

# LETTERS OF JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

EDITED BY RAYMOND M. BENNETT

*The letters of Froude on which this article, the third in a series of four, is based are in the Stanton Memorial Collection of Douglass College. The editor, Professor Bennett, has recently retired from the Department of English of Douglass College, Rutgers.*

**D**URING the summer of 1874, following the death of his second wife, James Anthony Froude resigned his post as editor of *Fraser's Magazine* to assume a quasi-official role in political affairs. In August he made the first of two voyages to South Africa as an agent of the Colonial Secretary, the Earl of Carnarvon, to sound out the possibilities of forming a confederation of the South African states. On the first of these visits Froude traveled throughout the Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange Free State, Kimberley, and the Transvaal, where his somewhat tactless speeches were unfavorably received. Despite his advice to Carnarvon, when he returned to London, that the States resented interference from Downing Street and that they should be allowed to take care of their own problems, the Secretary sent Froude back to Cape Town in June 1875, this time to serve at a conference to discuss federation. Writing to Queen Victoria on April 29, 1875, Lord Carnarvon pointed out that the advantages of such a union

will be in all respects very great, and much that is now in South Africa a cause of difficulty and even danger will, it may be hoped, be converted into a source of strength. Lord Carnarvon will only add that he has great confidence in the zeal and the judgment of Mr. Froude, not less than in his well-known ability, whilst his personal relations with many of the leading politicians at the Cape, and the other Colonies, are such that many asperities and jealousies may be smoothed by his diplomacy.<sup>1</sup>

Upon his arrival, however, Froude discovered that the Colonial Assembly, guided by John Charles Molteno, the Premier of the Cape, had already rejected the plans for a conference and that he could do

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria*, second series, 1862-1878; ed. by George Earle Buckle (2 vols.; New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1926), II, 387-88.

little more than deliver addresses favoring a confederation in the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State.

Speaking, for example, at a public meeting at Port Elizabeth, Natal, on September 9, 1875, Froude made clear some of the favorable results to be derived from a confederation. The time for small states had passed; for, he added, "small States make small men; the parish makes vestrymen; the town makes aldermen; the county small politicians; but it is the country which makes statesmen, and the greater the country the greater the statesmen." Moreover, in the great country the individuals enjoy an expansion of minds and of ideas, and with the increase of their self respect, they become wiser and better men. "In an enlarging and prosperous State," he continued, "everything goes ahead and improves. Trade extends; shipping increases; railways improve communication and increase the prosperity; everything goes forward with increasing velocity. The battle is to the strong, and the race is to the swift." He also explained that when her colonies were young and weak England had been forced to interfere; but in South Africa, he assured his audience, "the Imperial Government wishes to confine itself to the protection of the coast, leaving all internal affairs to be managed by the Colonists themselves . . . . Were the several States of South Africa united, each of the integral parts would have the management of its own affairs."<sup>2</sup>

When Froude returned to England late in 1875, his report to the Colonial Secretary was published as a Parliamentary Paper.<sup>3</sup> Here, as well as in his later lectures and writings, he expressed his opinions concerning the South African situation. He believed that the British Colonial policy had not always met this situation justly or wisely and that the acquisition of Griqualand West in 1871, following the discovery of diamonds there, "was an act, beyond all doubt, of the greatest impolicy," prompted by selfish interests. Recognizing also that under European control the various Bantu tribes who threatened Natal and the Transvaal had been seduced from their original virtues of honesty and truth, he nevertheless maintained that they should be kept in hand by force. The whole question, he concluded, "at issue between the British Government

<sup>2</sup> Port Elizabeth *Telegraph*, September 10, 1875, reprinted in *Parliamentary Papers*, 1876, LII (C. 1399), 33-35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 58-83.

and the two Republics cannot be any longer ignored. The frontier is undefined; the course of justice is disturbed. The protest of the Orange Free State has been four years before the world, and the Government at Bloemfontein insists that the demand for foreign ambition must either be allowed or must be superseded by direct negotiation, unless the British Government intends to rely merely on superiority of force."<sup>4</sup>

