

THE CAPE AND SOUTH AFRICA

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649309030

The Cape and South Africa by Anonymous

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ANONYMOUS

THE CAPE AND SOUTH AFRICA

THE CAPE
AND
SOUTH AFRICA.

REPRINTED, BY PERMISSION, FROM THE 'QUARTERLY REVIEW.'

LONDON:
EDWARD STANFORD, 55, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

—
1879.

St. John F. Edwards.



PREFACE.

THE following paper was contributed by the writer a few years ago to the 'Quarterly Review,' and he thinks that its republication at the present time may be useful, as containing much information respecting our possessions in South Africa and the Kaffir tribes, with the most formidable of which we are now at war. Little change has taken place in the social and political condition of South Africa since the article was written, and the territorial arrangements, with one or two important exceptions, remain the same.

The Zulu people had scarcely any appreciable political weight in South Africa at the time the article was written; but it would be useless to shut our eyes to the fact that the present king, Cetywayo, is the virtual ruler and champion of all the native races in South Africa; and that the conflict between civilisation and barbarism which has from time to time broken out and been suspended, has now assumed a very formidable aspect. The struggle, as we know from history, between these conflicting powers has not always resulted in favour of civilisation. The long series of disasters which the Roman Empire sustained in its contests with savage races, are the most humiliating in its history; and although the results were ultimately beneficial to the world, a similar

result cannot be predicted should the black races of Africa attain a predominance before they have been converted to Christianity and subjected to the humanising influence of Europe.

Of the origin and progress of the Zulu power little is known. The people are Kaffirs by blood, and their characteristics do not essentially differ from those of the other tribes. That there has been a steady pressure from the north upon the southern Kaffirs is highly probable, and is consistent with what we know of the migrations of savage tribes in former periods of the world. The Zulus undoubtedly came from the north, and under their chief Chaka are believed to have gradually dispersed or destroyed all the tribes from King George's River, to the north of Delagoa Bay, as far as Port Natal, a territory extending a thousand miles from north to south. They are the same people who in 1821-22 ravaged the whole southern district of Africa as far as the Portuguese settlement of Delagoa Bay. Supplied afterwards with firearms by American and British traders, and profiting by what he had seen of European discipline, Chaka brought his army to a high state of perfection. Like most barbarian chiefs, he was sanguinary and cruel, but not without some redeeming virtues. He received in the most friendly manner several Englishmen who visited his kraal in 1822, allowed them to settle in his territory near Port Natal, and supplied them with labour to enable them to cultivate their farms.

The government of the Zulus is a confederation

of clans under a sovereign head. The chiefs are nominally independent, but they acknowledge and implicitly obey the ruling chief, who is supposed, however, not to resolve upon any measure affecting the united tribes without calling them into consultation.

The Zulu military system is too well known to need any description. It is doubtless well adapted to the people and the country, and its officers are skilled in the strategy and tactics best suited for a savage race. Possessing absolute power over the persons and lives of his subjects, the king of the Zulus can enrol in his standing army the whole male population of his kingdom. The character of these people, and, so far as we know them, of most of the other South African tribes, is not, however, naturally warlike. Their highest wish is to till their mealie grounds and tend their cattle in peace. They are essentially domestic in their tastes, but their young men, subject to a general conscription, and trained from boyhood to arms, are debarred from the life most congenial to their disposition. An unnatural ferocity is imparted to them by the stern discipline to which they are subjected by their savage and sanguinary chief. His system of carefully examining the backs of the warriors after a battle is characteristic. If the slightest scratch is discovered on them it is regarded as a conclusive proof of cowardice, and those thus marked are immediately punished with death. These petty African kings regard their subjects pretty much in the same light as they do

their cattle. Sir Benjamin D'Urban, a former governor of the Cape, on remonstrating with Hintza, the chief of the Amakosa Kaffirs, for putting to death a great number of his people for having endeavoured to place themselves under British protection, he manifested the greatest astonishment and exclaimed, "What is all this about? Cannot I kill my dogs if I choose?"

The future peace of South Africa is clearly impossible while so formidable a power as the Zulu exists, ready at any moment to pour its hordes of warriors into our settlements. We cannot shrink from our responsibilities, but must accept them with unfaltering resolution. In the noble words of Sir Bartle Frere, who well knows the conditions upon which alone our supremacy can be maintained, "If every British subject should be driven out of Natal it would not make the slightest difference in the determination of the British people to put forth all their power for the suppression of the Zulu opposition to it." We must either retire from Africa baffled and disgraced, or put down a Power which openly boasts of its intention to expel us from the continent.

There are, unhappily, other complications than the Zulu war which threaten our power and influence in South Africa.

Even while the following pages were passing through the press information reached this country that a strong spirit of hostility had manifested itself in Griqualand and Basutoland, and that Le Bengula, the chief of the Amatebele Kaffirs, had

given notice to traders and all white men, with the exception of missionaries, to immediately leave the country,—a district to the north of Zululand rich in iron and gold. This chief is second only to Cetywayo in power and influence in the regions south of the Zambezi. He can muster ten thousand disciplined and well-armed warriors, and no doubt is entertained that a perfect understanding exists between him and Cetywayo. It is but too evident that a crisis, long foreseen in South Africa, has arrived which will tax severely the resources and energy of Great Britain. A gigantic task lies before the Imperial Government, in having to deal not only with races whose courage is unquestionable, but with armed masses incomparably more numerous than any that can be arrayed against them, together with the terrible power of concentrating and directing these masses at will, and in overwhelming strength, against their enemies. Should the Zulu power be crushed we shall even then have as our nearest neighbours the Amaswazi, a tribe of savages more numerous and more cruel than the Zulus, and behind them the vast reservoir of barbarism contained in the tropical and equatorial regions to the north.

The Dutch Boers and the Orange Free State, brooding over their wrongs, have sullenly resolved to afford no assistance to Great Britain in putting down Zulu pretensions, a danger equally menacing the whole European population of South Africa.

Some notice of the former Transvaal Republic and of the present Orange Free State will be found