

within their power to crumple up the army of England, and to beat all the British back into the sea, the powerful and able Secocœni, with his brave if brutal followers, fought to the last gasp with strong and unabated vigour.

"This struggle," says Mr. Rider Haggard, "was, during the long period preceding the final attack, carried on with great courage and ability by Major Clarke, R.A., C.M.G., whose force at the best of times only consisted of two hundred volunteers and a hundred Zulus. With this small body of men he contrived, however, to keep Secocœni in check, and to take some important strongholds. It was marked also by some striking acts of individual bravery, of which one, performed by Major Clarke himself, whose reputation for cool courage and presence of mind in danger is unsurpassed in South Africa, is worthy of notice—one which, had public attention been more concentrated on the Secocœni War, would doubtless have won him the Victoria Cross.

"On one occasion, on visiting one of the outlying forts, he found that a party of hostile natives, who were coming down to the fort on the previous day with a flag of truce, had been accidentally fired on and had at once retreated.

"As his system in native warfare was always to try to inspire his enemy with perfect faith in the honour of Englishmen, and their contempt of all tricks and treachery even towards a foe, he was very angry at this occurrence, and at once, unarmed and unattended,