His experiences in South Africa gave Froude a highly favorable impression of the Boers, who, he felt, had been unfairly treated by England. Possessing a strong sense of independence, these people, he later wrote,

were rough, but they had rude virtues. . . . They are a very devout people, maintaining their churches and ministers with excessive liberality. Their houses being so far apart, they cannot send their children to school, and generally have tutors for them at home. Religious observances are attended to scrupulously in their households. The Boers of South Africa, of all human beings now on this planet, correspond nearest to Horace's description of the Roman peasant soldiers who defeated Pyrrhus and Hannibal. There alone you will find obedience to parents, as strict as among the ancient Sabines. . . . They rule after their own pattern. They forbid idleness and indiscriminate vagrancy.<sup>5</sup>

Lord Carnarvon depended upon Froude in his further attempts to form a federation. At a conference held in London in August 1876, he appointed Froude to represent Griqualand West, an appointment which that Colony would not acknowledge. Although Molteno came to London and talked with the Secretary about South African affairs, he refused to attend the conference. As a result, both the conference and the proposed confederation failed.

That Disraeli did not concur with his Colonial Secretary or with Froude about South Africa may be seen in his correspondence. As late as January 4, 1878, when in a letter to the Queen, he expressed his readiness to accept Carnarvon's resignation if it was offered, he referred to Froude as one of the Secretary's "literary parasites."<sup>6</sup> And on May 13, 1878, one of his private secretaries, Algernon Turner, echoed the Prime Minister's dissatisfaction with the

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>5</sup> Froude, *Oceana or England and Her Colonies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 42.

<sup>6</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria*, second series, II, 587.

troubles in the Cape, "commenced by Lord Carnarvon, who, he says, lived mainly in a coterie of Editors of Liberal papers who praised him and drank his claret, sending Mr. Froude, a desultory and theoretical littérateur to reform the Cape. . . ."

The following six letters, which are part of the Stanton Memorial Collection at the Douglass College Library, were written by Froude to General Gustave Paul Cluseret during the years 1876-1877. They primarily concern Froude's knowledge of affairs in South Africa and his efforts to obtain a position for Cluseret in the government of the Transvaal. Theodore Stanton published parts of Letters XVI, XVII, XVIII, XX, and XXI in "Some Froude Letters" in *Nation*, LXXIV (June 26, 1902), 506, and of Letter XIX in "Letters on Public Affairs" in the *Independent*, LIV (July 31, 1902), 1812.

## XVI

5 Onslow Gardens  
March 1 [1876]

Dear General Cluseret

I have absolutely no knowledge of military matters.<sup>8</sup> I shall however read your Essay with very great interest, and if I see opportunity I will submit it to the inspection of my friend Sir Garnet Wolseley, whose name you have doubtless heard of.<sup>9</sup>

I was not unmindful of you when I saw the President of the S A Republic.<sup>10</sup> He saw readily the great advantage which he might

<sup>7</sup> Quoted by Arthur Ponsonby, *Henry Ponsonby, Queen Victoria's Private Secretary* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1944), p. 330.

<sup>8</sup> This letter was printed in the *Nation*, LXXIV, 506.

<sup>9</sup> Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, afterwards Viscount Wolseley (1833-1913), was the celebrated field marshal whose active career included service in the Burmese and Crimean Wars and in China. He had command of troops on the Gold Coast in 1873, served as governor of Natal in 1879 and as Commander-in-Chief of the Expeditionary Force to Egypt in 1882. He was likewise the author of the *Life of the Duke of Marlborough*, the *Decline and Fall of Napoleon*, and the *Story of a Soldier's Life*.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas François Burgers was president of the South African Republic from July 1872 until 1877. He had been a clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church in Hanover, Cape Colony, where he had successfully vindicated himself against a charge of heresy brought against him because of his disbelief in a personal Devil. His education in Europe had provided him with fluency in the English language and with intellectual and progressive interests. Haggard maintained, however, that his mind was of a "peculiar volatile order," that he was "always soaring in the clouds," and that he lacked a practical point of view. H. Rider Haggard, *Cetewayo and His White Neighbours; or, Remarks on Recent Events in Zululand, Natal, and the Transvaal* (London: Trübner & Co., 1882), p. 88. He was, in Sir Bartle Frere's opinion, a "singular and evidently very clever man,

derive from your presence and assistance.<sup>11</sup> *His fear indeed was that your influence might become too great and that you might become a dangerous rival to himself.* Yet he bears you in mind, and I shall not be surprised if you hear from him. He has now returned to the Cape to resume his duties, and will make us acquainted before long with his future plans & purposes.

