takes place—into the hold of a cargo-boat. It is next rammed down into the smallest possible space by Kaffirs in a happy-go-lucky manner. I may mention that these Kaffirs show wonderful balancing power; as they stand on the decks of the boats, they seem to grasp the planks with their feet and retain their hold, despite the pumping and rocking, which are excessive. The passengers next sit on the bulwarks of the steam packet, and wait patiently until a kindly wave brings the luggage in contact therewith. At this particular moment, the traveller, male or female, must take a bold leap on to the deck of the cargo-boat, which is a wooden structure, entirely innocent of bulwarks or railing of any description. I, for one, considered myself a promising candidate for a briny grave. The next move is to huddle the whole of the passengers together in the hold; and thus, sitting or standing upon our goods and chattels, and scarcely discriminated therefrom, we ultimately reach Durban. If rain be falling, the heat which on all these occasions is oppressive enough, becomes well-nigh unbearable. A veritable *mauvais quart d'heure* indeed! And this is all owing to the sand-bar at the entrance to the bay. East London, Mossel Bay and other seaports are in much the same plight. The sooner Sir John Coode's remedial schemes [1] bear fruit, the better. There seems to be every prospect of an improvement under the auspices of Mr. Innes, the resident engineer at Durban.

I have not yet completed my indictment against sand. Arenaceous shoals blow in upon you and blind you. The miseries accompanying pedestrianism on account of bad roads, by no means inconsiderable at the best, are greatly heightened by sand-heaps which

[1] Sir John Coode, engineer-in-chief of the harbour works at Portland, visited Cape Colony and Natal in 1876-7. See his *Reports* on the harbours of Cape Colony, and on Port Natal, London 1877. His suggestions for removal of the bar at Natal were considered to be too costly. Instead, Edward Innes extended Milne's wall and built the Innes breakwater from the extremity of the Bluff.

collect in eaves and corrugations. This even is the case in some of the leading thoroughfares.

Every step you take you find yourself ankle-deep in silvery particles, so that your progress is almost retrogressive, if I may use such an absurd figure of speech. Miniature avalanches in ascending Mont Blanc continually take you back for several yards over well-fought ground. So the shifting, drifting sand makes your utmost efforts to get on almost futile. You return from a " nice walk " weary, footsore and angry, blessing your fate in terms more or less appropriate.

No water-carts and no road scrapers! Thus a heavy rainfall scarcely improves the condition of things, as you then have to pick your way as best you may, through the lutulent ingredients of infantile pies. The Kaffirs, with their shoeless feet are now useful. They perform the kindly office of hardening the roads. The only parallels to the sand of Durban I can call to mind as in any way presenting a faint idea of the inconveniences arising therefrom, are the roads of Northern Italy, which are so often formed of decomposed limestone; and, nearer home, the country between Fleetwood and Rossall, in Lancashire, which is for a mile or so inland a veritable Sahara.

If it comes to a competition between sand and mud, I really don't know to which I should award the palm of discomfort. Durban on a wet night! Oh! shade of " rainy-day Smith," what would you say to it? The poor pedestrian venturing out to a dance, dinner, concert, service or public meeting has been heard to mutter naughty words, as he made his unhappy progress. If he be going to a public meeting, he is indeed an object of heart-felt sympathy, for what with mud-throwing without and mud-throwing within, fresh terrors indeed will be added to his life; and he will, before he returns home, be likely to look upon death as a happy release from his self-inflicted miseries.[1]

[1] The author's impressions of Durban were by no means wholly unfavourable. " On the whole," he wrote, " Durban is not so very bad a place to live in, but for my part, I much prefer Cape Town." Ibid. p. 237.

6. THE VICTORIA CLUB, MARITZBURG, IN THE 'EIGHTIES

From *Six Months in Cape Colony and Natal*, by J. J. AUBERTIN, 1886

For the few days that remained before leaving for Durban to take the boat, I was at leisure to rest at Maritzburg, and renew my acquaintance with its continuous bullock carts and Kaffir screams, and occasional furious winds and dust. These winds were now beginning to be cold, and sometimes brought corresponding rain with them, and I was therefore somewhat surprised to find that many members of the club did not seem to feel comfortable unless the windows were open enough to blow the menu off the table; nor was the reading-room considered quite in order unless the windows were open at the bottom, instead of the top, to blow all the newspapers and periodicals off the table two or three times a day. In vain the steward replaced them, with tacit orders to lie still; off they were again as soon as he turned his back. I understand they were about to move to some more convenient house, which may relieve them of having the bar under the bedrooms, the hours and employments of which are not quite consistent with the occupations that are supposed to belong to bedrooms. Nor did I thank *Punch* for arriving about this period with a cartoon by our immortal Tenniel, representing Mr. Gladstone with a woe-begone countenance and a concertina in hand, singing " Wait till the clouds roll by." For the " hit " hit everybody so immensely that the smart young barman never ceased to sing the song; realizing an old line from Sternhold and Hopkins, " Begin and never cease." All this little criticism of the club, however, is quite in good part, for I was very glad indeed of the chance of taking up my abode there, and I owe much of my comfort to the activity and attention of the steward.

Among the small blessings of life I was glad to

resume breakfast porridge, really made of oatmeal; for up country it is unpleasantly made of maize. One other small mercy I must add, as showing the manners of the country. I came back to my chance of getting coffee, made specially for me by the steward, without that mere *nastiness* called chicory. This coffee was grown in Natal, along the coast running northwards, and is by no means to be despised. But whether from want of knowledge in the treatment of the plant, or from want of depth of the soil—a condition which I remember is always looked for in the immense growths of Brazil—the cultivation does not seem to thrive. Tea is also grown, but I must confess I did not much relish the flavour; while sugar, I was told, has absorbed some £1,000,000 of capital, present prices (as we know) being miserable.

II

THE UNITED KINGDOM AND NATAL: EMIGRATION 1860-1900

THE failure of the Byrne scheme in the early 'fifties,[1] together with the allotment of much of the most fertile land to the handful of Europeans already in the district, rendered difficult the task of attracting to the shores of Natal a portion of the stream of emigration which was flowing so strongly to other lands. Alarmed at the influx of natives from across the Tugela and anxious to retain the goodwill of the Dutch farmers in the northern districts, Lieutenant-Governor Pine had abandoned the attempt to insist on occupation as a condition of landownership. Wasteful grants of land removed the danger that Natal would "lapse again to the undisputed possession of the savage." On the other hand, this policy gave to the Dutch farmers and to those who acquired title from them, secure possession of "immense tracts of country, known by the singularly inappropriate title of farms."[2]

These unwise concessions ruined the prospects of the Byrne immigrants. The well-watered land was already in the possession of men who did little or nothing to improve, or even to cultivate, their immense holdings. In the early 'fifties, land was so little valued that farms were bartered away for a bag of coffee. In course of time, the greater part of the alienated land was accumu-

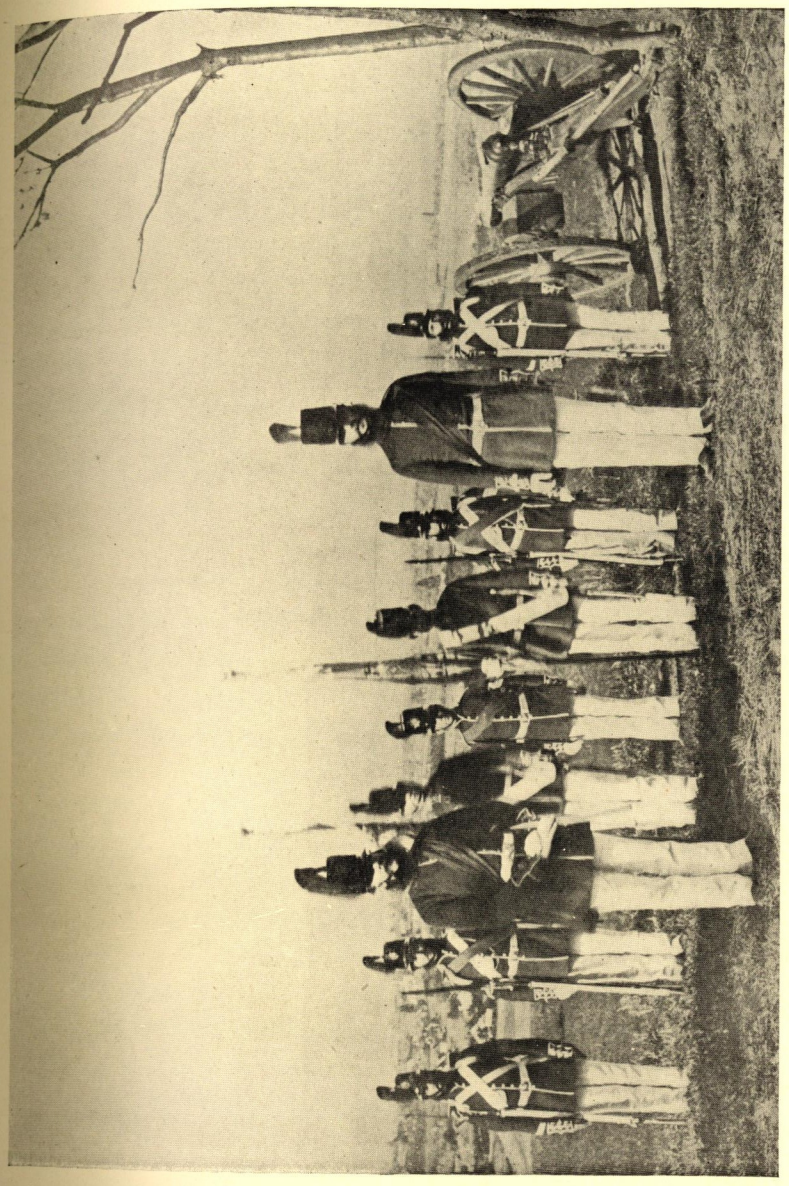
[1] Described in *More Annals of Natal*, pp. 15 *seqq.*

[2] W. F. Butler, *Report on European Immigration*, 3 July 1875, *Further Correspondence re Colonies & States of S. Africa, Natal*, 1876, LII (C. 1401-1). For a criticism of this report, see the *Memorandum*, May 1876, of the Natal Land & Colonisation Company.

lated in the hands of men who were interested in its speculative value, rather than in cultivation of the soil. When, in 1857, the colonial revenue had risen sufficiently to enable the Government to make a fresh attempt to introduce settlers from Europe, it was found that the residue of unalienated Crown land was insufficient for their location.

It was accordingly necessary to embark on a decidedly modest scheme of European settlement. Warned by the failure of Byrne immigrants to adapt themselves to the conditions of an unfamiliar country, the local authorities proposed to concentrate on bringing out to the Colony those who had relatives and friends already settled there. Under the assisted-passages system of 1857, which remained in operation for twelve years, colonists were invited to nominate persons in the United Kingdom for the privilege of a free passage. On all approved emigrants, a portion of the cost of the passage was to be defrayed from funds voted by the new Legislative Council. Payment of the balance was guaranteed by the nominator in Natal. For reasons that will presently be considered, the new system never produced more than a trickle of emigration. In 1862, the year when coolie labour was beginning to bring prosperity to Natal's coastlands, 462 new settlers were landed at the Point. Over five years the total number was no more than 1,703, at a cost to the colonial exchequer of from £5 to £7 per statute adult.

Meanwhile, a still more lavish system of land grants had been introduced. Between 1857 and 1860, the disposal of Crown lands by auction sale or free gift reached the colossal total of 1,361,334 acres. A minor boom brought with it a rush to accumulate holdings, preparatory to the expected survey of lines of railway. In this



THE NINE O'CLOCK GUN. MILITARY PARADE AT FORT NAPIER, 1861

By kind permission of Mr. F. Steere.

process oversea capital played a prominent part. The Natal Land and Colonisation Company, incorporated under the Limited Liability Act of 1860, hastened to obtain possession of an initial quarter of a million acres. Its first proposal was to conduct an extensive scheme of immigration. Now that the price of land had risen, profits could be derived from the sale to incoming settlers of the unoccupied land belonging to the Company. It was more doubtful whether the Colony could absorb a large number of new settlers of the labouring class. Little capital was available for the payment of European wages, and the sugar planters had already hitched their fortunes to the employment of the thrifty Indian. What Natal needed was the immigration in small numbers of men of capital. On the advice of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, the Secretary of State refused to consent to a bonus in land grants for each approved emigrant landed in Durban. He pointed out that the Company already possessed large holdings in its own right; and expressed the opinion that immigration could not properly be entrusted to a commercial company, or undertaken for the sake of profit.[1] Thus rebuffed, the directors turned from European colonisation to more profitable fields of investment. The Company's capital resources were used to assist coastal planters to import coolie labour, whilst its land was largely in the occupation of native squatters.

The slump in the middle 'sixties brought with it a calamitous fall in the value of landed property. Cheap land glutted the market. Able to weather the storm because its native tenants paid a substantial rental, the Natal Land and Colonisation Company increased

[1] *Report* of T. W. Murdoch, 24 February 1863 (G. H., vol. 12, no. 59, Inward Despatches, Natal Archives).

its speculative holdings to a total of 688,000 acres.[1] In the ensuing years, commerce was to recover its activity and exports to mount up. But little could be done to promote European settlement in a land where "a vast waste of wilderness meets the traveller's eyes wherever he turns his steps over the great uplands of Natal, and year by year the blue sky of winter is darkened by the smoke and the nights are reddened by the glare of unnumbered fires which carry again into the atmosphere the wealth that the summer's rain and sun had quickened upon the soil."[2]

Meanwhile Dr. R. J. Mann had been sent to England to inaugurate a new system. Mann had recommended that land grants to incoming settlers should be proportionate to the capital resources which each could command. Those possessing £500 or more were to receive a 200-acre farm with rights of user and pre-emption over a further 400 acres of pastoral land. Emigrants without capital were not to be excluded from the benefits of the scheme, provided that they could pay £5 towards the cost of their passage, and could certify that they possessed the means to keep themselves for six months after landing in the Colony. But the grant to them was to be limited to fifty acres. The obstacle of insufficiency of well-situated land Mann hoped to surmount by opening a register of proprietors who were willing to part with their land to the Government for the benefit of new settlers. In preparation for the arrival of his selected emigrants, the local authorities undertook to survey land in blocks of suitable size; and to issue title deeds after proof of continuous occupation for eight months in each of the two initial years.

[1] Of this amount, some 130,000 acres were occupied by producers, principally white settlers. The Company had invested over £400,000 on the purchase of land.
[2] Butler, *Report, Further Correspondence, Etc.*, p. 8.

The success of the new system was more apparent than real. In London, Mann was active, interviewing prospective emigrants and issuing land orders. But many who had no intention of making the Colony their home found it possible to secure assisted passages by false pretences. The discovery of the goldfields and the prosperity of the inland trade were the real inducements which brought immigrants to the shores of Natal. In December 1868, Lieutenant-Governor Keate complained that 27 out of 44 assisted emigrants from the *Earl of Southesk* were members of the Limpopo River Company, under engagement to proceed forthwith to the Tati fields.[1] No one landing at Durban in the years 1866–8 could have been favourably impressed by the prospects of employment within the Colony. For the first two of these years, the streets of the two towns were thronged with unemployed mechanics and artisans. Though conditions improved in 1868, there was still too little work for men of the labouring class. There was even a trickle of emigration from Natal to South America. Recovery was slow. Suspension of the vote in aid of immigration was the inevitable consequence of the decline in the colonial revenue, and in 1870 Dr. Mann closed down his office.

Five years later the drastic reorganisation of the colonial administration, undertaken by Sir Garnet Wolseley under the operation of the so-called Jamaica reforms,[2] was made the occasion for a careful enquiry into the whole subject of the European colonisation of Natal. The report of Major (later Sir William) Butler showed that, out of an estimated total of twelve million acres, only two or three million, situated for

[1] R. W. Keate to Sec. of State, 22 December 1868 (G.H., vol. 28, Natal Archives).
[2] *Infra*, Section V.

the most part in remote and inaccessible regions, remained unallotted. The most eligible lands, adjoining the towns and villages and skirting the main roads, were held by absentee proprietors in a condition of unredeemed desolation.

Major Butler evidently believed that the residue of unalienated land could not suffice for the location of any considerable body of European immigrants. He therefore proposed that proprietors should be compelled by law to grant leases of land which was either unoccupied or occupied only by native squatters. It was essential, in his opinion, that allotments should be made available which were not remote from the centres of trade and civilisation. He envisaged the replacement of vast tracts of unfenced land "left as nature formed it and roamed over by straggling flocks and herds which destroy more than they consume" by compact farms of two to three hundred acres, let to incoming settlers on a twenty-five year lease. From what remained of the Crown lands, Butler recommended free grants to those who would occupy the land and build a homestead thereon within a period of two years.[1]

The Government proceeded with great caution to examine these avenues of approach to Natal's most difficult problem. Considerable objection was raised to any interference with the rights of private property. All that the legislature would accept was a declaration in general terms affirming the obligations of occupancy and improvement. Professing to believe that the Government could gain possession of sufficient land through voluntary agreement with owners, the Council refused to enact a land tax and contented itself with the

[1] Butler, *Report:* Earl of Carnarvon to Sir H. Bulwer, 20 October 1875, *Further Correspondence, Etc.*, p. 84.

establishment of a local Land and Immigration Board. The new Board was not actually appointed until 1878.

Success in attracting immigrants depended not only upon the character of the inducements which the Colony could offer to incoming settlers, but also upon the ebb and flow of European prosperity. In the 'fifties the market for English manufactures abroad had not yet reached its maximum expansion, whilst rents stood high because the home harvest was still dominant. Despite the commercial panic of 1866, due in large measure to over-confidence in the new system of limited liability, mid-Victorian prosperity was not seriously shaken until the 'seventies. There was accordingly, in this period, a check to the outward movement of British people, which had reached its peak in the years following the Irish famine of 1845. Canada could still attract a steady flow of emigrants to take up good agricultural land which was to be had for the asking. So long as public funds were available in aid of migration, Natal could reckon on a thin trickle of settlers of the labouring class, but no more.

The world-wide depression of the middle 'seventies, heralded by the crash on the bourse at Vienna, brought with it renewal of interest in oversea migration. The first fall in prices was due to instability in continental and American markets, which was likely to pass when the disturbing effects of the French indemnity and the virtual bankruptcy of Egypt had been overcome. But there were ominous signs of the passing of British industrial supremacy. The United States and Germany began to build up tariff walls against British exports, and to exploit the natural advantage which they possessed in the change-over from iron to steel. Moreover the British Government took no steps to protect

British agriculture from the momentous effects of the opening up of vast new wheat-fields on the western prairies. In both town and country Englishmen began to be uneasily aware of the adverse balance of British trade. The corn-growing counties were stricken beyond recovery, and small proprietor and farm labourer alike began to show a renewed interest in the prospects of agriculture in the colonies. In the manufacturing areas the outlook was scarcely brighter. Exports of iron and steel showed a transitory recovery in the 'eighties. But few parts of Britain knew any genuine prosperity during the years 1875–95.

Under these circumstances, Sir Walter Peace, representing in London the Land and Immigration Board, had little difficulty in expending on assisted passages the votes made available by the Legislative Council.[1] Nevertheless, the attempt to introduce a farming population was destined to be a signal failure. This was not altogether due to the scarcity and high price of fertile land; for in the 'eighties the Land and Colonisation Company offered lots of one hundred acres to be selected by incoming settlers in any of the districts where the Company owned land. Up-country land was mostly in the occupancy of rent-paying natives, and it was quickly realised by European farmers that, as their wants were limited, the presence of a native population did not involve the existence of a local market. Thus, while the coming of the railway did something to correct the isolation of life in northern Natal, immigrants preferred to congregate in the towns, or to leave Natal for the diggings in the interior. Farmers with a little capital found that well-watered and favourably situated

[1] *Reports of the Land and Immigration Board*, 1878 (N. and I.B.B., vols. 308 *sqq.*, Natal Archives).

land could not be purchased at a reasonable price, whilst agricultural labourers were driven out of the market by native labour. Meanwhile, the older colonists and the companies, in receipt of substantial rents from native squatters and undisturbed by taxation, were able to retain their hold on the fertile and accessible land.

These were not the conditions which James Methley had envisaged in the late 'forties. "You look around over your own broad acres," he had written, "and see your corn bending to the breeze and your herds grazing over what was a short time ago a wilderness, and what has now become, by your exertions, a smiling spot in the landscape. Every work you have accomplished is a source of comfort; each new undertaking is to you prospective wealth; each hardship is a care past and gone; each day, as it glides away, leaves its blessing; you eat and sleep in comfort; you rise and toil, but it is for yourself, for your family; the sweat does not drop from your brow for the benefit of the tax-gatherer; you are not haunted by the fear of the returning rent-day; you want no licence to take the venison which bounds across your path; it is as much your own as the oxen pasturing before your door; you do as you like, go where you like and when you like; you cannot trespass."[1]

Nevertheless, though individuals might do well, no golden age for the farmer ever dawned in Natal. When the mealie crop was good and there was sufficiency of grass for the cattle, he attained a modicum of prosperity. As the difficulties of want of capital and inexperience in the farming of sheep were overcome, wool became a staple on up-country farms, especially in the mist belt

[1] *The New Colony of Port Natal* (1849), p. 39.

where the rainfall could be depended upon. But in all parts of the Colony devastating drought was far from infrequent. Crop failures occurred in four successive years, 1875-9, in five magisterial districts. Want of grass not only hindered agriculture, but brought to a standstill the transport riding upon which so many relied to gain a living in the winter months. Many emigrants were misled by statements that farming in a country with so much virgin soil was "altogether simpler and easier than in an old settled country." [1] In point of fact, farming made no real progress until the necessarily primitive methods of the early decades had been replaced by scientific farming which knew the value of fencing and tree-planting and was protected by such legislation as the Scab Act.

To the authorities in Maritzburg it seemed that the defects of the past might be remedied if little colonies of settlers were located in communities on specially selected land. The Land and Immigration Board had power to acquire land by purchase or lease. In 1879 it purchased Wilgefontein, a farm of 5,471 acres in the vicinity of the capital. The land, which was considered to be capable of irrigation from two small streams which intersected it, was divided into lots varying in size from 40 to 159 acres. James Methley was sent to England to procure forty families, if possible in the western counties, and to arrange for their conveyance to Natal. The intention of Government was to provide free passage to the Colony, and to bestow a freehold title, after payment of twelve annual sums at the rate of half a crown per acre. Food and shelter were to be provided without charge for one week after arrival, and accommodation in tents for a period

[1] W. Peace, *Our Colony of Natal*, 1883, p. 43.

of three months. In England, Methley found that agents from Australia and New Zealand, backed up by a strong organisation, were first in the field. His advertisements in provincial papers met with little response, and he was unable to procure more than twenty-four families.

It could not be said that the Wilgefontein settlers were lured to Natal by extravagant accounts of its fertility and resources. Methley had been careful to put before the members of the party the actual circumstances of life in Natal. "They were cautioned," he wrote,[1] "not to expect any return from their lands the first year; that houses, however humble, would have to be built, that kraals and fences must be made and garden ground enclosed, and that by their unaided efforts, so far as any dependency on native labour was concerned. I described without reservation the inconvenience and hardships of a life in tents. I stated the entire absence of wood on the lots and the necessity of planting trees to supply the want. I spoke of the warmth by day and the cold by night of the winter months, and the drenching rains of summer. In short, I placed before them, as well as I know how and as faithfully as I could, the circumstances in which they would be placed on arrival."

Nevertheless, considerable disappointment was expressed on arrival in the Colony by those whose anticipations of the advantages of the scheme had been altogether too optimistic. There was no lack of wise forethought by the authorities in Natal. The new settlers were met on board the *Nyanza* by C. A. Butler, secretary to the Land and Immigration Board, and in his presence lots were immediately drawn for the choice

[1] J. E. Methley to C. A. Butler, n.d., *Report of Land and Immigration Board*, 1881.

of allotments. Waggons and tents had been sent down to Inchanga, then (July 1880) the railhead. From that point the journey was made by ox-waggon with three nights on the winter veld. Unfortunately, it had been considered advisable to burn the grass on the farm immediately prior to the arrival of the party. The veld accordingly presented a blackened desolate outlook, with no scrap of vegetation beyond a few seringa trees in the vicinity of the solitary homestead. Three families at once refused to take up their allotments whilst many others expressed dissatisfaction with the terms of their agreements. By no means all were agriculturists. Two had been silk dressers. A third had retired from the coastguard service. In all twenty-one families entered into occupation of their allotments. The number soon dwindled to seventeen, of whom seven had had some farming experience in England. Through the sale of maize and potatoes to the military, all did well in the first three years of the settlement. But the lots were too small; and, as it was impossible to send working-stock long distances to pasture, the commonage was not in practice available for the use of all. Wilgefontein was not in fact a good choice for an experiment of the nature contemplated by the Government. Through long cultivation, the soil had become exhausted, whilst the water supply was insufficient for the purposes of market-gardening. Nevertheless, those who remained on their small holdings met with some success. By 1885 the vacant plots had all been taken up and much new land brought under cultivation. Green barley and forage fetched 5s. to 6s. a cwt. in times of drought on the Maritzburg market. Though planting was often retarded by the scarcity of native labour, the secretary to the Board, on his visit to

the settlement in 1889, found "all with few exceptions in comfortable and prosperous circumstances." [1]

A somewhat similar settlement was established on Crown lands at Marburg in the vicinity of Port Shepstone. Here the settlers were Norwegians. Migration from Norway was produced by excessive subdivision of holdings, and accelerated in the 'seventies by the competition from the new cornlands of the West. The Marburg immigrants, 33 families in all, were good colonising stock. But they suffered from the distance separating the settlement from its nearest market and from the want of communications by sea. At a time when butter was fetching 3s. 6d. a lb. and mealies 4s. on the Durban market, the produce of the allotments was virtually unsaleable. To relieve the distress, the Board relaxed the obligation of occupancy, making it possible for immigrants to leave their allotments and find employment on the Umzimkulu harbour works, or further afield at the gold diggings. Income from temporary employment was used by a thrifty people to develop the productivity of the land. By the year 1889, many had erected substantial brick homesteads and begun the cultivation of tea and coffee.

Lack of local experience had undoubtedly retarded the progress of both communities, but at Weenen, which was proclaimed a settlement in 1885, a new departure was made. One-half of the surveyed 50-acre plots were reserved for established colonists and at once taken up. Immigrants from oversea were gradually introduced to work the remaining allotments. The land was good; and by means of close cropping, it was found that no less than three crops could be reaped in the year.

[1] *Report of the Land and Immigration Board for* 1889.

The work of the Land and Immigration Board in promoting agricultural settlements in the Colony met with only a modicum of success. In the 'nineties, it was realised that there was little room in Natal for the white agricultural labourer. Assisted passages remained available for emigrants classed as agriculturists, but Natal farmers showed little disposition to utilise these facilities. Native labour, though not more reliable, was infinitely less expensive. In the towns there were few openings for newcomers. In 1896 the Government decided to discontinue subsidising the passages of artisans and others who might compete with colonists in the search for employment. Meanwhile, the old Board had been dissolved by Act no. 4 of 1894, though the legislature continued to make some appropriation for limited schemes of European immigration.

The sailing ship held its own in competition with the steamer until the early 'seventies. The worst days of the emigration traffic were past. Imperial legislation provided that ships should not carry passengers on more than two decks and that provision should be made for hospital equipment. An improved dietary was to be supplied during the voyage. Ventilation on sailing ships, however, continued to be unsatisfactory, for no adequate provision could be made against the contingency of a prolonged calm. The steamship, which gradually replaced the sailing ship on all emigrant routes, was able to furnish reasonably comfortable accommodation even for the steerage passenger. Losses of ships at sea might still deter nervous emigrants from leaving the homeland, as when the *Teuton* foundered on 30 August 1881, with thirty-nine passengers bound for Natal. But at least the dangers of the bar at Durban

had been largely overcome. Ships were larger and safer, whilst the length of the voyage to Natal had been materially reduced. Cramped quarters, insanitary conditions and revolting food, characteristic of the 'fifties, were things of the past. Emigration had become a well regulated branch of the great merchant shipping business.

7. ADVICE TO EMIGRANTS TO NATAL

From *Emigration to Natal* (official handbook), n.d.

The young emigrant cannot too soon get to understand that colonies are *not* cheap places to live in, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. Colonies are only cheap when the settler goes at once to his land, builds his own shelter there with his own hands, or nearly so, and with his own hands provides from the resources of his homestead all that he requires. In such circumstances, he does live cheaply, because he at once frees himself from both the need of and the temptation for all superfluous expenditure. If instead of at once going on his land, he settles himself in a town, he will be almost certain to find house rent dearer than it is in England, domestic service most probably not to be had at any price, the necessaries of life not cheaper than at home, and all luxuries fifty per cent. dearer. Even when he gets fairly upon the land and begins to realize prosperity, he will learn that it is not in money that his affluence first comes. His immediate accumulation will take the form of cattle, sheep, horses, houses and land; and he will have to look to time and favourable opportunity for the conversion of these—into cash. If the settler begins his work with limited means, he must of necessity husband these with the utmost care. He must first live in a thatched hut, very much like the hut that the Kaffirs construct for themselves, but having the added convenience of a door and window. A commodious dwelling of this class may be built by the aid of Kaffirs, and

by having the door and window sent from some town, at an expenditure of about £10. The climate is so sunny and genial that men may live in huts of this character for long periods.

When his first rude dwelling has been provided, the settler proceeds at once to enclose a small portion of his land, suitable for agricultural operations, within the protection of a ditch and sod fence. The Indian corn then naturally becomes his first crop, as it pretty well affords the food actually requisite for his Kaffirs, besides furnishing a most valuable and comprehensive article for his own table.

It is deemed well here to add an instance of what has been actually done with a small capital of £500 in up-country mixed farming, by a thrifty and industrious settler who had a small holding of land in the neighbourhood of Maritzburg.

	£
A sod house, plastered inside and out, cost	30
20 oxen .. .. „	80
50 cows .. .. „	150
200 ewes .. .. .. „	150
Seed for crops .. .. .. „	30
Pigs and poultry .. .. „	10
Waggon and other small expenditure „	50
Giving a sum total of first outlay, in addition to land	£500

The income actually realised in the first year was :—	£
40 calves from the 50 cows	40
Butter	50
Sheep, 100 lambs at 10s. each	50
Beans, wheat, mealies and potatoes from 30 acres	100
Bacon	30
Total receipt	£270

From this there was, of current expenditure, to be deducted :—	£
Wages for 1 ploughman and 3 labourers	30
Food for native labourers	18
	£48

The settler had lived during this period and supported his own household on the produce of pigs, sheep and poultry; and he reckoned that the actual profits of his third year would be at least double those of the first, from the sale of stock and increase of dairy produce.

It is of the utmost importance that the settler's wife and daughters should know thoroughly how to do those many things that are performed by neat-handed domestics in English households, so that they may *at least* be able to teach native servants how to carry through these more or less necessary arrangements and operations, and even be capable of doing the things themselves under circumstances of temporary need. Knowledge and skill in this particular make all the difference between great comfort and extreme discomfort in a settler's dwelling. Women who have been used only to the habits of refined and cultivated society in an old land should perfectly understand this before they enter upon a colonial life.

8. "THE EXPERIENCES OF A PERFECT NOVICE."

From an *Appendix* to the pamphlet *Emigration to Natal*, 1866

In November 1861, I landed in Durban, foolishly spent ten months "looking about me," as the phrase was, and on 9 September 1862, entered on my present farm. The farm was small, consisting altogether of 255 acres, more or less. Twenty acres were enclosed by a ditch and bank, the latter planted with seringa trees through its entire length, and on one side in addition with blue gums. These twenty acres were in a fair state of cultivation. Ten acres adjoining were half-enclosed by a ditch and bank, but no trees were planted on the bank, and about one-fourth of the enclosure had the turf ploughed up. Within the larger enclosure was a dwelling-house, a decent building as compared with the general construction of that kind in the district, including rooms for storing grain,

sacks and all the small appurtenances of the plough and cart, also a pantry. Some of the eight rooms were small, having been originally constructed for pig-sties. They were, however, substantial, and admitted of being made tolerably comfortable. About twenty feet from the dwelling-house, and parallel with it, was a small stable and milking-shed. The space between these and the house was each night occupied by about a score of cows. It was the cow kraal. This yard was covered with litter and dung, generally from one to two feet thick through which the cattle plunged during the long nights. . . . The cows could scarcely be expected to lie down, and of course were constantly on the move; now rubbing their horns against the bars which protected the bedroom windows, then violently pitching each other against them, and anon varying their employment by a conversation more loud than interesting. To obtain sleep, it was not only necessary to get the ear accustomed to the strange noises, but also to have the nose and lungs inured to the smell and malaria, that, during the sultry tropical nights, in spite of every precaution, filled every part of the bedrooms. As I did not believe any possible circumstances could justify the proximity of such a nuisance, the cow kraal soon ceased to exist there. A tiny lean-to at one end of the milking-shed, used for curing bacon, a rickety pigsty, a moribund cattle kraal, and half an acre of peach orchard completed the inventory, which represented all I was to have, when fortune had so smiled upon me as to enable me to pay £500 for them. I entered on the farm; and, after paying ten per cent. of the purchase money, all I had were four oxen, two cows, one heifer, a one-year-old bull, and two calves; also a horse which ran away a few weeks after, and which I have not seen since. Together, at the then high prices, my stock was worth about £66, which, with 22s. 9d. in cash, was my entire capital. I had however expectations from England, which made the venture somewhat less rash than it appeared to be.

Though a perfect novice in farming, before I had followed the occupation many months, I felt convinced that the methods of agriculture, practised in this district of Natal, were of the rudest possible kind; and that with a little more capital to purchase proper implements and obtain a sufficiently large herd of cattle to make manure, the average yield, of maize especially, could be doubled. During the first year, I had to battle through with but £70 of capital, which was no small hindrance. In 1863 and 1864, in consequence of engaging in cattle dealing, I had lung sickness constantly amongst my small stock and lost a large percentage; and in attending to this business I neglected my farm.

The summer of 1864-5 was the "rust year." The entire oat crop was that season destroyed by rust. This had not happened before during the time the Colony had been in existence; and of course the loss I sustained, when introduced into a four years' balance sheet, makes a greater deficiency than if it were spread over sixteen or twenty years.[1] That year I had forty acres under crop, 15 of which were in oats. The summer of 1865-6 was the dryest the Colony has known; and in consequence the yield of maize was lower than in any preceding year, improved methods of cultivation being allowed for. In that year I had 66 acres under cultivation, 62 of which were in maize.

The summers of '62-'63, and '63-'64 were favourable; but in the former, my first year, I had but 19 acres under plough and these were badly managed; and in '63-'64 only 25 acres. The four winters I have been here, old colonists tell me, have been above the average for mildness and moistness, so that probably I have reaped some advantage from that source.

[1] The writer of these memoirs, R. E. Ridley, had been a saddler in Lancashire before emigrating to Natal. His farming career terminated in failure in the later 'sixties, and he became chief writer for the *Times of Natal*, and a member of the Legislative Council. The farm described in these pages was situated some thirty miles from Maritzburg. For an estimate of Ridley, see R. W. Keate to Sec. of State, February 1871 (Conf.).

I have thus endeavoured to give a fair statement of my doings, having undervalued, rather than overvalued, everything. A greater measure of success is now, I am sure, open to any man who with a fair capital, ordinary capacity, moderate industry and economical habits, chooses to seek it in Natal. Life here is not all hard work. I spend on an average one to two days each week shooting buck or partridge. Pleasant neighbours are on all sides; we visit often and enjoy social life as it can only be enjoyed when perfect freedom socially and politically exists. Four months of our winter is one unbroken sunshine, tempered by a dry bracing breeze that gives strength and spirits to a man, and makes life truly enjoyable. There are many difficulties to be encountered; much self-denial and perseverance required, but not more, if so much, as is necessary to success anywhere. Things seem very strange the first year. The emigrant has to learn altogether a new mode of life. He knows nothing of the Kaffir language; yet must have Kaffir labourers and must speak to them in their language. It is almost inconceivable how much annoyance is felt, and no little loss sustained too, while the newcomer is being initiated into the mysteries of the Zulu tongue. This fortunately is becoming each year less a difficulty. There is, in my estimation, nothing in all the catalogue of dangers, difficulties or hardships in Natal life, to be placed for a moment as a set-off against the grateful soil and genial climate of the country.

9. SIR FREDERICK BROOME CONSIDERS HOW BEST TO ATTRACT EUROPEAN EMIGRANTS TO NATAL

From *Report on Crown Lands and European Immigration*, 1 June, 1876

Land and Immigration in Natal can no longer be dealt with on a broad basis. Here, the early days have long passed, and the ample space has long been

occupied, which are required for their large treatment, and it is scarcely too much of a paradox to say that we have now to consider how best to attract immigration to a country already peopled, how best to deal with lands already alienated. . . .

As for our soil, it would appear that Natal land is too often a doubtful commodity. Parched and saturated by turns, there seems too often poison in the rich grasses, and an unprofitable fertility in the red African earth. The immigrant has before now fought shy of it, when it was offered to him; and owners have returned it to Government as a bad bargain. Among the oldest settlers, there is uncertainty and diversity of opinion as to its capabilities. The herds sicken, and none can tell the reason or the cure. In many districts the flocks cannot exist during one season, on the pasture on which they have thriven during another; and must be driven across the mountains, so that stock farming has to be carried on, as it were, in duplicate. In the whole Colony, there are only a few thousand acres on which wheat will grow, and on these not without irrigation, to a yield of some twelve or thirteen bushels an acre. On the semi-tropical coast belt, the sugar cane flourishes fairly well, but it is the country of wheat and not the country of sugar which attracts the British emigrant. Farmers within reach of a market find the growing of "forage," or oat hay, a profitable industry. Tobacco and a number of other commodities have been raised in small quantities here and there; but, at present, at any rate, it would appear that the only true, general and infallible staple of Natal is maize, a grain which among Kaffirs may be the food of men, but among Englishmen is the food of horses, the old jest involving in this case a most serious fact.

We must remember also that, connect as we may the subjects of land and immigration, it is the labour market of a country and not its land which, setting aside the paramount attractions of gold or diamond fields, is the primary and principal inducement to immigrants. The labour market of Natal presents

peculiar conditions. In other colonies, capital calls for labour and the labour comes; but capital in Natal does not need European labour, as European labour is needed in Victoria and Canada. Our chief capitalists are the sugar planters of the coast, who would be ruined were they dependent on white labour, and whose cry is, not for European, but for African or Indian immigration. The farmers of Natal, Dutch or English, are not so much in want of white as of more black labour; and it is to be questioned whether they would prefer, or could afford, to pay a pound a week for Scotch shepherds, instead of ten or fifteen shillings a month for Kaffir. Take away the planters of the coast and the farmers of the country, and there remains but the labour market of the towns; and the two towns of Natal are scarcely labour markets which require immigration, as immigration is understood in other colonies, to feed them.

Natal has one characteristic, very significant of the disadvantageous condition it labours under as regards land and immigration. The poor gentleman, that nondescript which every healthy colony rejects, may settle nowhere so safely as in Natal. In Australia, in New Zealand, in the United States, he is crushed between the ranks of labour and capital; and, unless content to enlist in the former, must quit the field. In Natal it is different. Here there are no serried ranks of labour and capital; and the poor gentleman with a few hundred pounds can be a poor gentleman still, vegetating in a sort of way, with his few head of stock, his patch of "forage" or "mealies," his cheap acres and his Kaffir servants.

The task before us is indeed difficult. We have to devise a scheme of immigration to a colony which, from the inherent conditions of its geographical position, is less suited for European settlement than countries in the more central latitudes of the temperate zone. We have to endeavour to people and cultivate Crown lands at present, through their remoteness from the market, almost entirely worthless for agricultural pur-

poses, and far inferior in nearly every respect to uncultivated tracts in private hands. We have to bring immigrants to a country in which much of the land is of doubtful value and uncertain capability; in which stock of all kinds are ravaged by strange and fatal diseases; which is already peopled by a black race, whose cheap labour renders it problematic whether a couple of shiploads of immigrants would not swamp the market for white servants and workmen. We have to redress the balance of a population weighted with barbarism, when our immigrants may, and probably will, in some numbers, quit us for the neighbouring diamond fields soon after their arrival. The complete accomplishment of such a task as this cannot be for many years; and the best spirit in which to begin it is that of a candid confession of the difficulties and drawbacks which exist, but which nevertheless may leave us room to accomplish something.

There are some favourable, and some characteristic, conditions which may recommend the Colony, and our London Agent should make the most of them. There is first the fine climate. Then, Natal is close to England compared with Australia or New Zealand; and the voyage, besides being short, is over smooth seas in fine steamers, and pleasantly broken. The construction of railways, which will greatly facilitate transport and open up the country, is progressing, and trade is active and prosperous. The interior traffic of the Colony is extraordinarily great; the main road to the Dutch states is a crowded thoroughfare; transport riding is very lucrative, and a waggon and span of oxen afford their owner the means of a comfortable livelihood. Wages for Europeans are high, and the white workman is no longer in the lowest rank of the community, but finds himself exalted over a whole population, and doing his day's work like a lord, with several Kaffirs to wait upon him. Degrading and adverse as such a state of things may in reality be, it is one which has its attractions for most emigrants of the working class; and, since it exists, there is no reason why it should not

be set before them for what it is worth, or for what they may think it is worth. In the same manner, the diamond and goldfields of our neighbours should be mentioned, though they will probably rob us of many a good immigrant. There is a certain ease in Natal life, an absence of the stress and strain, the hard and unremitting manual labour which is the immigrant's lot in more bustling communities, and this may be dwelt upon. Let the gentleman of small means also be invited to his own peculiar colony, for his sons and daughters will recruit our strength. If all these things be fairly set forth, and if there be added absolutely free passages for labouring people and others who cannot afford to pay, together with the further inducement of land, cheaper at any rate than any to be had in Australia or New Zealand, I believe we shall be able to obtain as many immigrants as we can at present provide for.

10. SHEARING TIME ON AN UPLAND FARM

From *Life in the Uplands of Natal*, Cape Monthly Magazine, x, pp. 242–8 (1875)

Shearing time in our wool-growing colonies is always the epoch of the year, but in Natal it means something more than the mere gathering in of the wool harvest. It was long held by the settlers that a native could not be trusted or taught to clip. This idea probably emanated with the Dutch, who always misdoubted a Kaffir's capability of performing any but the most menial farm offices; and so arose the very general custom that led the principal settlers of a district to assemble and mutually assist each other to shear in rotation; the which, as the flocks were but small, and professional shearers unknown, answered sufficiently well.

Very pleasant social breaks to the monotony of up-country life these meetings grew to be. Old friends not met with for months and recent arrivals alike were sure to be found at So-and-So's clipping. Open

handed hospitality is on these occasions freely extended to all comers; and though a straightforward shearer, who sticks to his work closely, is always appreciated, yet still, if a man proves but a cheerful, genial companion, his work may pass muster, without too severe a scrutiny; and the shearing over, a picnic is often planned to the cool shades of the bush (as the forests hereabout are termed), where a harvest of rare ferns rewards the lady collector, while the ruder sex may organise a bush buck hunt, or some other amusement, before they separate for their respective homes. Mr. Bent [1] still adheres to the old custom, though he has amply proved that with proper and patient instruction his own native labourers soon become clever at all descriptions of skilled farm labour. Indeed he has in his employ some Zulu shearers whom he is open to back against all comers.

Presently a bell rings, and my host appears to conduct me to the supper table—that pleasant, substantial, sociable meal to which you who have probably in colonial fashion risen at daylight, and so dined at noon, bring a hearty sharp-set appetite. All the members of the family are now assembled down to the youngest hope, still rather uncertain of gait. A goodly band truly, for Mr. Bent has several married sons and daughters settled in the neighbourhood, who have arrived with their families, so that with some friends from a distance we sit down to table twenty in number. The board is very amply spread; but still, as our host informs us with pardonable pride, all the concomitants of the feast have been gathered from his own estates. The huge baron of beef that commands the head of the table owes its thick luscious layers of fat to the soft, rich, mimosa-sheltered pasture; the venison, game and poultry come from near home, while the sugar and coffee have travelled for many a mile up from the coastlands, where they were grown on an estate in which Bent holds a share. Much of the

[1] Mr. Bent's farm, Yarrow, was situated in the north-west portion of Umvoti County.

furniture too has been turned from native timber; and we particularly admire the frame-work and doors formed of sneeze wood, which, when well worked up, much resembles satinwood in appearance, with this further advantage, that it perfectly resists the attacks of the white ant.

The meal over, our party disperse, and I join a group, who, comfortably seated in the verandah, are enjoying their cigars and discussing countryside news the while. Presently, the rich, full tones of a fine piano are wafted through an open window at the further end of the building, and it is with a certain thrill of surprise and pleasure that I hear a sweet young voice breaking forth in the words of a ballad which was a new and general favourite when I left England but a few weeks back; for rapid steam communications have now placed European novelties of all descriptions within easy reach; and I question much if the spry Natalians are not in possession of recent publications and modern fashions ere they have penetrated to very many retired nooks and corners in Great Britain, or wild districts in Ireland.

But a sense of the impending work on the morrow soon drives us to seek our couches, which in the case of we men had been prepared in a large spare room in one of the out-buildings, and which, during shearing time, is turned into a bachelors' hall for helpers from a distance. An hour before sunrise I am aroused by a Kaffir boy, who silently hands me a cup of coffee; and, early though it be, the whole family seems astir. As I step out into the sharp morning air, I see two new arrivals busy off-saddling their horses; while Mr. Bent himself in stentorian tones is calling out the Kaffirs from their hive-shaped grass huts and bidding them be up and doing.

. . . . . .

The tinkle of a bell presently calls us in to an early breakfast, and that dispatched the party repairs to the shearing-shed, where all is now in readiness for the serious commencement of business. Let us glance at

the scene an hour before noon, when all things have fairly slid into their appointed grooves and are working smoothly. The flock hurdled in the morning has sensibly diminished, and a fair number of sheep bereft of their coats sprinkle the adjoining paddock. A brawny Kaffir guards the penned animals, and, obedient to the call of the shearer, catches and brings him a sheep as required. In a corner of the shed an oblong box stands on end, into which a wool bale is fixed for the reception of the fleeces, which a stout heavy Kaffir, armed with a sort of wooden spade, stamps and presses as tightly as possible. To the eye of an Australian accustomed to light work conducted on a large scale, and attended with much care and precision, there is perhaps a certain roughness and want of finish in the arrangements, and carelessness in picking of the fleeces, shorn as they are in the grease, and tossed unsorted into the bale. The up-country Dutch farmers are specially careless as to the condition and packing of their bales. A wool purchaser at Pietermaritzburg once published in the public journals a list of what may be termed strange foreign bodies turned out of a pack. Some old iron, a few brick bats, a pair of very ancient boots, half an ox-skull, with other articles too numerous to specify. But among Natal farmers the importance of giving increased attention and care to the general shearing operations is now almost universally felt.

. . . . . .

A few days more, and the imported sturgeon merinos, which form the rear guard of the flock, are triumphantly disposed of, and the season's shearing is over. The wool bales are stowed in an out-house till it be convenient to pack a waggon for the capital; but the troubles and anxieties of the farmer are by no means over. The journey to town is a long and difficult one. For some spots the road is little better than a swamp, where the waggon may stick fast till it be from necessity off-loaded. Several unbridged streams have also to be forded at considerable peril, should the water run high, while

heavy thunderstorms in the afternoons are frequent, so many settlers accompany their drays on horseback, or rather meet them here and there at difficult points of the road. Even when the city is reached, a great difficulty may be found in meeting with a purchaser at a remunerative price, and frequently household supplies are accepted as part payment. Shearing-time fairly past, the upland farmer turns his attention to the garnering of his crops, for wheat and oats are both cultivated.

A traveller in Natal is generally much surprised at the very small proportion of an estate that is brought under the plough. The farm may embrace some eight thousand acres of land, composed of excellent soil for arable purposes, yet perhaps some fifty represent the area cropped. A little oasis in the wilderness. There have not been wanting passing visitors from other lands who, noting this anomaly, have publicly exhorted the Natalians to be up and doing, and satisfactorily swept away all obstacles and bridged over all difficulties—on paper. Indeed, it must be confessed, that most of the schemes suggested savoured strongly of, and were about as feasible as, the Irishman's simple process of making cannon. "Jist bore a big hole, and pour some iron round it."

The truth is that the Natalian winter is also the dry season. Little or no rain can be expected from May till August; consequently it is in the summer and wet season that harvesting must be carried on and under what difficulties can be well imagined. Violent thunderstorms and heavy rains of frequent occurrence stop the work for the time being, and the fierce glow of the returning sun forces and ripens the grain so rapidly that, if not speedily reaped, much is shed on the ground. Mr. Bent has only some forty acres under wheat, yet the difficulties to be overcome will be great, ere the product be fairly reaped, threshed and garnered; even though provided, as he is, with a reaping machine, thrashing machine, ample sheds and a fair force of Kaffirs (expenses that are probably beyond the

reach of the beginner). There are other annoyances incidental to the summer season which a farmer must submit to, or avoid, as best he may. Rust increases in virulence as the season wears on, and hailstorms are not unfrequent.

The earlier settlers in Natal are, as a rule, well supplied with native labour. Grants of land on which Kaffirs had squatted were easily enough obtained, and these Zulus work out their rent in a light and easy fashion by supplying the proprietor with a certain amount of manual labour during the year, at wages averaging about ten shillings a month per man.

Mr. Bent draws his labour from a farm distant some thirty miles from Yarrow, and situated in one of the deep valleys through which runs the clear and rapid Mooi river; the country thereabouts is so rugged, broken and densely wooded with thorny bush, and prickly aloes that cultivation is impossible. The European visitor might pass on with a shrug; but to the Kaffir it is a very paradise. He somehow manages to hoe up enough rich ground along the river banks to grow mealies for his consumption. The excellent heat in summer suits him, and his herds of cattle and flocks of goats (his chief source of wealth) flourish. So there he passes his time in luxurious idleness, attended on and caressed by his wives, till an unwelcome messenger intimates that his turn of service has come. Then indeed the farmer may be prepared for plausible excuses and shiftings without number, and sometimes much vexatious delay occurs. But, when once fairly set to work, the Zulu is not a bad fellow and can turn his hand to almost any household and farm work, though he seldom adheres to any one particular branch of industry. One native in Mr. Bent's household, surely gifted with unusually strong domestic proclivities, occupies the peculiar position of laundry and nursery maid, and I have the authority of a lady for stating that he proves very efficient.

I well remember the amusing effect produced on my mind at seeing this huge, brawny fellow gravely and

sedately ironing out some light trimming, while a little boy, his usual charge, played at his feet.

The native women are but seldom allowed out to service, as their lords and masters require their attentions.

And so the summer wears on, and the time comes when we must bid adieu to Yarrow, and thank the inmates for their kind hospitality, a hospitality which we are bound gratefully to acknowledge is extended by the Natalians without stint to the wayfarer and traveller throughout the land.

11. JOHN DELVIN DESCRIBES THE ARRIVAL OF THE WILGEFONTEIN SETTLERS

The *Natal Mercury*, 12 July 1930[1]

On July 12 1880, the Union *s.s. Nyanza* (Captain Ballard) arrived in Durban with 23 immigrant families, 138 persons, including seventy children under 17.

We reached Durban on a Monday night and anchored outside where, later, members of the Board came out, met the families and discussed the proposition. Briefly, it was agreed that farms should be drawn for at once, with the option of exchanging between themselves should the newcomers so desire. The farmers and their families were to be conveyed to their respective allotments, supplied with food, cooking apparatus and firewood for ten days and tents for three months. I am afraid the Board never saw those tents again. No payment was to be made for the first three years: but was to start in the fourth, and continue for ten years. These terms were gladly accepted.[2]

Before leaving the ship, addresses of appreciation were presented to Captain Ballard and Mr. Methley. Then, after a hearty farewell breakfast, which we young-

[1] John Delvin, then a boy in his early 'teens, was brought out to Natal by his guardian, Mr. Parkin. Parkin, who had farmed in New Zealand, calculated that land would be available in Natal on the termination of the Zulu war. He read Methley's advertisement in the *Leeds Mercury*.

[2] The original regulations provided for occupation free of rent for two years and the issue of freehold titles after the expiration of twelve years.

sters enjoyed immensely, we were lowered over the side in baskets into the waiting tugs, in which we had a bumpy passage across the bar. There were hundreds of people to meet us on the shore, their welcome taking the practical form of dumping large quantities of fruit, cakes, sweets and flowers into the railway carriages. At the railway terminus at the foot of Inchanga bank, we found tents erected and food and tea cooked for everyone. In addition, bedding was plentiful.

The next day, everybody and everything found places on a dozen or so ox-waggons; and we set out for the north. The trek over the steep Inchanga Pass was a most interesting experience, and a source of delight to the young, irresponsible members of the party. We saw one waggon which had capsized over the steep escarpment on the left side of the mountainous road, the load being scattered almost to the bottom. Camperdown was reached at sunset, and an encampment made for the night, where again, as at Inchanga, tentage and food were provided. Our destination was reached at noon next day. Early in the business of settling down came the inspection of the allotments and the pointing out of beacons. This was done in a hurried and perfunctory manner, leading to many disputes regarding boundaries.

After ten days of liberal rations, we were left to fend for ourselves, and this necessitated a walk of seven miles to Maritzburg, to purchase food, implements, seed and building material. There was no other means of getting into town than on foot. After a visit to the bank, we strolled through the little town, and made our purchases from the very few shops. I can recollect Tomlinson's, Woodhouse's, Dunton's and Dickinson's, the merchant from whom we purchased our building material, including "gospel oak" roofing iron.

It amused us to see waggons outspanned in Longmarket street, while the oxen grazed on the grass growing along the sides of the water furrows. Another feature which struck us was the absence of European

policemen. Later in the year, my cousin, G. Gibbons, who came out with us, was enrolled as a policeman and became the first sergeant.

On our first arrival, several immigrants had been dismayed by the dismal appearance of the settlement. The grass had been burned a few days before; and the bleached, or charred, bones of oxen scattered over the ground, appeared to those fresh from the green pastures overseas to be an evil omen. Seven families left[1] the second week and settled in other parts of Natal; others obtained positions in Maritzburg and Durban, while one family of seven persons returned to Scotland, only to proceed the following year to Port Elizabeth. The Board made some attempt to obtain refunds of the passage moneys from those who abandoned their farms, but as the majority of these people decided to remain in Natal, no legal proceedings were taken. In those days, Natal was only too glad to obtain British colonists, The abandoned farms were subsequently taken up by the sixteen farmers who remained.

We had numerous visitors at week-ends, most people riding over to see the "immigrants." We boys were always glad to see them, for many a shilling and half-crown were quietly given to the nice rosy-cheeked English children. The Governor, Sir Pomeroy Colley, and some of his staff, were among the visitors. A few months later; this fine soldier and gentleman was lying dead on Majuba.

For the first three years the farmers prospered, for prices were good. I remember we sold our first mealies at 30s. per muid, potatoes at 54s. a sack, eggs 6s. dozen, cabbages 2s. each and cauliflowers 4s. Oat and barley forage brought correspondingly high prices.

Commonage, access thereto and the cutting of hay caused a great deal of quarrelling. Several actions over riparian and irrigation rights were temporarily stayed by a working arrangement, drawn up after a meeting between the litigants with the magistrate,

[1] The figures given by Mr. Delvin should be compared with those in the official *Reports* of the Land and Immigration Board.

Mr. Forder and the secretary of the Immigration Board. After the prosperous three years, came the lean ones, this period unfortunately coinciding with the commencement of rent payments. The Board extended free occupation for another year, but there followed in succession drought, floods, locusts, army worms, lung sickness and low prices—and these combined to bring disaster on the settlement, though a few of the holders struggled on for a few more years.

The late Bishop Colenso and other clergy held service every Sunday at the big house originally occupied by Mr. Woodhouse, the owner of the whole farm. This building was reserved in perpetuity for use as a school. When the draw was made on the night of our arrival in Durban, the best farm, the only one with a house and irrigation furrow, was drawn by the one bachelor farmer of the party, Mr. W. Clark.

Most of the boys and girls as they grew up drifted away to the towns. Many families leased their farms, some to natives, whilst one or two cut their losses and abandoned all claims for a refund of payments made and for improvements.

The scheme of settlement, though well intended, was an utter failure, apart from the fact that it brought a number of good colonists to Natal. Of the forty farms, only two are now[1] occupied by descendants of the original settlers.

[1] 1930.

III

SHEPSTONE ANNEXES THE TRANSVAAL, 1877

SHEPSTONE'S annexation of the Transvaal belongs essentially to the annals of Natal. Economically, the two communities formed in large degree a single unit, whilst there was no such political separation as would debar Natalians from finding employment at Pretoria or burghers from showing their respect for the Queen by keeping her birthday as a public holiday. Dutch and English had always been freely intermingled in the Klip river magistracy and across the border in Utrecht. Not a few Natal colonists owned farms in the Republic. Many were in reality citizens of both states. In times of drought Transvaal farmers drove down their cattle to pasture in the richer uplands of the Colony. Though the Transvaal possessed the status of a self-governing community, the links which bound its interests to those of Natal were therefore strong, and they were drawn closer by the mineral discoveries in the north. When in 1877 Lord Carnarvon heard of the accomplishment of Shepstone's mission, it was the annexation of the Transvaal to Natal that he at first contemplated.

So early as the middle 'sixties, British ministers had begun to question the policy of the Sand River Convention which had guaranteed the self-governing rights of the farmers beyond the Vaal. What Secretaries of

State and their representatives in South Africa alike feared was an outbreak of war between independent Transvaal and its native neighbours. In that event the Colony of Natal would be gravely imperilled. Its native population was dangerously large. In search of an outlet for its swarming native subjects, its Government had appealed successively for additional territory in Nomansland, Basutoland and across the Tugela frontier. Except for a tiny strip in the south, no territory had been added to Natal in response to these representations.

From the earliest days of European settlement, Natal had been embarrassed by the large influx of natives across its frontiers. Though never the object of concerted attack by native tribes, the Colony was at a disadvantage in lying between a powerful and independent Zulu kingdom and the turbulent Kaffrarian tribes. On one occasion the pressure of victorious farmers north of the Orange river had brought Basutos stampeding down the Drakensberg passes in search of security from the pursuing commandos. Outnumbered by its own native subjects, Natal lived in continual fear of combination among the tribesmen by whom it was surrounded. No less a source of anxiety was the republican community beyond the Berg. For the Transvaal was continually engaged in efforts to bring native chiefs under Boer control. Victory for the farmers in their constantly recurring native wars was fraught with danger to neighbouring communities. The flight of broken and defeated tribes into the confined area of Natal would undo Shepstone's great work of pacification, and perhaps involve the Colony in the complications of a general native war. If, on the other hand, the Republic should be defeated, Natal,

itself confronted with the menace of Zulu aggression, would suffer incalculable damage through the decline of European prestige.

Since, as was abundantly clear, the native problems of the Transvaal transcended its own borders and threatened to bring about a clash of races which statesmen would find it difficult to localise, it was a wise precaution for the Colonial Office to take counsel with Theophilus Shepstone. For Shepstone had done more than any man living to avert a struggle in South-East Africa between colonist and tribesman. "He saw long distances," wrote Sir William Butler,[1] "and moreover the hills on the horizon had other sides for him." Lord Carnarvon believed that, with his long experience in native administration, he would be able to exercise a salutary influence on Boer-Zulu relations. In Natal, Shepstone had been as anxious as the European colonists to make room for legitimate European expansion. At the same time, he possessed in unique degree the affection and respect of the natives.[2] "That we have escaped a great and serious war up to this time," wrote Lord Carnarvon to the Queen (5 June, 1877), "is in my opinion entirely due to him."

In the 'sixties, nothing had been further from the minds of successive Cabinets than an extension of British territory in South Africa. Insistence of the Treasury on economy left Colonial Secretaries no alternative but to pursue a policy of renunciation of responsibility. They endeavoured to help Natal, and to avert any aggravation of the already complicated and dangerous native problem, by heading the trekker communities away from the coast and retaining control over the supply of munitions. Even after the adoption

[1] W. F. Butler, *Autobiography* (1911), p. 185.

of the policy of confederation, the dominant motive at Whitehall remained the contraction of British responsibilities, and the lightening of the financial burden carried by the mother country.

Co-operation of the different communities within a federated South Africa was a condition precedent of British withdrawal. For only a powerful state, exercising control over every aspect of native policy, could cope satisfactorily with the problems of racial contact. Before the Great Trek, the Cape Colony had not been a rich or a populous community, but its Government dominated the southern half of the sub-continent, and alone exercised control over the relations between black and white. In the succeeding generation, frontier disputes and native risings had followed in quick succession. Desirous of placing a limit to territorial expansion, the mother country had signed conventions, conferring self-government upon the emigrant states. But Whitehall soon found that it could not divest itself of its responsibility for the welfare of the black man. Nor, in view of the gravity of native discontent, could it decline to take thought for the safety of the European colonists. The trouble with Langalibalele in Natal (1873-4) was an awkward reminder that the day of isolated native wars was over.

When Lord Carnarvon accepted the office of Colonial Secretary in Disraeli's Government, South African affairs could no longer be regarded as local and unimportant. David Livingstone had filled in the blank spaces on the map of the interior. The famous *Missionary Journals* lifted for ever the veil which had surrounded the territory to the north and east of the Transvaal. Livingstone's enthusiasm quickened the humanitarian zeal for the abolition of slavery. To

[2] *Infra*, pp. 242 *sqq.*

complete the task of rooting out the Arab traffic, Britain needed not only the co-operation of the Sultan of Zanzibar, which was secured within five weeks of the death of Livingstone, but also effective command of the south-eastern coastline. Just when final success seemed to be within the power of the British Admiralty, the French President's award (1875) of the shores of Delagoa Bay to Portugal revealed a weak link in the cordon of British control. Moreover, through Delagoa Bay, non-British interests might penetrate to the Transvaal. In the 'seventies, European Powers had begun to take an interest in the colonisation of the African interior. Demands for colonial territory were expected to follow. Reports of the presence of Germans at St. Lucia Bay and along the Zululand coast were being filed in the colonial office at Maritzburg. Shepstone believed that Germany only awaited a favourable opportunity to step into British shoes in the Transvaal. European rivalries thus penetrated into South-African waters. At Pretoria, these developments were not unwelcome. The Republic already contemplated an independent railroad, financed by European capital and secured against British interference by a system of foreign alliances. So early as 1875, the British Foreign Office could envisage a Transvaal strong enough to reject confederation and turn its back on the south.

At the moment, no community could have displayed more overt indications of coming collapse. The white population consisted of some 45,000 European settlers, of whom the great majority were Dutch-speaking farmers, courageous and hospitable by temperament, but obstinate in their adherence to the customs of their fathers and utterly intolerant of governmental control. Here, as in the Orange Free State, the Boer common-

wealth was built upon the foundations of the self-sufficing family. The solitary farmstead, surrounded by thousands of acres of lonely veld, bred a self-regarding spirit which resented the interference of officials, and upheld with indomitable tenacity the patriarchal authority of the farmer. Somewhat similar conditions had existed in the late 'forties in upland Natal. In all probability, Transvaal burghers were no more averse than Natal colonists to the imposition of taxation or the exercise of the authority of the state. But the northern community was riven with civil dissension. Its leaders were united only in defence of the interests of the European farmer and the maintenance of inequality as between white and black. Discord, civil and ecclesiastical, prevented the orderly functioning of the life of the community. The population was weak and scattered. Its wealth lay exclusively in land and stock; and, by the close of the year 1875, unalienated reserves had been so far reduced by reckless grants that the harassed exchequer ceased to derive revenue from the sale of public land. The tiny income of the state was engulfed in the sea of indebtedness which followed the launching of President Burgers' scheme to link Pretoria by rail with Lourenço-Marques. In 1876, Natal merchants complained that accounts against the state could not be paid. When certified by the auditor, they floated amongst the population of the towns as a kind of depreciated currency. Burghers, though they might escape the payment of taxation, were no better off than the officials. For the slump in land prices produced a strain on the finances of countless households. With the banks refusing to discount bills, the Republic was clearly drifting towards bankruptcy and chaos.

Among the townsfolk, a large proportion of whom were English, there was little room for confidence in continuation of the republican régime. On the diggings also public opinion favoured a complete change in the structure of government. The clamour for annexation in the press of Natal became more insistent with the arrival of every mail-cart from the north.

In 1876 the Republic became involved in a struggle with the Bapedi chief, Sekukuni. In the debatable frontier lands, where farmer strove with tribesman for possession of the pasture, a condition of anarchy had long existed. Pressure on native land was a symptom of the growing shortage of farms for Europeans. Committed to the construction of the projected railroad, the Republic, no less than its subjects, needed land for its very existence. The territory which it now claimed from the Bapedi, on the ground of a thirty-year-old Swazi concession, had been pledged as security for the railway loan. Sekukuni's resistance made it necessary for Burgers to call out the farmers. But the defiant chief was too strong to be overcome in his mountain stronghold. Excitement blazed up all over South Africa when it became known that a commando led by the President in person had been repulsed in disorder. Subsequent news brought no reassuring information. Though the forces of the state suffered no further reverses, the campaign was conducted with incredible harshness, calculated to inflame native opinion on all the republican frontiers. Nothing could undo the moral effect of defeat at the hands of a minor chieftain. Across the Buffalo, Cetewayo, nursing his own long-standing grievances against the Boers, lost his respect for the fighting prowess of the Dutch farmer. On all sides the tribes were encouraged to set at defiance the

authority of the Government. Even the Swazi, who had fought for the Republic against Sekukuni, felt humiliated by the successful defiance of the Bapedi. Alarm spread through the isolated European farmsteads and among the gold diggings at Lydenburg. But Burgers knew that the Republic could not withdraw. A pastoral community must expand or perish. The war was prosecuted more vigorously and Sekukuni induced to negotiate for peace. On another frontier, the Government put forward claims over the territory of Montsioa.

The disturbing news from South Africa hastened the intervention of Great Britain. On 14 September, Lord Carnarvon knew that the initial defeat of the republican commando had been followed by a movement within the state to invite the protection of the British High Commissioner. A few weeks later, he read in Sir Henry Barkly's sombre paragraphs an account of the atrocities committed by the irregular forces of Von Schlickman and Alfred Aylward. Barkly feared that a native war on a large scale would ensue, unless Great Britain intervened. There was clearly need for resolute action. Fortunately both Wolseley and Shepstone were in England. At Downing Street, Shepstone spoke with authority on the native mind and the possibility of a general conflagration spreading from the Transvaal to the neighbouring British colonies. He knew that appeals had reached Maritzburg and Capetown to take over the government of the country. When shown Barkly's telegram asking for instructions, Shepstone suggested that the Governor of Natal should be entrusted with the conduct of negotiations. Carnarvon preferred however to use Shepstone himself. On 23 September, Natal's great native administrator left England for South Africa. He carried with him

authority to annex the Transvaal, if he should be satisfied that a sufficient number of the inhabitants desired it.

There can be no doubt that Lord Carnarvon welcomed the opportunity to bring back the Republic under British control. But behind the immediate step of annexation lay the ultimate goal of confederation, which would give South Africa the means to cope with its formidable native difficulties and "greatly lessen the probability of a demand for aid in the shape of Imperial money or troops." [1] What Carnarvon envisaged was a self-governing federation under the British flag, which would ensure a much larger degree of control by South Africans over their domestic affairs than could be permitted to small and weak communities. He believed that leadership and co-ordination were essential. But the Cape Colony, the oldest and wealthiest unit in the sub-continent, had declined to share the burdens and responsibilities of its neighbours. Rebuffed by Molteno, the Cape Premier, Carnarvon turned to the north. He knew that, if the Transvaal could be secured for confederation with the goodwill of a large part of its inhabitants, it was unlikely that the older Colony would be able to hold aloof. In itself, the northern state possessed no attractions for British statesmen. The prosperity of its goldfields lay in the future, whilst the Keate award had cut away all land known to be diamondiferous. Only because the recalcitrance of Molteno had blocked the road to confederation through the self-governing south was it "of great consequence to secure the Transvaal." [2]

Shepstone reached Natal in November. Here he encountered rumours of Zulu preparations on the

[1] On the colonial policy of Lord Carnarvon, see A. Hardinge, *The Life of Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, 4th Earl of Carnarvon*, ii (1925).
[2] Lord Carnarvon to Sir T. Shepstone, 4 October, 1876.

Transvaal frontier. Conditions in the Blood river territory had been tense for many years. Boer farmers had continually straggled across the border into fertile Zululand, in search of pasture for their cattle, acquiring grazing concessions which were not easily distinguishable from territorial grants. When Cetewayo succeeded Panda, Boer penetration encountered a more stubborn resistance. The new monarch had never been the vassal of a trekker republic, and he was by temperament masterful and sanguine. In 1876, he felt strong enough summarily to reject the terms of a settlement brought down by Rudolph from Pretoria. When the landdrost attempted to levy a hut tax in the disputed territory, Cetewayo replied by ordering the construction of a military kraal. Alarmed by reports of his bellicose attitude, Shepstone moved up to Newcastle to be near at hand in the event of a clash.

The Zulu terror in the borderlands prepared the way for a mission, the declared object of which was to discuss native affairs, and secure, if possible, a settlement of outstanding disputes. Shepstone knew well enough that he must enter the Transvaal with the consent, and if possible at the invitation, of the republican authorities. He therefore wrote to Burgers, asking for permission to visit Pretoria and to bring with him an escort of 25 men of the Natal mounted police. It was known at Maritzburg that no objection had been raised when the Governor of Lourenço-Marques had visited the state, accompanied by a detachment of Portuguese soldiery. Along the route through Standerton, Shepstone and his staff were received with enthusiasm. Authority was ebbing away from the President and his officials. Even the humblest shopkeeper knew that the state was insolvent.

Shepstone's proceedings at Pretoria fall outside the scope of the present volume.[1] After lengthy negotiations with Burgers, whose public speeches were clearly intended to pave the way for annexation, Shepstone issued his proclamation of British sovereignty on 12 April 1877. His reports to Whitehall left no doubt as to his personal conviction that the majority of the burghers welcomed the assertion of British authority; and it is not clear that his judgment was mistaken. He had not resorted to the weapon of bribery, unless his promise of a pension to Burgers can be so interpreted. All the prominent leaders, Kruger and Joubert alone excepted, seem to have been convinced that the state could not maintain its independence in the face of financial collapse and the gravity of the native menace. It is clear that Shepstone was personally popular. He was generous with gifts to hospitals and to children in the street[2] and he could speak with sympathetic understanding of the problems of the pastoral farmer in the midst of a prolific native population. He doubtless realised that there were many in the remoter districts who were not willing to sacrifice independence even to obtain the security which the British connection promised. But he estimated their numbers to be smaller than they probably were.

On the question whether a Zulu invasion was actually imminent there can be no certainty of opinion. Shepstone's critics said that he deliberately exaggerated the danger. They even whispered that the presence of the impis on the frontier had been invoked to aid

[1] See C. J. Uys, *In the Era of Sir T. Shepstone* (1933); C. W. de Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor in South Africa* (1937); and A. F. Hattersley, *Annexation of the Transvaal* (*History*, xxi, pp. 41 *sqq.*).

[2] "Shepstone was immensely popular in Pretoria. He spoke the taal perfectly, and knew exactly how to handle the Dutch." Elsa Smithers, *March Hare*, p. 100.

his mission. Bishop Colenso was at one time inclined to give credence to these rumours. It is now clear that Shepstone used his influence in the direction of peace. But subsequent events showed that his confidence that his advice would prevail was not altogether justified. Whilst Shepstone had been in England, Cetewayo's emissaries had been active in many parts of South-East Africa. In October (1876), messengers from Griqualand East had ridden in to Maritzburg with the alarming intelligence that "people there talked without any reserve of the proposal that, it was said, had come from Cetewayo for a combination between Zulus, the Basutos and other native tribes against the whites generally."[1] In earlier years, Cetewayo had shown deference towards the man who had placed the crown on his head, though he had always resented messages which savoured of dictation. He entertained no feelings of gratitude towards Shepstone, and his anxiety to pay off old scores against the Transvaal amounted to a consuming passion. The level-headed Governor of Natal, Sir Henry Bulwer, had no doubt concerning the reality of the Zulu menace. The danger of war had been perceptibly increased by the prolonged drought and the ravages of lung-sickness. Cetewayo bitterly resented the prohibition from Natal, directed even against a raid across the borders of Swaziland. In December, he had thrown off all restraining influences. But, in order to overcome the reluctance of his subjects to take a step which the Natal Government had refused to sanction, Cetewayo used Shepstone's name in his orders to the impis.[2]

No one in England and few in Natal believed that

[1] Sir H. Bulwer to Lord Carnarvon, 31 October 1876.

[2] Colenso Collection, Letter Book, 1877 (Natal Archives); see no. 13, *infra*, pp. 121-2.

the Republic could withstand a Zulu invasion. A generation ago, the laagered waggons had foiled the stabbing assegais in the fighting against Dingaan. But Cetewayo was a more formidable foe, and, in any movement of invasion, the frontier population must have been overwhelmed. Shepstone believed that, whilst he remained at Pretoria, his influence would induce Cetewayo to hold his hand. He saw no reason why he should not use the Zulu preparations, which he was powerless to avert, as a means of persuading the Boers to consent to co-operation. His unique success in management of the native population of Natal gave point to his explanation of the gravity of the danger in the frontier districts.

Perplexed by reports from the borderlands and angered by the folly of Burgers, the people received the proclamation of annexation with a quiet acquiescence which was not far removed from consent. Many were prepared to welcome a closer connection with Natal and Cape Colony. Few were disposed to underrate the value of the military security and financial assistance which the proclamation foreshadowed. Nevertheless, loss of independence was a severe blow to Kruger and his followers.

In failing to convoke the Volksraad and to insist on a formal vote on the issue of the Queen's sovereignty, Shepstone made a mistake which nothing could repair. He was content to place his own interpretation upon the attitude of the republican officials. Burgers had been careful to avoid compromising himself in public. He had explained in private to Shepstone that his official protest was merely formal. Inasmuch as he had assisted in the actual wording of the proclamation of annexation, he was naturally reckoned by Shepstone

among the friends of the new régime. Even Kruger displayed no recalcitrance towards Shepstone's government. Before he set out with Jorissen on his mission of protest to London, he frankly promised his loyal support in the event of failure at Whitehall. Whilst the subscription of funds to pay the delegates' expenses might be regarded as an ominous sign, Shepstone was reassured by a memorial in protest against the mission, to which six members of the Volksraad appended their signatures. It is evident that there was substantial satisfaction at the renewal of salary payments to officials and the prospect of a share, long withheld, in the customs receipts at the colonial ports. Aware of this sentiment, Shepstone was content to waive insistence on an open vote in support of his proclamation. It was a fatal error. His assumption of the government bore the impress of illegitimacy, because he could point to no constitutional expression of popular consent.

Shepstone had promised the Transvaal "a separate government, with its own laws and legislature." At London, Carnarvon was ready to discuss with Kruger and Jorissen the administrative requirements of the country. A constitution acceptable to the leading burghers could not be devised in a moment. Meanwhile, the Transvaal was virtually governed by Natal. With Henrique Shepstone in charge of native affairs, the main lines of Natal's native policy were introduced, shorn however of its essential provision of location land. In the civil administration, Osborn, resident magistrate at Newcastle, and James Henderson were Shepstone's principal advisers. He himself functioned as provisional legislature, introducing by proclamation various changes in the law and in the administration of justice.

It was a system of government which could not long be made agreeable to the new subjects of Queen Victoria. Though Shepstone's difficulties must not be minimised, it is evident that the administration lacked magnanimity, and was calculated to increase the irritation consequent upon the suppression of the republican institutions. Shepstone himself relapsed into cold aloofness. He agreed with Sir Bartle Frere that it was impracticable to entrust legislative power to an elective body. The imperial grant, upon which so much depended, was soon exhausted. As Shepstone was an incompetent financier, the Colonial Office sent out W. C. Sargeant, who had been colonial secretary under John Scott in Natal, to bring the Transvaal back on to the path of financial solvency. Sargeant insisted on economy in expenditure and the collection of taxes. In following his advice, the Government inevitably alienated the sympathies of the population. Autocracy, combined with rigid economy, was incompatible with generous interpretation of the promises which Shepstone had in effect made, in return for the surrender of independence. Whilst Shepstone had perforce maintained the Republic's unsatisfactory system of taxation, its free institutions were in abeyance, Kruger and his followers, not one of whom were admitted to responsible office under the British régime, became deeply estranged. The prospects of confederation were already remote, and in January 1879, Shepstone was virtually recalled.

12. CONDITION OF THE TRANSVAAL UNDER PRESIDENT BURGERS

Sir T. Shepstone to R. Herbert, 2 February 1877 (Shepstone Collection Letters Dispatched 1850–80, *Acc.* 96–15, Natal Archives)

When I came to Pretoria, I thought it possible that

Mr. Burgers might see the impossibility of carrying on the government under existing circumstances, and that he might officially tell me so. In that event my course would have been clear, and I should at once have proceeded to act; but although he admits the impossibility fully enough to me in private, he is too nervous and timid to take any responsibility upon himself, and has called the Volksraad together for the 14th instant, to lay before it the state of the country. What the decision of this body may be it is difficult to conjecture, because, from the nature of its constitution, it scarcely represents the voice of the people, each member being elected for four years, half of the members retiring by rotation every two years, and there being no power in the constitution to dissolve it, except by a resolution of its own.

The condition of the country is wretched. No effective government is possible; the executive has no power to enforce the laws; the taxes remain unpaid; the Treasury is literally empty; there is no money in the country; trade has collapsed. Complications (have arisen) with surrounding native tribes, among these the Zulus (whom) the Government dare not touch.

But, in the face of all this, the Boer clings to his prejudices. So long as his farm and stock are untouched, he feels no pressure. The taxes may be demanded, but, if he declines to pay, no one can make him: and, as a rule, he does decline. The credit or honour of his Government is a matter of utter indifference to him. He hates English rule because he has been taught to do so from his infancy, but he can give no reason for his hatred. He thinks that somehow or other all the state difficulties will come right: he likes to think that he has got a Government and a flag, and that he calls freedom.

This describes a large section of the community from which opposition in every form to the British flag must be expected. There is however also a large section of the more enlightened, who represent the thought and intelligence of the country, who see and feel the collapsed condition of the state, who perceive the

impending dangers, but who fail to see any chance of improvement under the present form of government and who earnestly desire a change. What that change should be is but vaguely understood by many; and to a great extent is a matter of indifference to others, provided only it be from a weak to a strong arm.

From the latter class I am receiving numerously-signed addresses, asking for "confederation." Many sign them not understanding what confederation means; others believing in its efficacy because of the supremacy of the British flag, and others because they think that any change must be for the better.[1] In some cases, these addresses come to me direct; in others, the form of memorial to the President and Executive Council, praying that any overtures from me may be favourably received, is adopted, and copies of them transmitted to me.

The neighbourhood of Pretoria seems to be the stronghold of prejudice against the English flag. I have been told that 500 armed Boers from hereabout are to be in town in a day or two, to insist upon the President not treating with me; and to remove me and my party beyond the boundary of the Republic. I do not believe this. Of course, I should not think of resisting, but I do not think I should move.

The near approach of the presidential election shows the state of parties. Both the candidates[2] are unpopular with the majority of the people; and that majority won't vote for either, under the belief that by refraining they avoid the duty of obedience; and it is thought that the election of either candidate will cause civil war.

All I can now do is to wait upon events, which must develop themselves shortly. Mr. Burgers promises to put the matter fairly but forcibly before the Volksraad; and, if he does, the result must, I think, be favourable.

[1] It is clear that to many "confederation" meant no more than an alliance with the British Colonies.

[2] The retiring President, the Rev. T. F. Burgers and Paul Kruger. Much light is thrown on the election in S. P. Engelbrecht, *T. F. Burgers* (1933), and in T. F. Carter, *A Narrative of the Boer War* (1882).

Cetewayo is evidently also waiting to see what turns up, so there is for the moment a lull in South-African politics.

13. DUBIOUS ATTITUDE OF CETEWAYO

Confidential Report of John W. Shepstone, acting Secretary for Native Affairs, on Zulu affairs, 27 April 1877, S.N.A., 371, Natal Archives.

The two natives, Abraham and Solomon, whose statement I had the honour yesterday of submitting for your Excellency's information,[1] said that there was one thing they wished still to tell me, which they did not want me to put on paper with the words they had already given; and this was that Cetewayo had by his rule made himself so disliked that they knew of no one and especially no headman who would raise a hand to save him (Cetewayo) from ruin, no matter from what cause.

The above was confirmed only yesterday by reliable authority (to the effect) that a power such as the English stepping in now would be most welcome to the Zulus generally, through the unpopularity of the king, by his cruel and reckless treatment of his subjects.

I heard from another source that, during the early part of this month, spies were placed at certain distances along the entire border beyond the Biggarsberg, Cetewayo informing his people that he had been requested to do so by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, to see that no Boers escaped.

[1] These two natives were refugees from the Eshowe mission station. According to their statement made to John Shepstone, "the people, great and small, are tired of the rule of Cetewayo, by which he is finishing his people. The Zulu army is not what it was: there are only six full regiments, the others are only parts, and cannot be called regiments." On Cetewayo's attitude towards the Transvaal, the two natives declared: "Cetewayo has wished very much to make war upon the Boers and Amaswazi, but he has been stopped from doing so by (four headmen). These told the king not to scatter his people, and asked if he still remembered the words spoken when he was made king." The reference is to the promises made at the coronation of Cetewayo by Shepstone. S.N.A., 371, pp. 29-30.

I do not believe this last: in my opinion it is simply a blind. I do not say that the spies used are not told this. They may be, and at the same time be given the true reason, which they may be directed to conceal.

On the other hand, Cetewayo may have found it necessary to tell his people that Sir Theophilus had desired him to watch the border in order to get them to obey; as it is said, and I believe with some truth, that the Zulu forces have been called out so often to do nothing that great difficulty is now found to get them to respond to any call to arm.[1]

14. SHEPSTONE DRAFTS THE PROCLAMATION OF ANNEXATION

Sir T. Shepstone to Sir R. Herbert, 11 April 1877 (Shepstone Collection, Natal Archives Letter Book 1876–7)

I have arranged to issue to-morrow my proclamation declaring the Transvaal British territory: it is now only a question of printing, the facilities for which here are very small and inadequate to meet an emergency. I shall, besides the proclamation, publish an address to the people in which I speak to them as a friend, and explain to them less stiffly than can be done in a proclamation, the true state of affairs.