It will amuse you to hear that one of his immediate intentions is to carry a vote through his Volksraad to *close* the remarkable Gold Fields which have been discovered within his boundaries. He and his people disapprove of the influx of vagabonds from all parts of the world, who trouble the peace of the old fashioned Dutch Farmers.<sup>12</sup> Do not *publish* this information. I mention it merely to show you what strange things may be attempted in that part of the world, and the kind of man that you may have to deal with in case he applies to you.

In haste

faithfully yours

J A Froude

and has great powers of attracting and attaching followers, but I am disappointed in what I have seen since he arrived here [Cape Town]. There is, to my mind, more of the charlatan, and less of the poetical element in his inconsistency, than I had expected. . . ." *Letters of Queen Victoria*, second series, II, 553. Recognizing the value of the minerals in his state, Burgers visualized the importance of the Transvaal in a united South Africa. He advocated "equal rights for all civilised men" and reforms in state and schools. His plans for the construction of a railway from Delagoa Bay required his travels to England and the Continent in an endeavor to raise funds. Unsuccessful in London, he did obtain about a third of the necessary amount in Holland. In his ambitious attempts, Burgers had to face the strong opposition of Paul Kruger and of the extreme conservatism of the people. See also C. W. de Kieuret and A. P. Newton, "The Establishment of Responsible Government in Cape Colony," and J. H. Hofmeyr, "Political Development, 1872-1886," *South Africa, Rhodesia and the Protectorate*, ed. A. P. Newton and E. A. Benians, VIII, *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, 448 and 500; Stuart Cloete, *Against These Three* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. [c. 1945]), pp. 97-98.

<sup>11</sup> It would seem that Burgers was interested in Cluseret's services to combat Bantu disturbances. Lacking an army, he had hired gangs of filibusters, headed by the Prussian ex-officer and prospector Schlickmann and later by Abel Erasmus and Alfred Alyward, to attack and plunder the Kaffirs. Various atrocities attributed to these raiders brought threats of a Zulu war in 1876, but Froude minimized the seriousness of the relations between the Boers and the natives. John Martineau, *The Life and Correspondence of the Right Hon. Sir Bartle Frere* (2 vols.; London: John Murray, 1895), II, 176; Cecil Headlam "Failure of Confederation," *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, VIII, 463; Ensor, *England, 1870-1914*, pp. 58-59; Froude, *Oceana*, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup> In the early seventies the discovery of auriferous reefs in the Zoutpansberg district drew prospectors to the northern part of the Transvaal, but for several years the number was not great. For an account of the Boers's attitude toward these Uitlanders who were seeking gold, see Cloete, *Against These Three*, pp. 2-3.

## XVII

5 Onslow Gardens  
London

March 11 [1876]

Dear General Cluseret

If you really care about this South African affair I will write what you say to the President & I dare say something may be arranged.<sup>13</sup> But I gather from your letter that you are indifferent about it. Now if you think of returning so soon to Europe would it be worth your while to undertake a work in itself of so trivial a character. The *money* which the S A Republic would offer would be very slight.<sup>14</sup> The only adequate reward which so poor a state could offer would be land and permanent office in the Republic. The Dutch farmers are poor themselves. They spend little in their own families and do not understand that one can need more. It is possible that if the President carries out his threat of closing the gold fields there may be fighting there. There are several hundred English American and Australian diggers at work there making large profits and they will not go out without a struggle. In that case the President will himself be anxious for your assistance. Let him ask for it himself and you can make your own terms.

But I trust that the turn of affairs in France will soon open a way for your return to employment and distinction in your own country, and you will cease to seek for these remote & Secondary methods of occupying your talents.