I have also determined simultaneously with these to publish another proclamation, suspending the operation of the law imposing the war levy which the people cannot pay without sacrificing, in many instances, the oxen with which they plough the land, and this grinds the poorer people into the very dust. It is an extremely unjust tax which the people have, as a rule, refused to pay, and which there is not in fact money enough

[1] This incident was probably the origin of the story that Cetewayo massed his impis on the Transvaal border on a hint from Shepstone. Shepstone himself attributed the story to Pretorius. "Thank Osborn too very much," he wrote to his son, Henrique (26 April 1879), "for the action he took to contradict that lying statement, made by Pretorius, about my having threatened to bring the Zulus upon the Boers, and for sending me copies of the letters on the subject."—Shepstone Papers.

in the country to pay if they would; so it offers a very good opportunity of at once showing the goodwill and kindly consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and will, I know, be accepted with gratitude.

There will be a protest against my act of annexation issued by the Government, but they will at the same time call upon the people to submit quietly pending its issue. You need not be disquieted by such action, because it is taken merely to save appearances and the members of the Government from the violence of a faction that seems for years to have held Pretoria in terror when any act of Government displeased it.

You will better understand this when I tell you thus privately that the President has from the first fully acquiesced in the necessity for the change, and that most of the members of the Government have expressed themselves anxious for it, but none of them have had the courage openly to avow their opinions, so I have had to act apparently against them; and this I have felt bound to do, knowing the state and danger of the country and that three-fourths of the people will be thankful for the change when once it is made.

Yesterday morning Mr. Burgers came to me to arrange how the matter should be done. I read to him the draft of my proclamation and he proposed the alteration of two words only, to which I agreed. He brought to me a number of conditions which he wished me to insert, which I accepted and have embodied in my proclamation. He told me that he could not help issuing a protest to keep the noisy portion of the people quiet, and you will see grounds for this precaution when I tell you that there are only half a dozen native constables to represent the power of the State in Pretoria, and a considerable number of the Boers in the neighbourhood are of the lowest and most ignorant class. Mr. Burgers read me too the draft of his protest, and asked me if I saw any objection to it, or thought it too strong. I said that it appeared to me to pledge the people to resist by and bye; to which he replied that it was to tide over the difficulty of the moment seeing that

my support—the troops—were a fortnight's march distant, and that, by the time the answer to the protest came, all desire of opposition would have died out. I therefore did not dissuade him from his protest.[1] You will see, when the proclamation reaches you, that I have taken high ground: nothing but annexation will, or can, save the State, and nothing else can save South Africa from the direst consequences. All the thinking and intelligent people know this and will be thankful to be delivered from the thraldom of petty factions, by which they are perpetually kept in a state of excitement and unrest, because the Government and everything connected with it is a thorough sham.

I write this hurriedly to put you in possession of the existing state of things and to set Lord Carnarvon's mind at rest, should rumours of resistance and protests reach him. There will be no organized resistance certainly, nor resistance of any other kind, I believe; indeed you may imagine that there is not much at the bottom of the protest, when no step has been taken with regard to me, although I have been in the capital of the country for now nearly three months, and in the midst of demonstrations, never hesitating from the first day to assert what the condition of the country was, the only remedy capable of being applied to it, and that I must apply that remedy; all these when I had only an escort of twenty men and the troops were in Natal 200 miles off, where they will remain until the intelligence of the issue of the proclamation has reached them, and they are directed to advance for the purpose of giving weight and stability to the new order of things; and they cannot be here for a fortnight.

I am, my dear Mr. Herbert, very faithfully yours,

T. SHEPSTONE.

[1] This was evidently the capital error in Shepstone's proceedings. He should have insisted on an unequivocal declaration of support. At the same time, it is now easy to understand why the British Government took so lightly the protests of the republican authorities.

5. SHEPSTONE RUNS UP THE UNION JACK

Sir T. Shepstone to Sir H. Bulwer, 12 April 1877 (Shepstone Collection, Letters Dispatched 1850–80, *Acc.* 96–15, Natal Archives)

The proclamations have just been publicly read in the market, or rather the church, square by my secretary, Mr. Osborn, accompanied by the other members of my staff. Everything went off quietly, and the reading was received with hearty cheers. The majority of the audience were Englishmen, so the cheers were natural; but there were a few Boers also, who, of course, could scarcely be expected to be joyful.

Mr. Burgers had his protest read, followed by a proclamation referring to the protest and desiring in the strongest terms all officers and others to abide by the issue of the protest, and to avoid by word or act any hostile demonstration that might damage the success of the mission to Europe.

After the proclamation, Burgers assembled his officers, and made a very feeling speech to them, urging them to accept the circumstances and support me. This moment the state secretary has come to me by his orders, and handed over to me the key of the offices which I gave back again into the secretary's charge.

Thus far everything has passed off quietly and well, and Burgers has helped me a good deal.

I lost the mail to the Cape, which started yesterday; so I should be glad if, should an opportunity occur, you would send the intelligence on to Sir Bartle and to England. I have not time myself to do so.

You will see by my official letter to the officer commanding the troops that I have authorised him to ask for the presence of Dartnell's police, if necessary; but I don't think it will be. . . . Fearing that Cetewayo might think that the advance of the troops meant hostility to the Transvaal and so he be induced to do what he wants to do and attack the Transvaal, I took the liberty at the last moment of the starting of the mail,

last night, to request the acting magistrate of Newcastle to send him the message, a copy of which I enclose.[1] I hope you will not object to my having done so. I had no other way of speedily putting a stop to what might have become a serious disaster.

[1] The message was to the effect that "if he (Cetewayo) has assembled any armies for the purpose of making any aggressive movement, they must be at once disbanded." Boast, acting magistrate at Newcastle, sent the induna, Kabana, with the message to Cetewayo, who replied: "They will now return to their homes." According to Boast's report, had Shepstone's message not reached Cetewayo, the Zulus would have invaded the Transvaal. Boast to Sec. for Native Affairs, 23 May 1877. Compare the Colenso Papers (Letter Books, 1877) which make evident that Cetewayo made use of Shepstone's name to gain obedience to his commands.

IV

THE ZULU WAR, 1879

DURING the long reign of Panda, friendly relations between Zululand and Natal had not been seriously disturbed. Spies and others, who in 1848 were to take part in the "Second Great Trek" from Natal to the territory beyond the Berg, had endeavoured to erect the short-lived Klip River Republic on the basis of a grant from Panda, which, if it had not been repudiated by the Zulu king, must have involved him in serious collision with the colonial authorities. But Panda, though highly intelligent, had no warlike ardour. In later years, he grew so corpulent that he could not get into a waggon until the front wheels had been taken off. After 1856, when one of his sons, Cetewayo, overthrew a younger brother Umbulazi, on the banks of the Tugela, Panda found himself little more than a figurehead in the government of Zululand. At Maritzburg, Cetewayo was believed to entertain no friendly feelings towards the Colony. Fortunately for the peace of the frontier, all doubt concerning the identity of Panda's successor had not yet been removed. Though six of Cetewayo's brothers had been massacred on the Tugela banks, there still remained, among others, Umtonga, son of Panda's favourite wife: and in due course, Umtonga and two other young sons found a refuge in Natal. This circumstance acted as a curb on Cetewayo's aggressive activities. In order to win

the support of Natal, and obtain from the colonia Government recognition of himself as heir of an undivided Zululand, Cetewayo was prepared to adopt a conciliatory attitude and allow the external relations of the Zulu kingdom to be guided by the advice of Shepstone. Thus the Tugela boundary was strictly respected until the death of Panda in 1872. The understanding was virtually converted into a protectorate when, in 1861, John Scott authorised Shepstone to visit Zululand and proclaim Cetewayo Panda's sole heir.

Treacherous in negotiation and ruthless in the removal of all obstacles to his supremacy, Cetewayo was intelligent enough to understand that the goodwill of the Natal Government was essential to the success of his diplomacy. For the Transvaal Boers were penetrating deeply into the country which lay near the junction of the Buffalo and Blood rivers. This advance towards the Indian Ocean, secured by purchases of grazing concessions and followed up by beaconing of the areas "ceded," began in the year 1854. It was carried further in 1861, at a time when Cetewayo's rival, Umtonga, was in Boer hands. When Umtonga escaped to Natal, there was no longer any reason why Cetewayo should treat with the farmers. Like the authorities in Natal, he viewed with dislike and alarm the extension of Boer territory into the heart of Zululand. He therefore repudiated the cession of territory in the Blood river area, and hastened to profess friendship for the Colony to the south.

At this time, the policy of the Natal Government was based on maintenance of the integrity of the Zulu kingdom. Scott and Shepstone preferred to deal with a single potentate who, despite recurrent frontier

alarms, had taken care to allow no violation of the Tugela boundary. Sir George Grey, on the other hand, taking note of the maintenance in its full efficiency of the Zulu military machine, aimed at the sub-division of Zululand among the surviving sons of Panda. He believed that it was to the interests of Natal to perpetuate the internal divisions of the country, and take advantage of the rivalries within the royal house to interpose European magistrates. He therefore disapproved of the policy pursued by Scott and Shepstone, who were content for the moment to forestall the territorial ambitions of the Transvaal Boers. Their ultimate object was the annexation of Zululand to Natal. The proclamation of Cetewayo as heir to the paramountcy was a long step forward, for it established Shepstone as "white father," and gave the Natal Government a new weight in the determination of Zulu policy.

Shepstone believed that the time would come when Zululand was ripe for annexation. He could not forget that its population had been drawn from discordant tribes originally scattered over a wide area. Drought and cattle sickness would, he calculated, breed disharmony amongst the chiefs and increase the resentment against the autocratic Cetewayo. In the 'seventies, an outlet to the north for the teeming population of Natal was a matter of urgency. Annexation of Zululand would remove the threat of a Zulu war, and bring the entire coastline as far north as Delagoa Bay under British control. Meanwhile, Panda's death in 1872 afforded an opportunity to consolidate the influence of the Natal Government. With characteristic duplicity, Cetewayo had applied both to the Transvaal and to Natal for official installation as Panda's successor. Anxious to frustrate the establishment of a Boer pro-

tectorate over Zululand, Lieutenant-Governor Musgrave sent Shepstone to place the symbol of royalty, hastily fashioned at Fort Napier, on Cetewayo's head. In return for recognition, the new king agreed that there should henceforth be no shedding of blood without open trial and the public examination of witnesses. As to the sincerity of Cetewayo's professions there was ample room for doubt. But Shepstone had imposed a barrier against the further penetration of the Transvaal Boers into the coastlands adjoining St. Lucia Bay.

In the territorial dispute between Boers and Zulus, the Government of Natal had played a neutral part. Its new authority in Zululand was used in the direction of moderation and patience. Shepstone knew that the Zulus claimed sovereignty over the whole country to the foot of the Drakensberg, and regarded the Dutch settlements at Utrecht and Wakkerstroom as an encroachment upon Zulu territory. But between Rorke's Drift on the Buffalo and the Pongola river, Boer farmers had from an early date sought and acquired permission to settle and depasture their herds. In the easterly districts, sawyers had long been at work depleting the timber reserves of the Pongola bush. These vested interests were supported by a transaction of the year 1861, whereby Cetewayo and Panda had both given their assent to Boer settlement north of the Buffalo river drifts. Three years later, a joint Transvaal-Zulu mission had beaconed off a line of frontier.

Unlike the low-lying land through which ran the Tugela, the debatable territory was healthy and well-watered. Boer expansion had been the irregular outward movement of farmers in search of pasture which had long been familiar on the borders of the Cape

Colony. Behind it was the old Trekker urge to reach the sea and find there a point of contact with the non-British world. Frontiers had never been clearly defined, even on paper. For whilst the Boers desired least of all to set a term to their aspirations for more land, the Zulus had no thought of such a territorial cession as would leave the existing native population landless under Boer sovereignty. It was even more difficult to trace a frontier on the actual terrain. Rivers ran here at right angles across any line of frontier which might be drawn. Even where Boer farms were numerous and relatively compact, Zulu kraals remained to share enjoyment of the pastureland. The Transvaal Government had exercised no authority over the Zulu inhabitants, and maps of the Transvaal revealed a disconcerting variation in the delineation of the Republic's south-eastern border.

When Shepstone annexed the Transvaal, the boundary dispute had already been the subject of much correspondence between Cetewayo, Sir Henry Bulwer in Natal, and the Colonial Office. Confident of the goodwill of his "white father," the Zulu monarch expected to regain the Blood River Territory. Throughout 1877 he waited impatiently, his impis ready on the Transvaal border, for some indication that the Zulu claims were about to receive recognition. Informed by Sir Henry Bulwer that "the Governments of Natal and the Transvaal are now brothers, what touches one touches the other . . . if any act of injury or violence be done to the Government of the Transvaal, it is done also to the Government of Natal,"[1] Cetewayo not unnaturally concluded that Shepstone wished to cast him off. "He

[1] Sir H. Bulwer to Cetewayo, 7 December 1877, S.N.A. Message Book, 371 (Natal Archives).

is no more a father, but a firebrand," he complained.[1] He had learned that Shepstone had changed his views as to the merits of the case.

Under these circumstances, Zulu indunas were not disposed to accord to Shepstone the deference to which he was accustomed. At a meeting in the disputed territory, Shepstone complained that Cetewayo had deliberately misled the Natal Government. Convinced now that Shepstone must be reckoned amongst his foes, Cetewayo sent emissaries to enquire of the Pondo king whether he would co-operate with the Zulus against Natal.[2] In the north, he hastily constructed a military kraal beyond the Pongola. Prompted by Shepstone and believing that the impis were clamouring for war, Sir Bartle Frere, High Commissioner at the Cape, gave orders for a naval patrol of the coast of Zululand.

Meanwhile, Bulwer was urging patience and delay. He understood better than Frere and Shepstone the workings of Cetewayo's mind. "Do you not think," he wrote to Shepstone, "that the strong feeling shown by the indunas and the strong action taken by them may possibly have been due to an apprehension in their minds that we are not prepared to act justly by them? to an impression that, so long as the claim was one made by our Dutch neighbours, we looked upon it with disfavour, and were strongly opposed to it; but that, now that we have stepped into the Dutchman's shoes, we have succeeded to his claims, we have taken them up as our own, and look upon them in a very different light from what we did?"[3] Shepstone replied

[1] Cetewayo to Sir H. Bulwer, 5 January 1878, *ibid.*
[2] Sir H. Bulwer to Lord Carnarvon, 4 October 1877.
[3] Sir H. Bulwer to Sir T. Shepstone, 14 November 1877, G.H. Papers, vol. 220 (Natal Archives).

that the Zulus had always pursued a policy of playing off the Boers against the English. He, on his part, was not anxious to be drawn into hostilities with the Zulus. His first object was to bring moral pressure to bear upon Cetewayo by demonstrating the unity of purpose of the Transvaal and Natal Governments. He realised the necessity for safeguarding the borderlands from Zulu aggression. In the Transvaal, burghers were looking to him to place the state on a footing of security, and afford adequate protection for established rights. His visit to the disturbed area in October 1877 convinced him that right was mainly on the side of the farmers. It was an easy step to become reconciled to the prospect of war. For the defeat of Cetewayo would solve many of the urgent problems of the Transvaal and Natal. He doubtless calculated that the loyalty of the burghers would be the reward for the enforced submission of the native tribes. The annexation of Zululand, by providing an outlet for the native population of the two colonies, would open fresh land for European settlement.

Cetewayo was ready to submit the Zulu claims to the Blood river district to arbitration. He still professed friendship for the British authorities. Recalling the fact that the military organisation, which Shepstone so trenchantly criticised, had been created more than half a century ago by Chaka, and could now be regarded as part of the traditional customs of the Zulus, Bulwer did not believe that Cetewayo was wilfully recalcitrant. His view that there was much justice in the Zulu claims was confirmed when the Boundary Commission, appointed in February 1878, reported emphatically in their favour. Careful scrutiny of the documentary titles, upon which the Transvaal's claims rested, exposed

one case of clear forgery, and revealed the fact that many "cessions" of territory were no more than grants of grazing rights. On this basis there could be no recognition of Boer sovereignty. Frere only heard in July that the report was unanimously in favour of the Zulus. He had already complained to the Colonial Office that any surrender of the republican claims would be "inconsistent with the pledges given by Sir Theophilus Shepstone to the inhabitants of the Transvaal that, in taking them over, the British Government would maintain the integrity of their state."[1] He now feared to publish the award lest the Boers should rise in rebellion.

Sir Bartle Frere's estimate of the situation in Zululand was governed by his experience of native affairs in other parts of the British Empire. He was invincibly opposed to native tribal government. On arrival in South Africa in 1877, he had at once advocated an extension of British sovereignty over the whole of Africa south of the Pongola river. Like his predecessor, Sir George Grey, he regarded European penetration of native areas as essential for the civilisation of Africa. No Governor ever upheld with more sincere accord the colonial contention that service for the European farmer was the principal avenue to the contentment and improvement of the native population. Accepting Shepstone's explanation of Zulu history, which suggested that the military machine had been arbitrarily imposed by Chaka on a peace-loving population, he readily concluded that the Zulus must be disarmed. In order to avoid the contingency of a future war fought around the homesteads of the colonists, Frere

[1] Sir B. Frere to Sir M. Hicks Beach, quoted in C. W. de Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor in South Africa*, p. 224.

was prepared to face the issue of an immediate campaign, which would remove once and for all the Zulu menace.

For this standpoint there was much justification. For, in July 1878, two months before Frere reached Natal on a tour of inspection, a party of Zulus had conducted a raid into Natal, and dragged back to Zululand the wives of the chief Sirayo, who had sought refuge at a police kraal. The women were subsequently killed out of hand. Cetewayo had indeed long abandoned the pretence of adherence to his coronation undertaking that indiscriminate shedding of blood should cease. Now, called to account for violation of the colonial frontier, he offered to pay a fine, whilst ignoring the demand that he should deliver up the culprits to justice in the colonial courts. It is clear that, even before the annexation of the Transvaal, he had made up his mind to assert entire independence of action within Zululand, in disregard of his promises to Shepstone, and careless whether or not his recalcitrance involved him in an open breach with the Natal Government. Bulwer's emissaries reported that a large section of the Zulu nation desired to try its strength in combat with the white man. Among the native population of Natal, there was common consent that the Zulus were stronger than the English.[1] It was known at Maritzburg that Zulu headmen were carrying on subversive propaganda in native territories to the south and west.

In pressing demands upon Cetewayo, Frere followed the promptings of his own judgment, and paid insufficient heed to instructions from Whitehall. The

[1] Fynney's *Report* to Sir H. Bulwer, April 1878; Sir H. Bulwer to Sir B. Frere, 24 April 1878; Sutton, *Diaries*, 1877-9.

situation in Eastern Europe and in Afghanistan, where Shere Ali had turned back a British mission at the frontier after receiving the Russian general, Stoletov, made it seem imperative that a native war should be averted in South Africa. Both Frere and Shepstone were clearly informed that they must avoid a collision with the Zulus. In reply to Frere's warning that the situation was extremely critical, the War Office laid down that the 6,000 troops stationed in South Africa were sufficient for any crisis that might arise. But, when Frere continued to urge the despatch of reinforcements, the Cabinet, uneasily aware that, with the cable extending no further than Cape Verde, the High Commissioner was deprived of the means of speedy communication with Whitehall, decided to send additional troops. They were to be used only if required for the protection of the European colonists. The situation was full of difficulty. Sir Michael Hicks Beach, who had succeeded Lord Carnarvon at the Colonial Office, felt that he must trust the man on the spot. This was Frere's opportunity. Believing that the peace of South Africa depended upon prompt steps being taken to meet the Zulu danger, the High Commissioner resolved to present demands to Cetewayo which would force the issue. His terms involved the demolition of the formidable military machine of the celibate army, and liberty to missionaries to evangelize in Zulu territory.

Frere later maintained that the instructions of the Colonial Secretary to employ every means for the avoidance of war arrived too late to postpone the crisis. But though Hicks Beach's despatch insisting that "we cannot now have a Zulu war in addition to other greater and too possible troubles," only reached Maritz-

burg on 13 December, two days after delivery of the ultimatum to Cetewayo's envoys at the drifts on the lower Tugela, Frere had already received (30 November) a telegraphed summary. The long-withheld report of the Boundary Commission was published at the same time. It is evident that Frere calculated that the issue must be faced without further delay, and that the outcome of war would be a settlement of Zululand such as would make the award obsolete.

Bishop Colenso alone believed that Cetewayo would accept the demands now made upon him. Frere himself was quite certain that some at least of the dictated terms would be refused. But he felt that Natal lay helplessly exposed to Zulu aggression; and that the only way to give security to countless homesteads was to abolish the military system, disband the impis and place a British Resident at the Zulu capital. "My own impression," he wrote, "is that it is quite impossible for Cetewayo to submit, without calling in our aid to coerce . . . his regular regiments." [1] In other words, when Frere drafted his ultimatum, he had already decided on war.

Frere was evidently responsible for the final decisions which made war inevitable. His attitude was guided by his conviction that Zululand must be brought under the direct control of the British Government. Shepstone, with his wide knowledge of the native mind, had impressed upon him the view that the civilisation of South-East Africa could not progress until the Zulu nation had suffered military defeat. There seemed to be ample indication of Cetewayo's hostility. The Sirayo incident, the expulsion of the missionaries, and the repudiation of control from Natal, all seemed

[1] Lady V. Hicks Beach, *Life of Sir M. Hicks Beach*, i, p. 108.

to point towards an early trial of strength. The danger of letting things continue as they were, until Cetewayo had perfected his plans for a concerted invasion of colonial territory, seemed to him infinitely greater than any risks involved in an immediate invasion of Zululand. His military advisers assured him that an adequate military force was available. No doubt he was unduly impressed by the nervousness among the colonial population. It is now clear that it was not only on the colonial side of the border that there was apprehension of invasion. Frere claimed that the urgency was so great that he was obliged to act on his own authority without delay. But, during the thirty days which elapsed before his ultimatum expired, no Zulu raids disturbed the peace of the frontier. Despite the bravado of some of his messages, Cetewayo had never yet ventured to make war on the Queen's subjects. At Downing Street, ministers could not understand why Frere had not proclaimed the boundary award six months earlier, and submitted for their approval his peremptory demands. On 11 January, the days of grace expired.

The supreme command was in the hands of Lieutenant-General Lord Chelmsford, who had been adjutant-general in India. He had since quelled a rising on the Cape frontier. Chelmsford's plan of campaign was to make a simultaneous advance from four points converging upon the royal kraal at Ulundi. The offensive had been carefully planned to avoid the dry winter months, and thus ensure pasture for the draught animals. Unfortunately for the success of this plan, the first rains came only one week before Christmas. In many districts the prolonged drought caused a breakdown in the arrangements for transportation. Whilst stores

steadily accumulated on the wharf at Durban, the troops were handicapped for want of supplies, because oxen in good condition could not be obtained for the waggons. These difficulties slowed down the advance of the columns. Moreover, the country to be traversed was virtually roadless. Along the coastal route, Colonel Pearson could make little headway. In the north, Evelyn Wood crossed the Blood river, and prudently entrenched his little force at Kambula near the banks of the White Umfolosi. Meanwhile, the main column, commanded by Colonel Glyn and accompanied by Lord Chelmsford, had brushed aside Zulu skirmishers north of Rorke's Drift and entered Zululand.

Chelmsford had previously selected Isandhlwana as a halting-place for his men. Fuel was available in the vicinity, whilst the frontier base at Rorke's Drift was not more than twelve miles distant. Nevertheless, the choice was unfortunate. For the position was such as to invite a surprise attack. The mountain which gave its name to the spot bore a marked resemblance to a lion couchant, with its head and precipitous front to the south. The western side was also steep. But on the north-east the ground sloped down to a wide plain, intersected by watercourses and terminating in low rolling hills. On this easterly slope, his right flank protected by a small kopje, Chelmsford pitched his camp. Apart from a chain of vedettes and a single outpost of infantry, no protection whatever was provided. No entrenchments were dug: nor, in neglect of warnings from Kruger and Joubert, were the waggons laagered. But parties of mounted police and native irregulars were sent out on reconnaissance under Major Dartnell. When Dartnell sent word that the enemy had been located, Chelmsford decided to

strengthen his detachment sufficiently to admit of forcing an engagement. At daybreak on 22 January, he himself, with Colonel Glyn and several hundred men, left the camp. There remained at Isandhlwana a total force of 1800, of whom 670 were British regulars. But, before leaving the tents, the general had sent orders to Colonel Durnford at Rorke's Drift to bring up his native troops and take over command from Colonel Pulleine of the 24th.

Chelmsford's column spent an unprofitable day endeavouring to bring to bay an elusive enemy. Throughout the forenoon, the Zulus, without waiting to be attacked, abandoned one after another positions of considerable strength. Refusing to be lured further from his base, the general gave orders for the selection of a new camp. From time to time, messages reached his staff from Pulleine, reporting Zulu concentrations in the vicinity of Isandhlwana and appealing urgently for assistance. But, since from various vantage points, it was possible to observe the tents still standing and apparently in peaceful occupation by the British troops, these messages caused no great concern.[1]

Meanwhile, in the absence of Lord Chelmsford, columns of Zulus began to issue from the rugged and broken ground surrounding the camp. On the arrival of Colonel Durnford with his Basuto levies, an attempt was made to check the Zulu advance with native forces, supported by a rocket battery. A company of the 45th Regiment was also sent to occupy a kopje to the north. Whilst Durnford was vainly endeavouring to harass the advancing impis, Pulleine took no steps to fortify his position. No single breastwork was erected to

[1] For an unpublished account of the movements of Lord Chelmsford's force, see no. 16, *infra*, pp. 143-150.

protect the troops. It was not too late to construct a defensible laager, for which purpose 45 empty waggons from the depot at Rorke's Drift were available. The reserves of ammunition, ample in amount, were allowed to remain in tightly-screwed-down cases. In the tents, scores of officers' servants and non-combatants were attending to their routine duties, unconscious of the approach of danger.

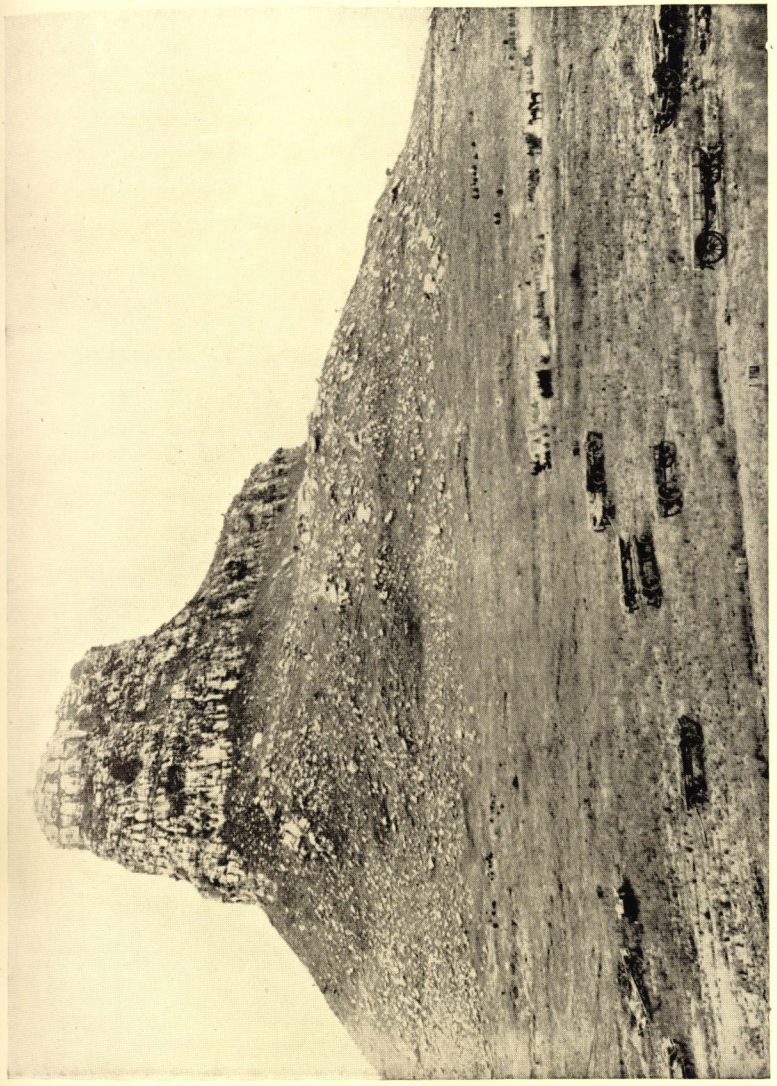
Soon after noon, the scattered detachments were heavily engaged. In conformity with the dominant principle in Zulu tactics, the Zulu regiments had been so disposed as to encircle the British force. The strong "chest" or centre, having disposed of Durnford's Horse, began early in the afternoon to move down directly upon the camp. The right horn descended the valley to the rear of Isandhlwana, whilst the left forced back the right of the British line. Despite heavy fire from the guns and rifles of the defenders, the impis pressed steadily forward. When the badly armed native contingent broke and fled, Zulus swarmed through the gaps in the centre. Little is known of the final stages in the fighting.[1] Taken in front and rear, the infantry fought until their ammunition was exhausted. Before 2 o'clock the whole camp was in the possession of the enemy. The majority of the defenders had been assegaied from a distance. Through the tiny gap which the encircling tactics of the Zulus had failed to close, a stream of mounted men and transport drivers thronged the road which led to Rorke's Drift. Many perished in the flooded Buffalo or from Zulu bullets. In all 800 white soldiers were massacred, together with some 500 of the native con-

[1] The hitherto unpublished accounts (nos. 16-18, *supra*, pp. 143 *sqq.*) throw some light on obscure details.

tingent. An immense quantity of stores and ammunition fell into the hands of the Zulus.

How great had been the mistake involved in neglect of the precaution of laagering was made evident by the subsequent defence of Rorke's Drift. Here, warned in time of what had happened at Isandhlwana, 103 men, under Lieutenants Bromhead and Chard, held against two of Cetewayo's best regiments a laager hastily constructed of mealie sacks and biscuit tins. Only in the early hours of the morning did the desperate assaults die away. The gallant defence retrieved the disaster of the previous day, for the impis had suffered the severest punishment and were in no mood for the invasion of Natal. With the remainder of the Zulu host occupied in ritual purification, Chelmsford was able, without fighting, to occupy the tragic camp. In the darkness of the semi-tropical evening, his men stumbled, grief-stricken, over the disembowelled bodies of the dead. Next day, full of anxiety, the general moved on to Rorke's Drift. Here he found the exhausted garrison still in possession of the barricaded buildings. The remnant of the main column had now no alternative but to evacuate Zulu territory. Chelmsford himself rode ahead to reassure and also to organise the dismayed population at Maritzburg and Durban.

For some weeks after Isandhlwana, military operations inevitably hung fire. No time was however lost in dispatching large reinforcements from the United Kingdom, whilst Napier Broome, lately colonial secretary of Natal, sent the greater part of the garrison from Mauritius. At Maritzburg, the public received the news badly. Though there was little panic, there was grave dissension between the civil and military authorities. With draught animals scarce, owing to the



ISANDHLWANA. THE WAGGONS AT THE RAVAGED CAMP

By kind permission of Miss Peace.

prevalence of lung sickness, and pasture close to the roads everywhere overgrazed, the hire of waggons reached £85 per month. Costs rose against a commissariat department which had been refused the right to commandeer transport and supplies at fixed rates. Chelmsford asked for full powers over the native contingents. This Bulwer, concerned at symptoms of unrest among the native population, felt bound to oppose. Public opinion was restless and critical. Blame for the war was visited on the head of Shepstone, now returned from the Transvaal. Old colleagues cut him in the streets of Maritzburg. In the week which followed receipt of the news from Isandhlwana, the authorities, supported by the newspaper press, did what was possible to allay the excitement. At Maritzburg, buildings were barricaded and loopholed, and citizens called out for patrol duties. Instructions were issued that, on a signal from Fort Napier, everyone should assemble in hastily constructed laagers with such personal belongings as were specified in an official list. Native servants had fled at the first note of alarm. In Durban, volunteers were enrolled to patrol the banks of the Umgeni. A palisade was erected, extending from the Ocean to the Bay, to protect the embarkation of citizens at the Point, should the town itself be overwhelmed. Similar precautions were taken in the villages. But it was realised that nothing could save the scattered population on the farms in the event of a Zulu invasion.

Not until the last days of March was a decisive check administered to Cetewayo's armies. The retreat of the main column to Helpmakaar imposed a period of inactivity and strain on the remaining British columns. At Eshowe, Pearson held a strongly fortified position

for two months, in daily expectation of an attack which was never delivered. In the north-west, the encircling tactics of the impis encountered their last success in the engagement at the Hlobane mountain. Before the horns cut off all retreat, Buller extricated the bulk of his mounted force; but among the fallen was the gallant Piet Uys. On the following day, artillery fire and scientific entrenchments drove back the Zulus with heavy loss from Wood's headquarters at Kambula. It was the turning-point in the campaign; for Wood had hurled back the flower of Cetewayo's army. Five days later, Chelmsford beat off an attack at Ginginhlove and relieved Eshowe. At this point the advance was halted. Only when ample reinforcements were available was the penetration of Zululand resumed. Crossing the frontier from the direction of Utrecht, Chelmsford advanced to Ulundi, where his column, formed up in hollow square with field pieces at each corner, administered a decisive defeat to Zulu military power. Though Cetewayo fled in safety from the field, Ulundi ended the Zulu war. Before the end of August, Cetewayo had been captured in the recesses of the Ingome forest and brought to Port Durnford for conveyance to Capetown.

Though the Zulu military machine was finally shattered, the war did little to solve the urgent problems of British policy in South Africa. It increased the difficulties of the Government in the Transvaal by encouraging the Boer leaders to agitate for independence. Moreover, the heavy cost of the campaign weakened the resolution of British ministers to uphold a sovereignty which might lead to further native wars. At Capetown, Isandhlwana lent emphasis to the misgivings of politicians concerning federation with Natal

and the harassed north. Public opinion in both colonies clamoured for the retention of British garrisons. Nevertheless, it claimed a decisive voice in the settlement which must follow the war. This had been entrusted by the Imperial Government to Sir Garnet Wolseley. With the retirement of Sir H. Bulwer, Wolseley became the first Governor of Natal.[1] His commission invested him with supreme military and civil authority over South-East Africa. In Natal, public opinion reacted badly to this virtual supersession of Sir Bartle Frere. Six weeks before Wolseley's appointment, rumours of the impending recall of Frere and of the decision to place Natal under a general of the army had caused consternation at Maritzburg.[2] The new Governor was not the suave diplomat who had administered the Government in 1875. His instructions insisted that he should obtain from the colonial legislature a vote sufficient to cover the £300,000 expended for local services and supplies. When Wolseley reminded the elective members that the war had been undertaken primarily for the benefit of Natal, he was received in disapproving silence. Though the Imperial Government had been involved in an expenditure exceeding £5,000,000, the claims of Whitehall seemed excessive. Moreover, Wolseley had made clear that there was to be no annexation of Zulu territory.

The nature of the settlement was dictated by the disinclination of Downing Street to extend British responsibilities. Zululand was divided into thirteen independent territories. Over each was placed a chief, whose authority was to rest on Zulu tribal law. But

[1] Sir H. Bulwer and his predecessors had held the rank of Lieutenant-Governor.

[2] G. M. Sutton, *Diary*, 15 April 1879 (Natal Archives).

the terms of their appointment carefully provided against any resuscitation of the military system. Rejecting Frere's plan for control through European officers, Wolseley installed a single British Resident with no executive or judicial authority. Colonial opinion was at one with Frere in criticising this settlement. Frere's contention that Great Britain could not thus be relieved of responsibility and anxiety for Zulu affairs received confirmation when the chiefs sprung to arms in inter-tribal warfare. In 1882, the Cabinet resolved to restore Cetewayo, who was once more installed as king by Sir Theophilus Shepstone. But, south of the Umhlatusi, those who did not wish to be Cetewayo's subjects were allowed locations in a reserve ruled over by a British Commissioner. As a further check on the restored monarch's ambition, his implacable rival, Usibebu, was left in independent possession of North-East Zululand. Despite the protests of Bulwer, now in office again as Governor of Natal, the Government refused to extend British sovereignty over Zululand. When Usibebu overthrew Cetewayo, and was himself humbled in battle with the dead king's son, Dinizulu, its anxiety to be rid of Zulu territory was strengthened. No objection was raised to the cession of a large block of Zululand to Lucas Meyer and other Boers who had assisted Dinizulu in the campaign against Usibebu. In 1886, Great Britain recognised the independence of the New Republic.

Annexation of what remained of Zululand was forced upon the British Government by Germany's new interest in Southern Africa. In the early 'eighties, German "travellers" began to make their appearance on the unannexed coasts of Zululand and Pondoland. Bulwer believed that Bismarck was seeking an occasion

for intervention north of the Tugela.[1] When the New Republic was absorbed by its larger neighbour to the north, Whitehall became impressed with the reality of the menace to imperial interests. In 1887, Zululand was declared to be British territory. Ten years later, it was annexed to the Colony of Natal.

16. HOW LORD CHELMSFORD WAS DECOYED FROM ISANDHLWANA

From an unpublished account by Trooper F. Symons, Natal Carbineers, in the possession of Mrs. M. A. Symons

On the 20th January 1879, the column under the immediate command of General Thesiger[2] commenced its march from the left bank of the Buffalo at Rorke's Drift at daybreak, and slowly wound its way up the grassy slopes overlooking the river. Through the thorns in the Bashee valley, it passed under the frowning rocks of Usirayo's stronghold; then, turning abruptly to the right and ascending a steep incline, came in view of a curiously shaped hill called by the natives "Isandhlwana."

Several companies of the 24th had been sent on previously, together with the Natal native contingent, to make a road. These fell into their proper places as the column advanced. Short halts were made to enable the waggons to surmount difficult places. The mounted infantry under Colonel Russell formed the advanced guard, with their waggons following. The police supported, with the Carbineers in reserve. Then came the first 24th regiment, the band playing merrily, succeeded by the long dark lines of the native allies, and with the second 24th bringing up the rear.

[1] Reporting the visit to Zululand of Captain Nagel, Bulwer wrote: "Nage is no benevolent German gentleman interested in the education of native races. He is an officer of the German Army, and one of numerous agents whom the German Government have employed of late in South Africa . . . and have been busy obtaining information and looking for possible opportunities for German intervention."—10 November 1885.

[2] Lord Chelmsford.

Resuming the march, the column crossed an open piece of country, flanked on the left by stony ridges and on the right falling towards the Buffalo, and entered a valley, the sides of which were covered with thorn trees, rocks and aloes. Isandhlwana crowns the opposite side of this valley, and under its peak facing the east the new camp was formed. On the extreme left of the camp was a long range of hills, with here and there a patch of scrubby bush: in front a stretch of flat country flanked on the right by high hills under which the road lies. Well, we pitched our camp on a rather swampy piece of ground, and most of the tents required to be deeply trenched. John and I had everything packed away nicely, then sat down to the best dinner we had tasted for a long time. The members of tent no. 3 used to mess together, namely Sergeant Methley and Troopers Greene, Slatter, Moodie, Macleroy, Davis, Sipthorpe and myself. That evening orders were read to the effect that the Carbineers, mounted police and 1st battalion of the native contingent were to march at 4 a.m., taking one day's rations, and patrol Matyana's location. Each man drew his rations of four biscuits with a tin of fish between two.

At 4 o'clock next morning, everyone was in the saddle. Twenty-nine Carbineers were left in camp for other duties. We, under Shepstone, were ordered to ascend the hill on our right, which we did, leading our horses. We soon came in sight of Matyana's stronghold. It is a very deep glen. If you were to take three Otto's Bluffs [1] and place them to form three sides of a square, with the steep sides densely covered with thorn bush, you would have some idea of what this notorious gentleman's abode is like. At the head of the kloof we halted, looking down towards the Buffalo river. Even numbers off-saddled, whilst odd numbers stood to their horses. Presently, we heard the report of a gun away to the left in the direction the police had gone. Not another sound was heard, not even a bird broke the

[1] Otto's Bluff is a bold hill, overlooking the Umgeni valley, eight miles north of Maritzburg.

stillness with its note. After waiting there some time for the native contingent to come up the valley, Captain Shepstone took us along the edge of the kloof to the right, to see what had become of them. At length we saw them winding round a point far away below us, their white shields glistening in the sun. On perceiving us, Lonsdale [1] ascended the hill and came to a halt. Here we were also joined by the police, who reported having seen about 700 Zulus on a hill to the left. Marching back with them to a clear little stream, we halted and off-saddled. The police had brought camp kettles on their pack horses, but we had nothing to make tea in. However, the police got little satisfaction from their cooking-pots; for just as the water was on the point of boiling, the order came to saddle up. Tired and disappointed, we stood to our horses and mounting, followed the major over the hill in the enemy's direction. Six Carbineers, Lieutenant Royston and John among them, were sent on to reconnoitre. We anxiously watched them, as they disappeared over the brow, but had not long to wait before they came back at a gallop down the stony mountain side. Then appeared, as if by magic, from one end of the ridge to the other, a long line of black men in skirmishing order, advancing at a run. It was a grand sight and they never uttered a sound. I defy the men of any British regiment to keep their intervals so well at the double. On reaching the brow of the hill, the centre halted and then the horns appeared. The points of the horns were half-way down, and all thought we were to be attacked. Nevertheless, we held our positions when the Zulus, of whom there were some seven or eight hundred, turned (for what reason I cannot say, unless it was to entice us up the mountain into a trap) and slowly retired, leaving only three or four men visible. Meanwhile, the major was awaiting the arrival of the native contingent. Since the sun was fast sinking and there were no signs of our allies, we were ordered to retire, a messenger being dispatched

[1] Commander of the native contingent.

to the general to inform him that the enemy were in force. By this time, we were all pretty well famished, and there was a little grumbling on hearing that we were to bivouac that night without food or blankets. As we retraced our steps, the native force met us and we marched together to a favourable spot on an open piece of ground close to a stream. It was a great relief to be rid of our heavy rifles and cartridges, which had not been off our shoulders since 4 a.m. On the opposite side of the spruit stood some kraals and here some of us collected some spinach, which we cooked to make a frugal meal.