You are good enough to wish to see what I have written about South Africa. It is merely a *long report* submitted officially to Parliament. It is published in a collection of Papers on the South African Conference laid on the Table of the House by the Colonial Secretary and is scarcely worth your looking at.<sup>15</sup> I was obliged to appeal to the

<sup>13</sup> The first two and one-half paragraphs of this letter were published in the *Nation*, LXXIV, 506, where they are incorrectly dated 1878.

<sup>14</sup> The filibusters received no regular pay from the Government but took cattle and land from the natives when they plundered the kraals. Burgers was constantly faced with a depleted treasury; at the time of the annexation of the Transvaal it contained only 12s. 6d. Ensor, *England, 1870-1914*, p. 59; Martineau, *Sir Bartle Frere*, II, 176.

<sup>15</sup> This is the Report by J. A. Froude, *Parl. Pap.* 1876, LII (C. 1399), 58 sq. The Secretary of State for Colonies was Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, the fourth Earl of Carnarvon (1831-1890), who held this position in 1866-68 and 1874-78.

*people* of the Colony against the Colonial politicians & minister, and I made them very angry with me. I am supposed *here* to have been out of order, but to have been essentially right, and my eccentricities will probably be forgiven. I have mislaid your last letter and have thus lost the address to which you desired your MS to be sent. I therefore return it to yourself. Frankly I have read but little of it. I must wait and Sir Garnet Wolseley must wait till we can see it in *print*. I am greatly occupied just now with a variety of work<sup>16</sup> and I really am without leisure to pay the attention which my general ignorance of the subject would impose upon me, if I was to make a real effort to understand what you have to tell us. Were I merely to read through your MS., I could make nothing of it. I should have to study it and study other works along with it, or I could form no opinion which it would not be an impertinence to offer you. You are aware I believe that I no longer edit the magazine. I gave it up when I went for the first time to the Cape.

Believe me  
Sincerely yours  
J A Froude

I cannot yet tell you who Aylward is—beyond my knowledge that he was a Fenian Head Centre and that he quailed at the mention of your name.<sup>17</sup>

From what I hear of his present proceedings he will not rest I think till he has himself hanged. If he was in Louis Blanc's model Republic he would still be a rebel being as his nature a child of Anarchy and revolt.

If you come to London remember that you are to pay me a visit. I shall be happy to offer you a room in my house.

<sup>16</sup> In addition to his work for Lord Carnarvon, Froude, who had recently been appointed a member of the Scottish Universities Commission, was required to make frequent trips to Edinburgh.

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Aylward, a captain in the Lydenberg Volunteer Corps, succeeded Schlichmann as Commandant of the Transvaal Republic. He was the author of *The Transvaal of To-day* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1878), and of "Africa and the Empire," *Fortnightly*, III (April 1882), 30-74. In a dispatch (C.1776, p. 11) to Lord Carnarvon of December 18, 1876, Sir Henry Barkly wrote that Aylward had boasted of participating in Fenian activities at Manchester and Clerkenwell. He likewise questioned whether the Government of the South African Republic could stop the atrocities committed by the filibusters. Martineau, *Sir Bartle Frere*, II, 176, fn.

## XVIII

5 Onslow Gardens

London, August 11 [1876]

Dear General Cluseret

I am sorry that the negotiation with the Transvaal Republic has led to nothing.<sup>18</sup> Yet perhaps you are as well out of the affair as in it. The President who seemed inclined to work with England when he was here is now pursuing a policy of his own from which I do not anticipate any good results.<sup>19</sup> He has provoked a war with the natives which all the *English* settlers in the country disapprove.<sup>20</sup> I feel uncertain whether without their help he will succeed in what he has undertaken and if he is defeated and there is a general rising of the native independent chiefs against him, we may be obliged to interfere. I wish the President well, and for that reason I should have been glad could he have had such efficient help as yours at his side; but he is rash confident and enthusiastic, and I have lived long enough to distrust enthusiasm except in those rare cases where there is sufficient dry fuel to kindle an irresistible fire.

You are no doubt impatient of inactivity,<sup>21</sup> but for your own sake I shall be sorry also to hear of your joining the Turks.<sup>22</sup> Turkey is a falling cause. England will not again support the Crescent against the Russians unless with Germany at our side. Hereafter perhaps when the Turkish Empire dissolves there may be a quarrel over the spoils, but the time is not come. Russia will not begin, and will not again run the risk of a war against a European Coalition.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> This letter was printed in the *Nation*, LXXIV, 506.