That night nine men were told off for camp guard, the remainder taking it in turns, three at a time to hold the horses, which had been linked together within the camp. A hollow square had been formed. Macfarlane, Stirton and I were on first relief guard, and during our watch some mounted infantry arrived from the camp with provisions and blankets. The food soon vanished and the blankets were distributed among the men. Someone else got the benefit of mine.

The guards' orders were to run to the horses in the event of an alarm. When the second relief took over, the natives had lighted great fires and were talking in loud voices, but the hum gradually subsided. The horses stood perfectly still, for they were too tired to move. We three of the first relief were sharing blankets, and I was almost asleep when a shot was fired away in front. I was on the alert, you may be sure, in two winks. " Mac," I called, " did you hear that ? " " Yes," said he, jumping up.

I seized my rifle and ran to my post, which was no sooner reached than with one accord those 2,000 natives rose, striking their shields, firing off their guns and losing all control over themselves. Some ran among the horses and had to be beaten back with clubbed rifles. Many found their way back to Natal that night : others were wounded by the assegais of their comrades who mistook them for Zulus. I could hear Captain Shepstone's voice giving the order to fall in, but I

could see nothing. Now and then, the sergeant-major of the police roared out in stentorian tones " Halt. Who goes there ? " He never got an answer, but he told his men not to fire. The horses were stampeding and, when the din had ceased, it was some time before they could be collected. Not a single man expected to see daylight and the first streak of dawn was hailed with real joy.[1] We saddled up and prepared to march against the foe. Again retracing our steps, we met the general and his staff at the foot of the hill. Between us and the Zulus lay the waggon road. A high conical hill stands out conspicuously, and beyond and at its base runs a little stream which takes its course through Matyana's rocky retreat. At the foot of the kopje the road winds in a south-easterly direction.

All the police and the Carbineers were ordered to follow this road. The native force marched straight across the valley towards the Zulu camp fires, which were still burning on the hill opposite, whilst the mounted infantry and the four guns were somewhere on our left. When day broke, we saw the contingent steadily advancing up the hill side. Not a Zulu was to be seen. We were kept waiting about until nine or ten o'clock, when a body of Zulus was seen occupying a ridge on our right. Our major's " Come on, boys " was sufficient ; and we were soon advancing at a gallop and driving the enemy to a position higher up the hill. Opening fire at 800 yards we killed some, as they retreated towards some caves. A few succeeded in getting into holes in the ground, but these were cut off by the native contingent. Eventually Trumpeter Scott sounded the retire and we were marched down to the stream. It was now that I heard firing from the direction of the camp. The mounted infantry joined us and we were again in the saddle. It was here that we first heard that the camp had been taken, but not one of us believed the report. But about four miles from

[1] This was the morning of the fatal 22 January. Lord Chelmsford left camp at 4 a.m. Trooper Symons was with the reconnoitring parties dispatched from Isandhlwana twenty-four hours earlier.

Isandhlwana, we met Lonsdale who told us that the tents were in the hands of the enemy. Someone was at once dispatched to call the troops left behind. Meanwhile we halted on the banks of a donga, from which a portion of the camp occupied by the 2/24th and the contingent could be seen, a stony ridge hiding the remainder from view. The tents were still standing, and on the left bodies of men were moving up the hill. I cannot describe our feelings, as we stood there watching the Zulus drive our cattle off and the tents vanishing by degrees. For three hours we had to stand and look on; and it was nearly sundown when the other troops came up. A short address was made by the general to the 24th, who replied with cheering.

The troops were then placed in battle order, mounted infantry and police on the extreme right, the 24th regiment and native contingent in the centre with the guns, and on the left the Carbineers, Buffalo Border Guards and Newcastle Rifles. The sun was just sinking behind the hills when the word "Forward" was given. As we neared the camp, the police were sent over to reinforce the left. Orders were to retake the camp at all hazards. There was to be no retreat.

In front and for miles along the heights to our right, a dense mass of black warriors were watching this little army boldly marching to the attack. Soon darkness hid us from their view. Zulu fires were burning on the nek. On arrival at the donga in front of camp, the word "Halt" was given and the artillery opened fire, succeeded by volleys from the infantry in the direction where the Zulus had last been seen. It was pretty to watch the bright flash from the cannon, and the graceful curve made by the shell before it struck the ground on the nek. When the gun was too much elevated, the missile would strike Isandhlwana itself, loosening the rocks and causing them to fall with a crash, whilst other shells vanished into the valley beyond.

Part of the 24th under Major Black were ordered to seize the kopje on the left of Isandhlwana. We knew

nothing of this, and, amidst the firing of big guns, cheering was heard from the hill. We all thought that it came from the defenders of the camp who had, we assumed, taken up their position on the kopje. At the word "Forward," we marched up, stumbling over dead bodies, and took up a position on the high ground.

Here we discovered that it was from Major Black's party that the cheering arose. Right among us, on the nek, lay three volunteers, Swift, Jackson and Gutridge. Firing could be heard throughout the night in the direction of Rorke's Drift. The child-like cries of the mules and the groans of wounded men were sufficient to melt anyone's heart; and there was a cold unearthly smell about the place which must have arisen from the dead around us. Everyone was indifferent as to whether the Zulus came or not. This feeling was caused by weariness and hunger. Biscuits were served out, it is true, at midnight, from tins which had been found untouched in a waggon, but where was the appetite?

Before dawn, the column was on the move back to Rorke's Drift. As we emerged from the valley into the open country, a large black mass was seen moving directly towards us. One gun was immediately unlimbered, but it was deemed best not to offer battle, as the Bashee valley lay before us, and unknown dangers might await us there. Opposite us, on the Natal side of the river, the smoke arose from burning kraals. What was our dismay, on reaching the nek which overlooked the station at Rorke's Drift, to see smoke rising from the ruins of the house. "What has become of our comrades?" each enquired of his neighbour, as we marched mournfully along the road leading down towards the drift.

"What is that on the walls?"

"It's a man waving a flag," someone shouted.

We feared that the flag waving might be a Zulu ruse to get us across the river. The Carbineers were therefore ordered to dismount and line the banks of

the river, whilst the mounted infantry crossed over to reconnoitre. "All right. They are our men," was the welcome news brought back by one of the M.I. Mounting our horses, we quickly crossed the river, and galloped to the punt in order to draw the general and his staff over, after which we handed the rope to the artillery. The native forces got across higher up.

On reaching the house, the first body we saw was that of a native auxiliary who was shot for deserting in the hour of need. Around the burned hospital lay in heaps the dead bodies of Zulus. Under the trees in front of the hospital lay three horses still tied to the trunk of a tree. We spent most of the day looking about in the long grass for dead Zulus. Many wounded were found in the orchard and up under the rocks overlooking the house. Next day we left for Helpmakaar.

17. THE ISANDHLWANA MASSACRE

From a Survivor's Account By J. A. Brickhill, *The Natal Magazine*, September 1879

On the morning of the 22nd of January, between six and seven o'clock, the Zulus showed in considerable force at the south end of the Ingutu mountain. Shortly afterwards, another force came in sight about the middle of the hill, and the intervening space was speedily filled in. We took a hasty breakfast, and then all hands were ordered to prepare for action. . . .

Between nine and ten o'clock, at the request of my tent-mate, Quartermaster Pullen, I directed all the waggon drivers and leaders to collect together their scattered oxen and tie them up to their yokes (but not to inspan them) so that the action of the troops should not be impeded by them straying about. As I returned, I took Colonel Pulleine word that two bodies of Durnford's Horse were signalled as approaching along the Rorke's Drift road. I came back through a corner of the Carbineers' camp, where I met Capt. Bradstreet

and Messrs. M. Moodie, Bullock and London. We stood there listening to what we thought was the general engaged with the enemy. We could almost have sworn that we heard rapid artillery firing, then volleys of small arms, then single shots; and afterwards the firing seemed to come from another direction, so that we concluded that Colonel Wood's column [1] had come up and was engaging another portion of the enemy. This illusion—for such it afterwards proved to be—was caused by the echoes and reverberations from the surrounding hills of a lot of small arms discharged by the native contingent and volunteers at small flying parties of the enemy, forming the decoy, at the head of Mangeni valley. At half-past ten o'clock Durnford's Horse arrived—a welcome addition indeed to our meagre forces—and at about eleven o'clock a party of them were sent by the way they came, round Isandhlwana, and from there round the northernmost point of Ingutu, to prevent the secret advance of the enemy in that direction. The rest were sent to attack the Zulus, now collected in large numbers on the southernmost point of Ingutu. I had no field glasses and cannot say whether the rocket battery accompanied them. They went round to the right of the conical hill and attacked the Zulus at the southern nek. We heard heavy firing over the northern nek, down which directly afterwards three horsemen came at full speed. Capt. G. Shepstone, who was one of them, rode into the camp of the 1/24th, and asked for the officer in command. I was accompanying him to Colonel Pulleine's tent when, on one of our officers shouting the colonel's name, he came out. But, before Capt. Shepstone could sufficiently recover his breath to speak to him, Capt. Gardiner, of the general's staff, rode up with a letter from the general, which the colonel read aloud. It was an order to strike camp and come on with all speed, leaving a sufficient guard behind to protect such portion as could not be moved

[1] Wood was then encamped at Bemba's Kop, and moving cautiously in the direction of Kambula.

without delay. Capt. Shepstone then said, "I am not an alarmist, sir, but the Zulus are in such black masses over there, such long black lines, that you will have to give us all the assistance you can. They are now fast driving our men this way."

As he spoke, the Basutos (Durnford's Horse) came retiring over the hill on the northern nek, keeping up a steady fire as they retreated before the advancing Zulus. Capt. Gardiner then said to Colonel Pulleine, who seemed thoroughly nonplussed as to what he ought to do, "Under the circumstances, I should advise your disobeying the general's order, for the present at any rate. The general knows nothing of this. He is only thinking of the cowardly way in which the Zulus are running before our troops over yonder."

They both went away together. I caught and saddled my horse, and then, having no weapon of my own, went about the camp in the hopes of getting one somewhere, and joining in the fight. In this I failed, so I betook myself to a fairly commanding position in front of the column's office. I found the whole army thrown out in battle array to the extreme left of the camp, under the Ingutu, Durnford's Horse holding the plain to the left of the northern nek; the white mounted force to its right, the two field pieces a little behind between them; the infantry arranged in lines in rear, about a mile from the nearest camp. The whole $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the Ingutu were by this time covered with Zulus; they kept up a continuous fire upon our men, but appeared to me to shoot at too great a distance for their fire to be effectual. The Durnford Horse, at the southern end, were now drawing the enemy down the southern nek in very large numbers. Those to the north retired to a crest which joins Isandhlwana to the Ingutu. Leaving their horses well sheltered here, they held this crest splendidly, keeping up a steady galling fire which, with that of the white mounted force on the right, checked what was at first a very determined advance in the direction of the camp; and, instead of coming on, they passed over the northern-

most end of Ingutu. The artillery threw about twenty-five shots from different parts of the field during the battle. Four of these were very effective, each tearing up what appeared to be an acre of ground in the enemy's masses. One of the guns, however, always appeared to shoot high, whilst one shell burst half-way, nearly over our foot native contingent. Durnford's Horse now appeared to the right of the conical hill, keeping up a steady fire, and retreating parallel to the road to Mangeni valley. A much larger force of Zulus now confronted them than we had yet seen, showing that the enemy had large accessions to his strength from the hidden end of Ingutu behind the conical hill.

The mounted white force now went down to their assistance, and these together held the plain so determinedly that the Zulu lines actually swerved once, and sought to mass together under cover of a kraal. A well-placed shot from one of the field pieces caused considerable havoc, and scattered them from there. A general forward movement was now made by the enemy from the kraal just named, right away up the northern nek. This was opposed by the two guns and the infantry alone. The native contingent had left and passed through the camp. One determination seemed settled on them all—to escape.

I could see nothing of the details of the infantry fighting because of the low-lying land, but if the increasing gun-roll kept up was any indication at all, the enemy's losses must have been terrible indeed. Our mounted force was now compelled to retire on the gully.

The Zulu left horn had now extended two miles below the road to Mangeni valley. They did not come on in lines, but evenly distributed. Nowhere could you catch three men well together and rarely two. In some places their front was threequarters of a mile in advance of their rear.

This gully the mounted force held most tenaciously, every shot appearing to take effect, so much so that, with the havoc caused by the shell thrown in the kraal before mentioned, a thousand Zulu dead must have

lain between the conical hill and the gully. The leading Zulus finding they were being mown down so terribly threw themselves flat upon the ground to wait for others to come up, when up they jumped and came on again. One of Durnford's Horse now brought up a wounded companion sitting on the horse behind him. Our mounted men turned to their horses. The Zulus took advantage of this slight break, and pushed across the gully sharply, whilst the Zulu left horn drew in slightly towards the camp. A simultaneous forward movement was now made by all the Zulus, and many of our mounted men who had ridden in for ammunition were closely followed in by them. Troops of all descriptions were now streaming through the various camps towards Rorke's Drift nek. Going down to the 1/24th camp, I saw Mr. Dubois, who asked me in Zulu how it looked. I replied, "Ugly." He said, "Yes; the enemy has scattered us this day."

Above the 1/24th camp, I met my poor tent companion, Quartermaster Pullen, who shouted to the running soldiers, "Come on, men, rally here, follow me. Don't be running away like a parcel of women. Let's try and turn their flank." Turning to me he said, "Mr. Brickhill, do go to Colonel Pulleine and ask him to send us help, as they are outflanking us here on the right." He went away towards the front of Stony kopje followed by several of the soldiers. I went round the volunteer camp into that of the 2/24th. Men were running away everywhere. I could see no officers. I saw one of the field pieces brought to the corner of the camp. The men jumped off and took to their heels.

Simultaneously with this, the only body of soldiers yet visible rose from firing their last shot and joined me in the general flight. Panic was everywhere and no officer to guide, no shelter to fall back upon. The only attempt at a stand that I know of was made by the few that followed the Quartermaster and the Basutos, who had a narrow escape of being cut off at the crest but who came through past the general's tent, shouting

to each other and keeping up their fire from a few rocks under Isandhlwana. The Zulus for the last 300 yards did not fire 25 shots, but came on with the steady determination of *walking down* the camp by force of numbers. I consider that there were thirty to one of us. At 120 yards distance, they raised the shout "*Usutu*"—the name of Cetewayo's army which overthrew the Izigove under his brother Umbulazi in the fight for supremacy in 1856.[1] The cry then was "*Minizela Usutu*"—"the Usutu has swallowed up, or overwhelmed." Since then, all Cetewayo's army goes by this name. They now came on with an overwhelming rush. I went back to the 1/24th camp to see if I could find my companion, but could not. So, seeing that the Zulus were already stabbing in this camp as well as the others, I joined the fugitives retreating over the nek, on reaching which I found all communication by the road we had come along cut off by several lines of Zulus running across. They had come along behind Isandhlwana and thus intercepted our retreat. The Zulu left horn had now come over the ridge south of Stony kopje. They could have completed the circle, but preferred, I think, leaving this gap, so that they might attack us in our flight and bring us to bay.

The Isandhlwana horn edged away more and more to the left and these two kept up a constant cross fire upon us.

Our flight I never shall forget; no path, no track, boulders everywhere. On we were borne, now into some dry torrent bed, now wending our way amongst trees of stunted growth, so that, unless you made the best use of your eyes, you were in constant danger of colliding with some tree, or finding yourself unhorsed at the bottom of a ravine. Our way was strewn with shields, assegais, blankets, hats, clothing of all descriptions, guns, ammunition belts and saddles, which horses had managed to kick off, revolvers and belts and

[1] The battle on the Tugela river, which established the supremacy of Cetewayo in the affairs of Zululand.

I know not what else. Our stampede was composed of mules, with and without pack saddles, oxen and horses in all stages of equipment, and flying men, all strangely intermingled, man and beast, all apparently impressed with the danger which surrounded us. One riderless horse that came up alongside of me I caught and handed to a poor soldier who was struggling along on foot. But he had scarcely mounted before he was knocked off by a Zulu bullet.

How one's heart soon steels itself against pity at such times! I came up with poor Band Sergeant Gamble, tottering and tumbling about amongst the stones. "For God's sake, give me a lift," he said. I replied, "My dear fellow, it's a case of life and death with me." Closing my eyes, I put spurs to my horse and bounded ahead and that was the last I saw of him. The next I came up with, also a soldier, said, "Well, I'm pumped. I'm done. The Zulus can just come and stab me, if they like," and quietly sat down on a stone to await his death. A little further down, I heard a sharp "*Wenzane*" ("What are you doing?") immediately behind me. Turning my head quickly, I saw a young Zulu of not more than about 18 years of age, his assegai poised towards me, not three yards distant. His eyes, however, were turned towards a Natal native who walked just behind my horse's heels. The upraised assegai of the Natal man and his older and sterner form, made the young Zulu quail and return to a respectful distance. I have not seen my unknown protector since.

Whilst descending into the deep bed of a torrent, I saw Lieutenants Melville and Coghill and Mr. Foley about 200 yards ahead, only more to the right. A stream of Zulus was fast pressing them down towards the course we were on. Scrambling over the rocky bed as best we could, we came up the hill on this side, fully exposed to the enemy's fire. We here came to an abrupt halt, by reason of a huge chasm or gully which opened to view just in front of our horses. There was nothing for it but to turn sharply round and

follow the course of the gully down, in the hope of finding a crossing somewhere. The constant *peerse* of Zulu bullets made one's ears tingle, and one of the mounted infantry, impatient with our Indian file, put his horse at the gully. It was a noble-looking grey, but the horse fell far short and the rider lay crushed twelve feet below. I have little doubt both horse and rider had found their grave.

We found a crossing to the gully, but so steep that, coming out on the far side, I placed my arms round my horse's neck and my head as far forward as possible. Even then, it will ever seem a puzzle how the horses got out without falling backwards. A little further I found Mr. Melville, carrying the colours. Turning to me, he asked: "Mr. Brickhill, have you seen anything of my sword back there?" After glancing back upon our path for his satisfaction, I replied that I had not. He must have lost it before he joined us. . . .

Going down the Blackwater river, we had some very bad country, so bad that we all got off and led our horses. We were compelled to take a narrow pass, the flying party all converging at this point. Seeing the danger of Mr. Melville's position (for there was a steep precipice on his immediate left), I backed my horse and kept back others as well as I could. It was then that I became aware that Mr. Coghill was just behind, as he shouted, "Get on your horse there, Mr. Brickhill. This is no time for leading a horse. Get on with your horses, you fellows in front."

Someone near him said, "You get off yours. This is no place to be riding one." I did not then know that he suffered from an injured knee and could not walk.

As we shot down into the bed of the Blackwater, we had to slither down a steep bank of 8 or 9 feet. The impetus of Mr. Melville's horse had carried him under a tree, a large branch of which caught his right shoulder and nearly unhorsed him. I was able to catch the back swing of the branch, though it tore my coat well down. Rising to the far side, we were again exposed to the full fire of the enemy, still in hot

pursuit. Crossing a little ridge, we came upon a grass-covered bog. This scattered our party, each one feeling his own way out. My horse was now fagged. As I spurred him, he reared and my spectacles fell off. So serious was this loss that, for a few seconds, I peered down into the green grass to try to catch some reflection of them, but the whizz of a Zulu bullet reminded me that time was precious so on I sped.

Reaching the Buffalo, we found it rolling high. No time for choosing the best crossing place then. There were the Zulus in running lines, making for the stiller water higher up. My horse, plunged in, swimming at once, but had scarcely gone six yards before he stumbled over something large and nearly fell into the rushing stream beyond. I clutched his mane and guided the rein with great care; yet four times I thought that all was lost. Not ten yards below was a waterfall, in the pool of which three riderless horses were swirling round and round.

Mr. Melville had crossed higher up, and Mr. Foley immediately behind him. Mr. Melville's horse seemed to have some difficulty in getting up the bank on this side. One impulse was to go to his assistance; but his horse gave a plunge and, I thought, was climbing out. My guides here scudding away, I hastened on.

When afterwards I was one of the party of twenty who were sent down to bury the bodies of Lieutenants Melville and Coghill, and to look after the colours (for I had seen them on the staff in Mr. Melville's hand up to the last),[1] I found that the obstacle in the river over which I so nearly came to grief, was a huge solitary rock, which then stood over six feet out of the water; but, when I crossed, there had been no indication whatever of its presence.

Coming up the hill on this side the Buffalo, we were again exposed to the full force of the enemy's fire. I saw a white man and a native fall off their horses here.

[1] The Queen's colour, entrusted to Melville, was found in the Buffalo river by a reconnoitring party on 4 February 1879. The colours of the 2nd battalion, which had been captured at Isandhlwana, were never recovered.

On, on we sped, catching up many native fugitives. We did not feel out of danger even temporarily, until we reached the Rev. Weber's station. Jumping off my horse, I told him what had happened, and he ordered his waggon to be inspanned. I seized a bucket of water, took a draught and pelted away after the now receding Basutos. On and on to the Gordon mission where I advised Dr. Dalzell to get everyone away across the Tugela at once; which he did that night. On and on to Mrs. Fynn, who, however, already knew by letter that Mr. Fynn was with the general's column. However, I induced her to get the waggon inspanned, and hastily we brought all over to the courthouse, where a rude defence was arranged under the careful management of the resident magistrate of Newcastle, assisted by Mr. Knight of Umsinga. We were each told off to our respective posts, and anxiously awaited each fear-painted rumour, as the weary hours of night wore slowly on. About 2 a.m., Col. Bray arrived with an accession of three or four to our white forces. Day at last dawned; and several more days and nights passed before Col. Bray gave me permission to leave the now well-defended little magistrates' office. I proceeded to Helpmakaar, there to rejoin my column.

18. THE ISANDHLWANA CAMPAIGN FROM THE ZULU ANGLE

From *Reminiscences of the Past*, by J. W. Shepstone (Natal Archives, *Acc.* 66–3)

The capture of Cetewayo was effected by Major Marter. Mnyamana[1] came to me in person at the camp. He was quite alone and expressed a wish to see me. I at once guessed that he had important information, or he would have come accompanied at any rate by two or three attendants. The only words he used were: "I have come to tell you that the wind

[1] One of Cetewayo's most trusted indunas.

blows from the Ingome forest," and at once left. I reported this to Sir Garnet,[1] telling him what it conveyed: and it was thus in the Ingome forest that Major Marter effected the capture.

Cetewayo reached headquarters camp on a very hot Sunday morning. I had a troublesome headache. Sir Garnet asked me to go and meet him and talk to him. I did so. He had been placed in a bell tent quite alone. On my entering it, he gave me what, I suppose, he had not given anyone else, the royal salute—*bayete*; and shook me by the hand. I told him that the intention was that he should leave the country. The tears ran down his cheeks and he said: "Ask that I may be allowed to remain in the country, not as king of the Zulus, but simply as Cetewayo. Ask that I may be allowed to sweep away the ashes of my burned kraal, and build fresh huts for myself."

I told him that it was no use. I could not even go and ask that.

He said: "If you like, you can speak for me and succeed."

I then pointed out to him that, with us, the decision did not rest with one but with several and therefore my saying anything would have no effect. The sun was so hot in the tent that I was anxious to get out. Cetewayo had said to me: "I can see you have not brought me good news, as you have no chair to sit upon. You're talking to me standing." I said: "It is true. I have not brought you good news."

After this, I left him, and of course told Sir Garnet what had passed. Later on in the afternoon, a mule-waggon arrived in charge of Major Poole, who was to escort Cetewayo with some of his wives and attendants to Port Durnford, where a vessel[2] was waiting to convey him to the Cape. Just before he got into the

[1] Sir Garnet Wolseley, sent out to assume civil as well as military authority in Natal and the Transvaal, reached Durban on 28 June 1879. He did not take over command in the field until after the engagement at Ulundi on 4 July.

[2] The steamer *Natal*. In 1882 it was decided to reinstate Cetewayo on certain conditions. He was soon involved in hostilities with a rival chief, Usibebu, and died at Eshowe in 1884.

waggon, he sent for me; but I had not the heart to go to him. It happened to be the very day of his installation six years previously by Sir Theophilus Shepstone.[1]

I conversed with several of the chiefs and certain other Zulus on the late war. The first remark one of them made was: "We fought for our king and you beat us." I replied: "How can you say that when you took the camp at Isandhlwana?" They said that, though they had carried everything before them at Isandhlwana, they were fully convinced on that day that they were no match for the white man. I asked how, and they replied: "You know what we are, when we once give way and run. There is no stopping us to fight with the pursuer. But your people, when, as in several instances, only numbering three, would stand back-to-back and defy us to approach. While the ammunition lasted, we did not attack; but took advantage of them when their powder failed. We allowed none to escape."

"You gave us the battle that day," they explained, "for you dispersed your army in small parties all over the country. We had therefore no difficulty in overwhelming each party as we came upon it, putting all to the assegai and passing on."

A report having reached Pietermaritzburg before I left that our troops had stampeded, I asked if this was so. The reply was "Ba fela ndawonye."[2] They described their loss as great, and said that Kambula and Isandhlwana were the worst days, as far as losses were concerned. The most remarkable feature of the war was that, after both Isandhlwana and Kambula, the army did not return to the king but dispersed and went to their kraals. At Kambula the headmen tried hard to induce them to return to the king, as was the custom.

[1] Cetewayo was installed as successor to Panda on 1 September 1873. On this occasion, Theophilus Shepstone, who was anxious to strengthen the influence of Natal, proclaimed certain judicial reforms with the consent of the new king and his advisers. Non-observance of these reforms by Cetewayo made inevitable further intervention in the affairs of Zululand.

[2] "They all (i.e., Zulus and Natal forces) died together."

These instances were wholly unprecedented. There is no doubt that, after the battle of Isandhlwana, though we were worsted, yet had a considerable force of horsemen at once pushed on to the Ulundi kraal, they would have met with little or no opposition. . . .[1]

The force that attacked Rorke's Drift (so they themselves told me) was the reserve which had not taken part at Isandhlwana. The intention in crossing over into Natal was simply, as they said and I fully believe, to get some cattle. On their way they saw the tents; and, being only three-quarters of a mile away, they made for them. They thus prevented the main body from going any further, as they fought for the greater part of the night and were only too thankful to return quietly next morning across the Buffalo. Here they met Lord Chelmsford and the force with him on the way from Isandhlwana to Rorke's Drift. Some of the officers begged that they might be allowed to attack the force of Zulus; but Lord Chelmsford forbade them attempting anything of the kind. On my telling the Zulus this, in Zululand afterwards, they remarked, "We felt that day that the spirits had watched over us. For, had the white force attacked us, we could have offered only feeble resistance, having had little or nothing to eat the day before, no sleep during the night; whilst, having crossed the swollen Buffalo twice, we were completely exhausted." I asked them whether, had they won the day at Rorke's Drift, they would have gone on into Natal. They replied that they could not have exceeded the king's orders, which were that they were to resist to the utmost in Zululand, but not to invade Natal.[2]

During the Ulundi battle, Cetewayo watched the fight from a ridge about one mile away, with some of his brothers. The sun was shining when the troops formed square near the Nodwengu kraal; and the

[1] According to Mr. J. W. Shepstone, defeat at Isandhlwana was partly due to demoralisation of the native contingents, who had not been permitted to fight in their own formations, under their own leaders.

[2] The generally-accepted view is that the successful defence of Rorke's Drift saved the Colony from the horrors of Zulu invasion.

gunbarrels, swords and bayonets all glistening in the sun, Cetewayo declared that the troops had hemmed themselves in with iron. He watched, saw the attack made, and remained there until he saw his men waver and give way, pursued by the Dragoons and Lancers. . . . That night, Cetewayo slept in a cave beyond the ridge and thus became a fugitive in his own country.[1]

19. TENSION IN DURBAN

From *A Lifetime in South Africa*, by Sir John Robinson, 1900

When once the main facts of the reverse were placed beyond the reach of doubt, the leading men of both towns bestirred themselves to face the situation. In Durban a meeting was held, and a Defence Committee appointed. We met daily and discussed the exigencies of the moment from every point of view. Opinions greatly differed as to how the town could best be defended. Some thought that an advanced line of defence was desirable, and a body of some fifty mounted men were enrolled, under Mr. Escombe's captaincy, to patrol the Tongaat, a stream which flowed seaward about thirty miles from Durban. They were clad in a costume of dark brown corduroy, the only material available, of so pungent an odour that it supplied an expressive, if somewhat inelegant, name to the little contingent. The balance of opinion, however, was strongly in favour of local fortification, and the whole town was given up to defence works. At an early stage of the proceedings, the gravity of them was accentuated by the advent of Lord Chelmsford himself. After withdrawing all that remained of his force within the borders of Natal, he hurried down to Maritzburg and Durban to make such provision as might be possible for the defence of both places. It

[1] The destruction of a chief's kraal is usually followed by the submission of the tribe, since, with the chief a fugitive, it is impossible to maintain discipline and authority.

must be admitted that his presence did not tend to allay alarm, as both he and his officers frankly recognised the seriousness of the situation and the necessity for action. Said one of the latter to me at a meeting of the Town Committee: "I never saw such a foe; I don't think you could meet a worse foe." After it was over, we rode down the streets with his lordship, pointing out such buildings as might be defensible and generally, in no smothered tones, discussing the possibilities of resistance. Women and children, scared and nervous, gathered by the roadside, wondering what new and alarming danger beset the town. Before nightfall, an idea prevailed that the Zulus had crossed the border and were advancing on the town, and hardly anyone slept soundly before dawn appeared. What else could the arrival of the Commander of the Forces, and his words of warning, while inspecting the town, portend than some sudden and appalling crisis?

Thenceforward and for weeks, all was preparation and suspense. Every large building, no matter what its occupancy, was set apart as a place of refuge, should the anticipated onslaught be made. They were loopholed for riflemen, and sheltered from musketry fire or rushing spearmen by sandbags. For once, the natural curse of Durban—its sand—was found to be a blessing. Every available sugar bag and corn sack was pressed into service. To this day, many of these loopholes remain, objects of curiosity to the visitor and grim reminders of the past to the resident. The tongue of land known as the Point, where the work of the shipping was done, was barricaded by a wall of timber from shore to shore. Here, should the town itself be overwhelmed, and the worst come to the worst, people were to find a final refuge, with such shipping as might be in port to flee to in the last extremity. All the townsfolk were told off to their assigned places of resort on a given signal. Every townsman was enrolled in a Town Guard and directed to equip himself with a rifle, for which he had to pay, or hold himself responsible for paying, £2 10s.

Meanwhile, many ingenious townsmen devised their own independent measures of defence. One placed an iron tank in a tree near his newly-built house, from which he proposed to fire at any Zulus who might be audacious enough to attack his dwelling. "At any rate," he said, "before seeing my place destroyed, I shall have the satisfaction of shooting a few of the brutes." What might follow was not apparent. The agent of a local shipping company had a small tug in readiness to carry his household out to sea. Subsequent history was anticipated by a proposal to run an armoured train to and fro past the town; and, no doubt, had the occasion arisen, and the attempt been made, it would have proved an efficacious method of foiling the wily Zulu. In Maritzburg, almost exactly the same measures were taken. Some anxiety was caused in both places by the discovery that corrugated iron sheets—the only procurable material for shield purposes—were penetrable by ordinary musket bullets, but timber was fortunately abundant, and a backing of four-inch deals made the barriers practically impregnable. A daily service of runners was provided to the lower Tugela, only sixty miles distant, in order that regular and early news might be received regarding the movements of the enemy and the depth of the river. As long as "no enemy in sight" was reported, and the river was said to be "rising," comparative comfort prevailed, but sometimes the Tugela was announced to be "very low," and rumours of "Zulus in sight," were transmitted, to the perturbation of everybody. On such occasions the nightly watch was specially vigilant. For weeks many householders went to bed with their portmanteaus or bags packed in readiness for an instant flight; and any noise that might disturb the darkness, a Kaffir song, a rifle shot, a distant thunderclap, caused many a beating heart and wakeful eye. One Saturday morning, when passing down the street, a high official, with pallid face and fluttering scrap of pink paper held in shaking hands, exclaimed to me, "They've crossed. They've crossed." I examined the telegram, having

already had a later one of my own of quite a different tenor, and was able to point out to my friend that the persons "crossing" were not bloodthirsty Zulus, but peaceful messengers with cheerful news from Eshowe.

This state of tension lasted fully two months.

20. SHEPSTONE'S ANXIETIES IN PRETORIA

Sir T. Shepstone to Sir B. Frere, 30 January 1879. Shepstone Collection, Letter Book 1878–9, *Acc.* 96–15, Natal Archives.

I find that there is very little prospect of getting any of the Boers to turn out.[1]

Their sympathies are strongly against us, and it is not an uncommon thing to have these expressed in the shape of exultation at the misfortune which lost the general his camp.

The idea is that this misfortune has afforded them the best chance they can ever have of recovering their independence, and many of them are in hopes that, as soon as Piet Joubert returns from his mission to you, with the refusal which they well know he must receive from you, active measures will be taken to accomplish their object.

Piet Joubert is himself responsible for most of this feeling. He has, I am told, been doing all in his power privately to foment it, and has frequently expressed his hope that the Zulu campaign may end disastrously for England's arms.

It is said also that an understanding exists between certain of the Boers and Cetewayo, that provided they take no action against him, and do not in any way take part in the hostilities against him, they, the Boers, will not be molested by the Zulus. . . .

So great is the effect produced on the minds of these people by our temporary reverse. Everything is

[1] The heroic Piet Uys raised a small commando to co-operate with Colonel Wood against the Zulus.

magnified into a great grievance. To the stereotyped ones are now added the award, and even Mr. Sargeant's report.[1]

Reasoning and explanation are alike useless. I have spoken to a few of the more sober-thinking ones. They say that, so long as the finality of the annexation remains a question, so long will the Boers be unanimous in opposing the British Government; because they know full well what the fate of those will be who might show now a preference for British rule, should by any chance that rule be withdrawn; and they all think there is a chance of that being the case. . . .

The people of the Utrecht district have as a rule much less of this feeling among them; and a few are at the front with Colonel Wood's column doing good service, but from Wakkerstroom and upwards the feeling I have described is said to be universally professed.

Since writing the above, I learn from Pretoria that on Monday morning last a Zulu messenger passed Pretoria. He was met by a field cornet, Lewis, just as he crossed the waggon road. Lewis went out of his way to question him.

The Zulu told him that he was the bearer of good news from Cetewayo to Paul Kruger, and that another messenger had gone to Potchefstroom to Pretorius with the same message. The "good news" was the intelligence of the capture of the general's camp and of six cannon. The message was that "now was the time for the Boers to join him and drive the English into the sea; but, if they did not wish to join, they were to sit quiet, that he had shown what he could do in the first encounter; he would allow the troops to amuse themselves in Zululand, but he would leave them there and enter Natal." The fact seems incredible, because the intelligence by mail reached Pretoria only at 10.30 on Monday night. But it is a fact that Field Cornet Lewis told this story to the sheriff, Mr. Jackson,

[1] *Report*, September 1878, on the Finances of the Transvaal, by W. C. Sargeant, Crown Agent. The economical administration, introduced by Sargeant, increased the unpopularity of the new régime.

in Pretoria twelve hours before the mail arrived. . . . P.S. I forgot to mention that reports of sinister intentions by Molappo[1] are very rife among the Boers. It is said that he intends entering Natal at the sources of the Bushman River. . . . It would seem that the Boers are in communication with all the native tribes.

[1] A prominent Basuto chief.

V

PARLIAMENT AND LAW COURTS: NATAL BECOMES A SELF-GOVERNING COLONY

THOUGH the charter of 1856 had established Natal as a colony with representative institutions, advance to the status of a self-governing community was unavoidably slow. Confident as he had been of the capacity of the European population for exercise of the elective franchise, Sir George Grey had yet insisted that "Natal cannot safely be made the scene of political experiments." Owing to the formidable numbers of its native subjects, the colonial Government was bound to avoid any steps which might cause serious offence to native sentiment. Under John Scott and R. W. Keate, as has been related in an earlier volume,[1] the policy of the elected majority on the Council had aimed at transferring to legislative control the management of native affairs, and subjecting the native population to disabilities and special taxation, from which European colonists were immune. Under these circumstances, the natives regarded the Executive Government as their natural protectors. Knowing this, Secretaries of State could not entertain proposals which, through an enlargement of the jurisdiction of the legislature, might result in dangerous racial friction. Nevertheless,

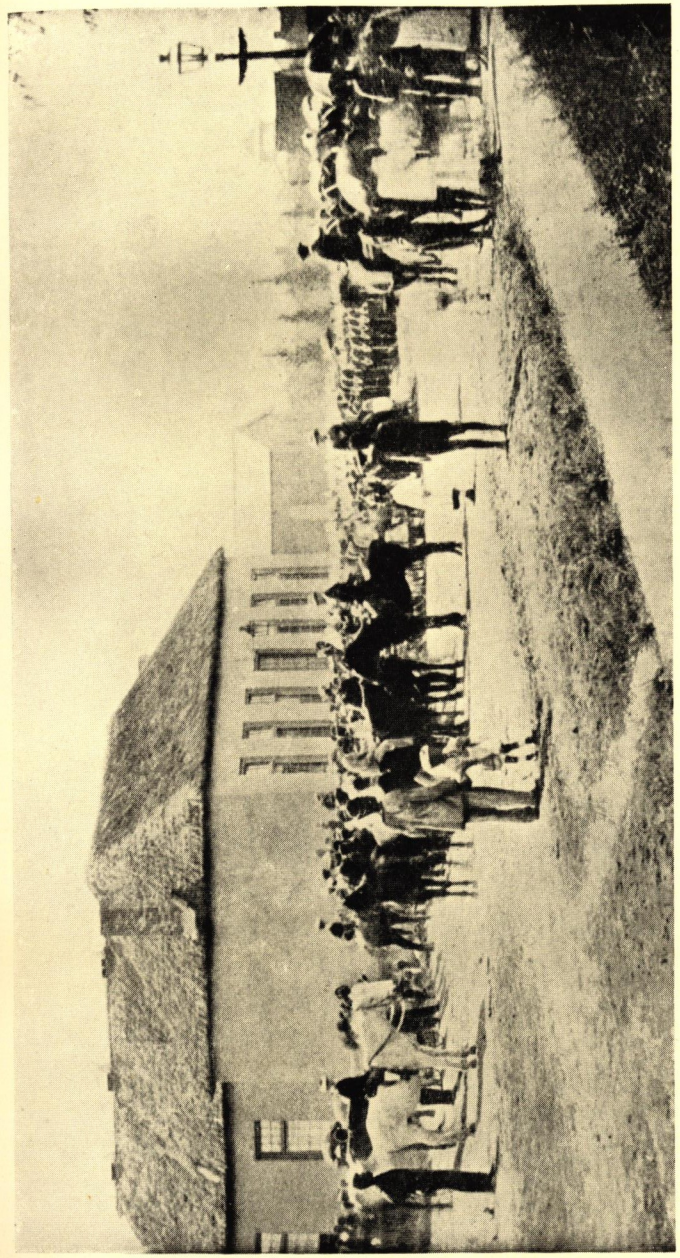
[1] *More Annals of Natal*, pp. 186–93, 241–3.

the existing system was cumbersome and productive of friction. Whilst colonial public opinion resented "the interference of political parties in England," the charter gave no guarantee that the policy of the Imperial Government would prevail. By refusing to pass the estimates, the Legislative Council could compel a Governor to choose between yielding to its wishes or attempting to defray public expenditure without recourse to parliamentary grant. When Keate refused to make concessions to the opinion of the elected members, resentment found expression in bitter press attacks.[1] At Whitehall, there was a natural objection to extension of the constitutional liberties of a colony which must for many years be dependent upon an imperial garrison. Moreover, grave irregularities in the administration precluded confidence in the ability of Natal to manage its own affairs. In 1875, Sir Garnet Wolseley found confusion and disregard of Treasury regulations rampant in all the executive departments. Hopes of prosperity and of buoyant revenues, consequent upon the discovery of goldfields in the north, had begun to fade. Across the Tugela, there were ominous indications of trouble brewing.