<sup>19</sup> Burgers attempted to promote alliances with Belgium, Portugal, and Germany following his failure to obtain a British loan for the Delagoa railway. Headlam, *Cambridge History of the British Empire*, VIII, 464-65.

<sup>20</sup> Because of the occupation of disputed territory, Burgers led a commando of Boers and Swazis against Sekukuni, chief of the Basutos. After a defeat on August 2, Burgers's forces were put to rout. H. Rider Haggard, *A History of the Transvaal* (New York: New Amsterdam Book Co.; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1900), pp. 31-34.

<sup>21</sup> Writing to Lady Derby on September 22, 1876, Froude said he had just received a letter from Cluseret, who had complained, "*J'ai la nostalgie de la poudre.*" Paul, *Froude*, p. 280.

<sup>22</sup> Later, however, Cluseret did join the Turkish forces in the war with Russia, 1877-78.

<sup>23</sup> The Eastern Question, an ultimate result of the Treaty of Paris, had become increasingly serious since August 1875, when Hercegovina and Bosnia, aided by Serbia and Montenegro, attempted to throw off Turkish and Mohammedan control. The Andrassy Note, which set forth a series of reforms for the Balkan States drawn up by the



But you must judge for yourself.

Yours ever-sincerely  
J. A Froude

XIX

5 Onslow Gardens

November 19 [1876]

Dear General Cluseret

You have seen an imperfect account of my Address.<sup>24</sup> I shall not

*Dreikaiserbund* and approved by France and England, was presented to Turkey in January 1876. Although the Porte, banking on British support, expressed a willingness to meet the demands, hostilities were intensified in May with the murder of the French and Prussian consuls at Salonika. Later that month Sultan Abdul Aziz was deposed and killed, and Midhat Pasha became the virtual ruler. In June an insurrection in Bulgaria ended with the most shocking massacres committed by the Turks. And on July 2, when Servia and Montenegro entered the war, thousands of Russian volunteers, who felt the kinship of race and religion with the Slavs, joined forces against the Turks.

Not until this time did the British regard the Balkan difficulties as being especially critical, and even then the Government assumed a hands-off policy. When matters became acute, England and the Ministry itself were divided in their sympathies. The Queen and Disraeli, recognizing the value of Turkish friendship in the safe conduct of traffic to India through the Suez Canal and fearing a possible increase of Russian power, favored the Porte. But Secretaries Derby, Salisbury, and Carnarvon and the liberals headed by Gladstone were opposed to entering a war on the side of Turkey. Writing to Lady Derby in September 1876, Froude stated his opposition to war and his suspicion that Gladstone and his followers were stirring up anti-Turkish sentiment in order to force an election and the possible resignation of the Ministry. Such action, he added, might in "retribution for the Crimean War, bring the Russians to Constantinople." Later in the year, however, Froude, following Carlyle, sided with Russia and favored Bismarck's serving as an arbitrator of the Russo-Turkish question. Paul, *Froude*, pp. 279-80.

<sup>24</sup> This letter, except for a few minor omissions, was printed in the *Independent*, LIV, 1812. Froude's address, "The Uses of the Landed Gentry," was delivered at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, November 3, 1876 and published in *Fraser's*, XIV (December 1876), 671-85. Froude began his address by admitting the use of the gentry to the community to be "purely a philosophical one." However much some people desired a change in the apportionment of land, this distribution in a free country depended "on economical laws as absolute as the law of gravity." And as long as England continued to be free, the landed gentry were "as fixed a part of it as the planets of the solar system." Nearly one-third of the whole area of Great Britain, he pointed out, was in or about large cities; this land fell into the hands of rich speculators who sub-divided it and sold it for building sites and in this way multiplied the holdings of small proprietors. But the reverse was true in the country where, agricultural land paying only two per cent of the value, the yeomen found it advantageous to rent from some one else. Consequently he believed this vague desire to see a "peasant proprietary" established in England was "a mere dream." A time might come, however, when industry and progress would slacken in England and when the English would no longer "struggle for a first place among the nations"; then, he predicted, "the great estates would dissolve and the soil would again be divided among unambitious agricultural freeholders." But such a prospect was not very disturbing. Like petty monarchs, the great