The Langalibalele crisis disclosed the political weakness of Natal.[2] Since the Colonial Office could not constitutionally withdraw self-government from a colony, it dispatched Sir Garnet Wolseley to induce the colonists to consent to a greater measure of executive control. By public flattery and lavish hospitality at Government House, Wolseley hoped to overcome the reluctance of the legislature to amend the constitution and make Natal a Crown colony. In the end he had to be content

[1] For criticism in a vein satirical rather than bitter, see no. 21, pp. 183 *sqq.*

[2] The Langalibalele rising is discussed in C. W. de Kiewiet, *The Imperial Factor in South Africa*, pp. 36-40.



LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR KEATE OPENS THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

with an enactment which added eight new nominated members to the Legislative Council. It left, however, the elective members in a majority, and safeguarded their control over finance by the provision that taxation of the European population should not be valid unless imposed by a two-thirds majority of those present. Even so, the amending act was bitterly resented as undeserved punishment of the Colony for its handling of the Langalibalele episode.[1] It was the belief of Lord Carnarvon that temporary curtailment of the powers of the legislature would end the deadlock, restore stability and public confidence, and thus hasten the attainment of responsible government. He may have been right; and certainly, the knowledge that Whitehall aimed at confederation based on possession of self-governing powers by each of the component communities, helped to reconcile the colonists to the new régime. In the coastal districts there was less antagonism to Wolseley than had been shown in official Maritzburg. For confederation would admit Natal-grown sugar free of duty to the Cape Colony. Moreover, Wolseley spoke hopefully of the prospects of railway construction, and was able to promise renewal of coolie immigration.

Since the Imperial Government believed that "Natal must gain strength by confederating with its neighbours," it was the task of Sir Henry Bulwer, who took over the government from Sir Garnet, to prepare the way for closer political relations with the Cape. The new Governor, whom G. M. Sutton thought "very sensitive and touchy,"[2] was wise enough to realise that local initiative was essential to the success of Lord Carnarvon's

[1] Sutton, *Diary*, 1875: "Exceedingly angry and excited over the proposed Government policy of more nominees in the Council."—26 April 1875 (Natal Archives).

[2] *Diary*, 2 June 1876.

policy. He found public opinion apathetic towards the question of the possible union of South Africa under the British flag. "We must make them take a prominent part themselves," he wrote, "in the preliminary steps leading to confederation." [1] On 3 September 1878, the legislature, thus coached by Bulwer, expressed its willingness to enter into conference with the other states of South Africa. But the cause of confederation had already received a setback in the north, whilst the Zulu war increased the reluctance of the larger colony to share the burdens of Natal. In 1880, Wolseley's amending act was allowed to lapse. The Legislative Council hoped that it would be succeeded by a constitution resting on a basis of responsible government. In reply to a reasoned petition, Whitehall affirmed that Natal could only have self-government through confederation.

The decision of Downing Street meant restoration of the constitutional arrangements as they had existed in 1874. Ministers would have been prepared to enlarge the powers of the European colonists, had Natal's neighbours consented to some form of union which would have given the tiny community assurance of support in the event of collision with its enormous native population. But self-government was unsuited to the circumstances of a colony in which the natives formed the great majority of the inhabitants. On the other hand, the charter of 1856 could not permanently be maintained. In February 1882, Earl Kimberley was compelled to admit that there was little probability of the achievement of a federal structure. Wearied of the importunity of the Natal colonists, and prepared

[1] Sir H. Bulwer to Sir B. Frere, 13 November 1877, G. H., vol. 220 (Natal Archives).

to agree that "the evils inherent in the existing constitution day by day press more injuriously upon the well-being, and interfere more seriously with the good government of the Colony," [1] the Secretary of State promised to consent to a greater measure of governmental autonomy, provided that a fresh election showed that the proposed change was desired by a majority of the European voters.

It now remained for the colonists to consider what responsibilities were involved in the adoption of self-government. Within the Council, men like Robinson and Sutton held the view that, under this system, the Imperial authorities would still be saddled with the obligation of defending Natal from aggression from bordering territories. On this essential issue, Henry Binns, who happened to be in London, made careful enquiries of Courtney at the Colonial Office. Courtney was emphatic that "responsible government pure and simple means defence from all danger external as well as internal." [2] Writing to Harry Escombe, Binns reported that it was not expected at the Colonial Office that Natal would accept self-government. Courtney's judgment was not at fault. A large majority of the colonial electorate rejected without hesitation the offer of responsible institutions without a British garrison. Robinson and his chief supporters were unseated. Escombe, who had fought the elections on the opposite platform, now endeavoured to find a solution whereby responsible government could be made compatible with room for the exercise of imperial power. He had

[1] Select Committee re future government of Colony, *Report*, 5 December 1881.

[2] "I put cases to him . . . but he was immovable, and said that from this there could be no departure. This in my mind quite settles the matter, for we cannot undertake anything of the sort."—H. Binns to H. Escombe, 12 March 1882, Escombe Papers (Natal Archives).

been informed by Binns that the Cabinet would insist on something more than a veto in native administration. The proposal which he finally elaborated combined with a responsible ministry the provision that the Crown should nominate seven members of the Legislative Council to protect the interests of the non-European population. Courtney insisted that all legislation affecting the natives should originate in the Executive and be subject to the right of reservation.[1] In 1883, however, Escombe's bill to amend the charter on these lines was rejected in the Council by the casting vote of the Speaker.

From time to time the legislature continued to make suggestions for constitutional reform which would satisfy the demands of Whitehall, and at the same time be consistent with the safety of the community. The conditions upon which the Secretary of State insisted were, however, incompatible with any genuine measure of self-government.

In the 'eighties, the failure of the policy of confederation made acute the problem of the relation of Natal to the self-governing Cape. With the departure of Sir Garnet Wolseley, the Governor of the Cape resumed those functions of supervision which were vested in Her Majesty's High Commissioner for South Africa. Whereas the High Commissioner was directly responsible to the Secretary of State, he was subject, as Governor, to the advice of his ministers. In 1882, Frere's successor, Sir Hercules Robinson, communicated to his ministers the request of Natal, forwarded to him in his capacity as High Commissioner, that he should arrange with the Governments of the Transvaal and Orange Free State a conference of the three states

[1] Binns to Escombe, 20 March 1882 and 25 May 1882, Escombe Papers.

on railway communications. His action gave rise to considerable resentment in Natal. For the younger Colony had grounds for suspicion that it was the desire of Whitehall to make Natal subordinate to Cape Colony. In 1881, the Secretary of State had taken steps to appoint W. J. Sendall, an assistant secretary of the Local Government Board, to the vacant office of Lieutenant-Governor. Sendall was known to be a friend of Sir H. Robinson. It was conjectured that the appointment of a Lieutenant-Governor, instead of a Governor, foreshadowed a closer connection with the Cape, and even an intention to govern Natal through official channels at Capetown.[1] In fact, Robinson had supported the unexpected candidature of John X. Merriman. Fortunately, the Colonial Office understood more accurately than either Robinson or Merriman the inadvisability of appointing a Cape politician to the government of Natal.[2] When the Legislative Council raised the salary of a Governor to £4,000 "to induce the British Government to appoint a man of recognised standing and experience," the Colonial Office deferred to the wishes of "this most troublesome Colony" and sent back Sir H. Bulwer, in place of Sendall.

Undeterred by the reverse of 1882, John Robinson soon returned to the Legislative Council, with undiminished zeal for the cause of colonial liberties. His chief lieutenant was George M. Sutton who had begun his political apprenticeship in 1875 with conscientious study of Macaulay's *History of England*. Escombe, whose advocacy of native representation in the legis-

[1] "The Natalians being very touchy in resenting any sort of dictation from Cape Colony, as they considered the nomination of a Governor who was a friend of Sir Hercules." *Memoir of J. E. C. Bodley* (1930), p. 108; Legislative Council Debates, vols. 3–4, 1882.

[2] Sir P. Laurence, *Life of J. X. Merriman* (1930), p. 107.

lature had been viewed askance by his colleagues, gradually modified his earlier attitude of antagonism towards responsible government. In 1880, he had been nominated by the Governor to a seat on the Executive Council. The law required that certain questions connected with the administration should be laid before this body. When Bulwer proceeded to appoint a Protector of Immigrants without reference to his Executive, he was strongly criticised by Escombe. It is clear that Escombe regarded the Executive Council as a quasi-cabinet whose advice was constitutionally binding on the Governor. This was not the view of the Secretary of State, the Earl of Derby, who upheld Bulwer's contention that responsibility lay with the Governor alone. In July 1883, Escombe was not reappointed to the Executive Council. He at once complained of deposition. Following this incident, he began to join with John Robinson in pressing that the Governor should cease to exercise authority in accordance with his private judgment. Both urged that, when the time came for bestowal of greater freedom in government, the powers which the Governor exercised as supreme chief should be subject to ministerial approval. They felt that any other interpretation of the status of self-government would be misleading and likely to issue in constitutional deadlock.

Thus confronted with the major problem of the security of native rights, the Secretary of State invited the colonial legislature to devise constitutional safeguards for the protection of native interests. The influence of Escombe may be discerned in the efforts which were now made (1885-92) to reply to this invitation. Robinson had always contended that the loyalty of the native population was sufficient evidence of mutual goodwill

in the relations of black with white. Remembering the bitter controversies of the days of Lieutenant-Governor Scott, the Colonial Office was not impressed by this plea. It insisted on the erection of a nominated upper house as a check on hasty legislation; and it demanded the reservation of a sum of £10,000 to be devoted annually to the promotion of the welfare and education of the natives.

These terms were agreed upon in London by Sir John Robinson (who had been knighted in 1889) and G. M. Sutton, the selected delegates of the Legislative Council. Both men were confident of success at the polls. For the annexation of Zululand (1887) had made Great Britain responsible for the peace of that unhappy country, whilst the Cape Colony had begun to assert control over the territory of Pondoland. There accordingly appeared to be less danger of external aggression than in 1882. At the same time, Lord Knutsford undertook in 1889 to maintain for a period not exceeding five years after the introduction of responsible government, a certain number of troops in Natal and Zululand, to facilitate the organisation of colonial forces. Opponents of the contemplated change were still strong in the midlands and at the capital, where Sir John Akerman and John Bird argued that responsible government would intensify race feeling and be followed by a dangerous attempt to interfere with native customs. On the coast and in the upland districts adjacent to the two republics, Robinson's followers were numerous and enthusiastic. In the long run, external factors dictated a decision in favour of self-government. The trade of Natal depended upon its railway communications with the interior. In the early 'nineties, Kruger's Government in the Transvaal

refused to allow the Colony to extend its railroad beyond the colonial frontier at Charlestown. The Cape Colony and Natal had long been bidders for the trade with the northern republic. When, by the close of the year 1892, the Cape line through Bloemfontein reached Pretoria, the outlook for Natal looked bleak. It was shrewdly calculated that the friendliness of Kruger and his officials would increase in proportion as Natal emancipated herself from the tutelage of Whitehall. Moreover the Imperial authorities now clearly favoured responsible government, if it could be conceded without harm to native interests. A strong hint that further borrowing powers, without which Natal could not hope to complete her railway system, could only be exercised on the responsibility of the Colony as an autonomous community turned the scales in favour of Robinson's party. Two strenuously contested elections followed. Though opinion appeared to be equally divided, and even, in the vital election of 1892, to incline to the side of conservatism, the Colonial Office interpreted the general desire of the constituencies as favourable to the enlargement of self-government.[1] On 4 July 1893, Natal entered upon her career as a self-governing colony.

In accordance with the wishes of the Secretary of State, the new constitution gave Natal a parliament consisting of two chambers, a nominated upper house of eleven, and an elected assembly of 37 members sitting for four years unless dissolved earlier. No change was made in the franchise; nor was the charter of justice repealed. The responsible ministry was to consist of not more than six members.

The old Legislative Council had moved in the early

[1] *Brit. Parl. Papers*, Natal (Responsible Government) 1893–4. LX (216).

'seventies from the low-thatched Government schoolroom to the court house which Keate had built in a period of unprecedented slump, and in defiance of public opinion. Here it remained in convenient proximity to the Royal Hotel,[1] the social rendezvous of the 'eighties and informal club for parliamentarians, until the opening in 1892 of the new assembly buildings erected in preparation for the advent of responsible government.

The first colonial ministry was sworn in by a new Governor, Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson, on 10 October 1893. Sir John Robinson was inevitably the first Premier of Natal. No one had worked with greater industry and ability in the cause of Natal's parliamentary liberties. At his side, as Attorney General, was Harry Escombe, soon, owing to the ill-health of his chief, to succeed to the leadership of the party. The new Government was mainly occupied with questions of tariffs and communications. Having negotiated the Charlestown agreement with President Kruger, providing for extension of the railway to the Rand, Robinson was able to reach a trade agreement with the republics. And, when the Pondoland difficulty had been disposed of,[2] he was ready to turn to the south and discuss with the older Colony the question of closer union. In 1897 these negotiations fell into Escombe's hands. It was the cherished ambition of the new leader to promote the unification, under the Crown, of the whole of South Africa. After consultation with Cecil Rhodes, he introduced a permissive federation bill into

[1] Built by Henry Cloete in 1845, now (1937) the Oaks Hotel.

[2] In 1892, the British Government had, unknown to Natal, agreed to the ultimate annexation of Pondoland by Cape Colony. The Government and colonists of Natal had hoped for the incorporation of northern Pondoland within the Colony of Natal.

the Assembly. But Escombe, who was dependent upon the votes of coastal constituencies, could not agree to raise the low tariff rates upon which Natal had invariably insisted. Even a customs union with the Cape and Free State was out of the question, unless Natal would compromise on this issue. Some months later, an election brought into office the Country party, with Henry Binns as Premier. Mutual concessions prepared the way for the entry of the Colony (1898) to a customs convention with the south.

After the South African war, there was a temporary reaction against the policy of co-operation. For the Afrikander revival in other parts of South Africa antagonised the predominantly British population. Moreover, the transfer to Natal of the districts of Vryheid and Utrecht seemed to many to give the Colony the strength to stand alone. But confidence was rudely shaken by the Zulu outbreak of 1906. The Bambata rising was a sharp reminder that Natal might be unable to cope with serious native disorder without assistance from the neighbouring colonies. Sir Frederick Moor, Natal's last Premier, who took office in November 1906, accordingly set himself to promote the closer union of South Africa.[1] With the economic future of the Colony clearly dependent upon customs and railways agreements with more powerful neighbours, some measure of unification seemed imperative. In 1908 Moor's Government realised that conferences between independent communities could not find a permanent solution of sharply conflicting interests. But Natal desired to preserve its identity and its parliamentary institutions. In the view of the vast majority of the colonists, union ought to take the form of federation.

[1] For the career of Sir F. R. Moor, see *Dictionary of National Biography*, 1922–30.

Agreement on this basis proved to be impossible. When Moor and his colleagues returned from the National Convention, they could however point to some concessions to federal sentiment in the draft act. It was wisely decided to submit the issue to a referendum. The figures were substantially in favour of ratification (11,121—3,701); and in 1910 Natal entered the Union of South Africa.

The Supreme Court of Natal had been established in 1857, with Walter Harding as first Chief Justice. Both the two puisne judges, Henry Connor and H. Lushington Phillips were men of uncommon ability. Connor, who had been Chief Justice on the Gold Coast, was to make for himself a great reputation as an exponent of the modern Roman-Dutch Law. His junior colleague was also to win distinction in the world of law, but he lacked the urbanity and patience of his senior. In November 1859, he came into collision with Lieutenant-Governor Scott. Exercising the royal prerogative of justice, Scott liberated a prisoner whom Phillips had sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment. Since the reason for this remission was the prisoner's ill-health and arose subsequently to his sentence in court, it was not irregular for Scott to have exercised his authority without previous communication with the presiding judge. Phillips, however, regarded the Lieutenant-Governor's action as a gross violation of constitutional practice. He proceeded to deliver in open court a bitter attack on the Executive Government. With equal indiscretion, Scott took the grave step of suspending the second puisne judge from his judicial functions. Thereupon, the cry of "independence of the bench" was raised in the anti-Government press. Though hot-tempered and erratic, Phillips was an able judge and

popular by reason of his devotion to sport. He lost no time in proceeding to England, and laying his case before the Colonial Office. Apart from the special provisions of an act of 1781,[1] a judge could not be constitutionally deprived of his seat except for a strictly legal misdemeanour. Though Phillips had acted injudiciously, the Duke of Newcastle could only advise Scott that grave results might follow, were it to be believed that a judge was liable to punishment for expression of his sentiments in court. In June, Phillips was reinstated. He pressed home his advantage by claiming damages from the colonial Government. Ultimately, he was awarded a pension charged upon colonial funds.[2]

On Harding's death in 1874, Connor became Chief Justice. Michael Gallwey was still attorney-general, which office he had held since 1857. Gallwey's great work was the patient and impartial examination of Zulu and Boer claims at the arbitration commission of 1878, over which he presided. It was natural that he should succeed Sir Henry Connor in 1890.

The common law of Natal was the Roman-Dutch law of the older Colony. Consequently, the original district court had been presided over by a recorder, in the person of Henry Cloete, whose acquaintance with this system was profound. His successors had been trained in the English Law. With the exception of Connor, who was thoroughly at home in the work of Roman-Dutch commentators, Natal judges tended to apply, when convenient, English precedents. They were doubtless influenced by the consideration that the

[1] 22 George III, cap. 75. This act empowered Governors in Council to "amove" judges who had misbehaved in office. It was employed in South Australia in 1867. The alternative method was for the crown to act on an address of the colonial legislature.

[2] Newcastle to Scott, 19 March 1860. Scott's account of the incident is given in his despatch to the Secretary of State dated 26 December 1859.

final court of appeal was the Privy Council at London. Many English legal principles were inevitably introduced into the law as it was expounded in the courts of Natal.

The coming of Union centralised for South Africa the administration of justice. But Maritzburg remained the seat of the provincial division of the Supreme Court.

21. DEADLOCK IN THE CONSTITUTION OF NATAL, 1869

From *The Second Book of Ignoramus*, by W. M. Dick (Maritzburg 1869)

Now the fulness of time was come when the elders must arise and depart to their homes.

Yea, to all that they did Er Keet[1] said: "Nay, shall it not be." And all that Er Keet did, the elders said "nay" unto.

So they had wasted an hundred and forty and two days, with their shekel a day, and their candles and their printing.

Then David the Scribe,[2] seeing nothing could be done, having a piece of paper with the superscription of Er Keet thereon;

Lo, sauntered David to the other end of the house, where sat Chinny[3] his son, and he gave him the briefie.

And the young man arose and approached, and David, even Candle-bottoms,[4] shouted with a loud voice, "A message from His Excellency."

Then arose the chief elder[5] and made an obeisance to the young man, and the young man unto the chief elder;

[1] Lieutenant-Governor R. W. Keate.
[2] David Erskine, Colonial Secretary.
[3] R. Erskine.
[4] D. Slatter.
[5] Walter MacFarlane, Speaker of the Legislative Council.

And he delivered the briefie, and the chief elder gave it unto his scribe, even Tom the Forrester,[1] he of the the scarlet raiment.

And Tom arose and said: "Arise; depart ye every man to his own house; return ye not until the month Purim of the next year.

"For saith the instructions[2] that so may I do," and Tom cried with an exceeding loud voice, "God save the Queen, without a date."

And the elders departed, and so did the prophet; and, as he wended his way homeward, he said unto those who were with him,

"All this time hath been wasted, and all this money thrown away for nothing, nearly four thousand shekels:

"Brethren, this is but a one-horse government; it is neither one nor t'other; better this land was as before this plaything[3] was got.

"Or pay our mistress, the Great Queen, to permit us under her to govern ourselves, even as the people of the great island of the South Sea doth.[4]

"For lo. Ye are blinded one time with gold and another with coals, and now, by this ill-begotten, with his ways of iron[5]: see you not the hoof of Bigtail[6] and the hand of Karlburns[7] in all this?

"Your waggons have as much need for a fifth wheel, or your oxen for another tail, as ye have for four ways of iron at his price.

"Esau sold his birthright for a meal of burgoo, which was something, and this man would take your children's and give not even a burgoo.

"Keep the roads you have in good condition, until ye can make for yourselves a path of iron."

[1] T. Foster, clerk to the Council.
[2] The Royal Instructions issued to Governors on their appointment.
[3] The Charter, establishing Natal as a separate colony with representative institutions, 1856.
[4] The Australian Colonies, with the exception of Western Australia, received responsible government in the 'fifties.
[5] A reference to the Welborne railway scheme, adopted by the Legislative Council, but rejected by the Secretary of State.
[6] Jonas Bergtheil.
[7] Carl Behrens, local agent of the Natal Land and Colonisation Company, to whom many Natalians were heavily in debt in the later 'sixties.

22. THE IMPERIAL FACTOR: MR. FROUDE GATHERS INFORMATION

From *Leaves from a South African Journal*, by J. A. Froude, 1877

Maritzburg, October 17 (1874).—Arrived here a week ago, after a picturesque drive of fifty miles on the mail cart. After leaving the coast and the sugar plantations, signs of cultivation disappear almost wholly. There are a few farms scattered along the roadside, but with little sign of work upon them. The energy of the colony has gone into the transport department. The enormous wealth suddenly developed at the Diamond Fields has revolutionised South Africa. Horses, men and cattle are out upon the roads, waggon-driving between the Fields and the ports. The poor Kaffirs must have many merits. The farmers go away, leaving their houses and their families and property undefended. No outrage is ever heard of. The waggons are sent many hundred miles through a country almost uninhabited. They are loaded with a thousand articles which the natives must covet, and highway robbery is unknown. Yet the whites are afraid of them. No wonder, considering the disproportion of numbers. If they could be induced to work, they would be manageable; but the settlers legitimately dread the effects of deliberate idleness, supported by polygamy and female slavery, on the native character. The Langalibalele affair was an explosion of the normal uneasiness, and the blame of it lies with the system more than with the Natal Government.[1]

What is to be done with this country? It cannot be left as it is. Is it to be annexed to the Cape Colony? Is it to be a confederate province of a South-African

[1] The whole system of native management was reformed by Sir G. Wolseley in 1875. Wolseley, however, realised that there was much to be said in favour of the policy of Sir B. Pine, who had sought, by making an example of the recalcitrant Langalibalele, to subordinate the native population to European influence.

dominion? Should it be made independent and allowed to attach itself to the Dutch republics? Time will show. But it becomes more and more clear to me that if South Africa is to remain under the British flag, the choice lies between one of two policies, and that any other will fail.

If we can make up our minds to allow the colonists to manage the natives their own way, we may safely confederate the whole country. The Dutch will be in the majority, and the Dutch method of management will more or less prevail. They will be left wholly to themselves for self-defence, and prudence will prevent them from trying really harsh or aggressive measures. In other respects, the Dutch are politically conservative, and will give us little trouble.

If, on the other hand, we are determined to direct the native management from home, it will be mere insanity to erect a powerful and united constitution, with a legislature and a responsible ministry, with which we shall immediately come into collision. A united South Africa must then be governed as a province of India. We must keep the military and police force in our own hands, and along with it the entire administration and the entire responsibility. In this way, so far as I can see, there will be no great difficulty either. But attempts to combine the two methods will certainly lead to disaster.

23. HARRY ESCOMBE OPPOSES RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT IN 1880

From *Speeches of the Right Hon. Harry Escombe*

As the hon. member who has just sat down (Mr. Moor)[1] has expressed a wish that every hon. gentleman should express his views on the motion before the

[1] Mr. (afterwards Sir) Frederick Moor, member for Weenen County.



PIETERMARITZBURG IN THE 'SEVENTIES

By kind permission of Mr. F. Steere.

House,[1] I will briefly state what are my feelings as regards this question, and give my reasons for opposing this proposition. This House is asked, by passing this motion, to express its " deep regret that the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Earl of Kimberley, felt unable to recommend to the approval of her most gracious Majesty the Queen the prayer of this honourable House, as set forth in its humble petition to the Crown for the grant of responsible government. I cannot agree to this, because it is to me a matter of unfeigned satisfaction that Her Majesty's ministers have taken the course they have; I can conceive of no matter for greater congratulation than that the Government of this Colony is not in the hands of untrained statesmen. I think this is a time when we have special reason to congratulate ourselves that we have not responsible government in this Colony. What, I ask, is the public opinion in the Colony on this question? Where has it been tested? It was tested during the recent general election in the borough of Durban and also in the county of Durban; and in both instances the constituencies returned men who were pledged against responsible government. Now that is the sort of test that ministers at home take into consideration, in dealing with such a request as is contained in this motion. This cry about the cravings of the people for responsible government and the growing discontent with existing institutions is altogether ridiculous in the face of facts, and I can assure those who are raising it that they are yearning for a thing that is beyond their reach. . . .

[1] The proposal was one regretting the inability of the Secretary of State to recommend acceptance of the petition of the Legislative Council, 10 February 1880, for the grant of responsible government; and attributing the refusal to misrepresentation of the situation by Sir Garnet Wolseley. Smarting under the refusal of the Council to assume responsibility for payment of one-half of the salary of the new Resident in Zululand, and its criticism of the claims of the Imperial Government in the matter of Zulu War expenditure, Wolseley, in his covering despatch of 13 February, had expressed himself in decided opposition to the petition for self-government. On 12 February, he had been " received very coldly " in the House, where his references to the " province of Natal " and the " independent kingdom of Zululand " were little calculated to placate the elective members. See *Sutton Papers*, diaries, 1880, Natal Archives.

We cannot afford to play with such an important question as this; and I ask hon. members to consider in all seriousness what the granting of responsible government to Natal at the present time means. It must come sooner or later, I believe—sooner, some hon. members hope; later, I myself hope—but we may, I think, take it for granted that it will not be given us until we have in some measure prepared ourselves for such a radical change. The establishment of local boards in the Colony will, I take it, to some extent be useful in this direction. Another essential step in the direction of responsible government is the formation of parties in the House. I do not think it can be said that there is any such organisation at present in existence. I will go further and say that, when the votes of hon. members this session come to be looked into, we shall by our own action stand condemned as unfitted for the granting of responsible government. We cannot find any three members agreed on any great question that comes before the House. I say that, until hon. members show some capacity for leadership, or that they are amenable to discipline, it is idle of them to clamour for the granting of responsible government. The existing Government may have its faults; but, instead of always crying out against existing institutions, it is our duty to render the Government all the assistance in our power, and at the same time endeavour to educate ourselves for a time when we can take the reins of government into our own hands. Hon. members should also bear in mind that the assumption of responsible government involves the taking into our hands the defence of the Colony, and I ask, are we prepared to do that? I say that people come out here, not with the object of fighting, but for commercial purposes; and if we are not prepared to fight in defence of responsible government, it is useless to ask for the granting of it: for a defensive measure is one of the first necessities under such a form of government, and that too, on a very extensive scale. I say that when hon. members put before us the details of their plan, especially

as regards this important question of defence, it will be time enough for us to consider how far that plan is entitled to support. I have myself tried to get at it, but have failed, and I cannot see what is at the back of this cry. Indeed, as I have said, I do not think there is any cry in the Colony for responsible government.[1]

24. THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY ON RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

From his despatch, 2 February 1882, to Sir H. Bulwer. African, 244

Sir Evelyn Wood in his Despatch No. 219 of the 10th of December last, transmitted to me copy of a Report of a Select Committee of the Legislative Council respecting the proposal for the establishment of responsible government in Natal, together with a petition to the Queen from the council on the same subject.

. . . In my Despatch of May 27th, 1880, to the late Sir G. P. Colley, whilst admitting that the existing constitution was not one which could with advantage be permanently maintained, I said that Her Majesty's Government considered it advisable that the establishment of responsible government should be postponed until the Colony was included in a general South African Confederation.

At that time it was expected that the Cape Government would take early steps to assemble a conference on the subject of Confederation, and proposals for that

[1] Nevertheless, in a debate on responsible government, December 1881, Escombe declared: "We are getting tired of things as they are, and must have a change. We do not mean to be kept in short frocks any longer, and insist upon the 'tucks' being lengthened out. . . . The natives cannot be governed from Downing Street. They must be governed by men living in the Colony." In December 1879, he had proposed representation of the natives in the Legislative Council, and he believed that native legislation should be subject to the approval of the Imperial Government. His attitude in these years was not popular with the majority of the elective members, by whom his suggestions were regarded as "fine spun theories" (*Sutton Papers*, diary, 1879).

purpose were shortly afterwards brought forward in the Cape Parliament. Those proposals however fell to the ground, and there is now little probability that any action will be taken for the establishment of a Confederation under the South Africa Act 1877, before the expiration of that Act in next August.[1]

It is the fact also that, as the Committee point out, by the union of Griqualand West with the Cape Colony, and the recent changes in the Transvaal, the Colonists in Natal remain the only white community in South Africa which has not full control over its own local affairs.

In these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government admit it is reasonable that the question of the establishment of responsible government in Natal should be reconsidered, and they have carefully examined the report of the Committee in order to see how far the Colonists are prepared to meet the difficulties pointed out in my Despatch to Sir G. P. Colley, to which I have referred above.

In paragraphs 5 and 6 of that Despatch, I wrote as follows: "If responsible government were now granted to the Colony, a native population estimated to amount to no less than 400,000 souls would be placed under the sole control of a body of European settlers, who are not much more than 20,000 in number. Moreover, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, the exercise of complete self-government by a Colony brings with it the obligation that the Colony should undertake the duty of its own defence; that is to say, not only the maintenance of internal order, but also defence against aggression from bordering native tribes; and it appears to have been very generally admitted in the Natal Legislative Council, either directly or by implication, that the Colony is very far from being able to provide from its own unaided resources for the protection of its frontiers.

The result would be that, if the direction of border

[1] This act "for the union under one Government of such of the South African Colonies and States as may agree thereto" expired on 1 August 1882.

affairs were placed in the hands of responsible ministers, representing the majority in the local Legislature, the Imperial Government would be saddled with the cost and responsibility of providing against the consequences of a policy over which they had ceased to have any effective control.". . .

The Committee contend that the Colony ought to be relieved from the burden of defending itself against bordering native tribes on the ground that "the Council has not claimed, and would not claim the right of interfering in the affairs of territories beyond the borders of the Colony," and they point out "that the duty of protecting the Colony from external foes, whether by sea or land, devolves on the Empire as a whole."

I may refer here to my letter of November 17, 1870, to Sir H. Barkly, on the subject of the establishment of responsible government at the Cape, in which I observed that "it would be impossible for Her Majesty's Government to make such a separation as you suggest between the management of the internal affairs of the Colony and the defence of its frontiers against native tribes. Disturbances may easily arise amongst the natives within the borders of the Colony, which may extend to the native tribes beyond the frontier, and it is obviously impracticable to divide the task of repressing such disturbances into two parts, for one of which the Imperial and the other the Colonial Government is to be responsible." In the same letter, it was distinctly intimated that it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to maintain permanently in the Cape Colony any troops unless required for Imperial purposes. . . . In like manner, if responsible government is established in Natal, Her Majesty's Government would not be prepared to continue to station Imperial troops in the Colony as a permanent garrison, either for the maintenance of internal order, or for defence of the frontiers.

The intimate connection between the native population of Natal and Zululand renders it impossible to

treat the government of Natal as a separate matter having no concern with what passes on the other side of the border, and indeed the Council has just given a striking proof of this in the resolutions which it has thought it necessary to pass protesting against the restoration of Cetewayo.

Her Majesty's Government fully recognise the concern of this country in the defence of the Colony against any aggression by Foreign Powers, but they cannot undertake to station a garrison in the Colony for the purpose of protecting it against border tribes, when the whole control of local affairs is vested in the Colonists under the system of responsible government. Her Majesty's regular forces must be looked upon as a reserve to be resorted to only in the case of extreme necessity, when a Colony has been proved to be unable to deal with the emergency from its own resources; indeed, the Committee themselves observe that, in case of acts of aggression from bordering territories, the brunt of defence must be borne in the first instance by the Colonists.

Her Majesty's Government cannot but feel that the difficulty, which they have repeatedly pointed out, of establishing responsible government in Natal, on account of the small numbers of the white population both absolutely and relatively to the natives; and the presence of a large and warlike native population of the same race on the northern border of the Colony still remains to a considerable extent, although it is true that the white population has somewhat increased of late years, and that the Zulu power has been broken by the late war. Looking, however, to all the circumstances of the case, and to the frequent applications which have been made by the Council for greater freedom of government, they have come to the conclusion that it would not be their duty any longer to oppose the wishes of the Council, if the Colonists, after an opportunity has been given them of expressing their opinion on the question by a fresh election to the Council, with the full knowledge of the responsibilities which they are about

to undertake, decide in favour of the proposed change in the constitution.

I have therefore to instruct you to take an early opportunity to dissolve the present Council, in order to ascertain the views of the constituencies by means of fresh elections. . . .

25. DEFEAT OF THE RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT PARTY

From the despatch of Sir H. Bulwer to the Earl of Kimberley, 31 October 1882, G. H., 211, pp. 286 *sqq.*, Natal Archives

The establishment of responsible government in Natal has of late years been pressed with great urgency upon Her Majesty's Government by the Legislative Council. Her Majesty's Government, in considering the latest representation that was made on the subject by the Legislative Council . . . in the month of December of last year, at length consented to waive such objections as had appeared to them to exist to the proposed change, provided that the views of the Colonists, after an opportunity had been afforded to them by means of a fresh election, should be found to be in accordance with the solicitations of the Council.

Accordingly, on my arrival here in March last, I published your Lordship's despatch no. 333 of 2nd of February, dissolved the existing Legislative Council, and, after a due interval to enable the question to be fully discussed in the country, issued writs for the return of a new Council. The elections having been held, I called the new Council together on the 8th of June, laid before it in my opening speech the object for which it had been summoned, and a few days later transmitted to it, by message, copies of your Lordship's despatches nos. 333 and 334, with the request that the Council, as newly elected and as representing therefore the views of the constituencies, on the important questions that had been put before the Colony, would

take the question into its due consideration and communicate the result to me.

The address and resolutions of the Council, which were forwarded to me on the 31st August, embody, it may be said, the reply of the Legislative Council on the question; whilst the two bills now forwarded shew the particular changes which the new Legislative Council would desire to have at present introduced into the constitution . . . though whether as measures preliminary to the further consideration of the important constitutional question which has been raised, or independently of any such further consideration, is not perhaps so clearly indicated by the resolutions as could have been wished.

In truth, it cannot be said that the answer of the Legislative Council, as conveyed by the resolutions, is so distinct and explicit as, after all that has passed, might reasonably have been expected. The cause for this defect, as it seems to me to be, is indeed not far to seek. The colonists generally had not gone so far as their representatives in the Council had done in this question. In the coast districts, where the planting interests especially had in former years been strongly opposed to the movement for responsible government, it is true that a considerable change had taken place in public opinion; and the idea of self-government had been fast gaining ground. But, on the other hand, in the upper and midland districts, where the former movements for constitutional reform had originated and been supported, a reaction had set in. People might be in favour of the principle of responsible government, and might wish to see it adopted in Natal, but they did not consider the time had come for its adoption. They were inclined to distrust the experiment; both because they doubted if the colonists were numerically large enough to furnish sufficient materials for satisfactory government by party, and because they did not think the Colony was yet in a position to provide for its own defence. The agitation therefore for responsible government, that had been going on

for the last three years, was more an agitation by the members of the Legislative Council, than by the colonists. The demands of the Council for self-government had outrun the judgment of the constituencies generally, although the latter had not paid much heed to what had been going on, because they did not suppose that anything was likely to come out of it. Even the advocates for responsible government themselves, whilst they were pressing the claims of the Colony upon the Home Government, were many of them under an impression that they were at issue with the Home Government; that they would not get what they were asking for; that the prospect before them was one of doing battle with the Home Government in a popular cause; that there was before them a long period of agitation, which, though it might be very unpleasant for the executive government of the Colony, would do no great harm to anyone.

Consequently, the publication of your Lordship's despatch no. 333, in which it was stated in effect that Her Majesty's Government, in view of the repeated applications of the Council, would not feel it their duty any longer to oppose the wishes of the Council, if these were the wishes of the constituencies, came upon the Colony at large as a great surprise. The Home Government was now as much upbraided for consenting to grant the prayer of the Council, as it had previously been upbraided for refusing to grant it. Formerly, the Home Government had been denounced for its desire to keep the Colony in subjection to Downing Street; now it was accused of a desire to get rid of the Colony.

But the general feeling of the country soon shewed itself in a very unmistakable manner as being adverse to the acceptance of the responsibilities of self-government at the present time; and at the elections expression was given to this feeling in several ways, most of those who were elected being returned pledged to vote against the change. At Durban, Mr. J. Robinson, the able and most uncompromising advocate of respon-

sible government, was unseated; and the same result followed the elections for the Klip River and Umvoti Counties. The only constituency that returned members distinctly pledged for responsible government was that of the Victoria County. The other constituencies mainly returned their former members; but there was generally an understanding that they would not vote for responsible government. In short, nearly all the elective element of the new Legislative Council was returned against the proposed change.

Thus the Council met, and one of the chief difficulties many of the newly elected members had to encounter was how to reconcile former declarations in favour of responsible government with the present views of the constituencies. Some were able to say that it was not responsible government, as this is generally understood, that they had asked for, but something different—a modified form of responsible government, which would transfer the powers of the executive administration of the Colony to the hands of the colonists, without the responsibilities usually attached to the transfer. It was difficult for a council so constituted, composed of members, of whom some put the above construction on the principle of responsible government, some were in favour of a change, some were in favour of no change, and most of whom had taken part in the applications made for responsible government in the previous sessions, to frame an answer that would at the same time satisfy their individual positions and the public mind outside of the Council, which they were sent to represent.

Hence the answer as conveyed in the resolutions adopted by the Council. Its purport is hardly so clear as one could wish. The Council says that, in its opinion, the Colony is not yet in a position to undertake the responsibilities set forth in your Lordship's despatch no. 333. But, it adds, the Council "will use its best endeavours to make such suggestions for constitutional reform as may both satisfy Her Majesty's Secretary for State, and provide for the safety of the Colony." The

other resolutions do not, however, contain, as I apprehend, any such suggestions. There is a resolution stating that, in the opinion of the Council, the maintenance in the Colony of some force of Her Majesty's troops, is desirable. There is another resolution stating that the solution of the difficult question of the future constitution may be greatly facilitated, if Her Majesty's Government will state upon what terms, as regards the control of colonial policy, a suitable garrison may be maintained in Natal, until the Colony is strong enough to dispense with military help from England: and there is a further resolution stating that the difficulty attending the change will be lessened by the establishment in Zululand of some settled form of Government, for which Her Majesty's Government will hold itself responsible.[1] But, no practical suggestions, as I understand, are offered: and indeed, from the remaining resolutions, it appears that it is thought desirable no further constitutional alteration should be entertained until the Council is enlarged and the franchise extended.

26. ELECTIONS IN THE COUNTRY

From *A Life-time in South Africa*, by Sir John Robinson, 1900

Of the electoral contest which followed I could give many amusing reminiscences, did space permit. It was the most exciting and exhausting in my experience. In 1882, when Mr. Escombe opposed me on the same platform, and accomplished my defeat, the struggle was in my own case confined to the borough itself, but ten years later, when we both fought together, we had to spread our energies over the whole Colony. Durban had now become the stronghold of the Forward Party, and could be left to take care of itself, but the outlying constituencies had to be braced up and wooed.

[1] By October 1882, the mischief caused by the denial of any real power to the British Resident had become evident, and Zululand seemed to be on the brink of anarchy. See *supra* pp. 141 *sqq.*

Meetings had to be addressed, one week at Newcastle in the far north, and the next week at Harding in the far south. To reach the latter place, a post-cart journey of a hundred miles had to be faced, along roads the perilous nature of which, in the dark, must be experienced in order to be understood. A furnace-like hot wind blew during the first two stages of this journey, and the horses of my trap knocked up in the depths of the magnificently precipitous Umkomaas valley, and I had to walk all the way to Ixopo, twenty miles off, in the face of a fiery blast. Two nights later the open two-wheeled post-cart started with us hours before dawn, scrambling and crawling along a misty mountain track, whose dangers were mercifully hidden from sight by the darkness and the sleet. At the meeting held the same day in the billiard-room of the country hostelry, about twenty Griqua half-castes formed part of the auditory. Having votes, they had a right to be present.[1] They listened quietly enough, and afterwards assured me of their sympathy; and indeed I had specially for their benefit descanted upon the benefits that would accrue to the coloured population from being governed by men who knew and lived amongst them. They were privately interviewed however, later on, by an agent of the other side; and, so I was told, voted to a man against us. And that would be the common experience, had natives votes.

An even more interesting meeting, in the light of recent events was one held at Springfield on the Tugela, where our forces were fighting the other day.[2] I travelled thither overnight by rail as far as Frere. While passing through Maritzburg, I was told that the meeting I was to attend—it had been called by our party—had attracted the attention of the other side, and that our opponents would muster there in special strength,

[1] The native franchise in Natal was governed by law no. 11 of 1865, amended in 1883. Griquas, however, like Hottentots, were not natives, and a law (no. 14) of 1888 definitely provided that they should not come under the provisions of legislation applicable to natives, save as regards the sale of alcoholic liquor.