be surprised if you still fail to catch my meaning. England is not France and cannot be. As long as two thirds of our people are employed in trade and manufacture so shall men have a peasant proprietary. The land will be owned by the rich, and the only question is whether it shall be owned by rich men who wish and intend to make money out of it and will therefore grind the faces of the poor, or by our old families who are governed by other objects and other traditions. In this country and in yours too (look even at Gambetta)<sup>25</sup> the effort of the revolution hitherto has only been to substitute a plutocracy of the *middle classes* for an aristocracy of the higher, and the latter is the better of the two. We have not virtue enough for a true Republic, the Gods save us from a false one in which only money will rule.

As to the Foreign position, the state of things among us is curious. The Democrats are now in favour of Russia and the Whig and Tory politicians are in favour of Turkey. The Americans I fancy are unanimous for Russia. You will be fighting against Fate if you take service under the Porte. If the present ministry attempt to bring us into war with Russia they will be out of office in 6 months and Mr Gladstone will come back and bring with him a Russian alliance. I am confident that I tell you the truth.<sup>26</sup>

faithfully yours  
J A Froude

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landlords were "gradually becoming restricted by custom," and "while powerful for good, were comparatively powerless to do any harm." Should the great landlords prove extravagant or incompetent, bankruptcy would result. Unlike those in Ireland, the English landed gentry were not alien in blood and religion and were not indifferent to their tenants' welfare. They kept their cottages, farm buildings, and fences in repair, and they built schools and churches. They were, in Froude's opinion, "enduring witnesses of past worth and good work, and until they forfeited our esteem by demerits of their own they deserved to be respected and honoured." "Mr. Froude on Landed Gentry," *The Times*, November 7, 1876, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Gambetta believed, as he stated in a letter written April 24, 1870, the "Democratic party should take an attitude of moderation," and to realize that "Democracy meant security for all material interests, respect for property, guarantee of all rights; and that, while it sought to ameliorate and moralise those who were disinherited of fortune and intelligence, it meant neither loss nor peril to those who were privileged with them." To him the Third Republic was only an essential prerequisite to the solution of social and political problems, rather than the actual solution itself. Equality he viewed as the abolition of everything that remained of old castes and privileges, and the establishment of political rights, civil "functions, education, and property legally open and accessible to all." See "Léon Michel Gambetta," *Fraser's*, XXIV (1881), 28-41.

<sup>26</sup> Following the cessation of action during September, hostilities in the Balkans were

## XX

5, Onslow Gardens, S.W.

Jan 24 [1877]<sup>27</sup>

Dear General Cluseret

I have left your letter long unanswered. I made enquiries in your behalf, and waited till I had something definite to say. I could do little with the English journals, but there appears to be a chance with the New York Herald or the New York Tribune.

I have seen the Editor of the Herald (or one of his principal managers of it) and have strongly recommended you. I understand from him that he has been himself in communication with you. Failing this my American friends mean to apply to the Tribune & I hope have already done so.

The plot thickens—What next?<sup>28</sup> The Conservatives are Turk in this country—the Liberals are Russian. The confusion of partners & principles beats anything that I can recollect. The cloud will break in a thunderstorm before long. My own eyes are fixed on Bismarck, who alone, I suppose, in Europe, clearly knows his own mind. Many English officers will take service with the Turk, but my own conviction remains unchanged that the Turk is a lost cause.<sup>29</sup> Bismarck

resumed in October, but even with Russian support the Servians were beaten back at Djunis, and the capture of Belgrade seemed imminent. Late in October Turkey accepted the Russian proposal for a two-month's armistice. With faith in Alexander II's statement that Russia did not desire territorial aggrandisement and that she would enter the war only if the Porte refuse to grant the reforms advocated for the Slavic States, Lord Derby in November invited the European nations to confer in Constantinople in December to consider an amicable settlement of the Balkan question. Yet at this same time Disraeli, speaking at the Guildhall Banquet, boasted that England was ably prepared for war and that if she were to enter "into conflict in a righteous cause . . . she enters into a campaign which will not terminate till right is done."