[2] An engagement in the second Boer War, arising from the efforts of the British forces to relieve Ladysmith.

were it known that I was to be present. I was asked therefore to keep unseen in my carriage. The door, though locked, was often tried during the night; and from time to time, at stations we passed, I could hear whispered inquiries as to whether I had joined the train or not. The guard professed ignorance. We reached Estcourt after midnight, and there the question of my whereabouts was eagerly discussed just outside my window. On we went to Frere where, about three in the morning, I emerged in the darkness. There too, got out the two hostile emissaries. It was some time before they made me out at the other end of the train, which left us helpless in the veld. As it turned out, my opponents were my best friends, as they knew the locality better than I did; and, with the personal kindness I at all times experienced at their hands, they took charge of my movements and my bag. The rough shanty which there served as store and inn was some distance from the station, and would certainly never have been reached without this friendly aid. After much knocking we roused the inmates, slumbering heavily after a revel, and were glad to stretch our limbs on the bare floor for the few hours preceding daylight. One of the first sights I witnessed on going out into the crystalline morning air was the figure of one of my fellow travellers, standing out on the skyline towards Chieveley, rehearsing the stock speech with which he was a few hours later to pulverise the reckless advocates of self-rule.

A neighbour had arranged to drive me to the place of meeting at Springfield, on the Little Tugela, several miles distant. On our way we called at the farm of Mr. Pretorius. . . . His long, thatched dwelling-house looked homely and comfortable, with its adjacent orchard, its cornfields, and its large dam, or pond, lively with wild water-fowl, near at hand. It was a "clearing-up" day, and the plain but solid furniture of the sitting-room was being aired in the sun. Around the walls of that apartment were framed lithographed portraits of the chief Boer leaders in the war of 1881,

some of them kinsmen, all of them compatriots, of our host. They had been printed in Holland, which is the real nursery of Afrikander ambitions and designs. After a substantial breakfast, prepared specially for us, and a little chat with our hostess, we took Mr. Pretorius on with us to Springfield, and I did my best to dispel certain doubts he harboured as to the proposed constitutional change. It may seem strange, but it was the case, that the Dutch colonists of Natal were by no means eager to join the party of progress. They were bewildered by the conflict of opinion amongst the English electors; they were suspicious of the intentions of the Imperial Government; and they were greatly influenced by the story, so sedulously propagated, that all control over the natives was to be retained by Downing Street. I am also inclined to think that they saw no attractions in a measure which might popularise British rule and diminish any cause of discontent therewith.

Springfield at that time consisted of but three or four scattered houses near a lately erected bridge, on broad open ground, skirted by the towering cliffs and toothed crests of the Drakensberg. The meeting was held in a building which served as courthouse on the occasion of magisterial visitations. Thirty or forty people crowded in, and others clustered round the doorways and windows. An unusually large attendance of Dutch farmers lent special interest to the gathering, and the speakers on both sides were duly mindful of the fact. Amongst the auditors was the oldest Dutchman in Natal, one Oosthuysen. He had been with the Voortrekkers through the massacres of Blaauwkrantz, and had fought against Dingaan in Zululand—a white-haired, gentle-mannered octogenarian—fully conscious of the benefits he enjoyed as a British subject, though very possibly a republican at heart. There were no evidences at that meeting, however, of disaffection or recalcitrancy. The one or two Boers who spoke dealt with local grievances common to both races; but, as no suspicion of coming

events was in the air, any sinister significance in their utterances was unsought and unsuspected.

And that was our general experience throughout the campaign. At Ladysmith we had in the chair a leading Dutchman, recently under arrest as a rebel. At Newcastle, I attended by request a meeting of the local vereeniging, or union—a body essentially Afrikander or Boer in its composition and aims. Its proceedings were all carried on in the Dutch language, and resembled those of a religious body rather than of a political association. Hymns were sung and prayers of inordinate length indulged in. Some of the speeches left a ring of hostility in the ears, and a flavour of alienship in the mouth, and I left the meeting with a feeling that I had been a foreigner and an interloper. Was it fancy or forecast? Be that as it may, the final issue of the contest was decided by the Dutch vote, though not all at once. As far as could be ascertained under the ballot, the Dutch electors voted for the "Forward" candidates, and thus turned the scale. The numbers actually, though in two cases erroneously, returned by the magistrates were fourteen for and ten against self-government.

A special session was immediately summoned to enable the new assembly to record its verdict on the measure. I think that perhaps the gloomiest moment of my political life was that when, after all our efforts and hopes, we found ourselves confronted by an impregnable majority of four. The tables had been reversed. In the last Council we had been a solid phalanx of fifteen, now we had shrunk to ten. Our opponents lost no time in pressing their advantage home. We contended for delay until the disputed election returns should have been disposed of, but in vain. On points of procedure the majority were supported by the Government members who had, under instructions from Downing Street, abstained from voting on the main question. The "Antis" had the power in their hands, and did not hesitate to use it. They introduced into the reply to the opening speech words which practi-

cally extinguished discussion. There was nothing for it but to submit, and await the result of the election trials. So the session ended with apparent failure to our cause. The work of nearly twenty years seemed to have gone for naught. The "Forwards" by no means lost heart, however. They were resolved to wrest success out of temporary defeat. They provided the most strenuous professional advocacy at the election trials, which were held before an able and impartial judge, Sir Walter Wragg. Fortune smiled on them. In both cases the disputed returns were upset. So far as votes were concerned, there had been a substantial majority in each case recorded for the Forwards; but papers had been spoilt or rejected by the polling or returning officers. The judge overruled this action, and in the end the defeated candidates were placed in their rightful positions at the head of the poll. Henceforward, all was plain sailing. Again the Council was called together, and the Bill, which we had brought from Downing Street,[1] was passed in its integrity without amendment. Immediate sanction was given to it, and on the 4th of July 1893, Natal took her place as a self-governed colony.

27. SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF NATAL JUDGES

(Based on personal knowledge, and compiled in 1936)

Walter Harding, first Chief Justice, died in 1874 before my return from school in England. He appears to have had only middling legal attainments, and lacked personal dignity. He left no special mark upon the advance of colonial law.

His second puisne judge, Mr. Lushington Phillips, brought with him to the bench a pleasant note of

[1] On 25 February 1892, the Legislative Council appointed Sir John Robinson and the deputy Speaker, Mr. G. M. Sutton, to attend at the Colonial Office and discuss with the Secretary of State the details of the proposed bill. The two delegates saw Lord Knutsford at Downing Street on 3 June. Discussions principally concerned exercise of the powers which had belonged to the Governor as Supreme Chief of the native population.

geniality, as well as a knowledge of men and affairs which must have been invaluable when collaborating with Mr. Connor, the senior puisne judge in earlier years, but the real leader of the court; and this was no doubt Mr. Phillips's substantial contribution to its work. In private life, he was a noted sportsman. Those were the days when buck-hunting was still kept up, especially by the military officers.

Sir Henry Connor's name, still remembered with respect in our courts, is associated with the development of the Roman-Dutch law of South Africa. He served for a short time on the bench at Grahamstown, before going on to Natal in 1857. He succeeded Mr. Harding in 1874, holding the office of Chief Justice till his death in 1890. A lonely worker in an almost unknown colony, it is well recognised that he made a great contribution to the immense work of applying Roman-Dutch law and placaats to South Africa and adapting them to conditions unforeseen by the old text-writers. Facilities for study and opportunities for consultation were not such as Capetown afforded—little, indeed, beyond the books which he accumulated at his own house and the court library. But his whole life was given to study. He spoke of himself late in life as still a student. He never relaxed and his keen mind delighted in unravelling the subtleties of law and legal argument. His judgments, usually short and often excessively concise, showed his masterly power of getting at the heart of a case. But there was one serious defect, which perhaps does not show itself in the text of his decisions, but was well known to those who knew him or watched the course of cases coming before him; and it was due to his life as a recluse, as well perhaps as to a natural bent: he knew very little of the world of men and women and their ways. He lacked the give-and-take instinct, all that goes to make up a man of the world. He was, of course, a bachelor and did not go into society.

His personality was strong and very picturesque: his presence could never be overlooked in any company.

His bearing was simple and unconscious, and his habits most frugal. He lived alone in a cottage bare of everything but the most primitive and bare furnishings, a few tables and chairs and a couple of aged sofas, all covered with worn-out green " rep," plank shelves round the rooms full of books, and so forth. What money he may have saved in this way he did not keep for himself; it was believed to go to relatives oversea. He had one faithful native servant, deeply attached to him, who did everything down to feeding and grooming the horse. Sir Henry probably knew nothing about the house or housekeeping beyond writing orders and paying accounts. He trusted old Bantyana, who, when in any difficulty, would come up to the office to get the court usher's advice.

Sir Henry was a devout churchman, but he was very particular in his interpretation of the rubrics. Since no rubric made provison for a homily after evensong, he invariably left St. Saviour's Cathedral on Sunday evening before the sermon. His character was that of a high-minded gentleman, without stain. With all his aloofness, he was soft-hearted and his manner, though shy and awkward, was in all circumstances courteous. Though far from good-looking, his eyes were keen and kindly: though rather ungainly in walk or gesture, he possessed to the full the dignity that attached to high character and perfect freedom from self-consciousness.

Every now and then, he gave a dinner to four male guests, chosen from his official entourage. His caterer knew exactly what to do—always the same and always including a fine turkey. These dinners were looked forward to and remembered as a privilege. His conversation was animated and interesting, though constantly betraying a comical ignorance of life, while he would get completely lost if the talk turned on society. Sir Henry rarely went abroad. He was ill at ease in female company, and in fact knew nothing at all about women. It was said that he was a woman hater, which was a great mistake; and, more rightly,

that a clever woman could turn him round her finger in giving evidence. I remember his saying in the course of a judgment (sadly modified in the *Reports*), in reference to the old exception in a mortgage bond: " The law throws the arm of its protection round a woman, and I am glad that it is so."

His daily recreation was an afternoon ride on the gentlest of old steeds, which never stirred beyond a walk. Wholly unconscious of appearances, Sir Henry let his body sway to and fro and sideways to every movement of the horse.

In court, his demeanour was silent; though, occasionally, he would lean suddenly forward and utter a strange, interrogative grunt, if counsel seemed to be making a mistake. In giving a long judgment, he would rise to animation, waving his hands for emphasis, and appearing about to thump the bench violently, but the arms relaxed and it passed quietly off into a grasp and tweak of his very large nose. He refused to read depositions, pleadings and the like beforehand, lest his mind should receive some sort of bias. Yet his grasp even of complicated pleadings, when read out, was faultless.

Sir Walter Wragg had a strong individuality, the peculiarities of which no one who had personal or official relations with him could venture to ignore. Possessed of considerable ability and charm of manner and conversation, eminently conscientious, painstaking and fair as a judge, an excellent host, bringing round him the best society in our small capital, it may yet be doubted whether he ever had a really intimate friend, or whether anyone could be quite at ease with him. For beneath his perfectly sincere geniality, there always lay the risk of stumbling into a cause of offence or disagreement; and those whose duties brought them into closest contact with him best knew how warily they must approach any matter of difference, unless they felt able to face the consequences. Before coming to Natal, Sir Walter had lived in Ceylon, where as a district judge he had probably grown accustomed to receive

in fullest measure the deference due to judicial authority. Notions of divine right may thus have been impressed on his mind; but, whatever their origin, they had developed into a ruling instinct, affecting not only his official views but his attitude in private life. Taking him only as a judge, no one could fail to admire his courtesy, his perfect judicial balance, his scrupulous fairness to an accused person, his energy and the thoroughness of his work. He received recognition from the Imperial Government when, in the year 1889, he was selected as president of the special court constituted in Zululand for the trial of Dinizulu. It will be remembered that Dinizulu, being convicted upon a number of charges of treason, was deported to St. Helena. Mr. Wragg later received the honour of knighthood.

In 1892, when the grant of responsible government had at last been promised, if demanded by a substantial majority at a general election, Sir Walter was detailed as Election Petitions Judge. As the election gave a majority of one against responsible government, a great responsibility was thrown upon him, especially as an involved question of nationality came in, when an appeal was lodged against the election of an "anti-responsible government" candidate. The election was annulled and the party of Sir John Robinson gained a majority of one.[1] The wearied Colonial Office accepted this as sufficient evidence of the public wish, and Natal obtained its new status.

While the peculiar cast of Sir Walter's mind came less into prominence in court than when he was off the bench, his exacting demands upon the court staff sometimes made matters difficult. In the office, he was dictatorial, insisting upon all sorts of privileges, even

[1] The results as originally announced were 10 for and 14 against responsible government. But in the case of the elections for Weenen County and Newcastle, the returns were upset on petition. In December 1892, F. R. Moor and G. M. Sutton were returned for Weenen County in place of two anti-responsible government candidates. In January, two of Robinson's supporters were returned unopposed for Newcastle. This gave Robinson a majority of four.

if his fellow judges disagreed or shrugged their shoulders. The dignity of office left no room for a sense of humour, and yet he was not pompous, and there was no affectation about him. He insisted upon the number of natives attached to the court as messengers being increased, so that each judge might have one at his own disposal. When it was granted, none of the judges except Sir Walter made any use of the messengers. Sir Walter thereupon appropriated two of them to his own personal service, keeping one at the house for errands of every sort, and stationing the other at the gate of Government House, in case the Governor should require to send for Sir Walter, a puisne judge. Whether he was ever sent for and how long the thing continued, I do not know; but everyone knew that Mpondo, one of these men, and the usher himself, were at his constant call and dared not object. Their souls were not their own.

One morning Mpondo came to me in a terrible state of fear. He had been employed by Sir Walter to deliver a large number of invitations to a dance, wherever the addresses might be; and one of them lived at Richmond, 25 miles away. Even poor Mpondo felt that this was too much, so he bought a shilling stamp (to make sikker) and posted the letter. But he got afraid, and was terribly anxious about what might happen. And it did chance that the recipient wrote and told Sir Walter that he had found a shilling stamp on the letter. I was not there to see what happened afterwards.

Sir Walter used to recount the following anecdote concerning "Allett the Husher" (officially Hallett the usher). Hallett, himself a character from Somersetshire, had evidently learned something from Sir Walter about the necessity for the court, in all its members, being beyond all taint of politics. On being approached on behalf of a candidate for election, he coldly said: "Me and the judges doesn't vote." One morning, the judge was accosted as follows: "Good morning, Sir Walter. Did you 'ear, zur, that Mr.—— cut his throat early this morning?"

"Oh! I'm shocked to hear it," was the reply. "Have you heard any reason for it?"

"Well, zur, I always knew there was kleptomania in the family."

Many other stories are told of Sir Walter Wragg. On the first day of term, and at criminal sessions in Maritzburg, the judges wore their soberly-coloured "full dress" robes. But Sir Walter brought with him a magnificent bright-red silk gown. And when on circuit, against the usual practice, he wore the silk gown even when making his visit to the gaol and to each prisoner. On one occasion, at the close of a circuit at Estcourt, his stately robes seem to have deeply impressed an imaginative Irish convict, who regarded him with immense awe, addressing him repeatedly as "Your Eminence." After showing the judge out, the magistrate stepped back for a moment, and asked the Irishman why he called the judge by that title. "And was that just the judge?" cried the astonished prisoner. "Be all the saints, then, and me believing all the time it was a Cardinal."

At a criminal session, the district surgeon of a country town, having to ride a long distance, reached the court just in time to go into the witness box. Sir Walter, seeing him somewhat untidily dressed, reprimanded him most severely, the publicity and manner of it deeply offending the doctor. So, after the lunch interval, he re-entered the box in a black frock coat, a flower I believe in the buttonhole, top hat in hand and gloves on. With deliberate slowness, he placed his hat on the box ledge, took off his gloves, laid them beside the hat, and turned with a grand courtesy to face the judge.

Sir Walter Wragg's appointment as a puisne judge dated from August 1883. On the death of Sir Henry Connor, the gifted Irishman, Sir Michael Gallwey, who had been attorney-general since 1857, succeeded to the office of Chief Justice. With the retirement of Sir Michael in 1901, Sir Henry Bale was the first Natal-born man to accept the highest judicial post in the Colony.

VI

MANAGEMENT OF THE NATIVE POPULATION: THE SHEPSTONE SYSTEM AND AFTER

In all questions connected with the intercourse of European colonist and Natal native, the man of greatest weight in the Colony for more than a generation was the secretary for native affairs. Theophilus Shepstone's original appointment to be diplomatic agent in Natal was intended to pave the way for a policy of governing the natives in accordance with their own laws and customs. Of these, Shepstone had a deep and sympathetic understanding. He had spent the greater part of his early life in the crowded areas on the Kaffrarian frontier. Among the tribes whom it had been his duty to advise were men who, prior to the devastations of Chaka, had resided in Natal and Zululand. Intimate knowledge of native custom was thus the foundation of the system of management introduced into the Colony in the 'forties.

The royal instructions laid down that cases between natives should be judged in conformity with native laws. But usages repugnant to principles of humanity were to be suppressed. Inevitably the natives of Natal had to be ruled by a mixture of Zulu customs and English law. Shepstone alone understood in its entirety the complex of precedents and usages under which the native population was governed. For that reason

he was in large degree irresponsible. His chief task was to avoid a clash of races and give to the European community security of life and property. Even in the early years of the infant Colony, with magisterial and police establishments patently inadequate, this object was substantially accomplished. Giving evidence before the Native Commission of 1852, Henry Cloete, Recorder of Natal, pronounced: "Such has been the respect of the Kaffir towards the white man that there is, I believe I may venture confidently to assert, not one single instance during the last ten years of murder or an attempt at murder on any white man within this district; not one single case of that nature has been brought before the District Court during the past seven years, nor have I even heard of one."[1] Nor was security confined to European areas. Magistrates engaged in collection of the hut tax penetrated without fear of assault or robbery into districts unoccupied by the white man. Native dishonesty was so rare that farmers did not hesitate to entrust large sums to native messengers, who, in accomplishing long distances, would have nowhere to rest but in the huts of strange natives. "Upon the whole," wrote a Durban colonist in the early 'sixties, "there is probably no land in the world in which property is more absolutely safe than it is in Natal."[2]

Nevertheless the difficulties which confronted Shepstone were formidable enough. With scanty resources at his disposal, he could scarcely hope to lead the native

[1] *Report* of the Native Commission, 1852. J. Bird, *Is the Kaffir Population in Natal alien or aboriginal?* 1890, p. 27.

[2] J. Cullingworth, *A Guide to the Colony of Port Natal*, 1861, p. 23. When Shepstone visited the Klip river in 1848, he found native servants in charge of both houses and cattle. Only one case of theft was brought to his notice; and in this case the cattle stolen was returned to the farmer by the natives themselves.

far along the path to civilisation. In 1846, with four colleagues, he gave his attention to the problem of defining permanent locations, selecting for the purpose areas later described as "broken, rugged, inaccessible fastnesses." Removal to these locations was enforced by the simple expedient of authorising anyone to seize the cattle of a recalcitrant kraal. Only in two cases did Shepstone encounter resistance to his commands.[1] Having found land in remote districts for those whose unauthorised squatting on colonial farms had been the subject of constant complaint, Shepstone believed that he had removed the pressure on European land. In the 'fifties the provision of locations could still be described as on a generous scale. There was little ground for complaint on the score of native encroachment. But, as the population received further accessions of strength from across the Tugela, the shortage of fertile land became ominous. Under these circumstances, the Government, advised by Shepstone, sought, but without success, an outlet for its ever-increasing subject population by territorial acquisitions on the colonial frontiers.

Meanwhile the government of native territory proceeded along lines which were calculated above all to promote tranquillity. Within the locations Shepstone refashioned the fabric of Bantu institutions, encouraging the tribesmen to develop their own civilisation under chiefs appointed by himself and deriving authority from him. Whilst penalising such practices as judicial murder and witchcraft, the administration avoided any sudden abrogation of familiar customs. If the result was to stereotype native culture at the stage which it

[1] The cases were those of Fodo and Langalibalele. Fodo was deposed by Shepstone and a successor appointed chief.

had reached at the proclamation of British sovereignty, government at least provided for the contentment of the natives under institutions which they could understand and operate. At the same time, by means of a hut tax and heavy duties on goods imported for native consumption, the Colony was enabled to draw a considerable income from its native subjects. These same measures, in conjunction with the overcrowding which soon became evident in many of the locations, stimulated a flow of natives into the colonial labour market.

Whilst Shepstone was only too anxious to safeguard European security and to provide for the benefit of the white farmer a constant supply of labour, his system of management of the native population never won the support of the colonial community. The European view was that "the Government committed a fatal mistake when they undertook to govern the Zulus according to their own laws under their own chiefs." [1] The compact tribal organisation seemed to be incompatible with security, which could only come when the locations were opened up to the civilising influence of European contacts. Even without the continuance of Bantu migration from the north, it was believed that maintenance of tribal tenure in vast native reserves could only end in such a multiplication of the native population as would sooner or later produce an overflow into European areas. In the 'seventies, guided by men like John Akerman, the elective members of the Legislative Council were convinced that the growing Bantu population could no longer be safely left under the virtually unrestrained authority of its chiefs. On Akerman's motion, the Council insisted that the

[1] Cullingworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 23 *sqq.*

"amorphous" oral law, into which had been incorporated usages inconsistent with native "improvement," should be reduced to writing. It was a fair criticism of the Shepstone system that administration was often weak. Even so important a law as that which forbade natives to possess firearms was applied in an irregular and arbitrary fashion. The legislature desired to curb the independence of the tribes by abolition of the chieftainship, restriction of the initiative of the secretary for native affairs, and introduction of individual land tenure. These proposals were certain to encounter strong criticism. But, after the Langalibalele incident, no one could deny that the Shepstone system was in need of overhaul.

In England, public opinion was less excited by the arbitrary character of the proceedings against Langalibalele than by the proclamations confiscating land and cattle, and dispersing the Hlubi and Putili tribes among the farming population. The news of David Livingstone's death (1873) and the publication of his *Last Journals* brought widespread support to the British philanthropic movement. When Bishop Colenso called attention to the anomalies of the chief's trial and the dispossession of his followers, ministers were subjected to a popular pressure which overcame their reluctance to antagonise colonial sentiment. The explanations which Lieutenant-Governor Pine sent through Shepstone failed to convince the Colonial Office that the treatment of the unfortunate tribesmen had been free from vindictiveness. For Colenso was at hand to insist that at the root of the measures lately enforced was the determination of the European colonists to encroach on native land, and to bring a measure of compulsion to bear on the supply of labour from the kraals.

Revision of Natal's native administration was entrusted to Sir Garnet Wolseley. At Maritzburg, Wolseley persuaded the Legislative Council to enact momentous changes. The jurisdiction hitherto exercised by Shepstone as *induna* for the Supreme Chief was transferred to a new native High Court. Natives were brought under the criminal law of the Colony. To administer civil justice, the Governor was empowered to appoint officers, either native or European. But the old obstacle to uniformity in judicial pronouncements, which had been unsurmountable so long as the law remained unwritten, was now to be removed. A comprehensive code was promulgated in 1878. It was intended to be a guide to the magistrates in the interpretation of Bantu law. Not until 1891 was it replaced by a code made binding by statute on the courts.

These changes definitely curtailed Shepstone's authority. The new High Court was subordinated, against his wishes, to the Supreme Court of the Colony; whilst all future alterations in native law were to be submitted for approval to the legislature. Moreover, the natives had been accustomed to look to a single person for both judicial and administrative authority. Now these functions were separated; and paternal government gave place to the rule of officials.

Loss of personal contact was the chief defect in the system of native management which followed the retirement of Sir Theophilus Shepstone. The veteran administrator had done little enough to civilise the natives,[1] but he had kept in close touch with native opinion. His successors, John W. Shepstone and Henrique Shepstone, were unable to relieve the growing

[1] On this point, however, there is room for a very different interpretation; and reference should be made to Shepstone's defence of his administration, no. 30, *infra*.

tension between native and European farmer which was a symptom of the shortage of land. In the 'eighties, rents rose against native squatters, whilst evictions were frequent. As the self-contained tribal economy broke down, the power of the chiefs dwindled. Magistrates were unable to take their place in the confidence of the people, because no constructive measures had been planned to provide an outlet for native energies. With the advent of responsible government, authority passed out of the hands of those who possessed a deep understanding of native conditions. The Government became less accessible than ever, and conservatism and rigidity paralysed initiative.

The condition of the native population had slowly deteriorated with increasing pressure on the means of subsistence. In 1860, natives who squatted on vacant private land had been charged rent at the rate of 5s. an acre. A return of the rents received by the Natal Land and Colonisation Company in 1886 reveals an average as high as 28s. Purchase of land by natives was legally permissible. But good land in the 'eighties was quite beyond a native's means. The locations indeed were at first sight large enough. But, having regard to methods of cultivation, they were probably inadequate from the start. Evidence placed before the 1852 Native Commission indicated the grave shortage of arable land. Out of nearly half a million acres included within the ill-defined borders of the Impafana location, only 2,000 were declared to be suitable for native crops. Pasture was only satisfactory during the summer rains. In all the coastal areas, the land was bad for cattle. Here collection of the hut tax brought many kraals to the verge of destitution; and, by causing natives to occupy fewer huts, intensified the

overcrowding and injured domestic harmony. It was the difficulty of procuring cattle, rather than the preaching of the missionaries, which led to the growth of monogamy.

Outside the reserves, conditions were better. Natives living on Crown lands were in receipt of tillage, wood and grazing without payment of rent. European sovereignty had brought with it the plough, the waggon and the blanket, and thus added considerably to the comfort and security of life. On European farms, fencing was unusual prior to the 'eighties. For a small payment per acre, it was possible for native squatters to cultivate garden patches and send their cattle to graze with those of the farmer. When transport riding became more profitable than agriculture, it was to his native tenants that the farmer naturally turned for supply of drivers and leaders. In 1881, more than one-half of the native population were living on private or Crown lands.[1] Here, their position was utterly precarious. For with the growth of European settlement, cultivation was inevitably extended at the expense of the pastoral tenant. Grasslands could no longer be used for unlimited grazing by native herds. The increase in European-owned cattle and sheep confined the squatter to the more sterile areas, whilst fear of contamination from inferior stock brought about the enclosure by fencing of pasture land.

This gradual process of depression of native standards was to some extent alleviated by the upward trend of native wages. To meet their obligations to the state and the landowner and to satisfy their craving for

[1] *Report* of the Natal Native Commission 1881–2, *Natal Government Gazette*, 31 October 1882. An estimate, based on the hut tax returns, gave the total native population as 375,000, of whom it was thought 169,800 lived in the locations.

imported goods, natives were obliged to sell their labour to the European farmer.[1] Among the white settlers, the prevailing sentiment that natives who sought the protection of the Colony should be under constraint to make return by entering European service, was not altogether unreasonable.[2] Colonists believed that natives lived an idle life in the locations, that the land secured to them was too large, and that strict labour laws should be enacted whereby natives would be compelled to find employment with the farmers or in the service of the Government.[3] Inasmuch as emigration circulars had advertised cheap labour among the attractive features of colonial life, settlers who had invested their capital in the purchase of farms in Natal felt that they were justified in calling upon the Government to make it possible for them to obtain a living.

Whilst the colonial demand for rigorous labour laws was by no means outrageous, the contention that the Bantu had ample land, and that very little work in the locations was sufficient to supply all the needs of the native household cannot be accepted as valid. No doubt their needs were fewer than those of Europeans. Actually the Bantu were prepared to work for objects which they considered to deserve the effort of productive labour. Indolence was not an inherent trait in the Bantu character. But, in the first generation of British rule, they found it hard to unlearn the bitter experience of the period of Zulu devastations, when the accumula-

[1] The hut tax, originally 7s., was raised to 14s. a hut in 1876.

[2] For official appreciation of the colonial standpoint on this question, see John Bird's remarks, no. 31, *infra*.

[3] "As to the Kaffirs, they don't work. . . . They are idle and useless, and they remain so, though all the time the farmers are starving because they cannot get labour."—J. S. Little, *op. cit.*, p. 437. Little visited the Colony in a period of severe slump.

tion of surplus property had been a temptation to covetous neighbours. In a land where game was still abundant and grassland unfenced, the tribesman saw no need for continuous industry. When a liking for the products of civilisation induced him to satisfy his wants through labour for the white man, he would be content to work well for a period of some months. But his love of independence was fundamental, and he had little conception of the sanctity of contracts. Moreover, domestic service was alien to his instincts, which were those of the stockbreeder.

From 1870 onwards until the present day, a large proportion of the native population has been engaged for at least a part of each year in European employment. The greater difficulty of obtaining labour which was characteristic of the 'eighties,[1] was probably occasioned by the new demands of the transport and mining industries, together with the increase in expenditure on public works, and not by any intensified reluctance to work.

The restlessness of the younger generation of natives in the last years of the nineteenth century is attributable to the bankruptcy of Natal's native policy. Since Shepstone's retirement, the authorities had been content to refrain from undue interference with Bantu institutions. Whilst submission was required, it was the belief of the department of native affairs that, in order to retain the attachment of the natives to British rule, the Government had only to forbear from harassing legislation. Its policy was therefore one of *laissez-faire*. But when, following the conclusion of the Anglo-

[1] *Report* of the Native Commission 1881–2. The commissioners attributed the scarcity to the practice of squatting on Crown lands. "As far as we can see, the relations between masters and servants are, as a general rule, of a kindly nature."

Boer war, British troops were withdrawn from Natal, the natives concluded that the King was displeased with his white subjects. By this time, native grievances were numerous and formidable. In both Natal and Zululand, where sugar-planting was being widely extended, the scarcity of land had been followed by a steep rise in rents. In many parts of the Colony, where grazing had been plentiful, plantations of wattle and gum covered the grassland. New legislation protected the farmer's herds from the menace of stock thefts. His crops ran continuously for miles, forcing the kraals into untidy and sterile corners. Before the close of the century, all the remaining Crown lands had been taken up. In 1903 the squatters' tax was raised. More significant was the complete neglect of training in agriculture and industry, which might have absorbed the energies of the younger men. For two generations, the peace in the locations had freed the natives from external aggression and restrained them from inter-tribal warfare. But the old military instinct had not been extinguished, and the Anglo-Boer war intensified the malaise. When, in 1906, the Government endeavoured to collect a poll tax on natives who did not pay the fourteen shillings tax on huts, rebellion blazed up.

The Zulu rising was a sporadic and disorganised movement which might have been extremely serious had Dinizulu, son of Cetewayo, given it open countenance. Native unrest was widespread, in Natal no less than in Zululand. But the presence of imperial troops, moved down from Pretoria at the first appeal from Maritzburg, exercised a salutary restraint. There were murders of Europeans on isolated farms, but military operations were confined to Zululand and

Umvoti county. Here by cautious employment of a strategy based on the convergence of columns, Colonel Mackenzie compelled the surrender of Sigananda and Bambata, the two principal leaders, without incurring serious losses. The crushing of the rebel forces in the field was followed by action against Dinizulu. Though the Zulu monarch had offered an impi for use against Bambata, his attitude was regarded as equivocal. He had certainly harboured refugees; and it was believed that he was implicated in the assassination of a loyal chief. Ably defended by W. P. Schreiner, he was found innocent on 20 of the 23 counts of the indictment. His guilt on the remaining counts was held to justify a sentence of four years' imprisonment.

As an outcome of the rebellion, the colonial Government, under Sir Frederick Moor, took some steps to improve the administration of native affairs. The 1906 Commission had advised the creation of a native council with subordinate powers of legislation, and the establishment of a permanent non-political secretary for native affairs. These changes were duly enacted in 1909. Since these governmental arrangements were soon to be superseded on the completion of Union, more significance attaches to experiments now made with agricultural holdings. Though the problem of land for native use remained to tax the statesmanship of South African ministers, something was done in the last years of colonial rule to establish settlements and give to native holders an inalienable title to their allotments.

The passages which follow illustrate the main lines of Shepstone's policy, indicate the changes introduced in the 'seventies, and reveal the views of both colonists and visitors on the virtues and imperfections of the natives.

28. GROWING ANTAGONISM BETWEEN NATIVE AND COLONIAL INTERESTS

From a Memorandum by Sir T. Shepstone, 1864, Shepstone Collection, Natives Misc., iv, Natal Archives

In this brief summary of the history of the relations of the Colonial Government with its native subjects, there is little requiring further notice until the organic change in the government, caused by the granting of representative privileges to the white inhabitants. I say these privileges were granted to the whites, because practically and for some considerable time to come, this is the case.[1] The introduction of this change was, of course, unknown to the natives until the first writs for elections were issued; nor could the objects and tendency of this change be understood by them except as interpreted by what they saw and heard.

Unfortunately the management of the natives became a prominent point of discussion with candidates for seats in Council, and this became also of necessity generally discussed among the electors. I say unfortunately this was the case, because it conveyed a strong impression to the minds of the natives that this new element in the government of the country was hostile to them and their interests; nor was the impression created by unguarded remarks and promises made on the hustings lessened by the course which the Council itself subsequently took on such questions as the £5,000 native reserve,[2] the proposal to deprive them of their horses in the "Peace and Protection bill," and on other occasions, from which the natives very readily inferred that the elective Council was their enemy and the Executive Government their friend. Whether the convictions, on which the Council acted, were right

[1] The charter of 1856 contained no restrictions based on colour. In 1863, three members of the Executive Council contended that a native possessed of the property qualification was entitled to be registered as a voter. This was not the view of Chief Justice Harding who held that the charter did not apply to natives. Legislation of the year 1865 provided that natives should not be enrolled so long as they were subject to native law.

[2] See *More Annals of Natal*, pp. 240 *sqq.*

or wrong, there can be no doubt that the creation of such a thought in the minds of the natives was very much to be deprecated. But it was so created; and it can only be hoped that it may gradually die out, as future sessions may exhibit more cordial co-operation with the Executive, and less desire to legislate on native questions in a manner which the Executive Government find it necessary to oppose.

I have already mentioned the serious Zulu alarm, which took place between two and three years back, in which the native population showed themselves so ready to fight against the Zulus under the orders of the Government.[1] On that occasion they exhibited a gratifying proof of their faithfulness and loyalty not only to the Government, but to the white colonists; because, although the homesteads and property of the latter were abandoned to their fate, I am not aware, as I before said, that a single depredation was committed upon them by a native.

These remarks complete the general outline of history which I had proposed to give in these notes, except the question which has occupied so much of the attention of the people of this Colony, the Legislative Council and the Imperial Government. I allude to the question of the land claims of the natives. Very much has been written on this subject and deep feeling has been excited thereby. The point at issue now seems to be whether the natives have any real right to the land that is claimed for them, or whether the granting of it can only properly proceed from motives of expediency and policy.

On an examination of the returns to accompany which these notes are written,[2] it will be found that

[1] In 1861 Cetewayo massed his impis on the Tugela frontier, demanding from the Natal Government the return to Zululand of two young sons of Panda. Scott's prompt despatch of a military force to the Tugela averted the danger of frontier raids.

[2] Shepstone's *Memorandum* was enclosed by the Lieutenant-Governor in his despatch of 26 February 1864 to the Sec. of State: and was accompanied by lists of "aboriginal" tribes in Natal, compiled from the oral testimony of Natal natives. Together with the *Report* of the Native Affairs Commission of 1852, this material is the most valuable source for the condition of the native population during the first 20 years of British rule.

a very large proportion of the tribes can be clearly traced to possess aboriginal rights, in virtue of the ancient occupation of the territory of what now is Natal by their ancestors, whilst others can be clearly shown to have occupied parts of Natal, previous to the establishment of British rule here, and that they consequently have a perfect legal claim to all the benefits of the various proclamations and promises, in which their rights were so carefully protected and maintained by the Government. In later times, the measures of the local Government, in harmony to some extent but not fully, with these declarations and promises, renewed and confirmed them. Locations were formed for the natives; and they were removed into them by orders of the local Government, sometimes by force. When this was done, they were told that the locations were land set apart for them. They saw farms belonging to white men, which in some cases interfered with this arrangement, exchanged by the owners with the Government for lands elsewhere, so that the locations might be exclusively for them, and that, on the other hand, they might not interfere with the farmers. All these things were done by officers of the Government, whose instructions were not infrequently published for general information in the paper used in those days as a Government Gazette.

Surely these acts produced rights, even if none had existed before, but when to these are superadded previous occupation and ancient ownership of the soil, they become overwhelming.

The discussion of this question in the tone in which it has been discussed, produced a strong feeling that the whites only tolerate the blacks so long as it suits them to do so, and that the latter really have no certain prospect of being provided permanently with land. I trust that this session of the Legislative Council will put an end to this impression.

The question of their successful government in the midst of a white population, remained a problem which it will take some years to solve. Hitherto, those

residing in isolated positions on farms outside of the locations, have given far more trouble than the organized communities which reside in the locations. When living in small parties, the system of mutual responsibility has less effect upon them; and experience has shown that, in proportion as this is weakened, so is the power of management weakened also. But, when the population is more extensive and responsibility for each other more serious and more felt, the power of management is complete.

Nor do I think we estimate correctly the revenue which accrues from the natives to the Government, when we take into account the money only which reaches the Treasury. The chiefs of tribes and their subordinate chiefs and indunas are all in point of fact officers of Government in active service; and have been ever since the establishment of British rule in Natal. They carry out the orders of the magistrates among the native population; they are held responsible that these directions are obeyed, and punished whenever their neglect is the cause of failure; they keep order among their people and report all serious misconduct to the magistrates, and take their directions from them; they are petty magistrates invested with authority to decide small cases, subject to appeal. Indeed they furnish a means for their own government which no money could purchase a fit substitute for. Before they became British subjects, and in accordance with the rights to which the chiefs were born, they enjoyed their own independent incomes from their tribes. True, it was not a regular or fixed one, but they could raise it how and when they liked; and, however objectionable the mode of doing so might occasionally be, they possessed the right and used it.

Under British rule, they are deprived of this privilege. They can by law have no income from their people; they do all the work but they receive no pay. I think they are entitled to credit for the great value of their services, in the estimate of revenue which is collected from them and their people.

29. A NATAL CHIEF COMPLAINS TO SHEPSTONE OF LOSS OF AUTHORITY OVER HIS TRIBE

Memorandum of Sir T. Shepstone, 1864, Shepstone Collection, Natives Misc., iv, Natal Archives

I am glad to see you, for I have much that I wish to say to you. I was born a chief and my people were born my people. The Zulus destroyed us and we served them. We ultimately escaped from their servitude and came over to the white people. You told me to rule the people, not as my own, but as the people of the Government, and I as the headman of the Government. I have done it and they obeyed me, as their chief under the Government. But, in these latter days, I am no longer their chief. You have put my people over my head; they are greater than I. If any of them do wrong and I attempt to punish them by fine or any other means, they acknowledge the justice of it, but, as it is impossible to please two parties in a case, the losing one runs off to the magistrate, and I am told that I have no right to punish or to fine, and that I must restore the fine. When you want labourers for the harbour works or the public roads, then I am a chief, then I have people. I am ordered to find so many men by a given day and told that, if I do not find them, I shall be punished.

How can these two things go together? I have authority, or I have not. My people are put over me one day and I over them the next. I have been thinking of coming to Pietermaritzburg and asking you to take your people off my hands. I would rather be a common man than a chief under such circumstances. You pay me nothing and you allow me to get nothing from my people. One day, you object to my ruling; and then again, you threaten to punish

me, if I do not make my power felt by the people enough to make them go to work.[1]

30. ADVANCE IN CIVILISATION MADE BY THE NATIVE POPULATION OF NATAL

Memorandum of Sir T. Shepstone, 1864, Shepstone Collection, Natives Misc., iv, Natal Archives

To persons in daily contact with these people, it is difficult to observe exactly the progress they have made since their first contact with civilization. I thought it was considerable before my visit to the Zulu country; but, on that occasion, I had an opportunity of measuring them by the actual state they had been originally in; and I found the progress much greater than I expected. Those who accompanied me could scarcely believe that they had themselves been in such a condition. I extract the portion of my Report bearing on this point. It shows clearly their appreciation of the advantages of a settled and just government; and that they consider the Government of Natal to afford these advantages.

" The incidents of this meeting especially, and of the journey generally, produced a deep impression upon the natives who accompanied me from this Colony. They appeared to have been unaware of the great difference which had been gradually effected in their views and feelings, as compared with the Zulus. To many, this had been the first opportunity they had had of

[1] In his memorandum, Shepstone explained that the policy of the Government was to take advantage of the system of mutual responsibility, as the best guarantee for peace and orderly control. Since " their people tended to precede them in civilization," the chiefs would become progressively incompetent to deal with causes arising from the impact of the white man on native society: their power would, from the force of circumstances, gradually become extinct and be transferred to European magistrates. But, it was unwise to ignore the jurisdiction of the chiefs, through whom as indunas over their respective tribes the wishes of Government were conveyed. The above complaint was the outcome of resentment at the action of white magistrates who had shown little respect for the subordinate authority of the tribal chiefs.

seeing the Zulu people since they had ceased to belong to them themselves; and it was most interesting to listen to the remarks they made to each other on the mode of Zulu government, and its effects upon its subjects. In comparing their own condition with that of the Zulus, they wondered how they could possibly have lived under such a state of things.

" ' Why, they are wild beasts,' said they, ' while they walk, they are dead,' alluding to the uncertainty of life and property, in which they live.

" ' I would not live under the Zulus for all the cattle they could give,' said one.

" ' You would not live long here, if you had many cattle,' said another.

" ' They are accustomed to such a state of things, and we have forgotten what it is,' would say a third; and conversations like this generally ended in some exclamation, congratulating themselves upon the security and happiness they enjoyed under ' Our Government,' as they seemed glad to designate that of this Colony.

" On one occasion, passing the birthplace of one of our party, he said, ' Well, I was born there, but I don't seem to feel much interest in this hill.'

" ' No,' said his friend, ' because no shadow of our Government ever falls upon it,' and the same man, when he had safely crossed the Tugela river, which is the boundary of the Colony, sat down on the bank, and, thrusting his fingers into the sand, as if he enjoyed the feel of it, exclaimed, ' Thank God I can touch this soil again.'

" To me the great difference which showed itself between the native inhabitants of Natal and the Zulus was most surprising. I had never visited the Zulu country before, and, although I had heard much of their degradation and recklessness, I could not have understood the difference I have alluded to, without seeing it. Frequent discussions occurred between my attendants and the Zulus; and, when the former enunciated the commonest maxims of justice, by which they are governed in this Colony, it seemed to them something

so far above the state they ever hoped to attain to, as to be incapable of belief. They would ask again and again if such a state of things actually existed, or was the mere figment of my people's imagination. At this, they (the Natal natives) would always proudly refer to themselves as the living witnesses and enjoyers of such a condition. . . .

"I returned from the Zulu country very much impressed with the advance which the natives of this Colony have made in civilized ideas, by contact with the white inhabitants, and by the maxims of justice which have been introduced into, and rule the administration of their own law among them, by the officers of this Government.

"Continued contact with them had rendered comparison next to impossible. But, when I was able to measure them by the Zulus in their own country, I found that the distance between them had become very great. . . ."

There are many natives living in Natal, who have done and still do credit to their teachers. Some have become landed proprietors by purchase, have built substantial houses, possess waggons and ploughs, undertake contracts with white people, such as house-building and the like, and enter keenly into commercial speculations of a serious character, considering their circumstance. And it is not only in the absence of tribal wars, forays to obtain cattle, murders and disorderly riots that their social progress may be noted, but in their so completely adapting themselves to the commercial habits of the whites. . . . The natives are essentially a trading people; and, as years roll on, this predilection becomes stronger, at the cost of the warlike propensity which was forced on them by their circumstances in the early years of the present century. Many of them make extensive purchases of merchandise upon regular promissory notes, which are accepted by the whites. I have lately been informed of the purchase of a sugar mill and machinery by a Company of two or three natives on their own

account. They will in all probability have to employ white skill to erect and manage it for them. These are signs of improvement which cannot but be encouraging to any Government which has the responsibility of charge over them; they are in the direction of peace and industry, for it is scarcely probable that a community owning a sugar mill and enjoying the advantages of it will lightly jeopardise such property and enjoyment.

31. SHEPSTONE'S TASK IN NATAL

From *The Form of Constitutional Government existing in the Colony of Natal*, by John Bird, 1869

Long familiar with the language and usages of the Kaffir races on the border of the Cape Colony, the Diplomatic Agent (now the Secretary for Native Affairs) acquired, at the outset, a complete knowledge of the condition of the population of Natal. To notice the gradual addition of numbers to any tribe, to check the undue preponderance of one or more over others, to locate them separately, and with reference to known clannish variances, were duties which he was specially qualified to discharge without error or mishap.

From adopting the destructive vices that attend civilisation, the natives have also been saved by incidents peculiar to their condition. Their idea of wealth is restricted to the possession of cattle; yet they are not nomadic, for they cultivate the soil assiduously. The simple and inexpensive pleasures within their reach attach them to their kraals, and they are seldom willingly absent long from home. In consequence of the small number of European settlers, the natives have not hitherto experienced much difficulty in securing a sufficiency of pasture for their herds. The cultivation of the soil is the work of the women; the men are the councillors, the warriors, and the hunters of the tribe. But when not engaged in war, the chase

or the dance, they regard inaction as happiness. They have never been labourers till the coming of the Europeans. They have therefore generally no desire to be servants to the white man; and when they become so, for an object of gain or other advantage, they seldom serve for any lengthened period. It is, of course, very desirable that these habits should be changed; no objection could be offered to any endeavour to change them, however suddenly, *if* only the attempt could be safely made. Be this as it may. Inborn attachment to their own usages keeps them aloof, and has stood greatly in the way of their becoming addicted to the use of ardent spirits and other vicious indulgences that generate disease and physical infirmity.

Let it not for a moment be supposed—it would be a very erroneous inference—that the natives are an innocent race; that they are not inferior in morality to the great bulk of the European settlers. Far from it. If they were not inferior, Christianity and civilisation might appear to be a curse rather than the greatest of blessings. They do indeed sorely need to be raised in the moral scale. They are the slaves of many dark superstitions, and subject to many vices and turpitudes of the most degrading kind; but not such as, undermining the constitution and wasting vigour, are the usual precursors of the extinction of a savage people.

In speaking of their vices, mention must be made of the native usage, akin to vice, of polygamy, which probably had its origin thousands of years ago in struggles and contentions that, by the destruction of the males, disturbed the numerical equality of the sexes. Whatever may have been the circumstances that gave rise to the custom, it is adhered to with tenacity, as ministering to the ease, opulence and social position of the native in his tribe; his importance is measured by the number of his wives in his own estimation, and that of his fellows. There is no native who does not regard the attainment of a plurality of

wives as a thing to be coveted. Even the young who know that the polygamy of the elder men stands in the way of their own desire for marriage, have no wish to abolish the custom, since they meditate nothing more persistently than to adopt it themselves when time and opportunity may permit. Those who have an intimate knowledge of the feelings and propensities of the heathen race in South Africa, are well aware that there is no institution to which they are more obstinately attached than to that of polygamy.

It has been seen that the safeguard against the decay of the native races has been their comparative seclusion from the whites; and against their destruction or expulsion—the certain ultimate consequence, after many intervening horrors, of any general insurrection—in their fragmentary and disunited position in the Colony.

As long as the emigrant Boers formed the great majority of the European population, the demand for the labour of the natives was comparatively not great. The Boer busied himself little with cultivation; he was a stock-farmer and required only the services of a few herd-boys. Even these were not procured without difficulty. In 1850 the immigration of English settlers commenced, and with them a new spirit of industry and activity was introduced. At once "Kaffir labour" became a want keenly felt. It has never been, perhaps it never could have been, supplied to an extent equivalent to the desire of those who required it. The want was general, for the low rate of wages and the cheapness of the food needed by the native, led every European who landed in Natal to wish for "Kaffir labour." No one, even in the lowest grade of the social scale, was free from coveting the luxury—a new one to very many of the immigrants—of being served by another. The Kaffir has often been the servant of servants, and the demand for his services has been a fruitful source of vexation and disappointment.

The test of experiment had shown that, with a climate generally agreeable and temperate, a soil nowhere barren, in some parts very fertile, the variety of products

that might be profitably cultivated, whether in extensive tracts or on the smallest holdings, was very great, *if only* labourers could be procured in sufficient numbers, at low wages and with certainty.

When, the calculation of the cost and profit having been made, the hope of success, even of great success, had taken root in the thought of the immigrant, and when this hope was dashed by the difficulty of inducing an idle race to labour, it was natural that a feeling akin to aversion should arise in any mind not wholly stoical or very philosophic. To believe that a happy future was kept from him for want of assistance that might easily be rendered, to know that in the wigwams in sight on the neighbouring hills, there were numbers of men who might improve their own condition if they were not averse to labour, was a subject of deep dissatisfaction to the immigrant. And when the Kaffir did take service, he came unskilled, worked without energy and absented himself without permission. A crop was ripening, and the hands to reap it were wanting. A herd of cattle had strayed, perhaps never to be recovered, perhaps not to be recovered until they had roamed within reach of another herd infected with disease; and the herdsman had left them unguarded, led away by some idle caprice; he had followed an antelope or been decoyed by the sound of merriment at a neighbouring kraal, or had lain inactive in the long grass, watching the fleecy cloud above him, and yielding to the mere love of doing nothing.

This is no exaggerated picture of unusual occurrences; although unquestionably many natives are efficient servants; and it rarely happens that the employer who behaves fairly, firmly, temperately, with an even, certain, unvarying control, is left wholly without labourers, though he may not at all times have the number he may desire. But it is undeniable that great numbers of natives, listlessly idle, might be well employed, and that their supineness is hateful to a more energetic people.

32. SHEPSTONE'S VIEWS ON NATIVE ADMINISTRATION

From his *Memorandum on Native Affairs*,[1] 28 November 1874 (Colonial Office, Natal No. 65)

The whole system of native government in Natal will have to be considered and provided for; and first, the powers of the Governor.

The object of the provision in the ordinance no. 3 of 1849, which attached to the office of Governor the position and power of the supreme chief, was to enable the Government to discharge functions equivalent to those discharged by a native chief over a tribe, or over a number of chiefs and tribes; in other words, to make him by law the head of the native population in a sense different to that which his headship as Governor gave him; and it has been assumed because he occupies this position, is called supreme chief and is himself Governor also, that therefore the powers so vested in him by this law can be exercised independently of the functions and responsibilities which attach to the office of Governor, instead of in thorough subordination to them; and in truth, this dual capacity has caused some of the confusion and inconvenience which have lately occurred, and which might perhaps have been avoided if the Governor had been empowered by law to do certain things in his capacity of Governor only, and the head of the native population had been a separate and distinct person, acting under the authority and instructions of the Governor, like the official head of any other section of the community. When the Governor, as the supreme chief or head of the native population, so appointed by this law, is called upon to give a legal decision, he is bound by his position to give it, because he is the judicial as well as the civil and military chief; and there is no doubt an apparent incongruity in an appeal lying, as a matter of course,

[1] This memorandum was compiled by Shepstone in London, in reply to Lord Carnarvon's request that he should submit detailed suggestions for reform of the native administration of Natal.

to the same person, as Governor, who decided originally as supreme chief. This it is that places the Governor in a position of difficulty.[1]

I should not recommend that the effective power of the Governor in native matters be interfered with; but I am of opinion that his having specially attached to himself the powers and functions of supreme chief, as is done by ordinance 3 of 1849, impairs and occasionally stultifies the higher position of Governor; he should be able to do as Governor all that it is necessary he should do in native matters, without being subject to the disadvantage of having perhaps to correct, as Her Majesty's representative, a mistake he may have fallen into in his subordinate capacity of chief of the natives; and he should, I think, occupy no position that makes the distance between the Governor and the natives less than that between him and the white colonists. He should be Governor and Governor only, with all the functions that title implies over both.

By this means his position would be incapable of being misunderstood by either black or white; but that of the secretary for native affairs would have to be legally defined. He has been compelled by circumstances to do many things which only the vague provisions of the ordinance 3 of 1849 appeared to warrant, and some which even those seemed scarcely to embrace. Besides exercising original jurisdiction, which he must exercise, he has been forced by the necessities of the population to discharge, from the very foundation of the Colony, the functions of final appellate judge in all civil cases between native and native, and to decide, as a court of first instance, all disputed successions to

[1] At the trial (1874) of Langalibalele for treason, the court had been constituted as follows:—Governor Pine as supreme chief, Shepstone as his principal induna, a few native chiefs and four European magistrates. From the decisions of this court, appeal lay to Pine in executive council. Shepstone, who had been asked by Pine to explain the circumstances of the trial to the Secretary of State, could only point out that the Governor had not exceeded his powers under native law, which the ordinance of 1849 had recognised. It was clearly advisable, as Bishop Colenso had urged, to abolish exceptional procedure under native law and lay down that colonial law must be applied to all serious criminal charges.

chieftainships or disputes between different chiefs, these latter being of too serious and disturbing a character to be safely left in the hands of magistrates, whose decisions might be inconsistent, and who are in daily contact with the litigants, and therefore liable to have ill-feeling created against them.

I have, as secretary for native affairs, and in other capacities, discharged these duties and borne these responsibilities, besides others of a kindred nature, for now twenty-eight years, without the definite warrant of any law except that of necessity, and the burden has been frequently heavy; but I have, as a rule, enjoyed the confidence of the Governor and the approval of Her Majesty's Government. There seems however now no reason why this system should continue, or why a system of native government should not be established by law, in which might be defined the position and functions of the secretary for native affairs and the native department, the powers to be exercised by the Governor through this department, and the position of the native population generally towards the Government; and in which also might be provided for the creation of different courts for the trial of crimes and offences reserved to be dealt with according to native law, together with a fitting appeal from each such court; and these courts should be created with a view to the nature and magnitude of the crimes or offences they are appointed to try.

With a system such as this established by law, there would be an end to the uncertainties, apparent inconsistencies and sometimes mistaken action which, under political pressure or any emergency, a Government such as that of Natal is always liable to, even while acting with the highest motives and the strongest desire to follow a right course.[1]

In the transition journey which the natives must travel from their present condition to more intimate

[1] Some paragraphs containing detailed recommendations for changes in judicial administration are here omitted. They were substantially adopted and incorporated in the Native Administration Law no. 26 of 1875. See Eybers, G.W., *Select Constitutional Documents*, etc., pp. 247-51.

and practical contact with civilization, they need guides more experienced and advanced than their own hereditary native chiefs. These latter are naturally wedded to their ancient customs and prejudices, and are tenacious of their hereditary rank and the social position of their families. On the other hand, tribal organization cannot be dispensed with for a long time to come, because we can substitute no system of management half so effective at even ten times the cost; and the danger of it lies not in the organization, but in the fact usually connected with it, that it has at its head an hereditary chief.

When in 1846 I first undertook the management of natives in Natal, I at once found myself face to face with the difficulty that, taking the tribes generally, the Government could not command a balance of power; in other words, it was uncertain of its ability at any time to put down disaffection among the natives by means of the natives themselves. It was obviously impossible to do so by means of the white colonists alone; and I have always felt strongly that, if even it were possible, it would be in the highest degree impolitic.

Instances constantly occurred however of individuals, families and even sections of tribes becoming dissatisfied with their hereditary chiefs and desiring to have their connection with them severed. I observed that these malcontents were not unwilling to be placed under headmen of no hereditary rank; all they cared for was that their new head should enjoy the countenance of the Government. Here then seemed to be presented a mode of supplying a serious deficiency. Countenance was at first tacitly and cautiously given to the natural operation of this feeling. But it was necessary to observe the character of the men whose personal qualities had drawn these malcontents to them, before a too decided countenance could be given. Many of these men failed; others succeeded and became the headmen of one or two large tribal organizations, in which the hereditary feeling was supplanted by the idea that, being especially Government tribes, they took precedence of all those under hereditary chiefs.

Thus the Government had at its disposal a large force upon whose services it could at any moment rely.

These "unborn" chiefs, as the natives call them, being commoners, have no interest in supporting hereditary pretensions. All their importance depends upon the breath of the Government; and, although their position is fully acknowledged, they are always looked upon by the chiefs of ancient descent as interlopers and weakeners of their rightful power and influence.

It is by the gradual and judicious extension of this system, in combination with and under the control of white magistrates, that I think will be found the shortest and safest means of breaking down the power of hereditary chiefs without losing the machinery, as yet indispensable to us, of tribal organization. I would without anxiety let the hereditary houses crumble and their chiefs lose power, so long as the material does not become confused rubbish, but can be built into other, although smaller, edifices which possess none of the dangerous associations of ancient tradition. The Government will then become practically, what to a great extent it is now theoretically, the source of all rank and power in the Colony.

Sir Benjamin Pine's idea, expressed to me verbally a short time ago, that all native chiefs should hold a commission is, I think, a good one; such commissions would soon be looked upon as true warrants for headship, especially if accompanied, as they should be at first, by some sign of the authority conferred, more visible than a mere paper would be, to the common people.

The policy briefly sketched in the few preceding paragraphs contemplates that every location should be under the immediate control of a white magistrate, who should live among them and be their adviser and example. The chiefs and headmen in the location should report all occurrences direct to this magistrate and receive orders from him. His place of residence should be selected with a view not only to the most

convenient discharge of his duties, but it should be capable of becoming the nucleus of civilization, a site for industrial and other training and favourable for mission operations. These latter should however, be left to the exertions of such religious bodies as may choose to undertake them, but the secular educational training of children, industrial or otherwise, at these centres, should be under the control and supervision of the Government, except in cases where the parents express a distinct wish to the contrary. As a rule, the natives will feel much less objection to their children being taught to read and write, and industrial pursuits, if they see that the Government is not making their conversion to Christianity a primary object.

Such institutions would of course require the expenditure of a considerable sum of money and the proposal may encounter objection on this head; but it must be remembered that the native population of Natal contributes to the revenue annually a sum equal at least to that necessary to maintain the whole fixed establishment of the Colony for the government of the whites as well as themselves.[1] All this revenue, except the £5,000 reserved for native purposes, is used for the general objects of the Government and is at the disposal of the Legislature. Then again, disregarding for a moment the claims which our position over these people seem to enforce, it is a question whether it is not our best policy, as well as our highest interest, to train the youth of these people to peaceful and industrious occupations, and so make them more useful to themselves and others. . . .

It is worthy of consideration whether the fees and fines in all purely native cases might not fairly be devoted to the secular education and industrial training institutions intended expressly for the improvement of the

[1] Over the years 1857–74, a total sum of £57,551 was expended on native development from the reserved £5,000, amounting to a yearly average of some £3,197. Direct native taxation brought in as much as £70,000 in 1884. In addition to the hut tax, natives contributed to the revenue through customs duties, fines levied in court and the dog tax. See an unpublished thesis on *Taxation in Natal*, by C. E. Axelson, in the Natal Archives.

natives thus made to contribute; and any surplus income accruing to the Natal Native Trust Board, in which body is legally vested the lands set apart for the natives, might be granted by the trustees in aid of the same objects. I think there would be no objection to this.

The question where the men can be had capable of filling appointments, for the discharge of whose duties a knowledge of the native language is an important qualification, has always been recognized by the Government and the members of the Legislative Council as a very serious one. It is most desirable that all the magistrates in the Colony should possess this knowledge, but the majority do not. The only possible solution of the question seems to be the establishment on a small scale of some such system as is adopted to supply the Straits Settlements with officers who are able to speak the language of those over whom they are appointed. The details of this system are published in the *Colonial Office List*, and I think that a modification of them to suit the circumstances of Natal would in time supply the want. Meanwhile, it will only be possible to make the best of things as they are.

T. SHEPSTONE,
Secretary for Native Affairs.

London, November 28, 1874.

33. THE RELIABILITY OF ZULU SERVANTS

From *South Africa*, by Anthony Trollope, 1878

I like the Zulu of the Natal capital very thoroughly. You have no cabs there—and once when in green ignorance I had myself carried from one end of the town to another in a vehicle, I had to pay 10s. 6d. for the accommodation.[1] But the Zulu, ornamented

[1] This was not an exceptional case of over-charging. Lady Pender, visiting Maritzburg the same year (1878), was charged thirty shillings "for taking us one evening to the Governor's to dinner and bringing us back—a distance of about half a mile each way."—*No Telegraph*, p. 81.

and graceful as he is, will carry your portmanteau on his head all the way for sixpence. Hitherto money has not become common in Natal as in British Kaffraria, and the Zulu is cheap. He will hold your horse for you for an hour, and not express a sense of injury if he gets nothing; but for a silver threepence he will grin at you with heartfelt gratitude. Copper I believe he will not take—but copper is so thoroughly despised in the Colony that no one dares to shew it. At Maritzburg I found that I could always catch a Zulu at a moment's notice to do anything. At the hotel or the club or your friend's house you signify to someone that you want a boy, and the boy is there at once. If you desired him to go a journey of 200 miles to the very boundary of the Colony, he would go instantly and be not a whit surprised. He will travel 30 or 40 miles in the twenty-four hours for a shilling a day, and will assuredly do the business confided to him. Maritzburg is 55 miles from Durban, and an acquaintance told me that he had sent down a very large wedding cake by a boy in 24 hours. "But if he had eaten it?" I asked. "His Chief would very soon have eaten him," was the reply.

But there is a drawback to all these virtues. A Zulu will sometimes cross your path with so strong an injury to your nose as almost to make you ill. I have been made absolutely sick by the entrance of a good-natured Zulu into my bedroom of a morning, when he has come near me in his anxiety about my boots or my hot water. In this respect he is more potent than any of his brethren of the negro race who have come in my way. Why it is or whence, I am unable to say, or how it comes to pass that now and again there is one who will almost knock you down, while a dozen others shall cross you leaving no more than a mere flavour of Zuluism on your nasal organs. I do not think that dirt has anything to do with it. They are a specially clean people, washing themselves often and using soap with a bountiful liberality unknown among many white men. As the fox who leaves to

the hounds the best scent is always the fox in the strongest health, so I fancy is it with the Zulu—whereas dirt is always unhealthy. But there is the fact; and any coming visitor to Natal had better remember it, and be on his guard.

Almost all domestic service is done by the Zulu or Kaffir race in Natal. Here and there may be found a European servant—a head waiter at an hotel, or a nurse in a lady's family, or a butler in the establishment of some great man. But all menial work is as a rule done by the natives and is done with fidelity. I cannot say that they are good servants at all points.[1] They are slow, often forgetful, and not often impressed with any sense of awe as to their master, who cannot eat them up or kill them as a black master might do. But they are good-humoured, anxious to oblige, offended at nothing and extremely honest. Their honesty is so remarkable that the white man falls unconsciously into the habit of regarding them in reference to theft as he would a dog. A dog, unless very well-mannered, would take a bit of meat, and a Zulu boy might help himself to your brandy, if it was left open within his reach. But your money, your rings, your silver forks, and your wife's jewels—if you have a wife and she has jewels—are as safe with a Zulu servant as with a dog. The feeling that it is so comes even to the stranger after a short sojourn in the land. I was travelling through the country by a mail cart, and had to stay at a miserable wayside hut which called itself an hotel, with eight or ten other passengers. Close at hand, not a hundred yards from the door, were pitched the tents of a detachment of soldiers, who were being marched up to the border between Natal and the Transvaal. Everybody immediately began to warn his neighbour as to his property, because of the contiguity of the British

[1] Cf. the experiences of Lady Broome: "I had an occasional very bad quarter of an hour . . . as when I found an embryo valet blacking his master's socks, as well as his boots, or detected the nurse boy, who was trusted to wheel the perambulator about the garden, stuffing a half-fledged little bird into the baby's mouth, assuring me it was a diet calculated to 'make the little chieftain brave and strong.'"—*Colonial Memories*, p. 211.

soldier. But no one ever warns you to beware of a Zulu thief, though the Zulus swarm round the places at which you stop. I found myself getting into the habit of trusting a Zulu just as I would trust a dog.

34. SHEPSTONE ADMINISTERS JUSTICE ACCORDING TO NATIVE LAW

From *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa*, by Lady Barker, 1879

It is inexpressibly touching to see with one's own eyes the wonderful deep personal devotion and affection of the Kaffirs for the kindly English gentleman who, for thirty years and more, has been their real ruler and their wise and judicious friend; not a friend to pamper their vices and give way to their great fault of idleness, but a true friend to protect their interests, and yet to labour incessantly for their social advancement, and for their admission into the great field of civilised workers. The Kaffirs know little, and care less, for all the imposing and elaborate machinery of British rule. The Queen on her throne is but a splendid distant chieftainess to them, and no potentate can, in their eyes, compare with their own chieftain, their king of hearts, the one white man to whom of their own free will and accord they give the royal salute whenever they see him. I have stood in magnificent halls, and seen King and Kaiser pass through crowds of bowing courtiers, but I never saw anything which impressed me that morning so strongly as the simultaneous springing to the feet, the loud shout of "Bayete," given with the right hand upraised (a higher form of salutation than "Inkosi" and only accorded to Kaffir royalty), the look of love and rapture and satisfied expectation in all those keen black faces, as the Minister, quite unattended, without pomp or circumstance of any kind, quietly walked into the large room, and sat himself down at his desk with some papers before him.

There was no clerk, no official of any sort; no one standing between the people and the fountain of justice. The extraordinary simplicity of the trial, which commenced at once, was only to be equalled by the decorum and dignity with which it was conducted.

First of all, everybody sat down upon the floor, the plaintiff and defendant amicably side by side opposite to the Minister's desk, and the other natives, about a hundred in number, squatted in various groups. Then, as there was evidently a slight feeling of surprise at my sitting myself down in the only other chair (they probably considered me a new-fashioned clerk), the Minister explained that I was the wife of another Inkosi, and that I wanted to see and hear how Kaffir men stated their case when anything went wrong with their affairs. This explanation was perfectly satisfactory to all parties, and they regarded me no more, but immediately set to work on the subject in hand. A sort of *précis* of each case had been previously prepared from the magistrate's report for Mr. S——'s [1] information by his clerk, and these documents greatly helped me to understand what was going on. No language can be more beautiful to listen to than either the Kaffir or Zulu tongue. It is soft and liquid as Italian, with just the same gentle accentuation on the penultimate syllables, and the clicks which are made with the tongue every now and then are part of the language, and give it a very quaint sound, whilst the proper names are excessively harmonious.

In the first case taken, the plaintiff, as I said before, was not quite satisfied with the decision of his own local magistrate, and had therefore come here to restate his case. . . .

Tevula told his story extremely well, I must say; quietly, but earnestly, and with the most perfectly respectful though manly bearing. He sometimes used graceful and natural gesticulation, but not a bit more than was needed to give emphasis to his oratory. . . . Everyone listened attentively, giving a grunt of interest

[1] Shepstone.

whenever Tevula made a point; and this manifestation of sympathy always seemed to gratify him immensely. But it was plain that, whatever might be the decision of the Minister, who listened closely to every word, asking now and then a short question, which evidently hit some logical nail on the head, they would abide by it, and be satisfied that it was the fairest and most equitable solution of the subject, Here is a *resumé* of the first case, and it is a fair sample of the intricacies attending Kaffir law-suits.

Our friend Tevula possessed an aged relative, a certain aunt called Mamusa, who at the present time appears to be in her dotage, and consequently her evidence is of very little value. But once upon a time, long, long ago, Mamusa was young and generous. Mamusa had cows and she *gave* or *lent*—there was the difficulty—a couple of heifers to the defendant, whose name I cannot possibly spell on account of the clicks. Nobody denied that, of her own free will, these heifers had been bestowed by Mamusa on the withered-looking little old man squatting opposite; but the question is, were they a loan or a gift? For many years nothing was done about these heifers; but one fine day Tevula gets wind of the story, is immediately seized with a fit of affection for his aged relative, and takes her to live in his kraal, proclaiming himself her protector and heir. So far, so good. All this was in accordance with Kaffir custom, and the narration of this part of the story was received with grunts of asseveration and approval by the audience. Indeed, Kaffirs are as a rule to be depended upon; and their minds, though full of odd prejudices and quirks, have a natural bias towards truth.

Two or three years ago, Tevula began by claiming as heir at law, though the old woman still lives, twenty cows from the defendant as the increase of these heifers. Now, he demands between thirty and forty. When asked why he only claimed twenty, as nobody denies that the produce of the heifers has increased to double that number, he adds naïvely, but without hesitation, that there is a fee to be paid of a shilling a head on

such a claim, if established, and that he had only twenty shillings in the world; so, as he remarked with a knowing twinkle in his eye, "What was the use of my claiming more cows than I had money to pay the fee for?" But times have improved with Tevula since then, and he is now in a position to claim the poor defendant's whole herd, though he generously says he will not insist on his refunding those cows which do not resemble the original heifers, and are not, as they were, dun and red-and-white. This sounded magnanimous, and met with great applause, until the bleared-eyed old defendant remarked hopelessly, "They are all of that colour," which changed the sympathies of the audience once more. Tevula saw this at a glance, and hastened to improve his position by narrating an anecdote.

No words of mine could reproduce the dramatic talent that man displayed in his narration. I did not understand a syllable of his language, and yet I could gather from his gestures, his intonation, and above all from the expression of his hearers' faces, the sort of story he was telling them. After he had finished, Mr. S—— turned to me and briefly translated the episode with which Tevula had sought to rivet the attention and sympathies of the court. Tevula's tale, much condensed, was this: Years ago, when his attention had first been directed to the matter, he went with the defendant out on the veldt to look at the herd. No sooner did the cattle see them approaching than a beautiful little dun-coloured heifer, the exact counterpart of her grandmother, Mamusa's cow, left the others and ran to him, Tevula, lowing and rubbing her head against his shoulders and following him all about like a dog. In vain did her reputed owner strive to drive her away; she persisted in following Tevula all the way back to his kraal, right up to the entrance to his hut. "I was her master, and the *inkomokazi*[1] knew it," cried Tevula, triumphantly, looking round at the defendant with a knowing nod, as much as to say, "Beat that, if you can."

[1] Cow.

Not knowing what answer to make, the defendant took his snuff box out of his ear and solaced himself by three or four huge pinches. I started the hypothesis that Mamusa might have had a *tendresse* for the old gentleman and might have bestowed these cows upon him as a love-gift, but this idea was scouted even by the defendant, who said gravely, "Kaffir woman don't buy lovers or husbands: we buy the wife we want." A Kaffir girl is exceedingly proud of being bought, and the more she costs the prouder she is. She pities Englishwomen whose bridegrooms expect to receive instead of giving money, and considers a dowry as a most humiliating arrangement.

I wish I could tell you how Mamusa's cows were finally disposed of, but although it has occupied three days, the case is by no means over yet. I envy and admire Mr. S——'s untiring patience and unfailing good temper; and it is just these qualities which make the Kaffirs so certain that their affairs will not be neglected nor their interests suffer in his hands.

35. A ZULU NURSE GIRL

From *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa*, by Lady Barker, 1879

We have lately added to our establishment a Kaffir girl, who is a real comfort and help. Malia (for Kaffirs cannot pronounce the letter "r": "red" is always "led" with them, and so on) is a short, fat, good-humoured-looking damsel of fifteen years of age, but looks thirty. Regarded as a servant, there is still much to be desired, in spite of the careful and excellent training she has enjoyed in the household of the Bishop of Natal; but as a playmate for G—[1] who is fast teaching her the game of cricket, or as a nursemaid for the baby, she is indeed a treasure of sweet temper and

[1] Guy Broome, eldest son of Sir Frederick Napier Broome, then colonial secretary of Natal.

willingness. To be sure she did race the perambulator down a steep hill the other day, upsetting the baby and breaking the small vehicle into bits; but still, English nursemaids do the same, and do not tell the truth about it at once, as Maria did: it was done to amuse the two children, and answered that part of the programme excellently well, even the final peal of laughter from both the mischievous monkeys.

It is also rather singular that, in spite of the extreme slowness and deliberation of my Kaffir housemaid's movements, she breaks quite as much crockery in a week as anyone else would in a year; and she is so inexpressibly quaint about it all, that one has neither the heart nor the command of countenance requisite to scold. I handed her a saucer last night, to put down: the next moment she remarked, in her singularly sweet and gentle voice and pretty musical accent, "Now, here is the saucer in three pieces." So it was; and how she broke it, without dropping it, must ever be a mystery to me. It was like a conjuring trick, but it occurs somewhat too often. Malia ought not to be a housemaid at all. She has a thirst for knowledge which is very remarkable, and a good deal of musical talent. She speaks and reads three languages—Kaffir, English and Dutch—with perfect fluency and facility; and is trying hard to learn to write, practising incessantly on a slate. She is always whistling, or singing, or picking out tunes on a sort of pipe, on which she plays some airs very prettily. Every spare moment of her time she is poring over a book; and I wish with all my heart that I had time to teach her to write, and to learn Kaffir from her myself; but except on Sundays, when I read with her and hear her say some hymns, I never have a moment. She is so anxious to learn, poor girl, that she watches her opportunity; and, when I sit down to brush my hair or lace my boots, she drops on one knee by my side, produces her book from her pocket, and says, in the most calicante voice, "sall I lead to you a little, Inkosa 'casa?" Who could have the heart to say "no"; although my gravity is sorely tried by some peculiarities

of pronunciation? She cannot say "such"; it is too harsh; and the nearest we can arrive at, after many efforts, is "sush." Almost every word has a vowel tacked on to the end, so as to bring it as close to her own liquid, soft-sounding Zulu as possible. I think what upsets me most is to hear our first parents called "Dam and Eva." But indeed most of the Bible names are difficult of recognition; yet her idioms are perfect, and she speaks in well-chosen, rather elegant phraseology. Every alternate Sunday, Malia goes down to church, dressed in the smartest of bright pink cotton frocks, made very full and very short, a clean white apron, and a sky-blue kerchief, arranged on her head in a becoming turban. Malia's shy grins of delight and pride, as she comes thus arrayed to make me her parting curtsy, are quite charming to behold, and display a set of teeth which it would be hard to match for beauty anywhere out of Kaffirland.

The more I see of the Kaffirs, the more I like them. People tell us they are unreliable; but I find them gay and good-humoured, docile and civil. Every cowherd on the veld has his *saka bona*, or good morning, as he passes me, fern or grass-seed hunting in the early morning, and I hear incessant peals of laughter from kitchen and stable. Of course, laughter probably means idleness, but I have not the heart to go out every time (as indeed I ought, I believe) and make them, what Mr. Toots calls "resume their studies." Their mirth is very different from that of my old friends, the West Indian negroes, who are always chattering and laughing. The true Kaffir wears a stolid expression of countenance in public, and he is not easily moved to signs of surprise and amusement; but at home they seem to me a very merry and sociable people. Work is always difficult and disagreeable to them, and many generations must pass before a Kaffir will do a hand's turn more than is actually necessary to keep his body and soul together. They are very easily trained as domestic servants, in spite of the drawback of not understanding half what is said to them; and they make specially good grooms.

36. A VISIT TO A KAFFIR HUT

From *South Africa: A Sketch Book*, by J. S. Little, 1887

Kaffirs have some strange habits. If the gentle reader will follow me in spirit into a Kaffir hut—a wicker dwelling of semi-spherical shape—about 15 feet in diameter, I may hope, perhaps, to make him acquainted with the peculiarities of their manner of living. A well-to-do Kaffir will generally have a box full of clothes in his hut. These clothes are, more often than not, discarded uniforms—military, naval, constabulary and all kinds of official garments, the more showy and loud the apparel may be the better they like it. The floor, which is simply hardened earth, is bestrewn with a few mats made of skins, Kaffir pillows, mouchas (kilts), assegais, the horns and hides of animals, and shields. All these are scattered around; while, attached to the sides of the dwelling, you may expect to see pipes and the various ornamental appendages of the Kaffir toilet, and perhaps a few "highly-coloured" prints, and other vulgar so-called works of art—oleographs; a very appropriate place for both the one and the other. It is a pity the Kaffirs cannot take all these libels on true art; or rather all over and above those required in England by poor cottagers and other uninitiated persons. As to aforesaid ornaments, they comprise an assortment of bangles for the arms and anklets. Some of these are of native manufacture, made of woven grass, but the greater portion are of Brummagen make, wrought in brass and in white metal. Then there are numerous snuff boxes, which are worn in interstices cut in the lobe of the ear. Some of these are of their own production, and are formed out of small gourds, others are made of brass, and are from the aforesaid town which worships Joe Chamberlain. Bracelets made of beads, and finger rings, are also very dear possessions to the Kaffir breast.

No hut is complete without a box of Kaffir scent—a peculiar black compound, like unto the compressed

dates one sees temptingly displayed in the windows of small general shops in London. It is produced from odorous roots and compressed flowers, and is a powerful perfume resembling the hateful Patchouli. Their kilts are made of hides and the tails of animals; and in their construction, no less than in the manufacture and ornamentation of their pillows and shields, they display not only skill but also some rude artistic ability. The most elementary pillow is merely a tripod constructed from the forked and pronged limb of a tree; others are more elaborately finished, and there is some attempt at carved embellishment. Their shields too, are somewhat curious. They are not made of wickerwork, like those of the ancient Britons; although the Kaffirs are very proficient in the art of working in wicker, and in basket-making. Their shields, however, are cut out of cowhide; they are elliptical in shape and about 2 ft. 9 ins. long, and 15 ins. wide, and a piece of wood is passed in and out certain slit-like apertures in the shield, and thus forms a handle. About a dozen incisions are made in the centre of the shield, through which hide of another colour is obtruded. The really well-to-do Kaffir may include a rum-bottle and a Bible in his inventory of household effects, and some Kaffirs even "go in" for copies of Shakespeare and Milton. Singing, dancing, and various games, sleeping, eating and talking, alternated by a little desultory work, occupy their whole time when living in their kraals.

VII

YOUNG NATAL IN THE LATER VICTORIAN AGE

In Natal as in Great Britain, the feature of the later Victorian period is the repudiation of conventional restraints. Sunday inhibitions, the tyranny of clothes which impeded agility in recreation, and the stern aloofness of Victorian parents had never oppressed children in Natal to the extent that was usual, except among the poorer classes, in England. Fathers and mothers, engrossed in the struggle to make a living from colonial farming or trading, had little leisure to devote to their children. J. S. Little found the boys of the Colony "excessively precocious." At the age of 15, boys began to smoke and to drink. "Children act and talk with a freedom which has something of an American style about it." [1] Though discipline was not generally lax, the attraction of the diamond fields made parental repression difficult. For sons who found their aspirations thwarted gave expression to their longing for freedom by clandestine migration to the northern diggings.

To the old-time pastimes of bathing, bird-catching and shooting, boys in the 'seventies could add organised games. Outside the towns, however, cricket and football had to take second place to pursuits which the individual could plan. Victorian humanitarianism did

[1] Little, *South Africa; A Sketch Book*, pp. 50, 76.

not extend to colonial youth. No pastime was more popular than the shooting of birds with catapult or gun. Birds were also trapped with birdlime made from gum and the berries of the wild mistletoe. At Maritzburg, kites exercised a fascination, so much so that in 1875 the Town Council was moved to sanction an additional bye-law prohibiting " the flying of kites, the trundling of hoops, the use of catapults and games of any sort whatsoever in the streets, walks, etc., tending to the annoyance or danger of the inhabitants."

In the 'eighties, bicycles with iron tyres made their appearance. An early use of the bicycle was to facilitate the lighting of street lamps. To climb the poles, a short ladder was necessary. Donald Mackenzie, official lamplighter for the capital, conceived the plan of using a wooden-framed bicycle to transport the ladder. On all the hills, the elderly Aberdonian encountered willing helpers. It was understood in return that Mackenzie would allow his youthful assistants to career once or twice downhill on the unsteady " bone-shaker."

Squibs were another source of entertainment for mischievous children. In Maritzburg, the discharge of fireworks or the lighting of bonfires without permission of the mayor was a punishable offence. Even on 5 November, boys who wished to celebrate Guy Fawkes's arrest in the traditional manner had to apply for leave to " carry on their antics." Nevertheless, many an urchin risked a spanking for the pleasure of watching the effect of the explosion of crackers beneath the hooves of a restive steed, or outside a street door. The passing of the open sluits deprived boys of the pleasures of boat-sailing and crab-catching; but here there were compensations. For until water was brought in pipes from reservoirs in Zwartkop valley, boys had been

accustomed to undertake the laborious task of filling the household barrel from the nearest sluit.

Inevitably, pioneering conditions in a new country produced a hardy self-reliant type of colonial youth. Children of tender years preferred to play at " trekking," with improvised tent and genuine bullock whip, rather than indulge in " civilised " games with toys and dolls. At the age of fourteen, the average boy had left school two years behind. On farm or sugar plantation, out transport riding on the rough roads, or making the voyage by sailing-ship between Africa and Europe,[1] he could pull his weight with grown men. His interests and outlook were much more mature than is usual at the present day. For the Victorian passion for improvement of the mind drove boys and girls to read assiduously and to study nature. Hobbies which were most popular were those which took them out on to the veld. At sea, passengers of all ages had not learned to depend upon organised entertainment. The events eagerly entered in diaries, adult and juvenile, concerned not deck competitions and sports, but " the mysterious phosphorescent lights in the wake of the ship; the inhabitants of the sea, from the tiny swallow-looking flying fish to the great whale which occasionally comes to the surface and dashes the spray with its tail . . . the albatross whose breadth of wing often reaches twelve feet, the beautifully marked Cape pigeon, the booby, the mollymawk and the stormy petrel." [2] Among outdoor pursuits, natural history enjoyed a prominence that was later to be given to organised sport.

In social entertainment, the core of the season was May and June. The Governor's Ball on the Queen's

[1] No. 39, *infra*.
[2] J. Cullingworth, *Guide to the Colony of Port Natal*, p. 79.

birthday marked the height of the winter festivities in the capital. The polka and the barn dance were still in fashion in General Colley's day. Only in the last decade of the nineteenth century did dancing enter upon a dull period, with little to relieve the monotony of the valse. Another form of indoor entertaining was the " penny reading," which was quite devoid of light relief. For younger children, there were parties, bright and festive if informal, but less to the taste of high-spirited youngsters if they involved dressing up in cambric frocks, embroidered with lace and ornamented with pale blue or pink satin bows tied to the shoulders; or, in the case of small brothers, shirts with large frilled collars or velvet tunics. For everyday use, boys wore Norfolk suits with Eton collars, and trousers reaching just below the knee. Navy blue jerseys were popular in the 'nineties; and, with knickers and stockings, dark blue field-cap and leather belt, made up the uniform for cadets. About the period of the Anglo-Boer war, stockings ceased to cover the knees, and shorts became popular.

Satin sashes and bows were *de rigueur* for girls' evening wear. Party dresses were cut low round the neck and left sleeveless. For younger children, Kate Greenway frocks enjoyed a brief vogue.