<sup>27</sup> Note in Stanton's handwriting: "The date is between the close of the Servian-Turkish war & the outbreak of the more formidable Russian-Turkish conflict, which quickly followed."

<sup>28</sup> The remainder of this letter was published in the *Nation*, LXXIV, 506.

<sup>29</sup> Froude later expressed a similar view to Skelton: "What a nice temper we all are getting in, and how delightfully the cards are shuffled!—Bradlaugh and Liddon shaking hands on one side, and Lord Beaconsfield and General Cluseret on the other. I have letters from the latter (who is now in Turkey) on the text 'il faut humilier le Russe' which explains the tenderness with which the 'General' [Captain Bruges] is treated in *Lothair*. . . ." Skelton, *Table-Talk of Shirley*, p. 157. By this time Froude had publically acknowledged his pro-Russian sympathy. On December 8, 1876, he had attended a demonstration at St. James Hall, on which occasion Gladstone, the Duke of Westminster, Canon Liddon and others had denounced the Turks and praised the Russians. Also he wrote a preface for Mme. Olga Novikoff's book *Is Russia Wrong?*

privately advises us to seize Egypt, which we shall not do. As a nation we shall do nothing, and by attempting to stand still on slippery ice we shall make a helpless exhibition of ourselves.<sup>30</sup>

Is France effaced that she has no word to speak at such a time?

Ever sincerely yours  
J A Froude

XXI

5, Onslow Gardens, S.W.  
March 2 [1877]

Dear General Cluseret

I return M. Tromp's letter.<sup>31</sup> I cannot yet speak with certainty,

<sup>30</sup> The financial crises in Turkey and Egypt and the purchase of the Khedive Ismail's shares in the Suez Canal increased England's concern for Egypt. When Ismail declared a moratorium on his debts in April 1876 and, urged by France, set up the *Caisse de la Dette publique*, England and France sent delegates to Egypt to investigate and then formed a Dual Control. Ensor, *England, 1870-1914*, p. 77. Fearing the consequence of this Anglo-French union, Bismarck repeatedly advised the British to annex Egypt and the French to take Tunis. His motives for these proposals allegedly were to strain France's relations with England and Italy.

The correspondence between the German Crown Princess and her mother, Queen Victoria, sheds light on the positions taken by the two countries. On July 11, 1877, the Crown Princess wrote that England's acquiring a "firm footing in Egypt" would be "an essential, wise, useful thing," an opportunity that should not be missed in Victoria's reign. She also denied that Bismarck had any "arrière-pensée" in urging England to take Egypt, other than his belief that "a strong England" would be of "great use in Europe." *Letters of Queen Victoria*, second series, II, 546. Returning this letter to the Queen, Disraeli suspected that "It might have been dictated by Prince Bismarck." And he tactfully added: "If the Queen of England wishes to undertake the government of Egypt, her Majesty does not require the suggestion, or permission, of Prince Bismarck." When she replied to her daughter on July 17, Victoria echoed Disraeli's views and suspicions. Seizing Egypt, she explained, would be both "a wanton aggression" and "a great slap in the face of France," which Bismarck would welcome. "It is not our custom," she maintained, "to annex countries (as it is in some others) unless we are obliged, and forced to do so, as in the case of the Transvaal Republic." But, the Queen concluded, "What we intend to do, we shall do without Prince Bismarck's permission. . . ." *Ibid.*, II, 549-50.

Notwithstanding this position of the Government, a Franco-British Condominium was instituted in 1878 to further needed reforms in Egyptian finances. The recklessly extravagant Ismail was soon deposed and his son Tewfik made Khedive. The next three years were marked by mutiny in the Egyptian army and nationalist rioting led by Arabi Pasha. To prevent further bloodshed and destruction, France and England sent their fleets to Alexandria, and in September 1882 Sir Garnet Wolseley succeeded in defeating Arabi and his nationalists. It was then that Gladstone's Government felt "obliged and forced" to annex Egypt; France, carrying out Disraeli's advice at the Congress of Berlin, had taken over Tunis in 1881. Bismarck's endeavors to alienate France from England and Italy were then realized.