In the 'sixties, the church struggle between the adherents of Bishop Colenso and Dean Green produced a series of mild sensations, from the effects of which even children could not altogether escape. For some years, both parties worshipped in the same church. In 1867 those who believed that their children could not be safely confirmed by an excommunicated prelate, issued an invitation to Bishop Twells of Bloemfontein to perform the ceremony. When Twells arrived, he

found the doors of the cathedral barricaded against him. Inside were stalwart sidesmen who did not conceal their contempt for " the miserable mummery called the greater excommunication," or their intention to uphold Colenso in all his rights and privileges. To the consternation of adult worshippers, but the secret delight of their children, it was necessary for the sheriff to burst open the doors with sledge hammers before Bishop Twells could hold his service.[1]

The dramatic hall in Longmarket Street continued to be the principal place of entertainment until the completion on the same erf of the Gaiety Theatre. On long winter evenings, boys of thirteen and over went to such performances as could be arranged in a period when few visiting companies found it worth while to come to the Colony. One of the first professional companies to play in Natal was that of Disney Roebuck. At one of his performances of " Perseus and Andromeda " in the Gaiety, great amusement was caused by the dragon falling off the stage into the audience, from which it had to be picked up bodily and replaced on the stage.

Life for boys and girls in the later Victorian age was by no means all amusement. In the early years of colonial settlement, children could receive no more than elementary schooling, and that not without difficulty in the country districts. Not until 1866 did Robert Russell arrive to open the Durban High School, knowing little of Natal beyond the fact that it was inhabited by " Zoolahs, a fierce and predatory race," and ministered to by Colenso, who had sprung into prominence by his startling criticism of the Pentateuch narrative. Only seven boys put in an appearance on

[1] Nos. 37–38, *infra*; *Natal Mercury*, 9 July 1867.

1 June at the two-roomed building in Smith Street which Hartley had erected and somewhat grandiloquently styled " the mansion house." The school soon moved to the vicinity of Cato Creek, an unfortunate choice, since in rainy weather boys could not reach the school without taking off shoes and stockings and wading through the swampy vlei. The building was a disused corn mill, with a rickety upper storey wherein schoolboy gossip located a patent whipping machine for the correction of culprits. Its situation made impossible organised games, though rounders and prisoners' base were indulged in during the lunch interval. When time permitted, Russell encouraged long walks and rides into the country to study the fauna and flora of the coastal bush.[1]

Among the books used in school were Colenso's *Arithmetic*, and Butter's *Spelling Book*. The last-named displayed words which were derived from Latin, giving the Latin word above. Only in the two high schools was Latin itself a subject of the curriculum, Cæsar's *Commentary on the Gallic Wars* being the most popular text. Prior to the 'eighties, few parents desired for their children more than " bread and butter knowledge." Since their pupils were mostly withdrawn at the age of fifteen or less, the high schools could give little more than a smattering of languages and mathematics; and in 1878 it was officially admitted that these schools had not proved a success.[2]

Visitors were apt to regard Natal boys as uncouth and lacking in consideration and courtesy. J. S. Little, always an outspoken critic, condemned the colonial youth for " side," particularly in monopoly of the road

[1] *Durban High School Record*, Durban 1906, *passim*.
[2] *Report on Education for the year* 1878.

for equestrian exercise.[1] But the Isandhlwana campaign afforded tragic proof of the loyalty, bravery and generosity of Young Natal.

37. CONFIRMATION: FIRST INVITATION TO A BALL

From *Sunrise to Evening Star*, by Marina King, 1935

That year I was to be confirmed in St. Peter's Cathedral. Some time before the ceremony was to take place, the Bishop preached a sermon to which the Dean took exception.[2] Thereupon it seemed that the whole of Maritzburg was divided into two groups, the adherents of the Bishop and the adherents of the Dean. Of the latter my father was among the most staunch. Many of my friends belonged to the Bishop's party; he would not even allow me to speak to them in the street.

The Dean was holding a preparation class in the Cathedral when some men of the rival faction appeared with buckets in their hands and announced that it was the day for cleaning the floor. The Dean tried to turn them out, without success; then told us to stay in our pews and attempted to continue his sermon. The men firmly proceeded to form a chain from the stream outside in the road and passed bucket after bucket of water to those inside the Cathedral. As if fighting a fire, they flooded the whole place. With as much dignity as we could muster, we had to leave; some of the men remained to make sure that we did not return. The next Sunday, when the Dean was to preach, the Cathedral floor was found to be covered with garbage, strewn

[1] Little, *op. cit.*, p. 78. " The Natal equestrian delights in ousting a pedestrian from his lawful side of the road, and in endeavouring to run him down should he be crossing the highway from left to right."
[2] The two congregations worshipped in the same church at different times, until the anti-Colenso clergy took possession of the small St. Andrew's Church in Pietermaritz Street. There is evidence (vide no. 2, *supra*) that Colenso took some care to avoid giving further offence in his sermons.

with bones and rubbish of every description, the smell of which drove the congregation to their homes before the service had begun. There was only peace in Maritzburg when St. Saviour's church had been built for the Dean and his supporters.

Soon after my confirmation came my first invitation to a ball—that was a great day. I was afraid my father would once again declare I was too young; I hardly dared to ask his permission to accept. But this time he said that I might go, if I wore a simple frock which was suitable to my age—I was just seventeen. My father did not always approve of my dresses. I used to spend a lot of my time making clothes. My mirror told me I was pretty, and I liked to follow the fashions gleaned from the few illustrated papers which came my way.

I chose for the dance a white tarlatan dress. Unrelieved by any note of colour, it had flounce upon flounce from the hem to the waist, and a simple, but for those days daring, bodice. Without vanity, I knew that my shoulders and arms were good; the dress would show them off to advantage. And my hair was a lovely colour, nearly chestnut. If I had the courage I would wear a white flower in my hair, where it fell in a loose knot above the nape of my neck. . . .

But it was one thing to plan a lovely dress and, I found, another thing to wear it. Dressing for the ball, I felt amazed at my audacity. It was no simple frock for a girl—yet it was lovely. But how could I say good-bye to my father? He would never let me go.

I took off the dress again, leaving the underskirt. I tied some ribbon on the sleeves, twisted a blue scarf round my waist; then went to get his approval.

"Very nice and neat. Quite the proper thing for a girl," he said.

I rushed back to my room, tore off the ribbons—how I hated pale blue!—and once more put on the real dress. But the white flower was too much. I pinned a demure rose on my shoulder; it was the colour of my cheeks.

The maid came in and said that my host had called for me. "Oh, Miss!" she said, her eyes on my dress.

With a prayer that I would escape from the house unobserved, I hurried to the hall and out of the door. But before I had reached the carriage, my father called me back.

"You haven't said good night, my dear."

Escape was impossible; no use to pretend I had not heard. With awful fear I turned back, wrapping my cloak close about me. I kissed him good night—and he never saw my dress.

38. THE BARRICADING OF ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, 1867

From *The First Book of Ignoramus* (Maritzburg 1869)

Now the belief of this land was the belief of our fathers in the far-off land which we had left, and Jaydoubleyou[1] and Dungrin[2] and Ollywilli[3] preached unto the people.

Now beforetime the priests and local preachers had made large profit out of a certain lake of brimstone and pitch and all kinds of nastiness, and it was under the charge of one Diabolus.

Now the priests and local preachers made the people pay excessively for the use of this lake, but none of the people understood the matter.

And the Chief Priest, Jaydoubleyou, was an exceeding learned man, and he thought much and read much, and he said:

"Why do ye deceive the people? Behold I cannot find this lake, nor your servant Diabolus. Cease thus terrifying this people with this thing."

And this saying put the set on these priests and locals, so they met and cursed him with a curse.

[1] Bishop Colenso. [2] Dean Green. [3] Rev. W. Campbell.

Did they not bring Er Kaapstadt [1] to do the thing double strong, and he cursed Jaydoubleyou with all his heart.

And they hauled Jaydoubleyou before the Judges, even Walter [2] and his brethren, but they said: "We find no fault in him."

And they appealed to the Great Queen, and her councillors, and they said ditto.

Now there was a man named Swells,[3] chief priest among the Philistines, who was thought to be an exceeding holy man; and lo, he was very rich.

And the believers in the curse of Er Kaapstadt sent for him and said: "Bless thou, O holy man, our children"; and some whose children had been blessed by Jaydoubleyou were brought unto him and he blessed them.

And lo! these people and Swells came to the Temple, and the doors were shut, because Jaydoubleyou had not come to worshipping for the morning service.

And it was the Sabbath day. And Swells was there, and Dungrin and Charley,[4] even the dealer in iron, and the Cadi Sam [5] (he who slept on the keys) and Turncow[6] and Jay Fries [7] and many women.

And they got them axes and implements, and brake down the doors thereof, and entered and worshipped.

And great was the row in the City; and men stole along the streets silently, and Ignoramus mourned and said: "Wherefore this sacrilege?"

And he returned into the wilderness to ponder on this thing, saying: "No good will come of it."

"Faith doth not these things; I very much fear it is from another feeling."

[1] Bishop Gray, of Capetown, who pronounced the sentence of "greater excommunication" on Colenso in January 1866.
[2] Walter Harding, Chief Justice of Natal.
[3] Bishop Twells of Bloemfontein.
[4] Charles Dickenson.
[5] Sam Williams, mayor of Maritzburg.
[6] J. W. Turnbull.
[7] Jeffries, the confectioner.

39. OUTWARD BOUND TO NATAL IN THE DAYS OF SAIL

From the diary of a fourteen-year-old boy[1]

June 25, 1873.—After saying "good-bye" to Mamma, we left home at nine o'clock, going by boat to London Bridge and then to the docks. Our ship, the *Priscilla*, was towed down the river by a little tug, *Excelsior*. We saw the Shah of Persia going to inspect the East and West India docks and dipped our colours to him. At Gravesend, about eleven o'clock in the evening, three detectives came on board and removed a passenger and his son to shore, I suppose, for debt. However, they came back again a few hours later.

June 26.—Still at Gravesend. I suppose we shall sail when the captain comes on board. I see in the paper that our ship is mentioned because we dipped our colours to the Shah. We sailed from Gravesend at half-past one. Bertie [2] and I helped to heave the anchor; and away we sailed for the Nore with a fair wind. We anchored off Ramsgate for the night.

July 3.—A heavy sea and the wind not too favourable, but we are making more progress. The ship rolls so much that I cannot spell properly, so you must excuse me. Poor Simpson is sea-sick again. He looks blue and awfully miserable. Bertie is very anxious to fill up his diary, and puts down every mortal thing that happens, or is said. We amuse ourselves by climbing up the main backstay with our hands, and not using our feet. My hands are getting quite hard, for I help to pull at nearly every rope that is pulled and so do the others. It was very curious to see the water, as we sailed along, change from green to blue. At nine o'clock, we saw the Lizard lights, twenty miles distant.

July 4.—Foul wind again. I was to have been

[1] The journal was composed on board ship by Sir Charles Smith, at the age of fourteen.
[2] Elder brother of Sir Charles.

confirmed to-day at St. Luke's and am very sorry I missed it. In the afternoon, I went up aloft; and, while I was up there, the mate came up with a piece of rope, intending to tie me to the spar, until I had "paid my footing"—a bottle of brandy to be divided equally amongst the crew. But I slipped down a rope, and though he tried to catch me, he missed. He was laughed at by everybody. I saved four shillings, but burned my leg coming down the rope so swiftly, and I have it all bandaged up.

July 16.—We saw a ship to-day bound for the Mediterranean, but she was too far away for our signals.

About half an hour before dinner, Simpson came running to us and saying that we were going to have German pudding, so we all agreed not to have any. It is beastly stuff, made of starch and red currants. We had had it before. And it was fine to see the captain so angry. I am glad Mamma did not come with us, because the captain is a stingy old beast.

July 21.—I was up at half-past six this morning, but it was too cold for a bath. We are in the tropics now and it is very hot. I should like some of my friends to see me now. This is how I am dressed: a broad-brimmed straw hat, shirt sleeves rolled up to my elbows and no collar, trousers tucked up above the knees, no shoes, stockings or jacket, and a huge broom in my hands, washing decks and perspiring tremendously. Fox and I went up to the main truck this afternoon and sat there a long time. It is very difficult climbing up to it.

July 23.—Nothing of any importance has happened to-day, except that Fox and I went to the jib-boom end, to see if we could catch some fish. They refused the bait, however, and we thought that we could not come down without doing something. We let ourselves down to the ship's figurehead, a pretty bust of Priscilla, and we gave her a moustache and eyebrows, also some whiskers and a beard. Nobody knows anything about it; and won't they be surprised when they see how nice she looks? We saw a grampus to-day. It is

much like a whale and very large. I have been going about without my coat and my shirt sleeves rolled up. My arms are all sun-burned and smart awfully.

July 30.—In order to pass the time more profitably than we have been doing, we, the passengers, decided to open a literary class. It is to be called the "Priscilla Literary and Elocution Society." Rather a queer name, but we have determined to make it something unusual. Discussions are to be held, useful books read to the company; and then we are to write essays upon the subject.

July 31.—Steward woke us this morning at six o'clock to tell us that Patterson had harpooned a porpoise. It was about six feet long and weighed 150 pounds. Fox skinned it, and it is almost exactly like a pig. In fact, it is called the sea hog. Mr. Patterson wanted to have some of it for dinner, but the captain objected. In the evening, there was a shark following the ship. The mate harpooned him in the head, but the harpoon came out and he got away.

August 22.—Bertie and I have been on the poop a good while, talking about what we intend doing at Natal and about our friends. I will just tell you what our passengers are doing now. Captain Brown is on the poop talking with the mate; Patterson is seated very lovingly beside his wife on the after-hatch, and she is singing a nice song; Fox, Nundy and Simpson are forward, courting Miss Horsley, poor fellows; Mr. Simpson is studying the life of John Wesley; and Bertie and I are writing our diaries. It is a beautiful night and I am going to get ready for church.

August 30.—We have had a very nasty night with heavy squalls; and this morning a gale of wind. The men have been up all night, poor fellows. One side of the vessel is completely under water to a depth of eighteen inches or two feet. I was helping the men haul up the main sail when a huge sea came over the side. The lee bulwarks went under and I found myself swimming. Of course, I got a thorough ducking. We had dinner rather late and no pudding. We did

not like that at all. After dinner, I went on deck. The shutters were put on the skylights and everything was closely battened down, because we were going to have some more dirty weather. Presently, it came on to blow and rain harder than ever. The captain bellowed out: "Close reef the fore topsail"—a not very pleasant sound for the men to hear. It was blowing so hard that poor Mike could not hold the wheel alone, and the captain asked me to go and help him. Well, I went, and as I was going, over went my beautiful hat, and there I was standing at the wheel, wet through a second time, my arms nearly jerked out of their sockets and the rain coming down on my bare head like hail. We had prayers about seven o'clock, and very soon after that I went to bed.

August 31.—We have had a much worse night than Friday. The mate had a narrow escape. He was walking on the starboard side of the poop when the ship rolled. Away he went to port and his shoulder jammed between the side of the ship and a davit, where he hung for five minutes. If a sea had come over then, it would have been all U.P.

About three o'clock, another sea poured over the sides, carried away the doors of the galley and flooded the floor. Everything was swimming, including the dog and cat, clothing and all the pots. I could not help laughing, it looked so ridiculous; and then I had such a lecture from Captain Brown and old Simpson for laughing at such a time. I couldn't help it, really.

An hour later, a big wave came over the stern. It knocked Fred, who was steering, against the wheel and sent a hen coop into the mate and then crashed on to the main deck. Fred has hurt his legs very badly, and will not be able to keep watch, whilst the mate will only just be able to sit on the poop and give orders. The captain ought to keep his watch for him, but he is too fond of his bed. To-night, I am to keep watch for him from 8 to 12, and then go to sleep from 12 to 4. I shall go on watch again from 4 to 8 a.m., when there will only be Mike and Tom and I to manage the ship.

Tom is sixteen years old, but Mike is an able seaman. We have just had prayers, and now I am going to get the captain's oilskins and go on deck. I hope it will be a fine night.

September 1.—It has been a fine, but dreadfully cold, night. I saw the morning star rise. It was beautifully bright. The sailors seem to think that all our bad luck has been owing to the Cape pigeons being caught. We had rice pudding for dinner to-day and Fox told the captain he was sorry we had been done out of Sunday's duff. The captain said we should have it to-morrow. The covers from the skylights have been taken down.

September 3.—I am regularly joined to the watch now in Fred's place, and the captain has put my name down in his log. I am called "Third Mate." I should like Mamma and some of my old friends to see me on the poop with oilskins and sou'-wester on. I think they would see a vast difference between me and the Charlie Smith that used to present himself in the morning at half-past eight at 37 Milk Street, E.C.

September 7.—At service this morning, the captain had to go out, because there was a squall, and Mr. Simpson had to conduct the service. Mrs. Duggan[1] sat next to me, and she kept pulling my arm, asking me if there was any danger. I did not get any benefit from the service, and I am sure she didn't.

Tom and I went aloft to stow the foretopgallant sail, while they were at dinner, and I had my dinner with the second mate. I haven't enjoyed a dinner so much since I have been on board, because I could help myself.[2]

[1] Later the notorious "Jane Cakebread."

[2] The diary ends abruptly here, as the weather worsened. A series of smashing gales stove in the ship's bulwarks during the last week of the voyage, and badly injured two sailors. The *Priscilla* limped into the Bay at Natal on 15 September 1873.

VIII

THE INVASION OF NATAL
1899-1900

THE second Anglo-Boer war is of surpassing interest for its military operations. Inasmuch as machine guns, mobile artillery and barbed wire entrenchments were utilised, it was the first war fought on modern lines. At the same time, it was the "last of the gentlemen's wars." [1] War had not yet become a system. In 1899, Great Britain had no general staff, and no permanent organisation of divisions and army corps. The tactics adopted by her commanders were those which had proved successful in fighting on the Indian frontier. Infantry was expected to achieve by frontal attack the dislodgement of a well-posted enemy armed with the Mauser rifle. On the Boer side, war was still to some extent a seasonal activity. Hostilities were timed to begin as soon as the seasonal rains had renewed the grass on the veld. A short campaign was confidently anticipated. When Joubert settled down before Ladysmith, burghers from the Free State brought down with them their wives and dependents to share in the leisurely conducted siege. And, with the unexpected protraction of the campaign in Natal, many trekked away across the passes of the Berg without the formality of application for military leave. In the opening months, Joubert's operations were conducted with a

[1] J. F. C. Fuller, *The Last of the Gentlemen's Wars*, 1937.

patience and a degree of consideration for the safety and convenience of non-combatants which is now thought to be incompatible with success in warfare. His gunners were careful to observe the Sabbath. As dysentery struck down men in his commandos, he applied without hesitation to the British camp at Ladysmith for the essential medical supplies which his own forces lacked. Nor did he ask in vain. His simple courtesy was equalled by that of Sir George White, who sent the chlorodyne asked for, and added to it from his own limited stores a gift of brandy.[1] The absence of bitterness from the diaries and despatches of the Ladysmith siege reflect the underlying tolerance and good nature on the British side. These sentiments were not less prominent among the commandos.[2] But, behind the scenes graphically described in the despatches of the correspondents, there was an aspect of the war which received little publicity. Whilst the British soldier and the colonial volunteer were engaged along the railway line, the non-combatant population of Natal were obliged to witness the occupation of their country, in some cases the wanton looting of their farms, and the hasty flight from the occupied areas of anxious women and children. "Wire fences were cut and trampled down. The enterprise and toil of long years were wiped out, and the homeless sufferers, forced to find shelter where they might, were left to reflect once again upon the chances and changes that beset the Anglo-African pioneer." [3]

In the years before the war, the Government of Natal had exercised its influence in the direction of concilia-

[1] H. W. Nevinson, *Ladysmith : the Diary of a Siege*, 1900, p. 96.
[2] For an account of the campaign from the Boer angle, see D. Reitz, *Commando*, 1929.
[3] Sir J. Robinson, *A Lifetime in South Africa*, 1900, p. 97.

tion. The Escombe papers, now in the archives at Maritzburg, reveal the efforts which were made in 1897 to avoid a fatal breach. The Pretoria Government had been arming on a large scale since the unhappy episode of the Jameson raid. When, in reply to these military preparations, the Commander-in-Chief at the Cape proposed to send infantry and artillery to Ladysmith, the Natal Government promptly urged by telegram that such a disposition of forces, unless officially communicated to Pretoria, might be interpreted as foreshadowing an attack on the Transvaal. And, when he failed to win over Sir Alfred Milner to this point of view, Escombe sought an interview with President Kruger, gave an explanation of the movement of British troops, and frankly asked "what was his reason for spending such large sums on armaments?" Kruger's reply was, "Oh! Kaffirs, Kaffirs and such-like objects." [1]

But Escombe, with his wide South African patriotism and his passionate desire for peace and conciliation, was overthrown at the polls by the followers of Henry Binns. He continued to urge exploration of every conceivable avenue which might lead to preservation of the peace, and to insist that Natal must not be involved in hostilities without prior consultation with her responsible ministers. His influence was strong enough to induce the new ministry to offer co-operation, so late as July 1899, in a further effort to find a peaceful solution, and to repeat the earlier objection to the stationing of troops on or close to the Transvaal frontier. Mindful of what had occurred in 1881, when the Imperial Cabinet had abandoned the struggle after the reverse at Majuba, colonial opinion was apprehensive lest Natal, after

[1] C. Headlam, *The Milner Papers, South Africa*, i, p. 58.

suffering enormous losses, should again be left in the lurch. Milner, however, gave a definite assurance that the Colony would be defended with the full strength of the Empire, and redress exacted for any invasion of her territory. Thereupon Hime, who had become Premier on the death of Sir Henry Binns, promised the "active and sympathetic co-operation" of Natal in the event of war.

It was now clear that war was coming, and that Natal would be the field of operations. On 8 September, it was resolved to strengthen the troops in South Africa by 10,000 men, of whom rather less than 7,000 were at once ordered to leave India for Durban. When they arrived, the British regulars were still outnumbered by approximately two to one, whilst the disparity in artillery was even greater. For the defence of Natal there was available in October a force of 16,000 men, 3,000 of whom were local volunteers and mounted police. Though the arrival of the contingent from India had done much to restore confidence in Natal, the position in that Colony was in reality extremely precarious. Sir George White who took over the command from General Penn-Symons on 7 October, brought with him from Whitehall no considered plan of campaign. Two years earlier, the War Office had proposed the occupation of advanced positions in order that Natal should not be rushed in the initial stages of the war. Penn-Symons had accordingly stationed a force at Dundee. The new commander would have preferred withdrawal to the line of the Klip or the Tugela, but he allowed himself to be overruled by the insistence of the Governor, Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson. White had guessed that it would be impossible to afford protection to the British population in north-western

Natal, without a very considerable concentration in the vicinity of Laings Nek. In October, the strength of the Natal garrison did not admit of such a concentration. North of Ladysmith, the dangerous triangle of mountainous territory, wherein lay the coal mines of Dundee, was likely to be a death-trap for an army which was not strong enough to hold in force a long and difficult line of communications, liable to flank attack by Free State commandos issuing from the Drakensberg passes. Owing to starvation of the intelligence department, little was known of the disposition of the Boer forces. But it was incredible that the enemy would not employ the big numerical superiority which he enjoyed in order to force early successes in Natal, Before the British Cabinet had even sanctioned the despatch of a field army (29 September), Kruger told President Steyn that his burghers were on the march.[1]

The slow mobilisation of the Free State commandos and the shortage of transport in both republics gave the forces in Natal a precious respite. Kruger's ultimatum expired on 11 October. Three days earlier men and guns from India had passed through Maritzburg on their way to Ladysmith and Dundee. For several weeks, impatient groups of burghers had been converging on the Natal frontier. On 12 October, the commandos began the invasion of Natal.

The British plan of campaign was to hold the railway junction at Ladysmith in order to compel the Boers to use distant Germiston as the sole point of railway connection between the armies of the two republics. But when the Free State commandos were fairly on the move, Joubert could bring an overwhelming force

[1] C. Headlam, *op. cit.*, i, p. 549.

to bear on the exposed triangle of colonial territory through which ran the range of the Biggarsberg. Moreover, the republican artillery outranged the British by more than 500 yards. At Dundee the position of General Yule was soon found to be untenable, despite an initial success at Talana. By means of a hazardous night march, and assisted by an artillery action designed to pin down the Boers in their position, Yule succeeded in extricating his troops and effecting a junction with Sir George White. But, on 30 October, White thought himself strong enough to strike with effect at the forces converging on him. Two infantry battalions sent to surprise the Boer centre were cut off and forced to surrender at Nicholson's Nek. Ladysmith was now clearly in jeopardy. As White fell back in discouragement from Lombard's Kop, naval guns from H.M.S. *Powerful* were brought by rail to strengthen the defences of the little town. By 1 November, White, with practically the whole of the forces available for the protection of the Colony, had been surrounded and isolated.

Penetrating far south of the invested town, detachments of the invading force advanced unchecked through areas occupied by Dutch-speaking settlers. At Estcourt and Mooi River, the tiny garrisons were able to divert their progress away from the main road and rail line leading to the capital. But the position was intensely critical. Had Joubert rode on with the commandos, leaving only a small detachment to cover Ladysmith, the whole of Natal must have been at his mercy. At Maritzburg, rumours were in circulation that the Boers had been seen in the immediate vicinity. "The whole place," wrote Bishop Hamilton Baynes, "is seething. There is a perpetual crowd round

The Times office, where the latest telegrams are posted up." [1] After Nicholson's Nek, preparations were made to abandon the capital. Even Durban was thought to be in danger, and naval detachments were warned to be in readiness to co-operate in its defence. But Joubert refused to advance until Ladysmith had fallen. Fortunately, White had a large quantity of stores, whilst the naval guns could reply effectively to the enemy's big Krupps.

Ladysmith would have been relieved at an earlier date, had not the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Redvers Buller, persisted in frontal attacks on positions that were natural fortresses. On the Tugela front, the Boers were too strong thus to be dislodged. From carefully concealed trenches, Louis Botha's burghers could pour a devastating fire upon unsheltered troops. On 15 December, Buller withdrew with a loss of 1,100 men and 10 guns from an unwise attempt to force the Tugela near Colenso. To White, grimly facing Boers who looked forward with confidence to Christmas dinner in Ladysmith, he signalled advice to make what terms he could with Joubert. White's reply was to assemble the war correspondents, announce that the garrison could not be relieved as soon as had been expected, and issue an appeal to keep the town cheerful. Before Christmas, prices ran up to fabulous levels. Eggs fetched half a guinea a dozen, and tins of milk 6s. each. Nevertheless, the troops received the bad news with " cheerful stoicism; not a single complaint, only tender regrets about the whisky and Christmas pudding we shall have to do without." [2]

In the new year, however, the Boers emulated Buller's rashness, and incurred severe casualties in an attempt

[1] A. H. Baynes, *My Diocese during the War*, 1900, pp. 33–4.
[2] H. W. Nevinson, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

to storm the town. Both soldiers and colonial civilians now proved that they were of tough fibre. After Waggon Hill had three times been captured and retaken, the assault was beaten off. In the dark days of February, the town faced the extremes of sickness and privation. Before Christmas, sports and Shakespeare reading parties had enlivened the monotony of the siege. Now, " it would be impossible to get up sports or concerts. Too many are sick, too many dead. The laughter has gone out of the siege." In the last weeks, all were living on " Superior Ladysmith Chevril," manufactured in the locomotive pits from the flesh of horses and mules. Outside the town, the residue of the battalions held on to their defensive positions " out in cold and rain all night, out in the blazing sun all day, with nothing to look forward to but a trek-ox or a horse stewed in unseasoned water, two biscuits or some sour bread and a tasteless tea, generally half-cold." [1] Fortunately the Boers also were weakening. Before the end of January, Buller, by pressing his attack on Spion Kop, could have forced the line of the Tugela and compelled the retirement of Botha's marksmen. His final success at Hlangwane left open the way for the relief (28 February) of Ladysmith.

The later stages of the war witnessed the advance of the British army into republican territory. Though in 1901 the commandos were again to carry guerrilla warfare into many parts of Cape Colony, the territory of Natal was secure from the menace of invasion.

When Kruger's ultimatum expired, the regular volunteer forces of Natal numbered no more than 2,000 men. This force was maintained until the conclusion of peace in a high state of efficiency. In all

[1] H. W. Nevinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 270, 272.

nearly 10,000 officers and men, inclusive of many who were only temporarily resident in the Colony, were raised in Natal during the war period. This considerable effort, considered in conjunction with the losses sustained during the occupation of the northern districts, seemed to justify an enlargement of territory in the post-war settlement of South Africa. Just before his death, Escombe, true to his ideal of a South African commonwealth embracing equally both European races, had suggested the union of the Transvaal with Natal, and of the Free State with the Cape Colony. He believed that such an arrangement would hasten the fusion of the two peoples. Public opinion generally regarded the south-eastern districts of the Transvaal as properly belonging to Natal.[1] In view of the unprovoked attack made upon the Colony by the Orange Free State, sentiment in Natal also gave strong support to the proposal to incorporate Harrismith and Witzies Hoek. Though these aspirations were only realised to a limited extent, the cession of Vryheid and Utrecht being accompanied by the unwelcome provision that Natal should take over a portion of the Transvaal debt, the Colony emerged from the struggle far stronger than on its outbreak. The enlargement of its European population consolidated the influence of Natal in South Africa, and made it possible for the Colony to enter the Union on terms of virtual equality with her larger neighbours.

Since the siege of Ladysmith is the most heroic incident in the war, considered from the angle of Natal, the passages which follow have been selected to illustrate its successful defence and ultimate relief.

[1] The districts of Utrecht, Vryheid and Wakkerstroom had been recognised by the British Government as "The New Republic" in 1886.

40. THE INVASION OF NATAL

From *Commando, a Boer Journal of the Boer War*, by Deneys Reitz, 1929

Ladysmith was soon completely invested; on every hill and kopje lay a force of riflemen, and there must have been nearly ten thousand thus tied down who could have been put to far better use.

The weather remained fine, and we divided our time between watching the beleaguered garrison build forts and breastworks against our ultimate reception, and riding about the rear foraging for supplies.

After a while we of Pretoria received orders to move forward to occupy a hill named Bell's Kop, facing a murderous-looking English construction that had gone up within the last few days. We rode out before light one morning to take up our new position, which, we were informed, was to be held by us as part of the cordon that was being drawn round the town. When we heard that this was to be our permanent abode, all hands turned to building shelters against the weather, and generally making our camp habitable. Neighbouring farms were laid under tribute and plundered of everything that could be turned to account. My brother rejoined us here. He had had enough of gunnery for the time being, and our native boy Charley also entered appearance, beaming with delight at having tracked us down. He travelled on foot all the way from the Transvaal border, and although several times arrested as a spy, he had talked and argued his way through until he found us. Needless to say, he was received with open arms, as we were once more able to turn over to him our duties of cooking, carrying water, horseguard, etc., so my brother and I settled down to a life of ease, spending our time in sniping at the English outposts, or in riding to the neighbouring farms.

Camp-life was a pleasant existence. There were no drills or parades and, except for night picket and an

occasional fatigue party to the railway depot to fetch supplies, there were no military duties. Our commando received many fresh drafts and after a while varied from one thousand to fifteen hundred men, but discipline was slack, and there was a continual stream of burghers going home on self-granted leave, so that we never knew from day to day what strength we mustered. . . .

So quiet were things round Ladysmith that, as time went on, many burghers got ox-waggons brought down from their farms, and some even had their wives and families with them, which tended further to increase the spirit of inactivity that was gaining on the commandos. However, reports from all fronts were good, and we deluded ourselves into believing that everything was as it should be and, so far as my brother and I were concerned, we thoroughly enjoyed the business of besieging Ladysmith, sniping at outposts, riding from camp to camp to pay visits, and making regular excursions to see the guns fired into the town. . . .

Camp life continued uneventfully. The besieged garrison contented themselves with shelling us at intervals, and, as they made no serious attacks, we assumed that they were marking time, for there was great activity on the south bank of the Tugela, twenty miles away, where the English Commander-in-Chief, General Buller, was massing troops to attempt the relief of Ladysmith.

He was reported to have forty thousand men with great numbers of guns, and on our side reinforcements had been brought down from the Transvaal and Free State, and there were about fifteen thousand Boers holding the north bank of the river below Colenso bridge to Spion Kop, many miles upstream. As for us around Ladysmith, we felt secure in the belief that whatever might happen on the Tugela, the troops in the besieged town at any rate would make no move, so picket and other duties were carried out in a very perfunctory manner.

During the daytime no guards were set at all, as there

was always a sufficient number of men on the hill above amusing themselves with sniping to make sure of an alarm in case of need, and at night, although we went on outpost so close to the English sentries that we could hear them challenge each other, and sometimes exchanged shouted pleasantries with them, we did not take our watches very seriously.

We used to go on foot after dark in parties of twenty or so and, on reaching neutral ground on the plain between ourselves and the enemy's line, two men at a time would walk forward a short distance. Here they stood or sat on sentry-go, while the rest of us pulled off our boots, spread out blankets and went to sleep until it was the turn of the reliefs. At daybreak we collected our belongings, and tramped back to camp in time for morning coffee, and thus far no untoward incident had ever marred these tranquil doings.

But this happy state was disturbed on the night of December 9, for a detachment of two or three hundred soldiers came out of Ladysmith and, scaling Lombard's Kop, destroyed the big Creusot gun ("Long Tom") standing there. The kop lay six or seven miles from our camp, so we heard nothing till next morning; but, when we did, it gave us food for reflection, for it looked as if the pleasant immunity of our night doings was a thing of the past.

Our fears were well grounded.

41. LADYSMITH BESIEGED

From *Ladysmith : the Diary of the Siege*, by H. W. Nevinson
1900

February 2, 1900

After a misty dawn, soaked with minute rain, the sky slowly cleared at last, letting the merry sunshine through. At once the heliograph began to flash. I sent off a brief message, and soon afterwards the signal "Line clear" was sent from Zwart Kop over the

Tugela.[1] The "officials" began to arrive, and we hoped for news at last. Three or four messages came through, but who could have guessed the thrilling importance of the first? It ran:

> "Sir Stafford Northcote, Governor of Bombay, has been made a peer."

The other messages were vague and dull enough—something about the Prince of Wales reviewing Yeomanry, and the race for some hunt cup in India. But that peerage! To a sick and hungry garrison!

We were shot at rather briskly all day by the enemy's guns. The groups of wandering horses were a tempting aim. The poor creatures still try to get back to their lines, and some of them stand there motionless all day, rather than seek grass upon the hills. The cavalry have made barbed wire pens, and collect most of them at night. But many are lost, some stolen and more die of starvation and neglect. An increasing number are killed for rations, and to-day twenty-eight were specially shot for the chevril factory. I visited the place this afternoon. The long engine-shed at the station has been turned to use. Only one engine remains inside, and that is used as a "bomb-proof," under which all hands run when shelling is heavy. Into other engine-pits cauldrons have been sunk, constructed of iron trolleys without their wheels and plastered round with clay. A wood fire is laid along under the cauldrons, on the same principle as in a camp kitchen. The horse-flesh is brought up to the station in huge red halves of beast, run into the shed on trucks, cut up by the Kaffirs, who also pound the bones, thrown into the boiling cauldron, and so, "Farewell my Arab steed!"

There is not enough hydrochloric or pepsine left in the town to make a true extract of horse, but by boiling and evaporation the strength is raised till

[1] The relieving force under Buller, which had suffered a reverse at Spion Kop on 24 January, and was to be further checked at Vaal Krantz a fortnight later.

every pint issued will make three pints of soup. A punkah is to be fitted to make the evaporation more rapid, and perhaps my horse will ultimately appear as a jelly or a lozenge. But at present the stuff is nothing but a strong kind of soup, and at the first issue to-day the men had to carry it in the ordinary camp-kettles.

Every man in the garrison to-night receives a pint of horse essence hot. I tasted it in the cauldron, straight from the horse, and found it so sustaining that I haven't eaten anything since. The dainty Kaffirs and Colonial Volunteers refuse to eat horse in any form. But the sensible British soldier takes to it like a vulture, and begs for the lumps of stewed flesh from which the soup has been made. With the joke, "mind that stuff; it kicks!" he carries it away, and gets a chance, as he says, of filling—well, we know what he says. The extract has a registered label, "Superior Ladysmith Chevril."

42. LADYSMITH RELIEVED

From *London to Ladysmith via Pretoria*, by W. S. Churchill, 1900

Never shall I forget that ride. The evening was deliciously cool. My horse was strong and fresh, for I changed him at midday. The ground was rough with many stones, but we cared little for that. Beyond the next ridge, or the rise beyond that, was Ladysmith—the centre of the world's attention, the scene of famous deeds, the cause of mighty efforts—Ladysmith was within our reach at last. We were going to be inside the town within an hour. The excitement of the moment was increased by the exhilaration of the gallop. Onward, wildly, recklessly, up and down hill, over boulders, through the scrub. Hubert Gough, with his two squadrons, Mackenzie's Natal Carabineers and the Imperial Light Horse, were clear of the ridges

already. We turned the shoulder of a hill, and there before us lay the tin houses and dark trees we had come so far to see and save.

The British guns on Caesar's Camp were firing steadily in spite of the twilight. What was happening? Never mind, we were nearly through the dangerous ground. Now, we were all on the flat. Brigadier, staff and troops let their horses go. We raced through the thorn bushes by Intombi Spruit.

Suddenly, there was a challenge. "Halt, who goes there!" "The Ladysmith Relief Column," and thereat from out of trenches and rifle pits artfully concealed in the scrub, a score of tattered men came running, cheering feebly and some of them crying. In the half-light they looked ghastly pale and thin. A poor, white-faced officer waved his helmet to and fro and laughed foolishly, and the tall, strong colonial horsemen, standing up in their stirrups, raised a loud resounding cheer, for then we knew we had reached the Ladysmith picket line.

Presently, we arranged ourselves in military order, Natal Carabineers and Imperial Light Horse riding two and two abreast, so that there might be no question about precedence; and with Gough, the youngest regimental commander in the army, and one of the best, at the head of the column, we forded the Klip River and rode into the town.

That night, I dined with Sir George White, who had held the town for four months against all comers, and was placed next to Hamilton, who won the fight at Elandslaagte and beat the Boers off Waggon Hill, and next but one to Hunter, whom everyone said was the finest man in the world. Never before had I sat in such brave company nor stood so close to a great event. As the war drives slowly to its close, more substantial triumphs, larger battles, wherein the enemy suffers heavier loss, the capture of towns, and the surrender of armies may mark its progress, But whatever victories the future may have in store, the defence and relief of Ladysmith, because they afford perhaps the most remarkable examples of national

tenacity and perseverance which our later history contains, will not be soon forgotten by the British people, whether at home or in the Colonies.

. . . . . .

On March 3 the relieving army made its triumphal entry into Ladysmith, and passing through the town camped on the plain beyond. The scene was solemn and stirring, and only the most phlegmatic were able to conceal their emotions. The streets were lined with the brave defenders, looking very smart and clean in their best clothes, but pale, thin and wasp-waisted—their belts several holes tighter than was necessary.

Before the little Town Hall, the tower of which sorely battered, yet unyielding, seemed to symbolise the spirit of the garrison, Sir George White and his staff sat on their skeleton horses. Opposite to them were drawn up the pipers of the Gordon Highlanders. The townsfolk, hollow-eyed but jubilant, crowded the pavement and the windows of the houses. Everyone who could find a flag had hung it out, but we needed no bright colours to raise our spirits.

At eleven o'clock precisely the relieving army began to march into the town. First of all rode Sir Redvers Buller with his headquarters staff and an escort of the Royal Dragoons. The infantry and artillery followed by brigades, but in front of all, as a special recognition of their devoted valour, marched the Dublin Fusiliers, few but proud.

Many of the soldiers, remembering their emerald island, had fastened sprigs of green to their helmets, and all marched with a swing that was wonderful to watch. Their Colonel and their four officers looked as happy as kings are thought to be. As the regiments passed Sir George White, the men recognised their former general, and, disdaining the rules of the service, waved their helmets and rifles and cheered him with intense enthusiasm. Some even broke from the ranks. Seeing this, the Gordon Highlanders began to cheer

the Dublins, and after that the noise of cheering was continual, every regiment as it passed giving and receiving fresh ovations. . . .

Walking through the streets it was difficult to see many signs of the bombardment. The tower of the Town Hall was smashed and chipped, several houses showed large holes in their walls, and heaps of broken brickwork lay here and there. But, on the whole, the impression produced was one of surprise that the Boers had done so little damage with the sixteen thousand shells they had fired during the siege.

On entering the houses, however, the effect was more apparent. In one the floor was ripped up, in another the daylight gleamed through the corrugated iron roof, and in some houses the inner walls had been completely destroyed and only heaps of rubbish lay on the floor.

The fortifications which the troops had built, though of a very strong and effective character, were neither imposing nor conspicuous; indeed, being composed of heaps of stone they were visible only as dark lines on the rugged kopjes, and, if the fame of the town were to depend on relics of the war, it would not long survive the siege.

But memories dwell among the tin houses and on the stony hills, that will keep the name of Ladysmith fresh and full of meaning in the hearts of our countrymen. Every trench, every mound has its own tale to tell, some of them sad but not one shameful.

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