<sup>31</sup> Theodoor M. Tromp was the author of *Herinneringen uit Zuit-Afrika, ten tijde*

but I believe that the time is passed when you could have been of use in the Transvaal. Had the President accepted your services when I recommended him to employ you the Republic would now have been triumphant and secure of independence. His bad success has alienated his people, the majority of whom now desire to throw themselves on British protection, of course under the British flag.<sup>32</sup> The Zulu King Cetewayo now threatens them with war and is only prevented from invading them by fear of the British Government. Disordered and divided as the Boers are, Cetewayo who could send 50000 well armed men against them, could burn & plunder the whole country.<sup>33</sup> Though I think that it will be better for the South African states to be united under some common authority I am always sorry to see a Free State lose its autonomy, and if the President had accepted your help the Republic would have been able to enter the Union on more favourable terms.<sup>34</sup> But it is now too late. I would

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*der Annexatie van de Transvaal* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1879). The remainder of this paragraph was printed in the *Nation*, LXXIV, 506.

<sup>32</sup> Burgers's ideas of railways, taxes, loans from foreign countries, as well as his religious views, had not been popular in the Transvaal, and his reelection in 1877 did not seem assured. But contrary to Froude's opinion stated here, Cloete asserts that only "the foreigners [the English] and a small proportion of town Boers thought that the acceptance of British rule would solve their difficulties which they saw in terms of economics rather than in those of freedom." *Against These Three*, p. 101.

<sup>33</sup> "Handsome, aggressive, highly intelligent, and utterly ruthless," Cetewayo was installed as king in 1872, although his power throughout his father's reign had been virtually absolute. When he was crowned by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, British minister for native affairs in Natal, he promised to prohibit indiscriminate bloodshed, but he soon became a real threat to South African peace. He had the support of a well-drilled army of 40,000 impis who were pledged to celibacy until they had "washed their spears" in enemies' blood. It was feared in 1876 that Cetewayo would be joined by the Bantu chief Sekukuni in raids against Natal and the Transvaal in retaliation for the Boers' system of apprenticeship of kaffir children, which was in reality a form of slavery, and against the pillage by Burgers's filibusters. Ensor, *England, 1870-1914*, pp. 58-59; Headlam, *Cambridge History of the British Empire*, VIII, 472-73; see also Haggard, *Cetewayo and His White Neighbours*, ch.ii.

<sup>34</sup> As the conditions in the Republic failed to improve, in the spring of 1877 Lord Carnarvon sent Shepstone to consult with Burgers about a confederation and "with discretion to arrange bringing the country under the British flag." He found the President and his faction agreeable to a plan for annexation. After a long conference, the Republic was annexed by the British on April 12, 1877—an act violating the Sand River Convention of 1852. Ensor, *England, 1870-1914*, p. 59. In his *Oceana* Froude repeated his opposition to this step. Had England given financial aid to the Transvaal, had she been more friendly, and had she granted some boundary concessions, the Republic could have been saved, and the Dutch would have forgotten their grievances. But Lord Carnarvon considered the acquisition as a political coup, one that reflected his own astuteness. He had been led to believe that the Transvaal farmers no longer wanted political independence but desired annexation. Yet Froude had advised him otherwise,

not wish to see you go there, for you would have no field open to you in which to distinguish yourself. How often have those fatal words "Too late" interfered with the best intended enterprises.

Aylward is a mere fool, one of the Irish Fenian leaders of whom you have already had experience. I am sorry for my mistake about the New York Herald, but it seems at last really doubtful whether there will be a war at all. I will bear you in mind if any fresh opportunity appears.

Yours truly

J A Froude

This letter concludes those in the Stanton Collection written by Froude to General Cluseret. In the remaining eight letters which were addressed to Theodore Stanton, however, Froude frequently mentioned Cluseret's name and inquired about his activities.

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and had insisted that declaring the South African Republic as British territory would only aggravate the old bitterness. The Secretary for the Colonies chose, nevertheless, to follow the counsel of those who advocated the annexation. *Op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.