

Akermann
May 27-78

J. W. Akermann
May 27. 1878



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Mtburg Natal
27 May 1878

J. W. Chesson Esq

My dear Sir

I cut out of the "Mercury" a little slip which will I think amuse you. In it you will see that Sir J. S. family are not at all speeded. — Many thanks for the pamphlets you send me. The best to hand is the letter of Adams.

Really I do hope the British Parliament will second Sir Arthur's efforts though I fear the war feeling about Russia may interfere much with any other subject of magnitude. England is going to great expense just now, in S Africa

she has placed her a great man (the
B. Free) & it will be interesting to see
what she will do with these native social
customs so degrading to the race, though as
"Histoire" says so profitable to certain
Whites. I shall eagerly watch the issue
of Mr McArthur's action. Write me when
you can:-

A great struggle (privately) going on here just
now. The Stephens are raising much alarm
at the reduction of Sir J.'s powers to those
of a mere Administrator, & withdrawal of his
power to settle the Zulu boundary quarrel.
So they are reported to be trying to punish
Sir A. Bulwer (who at the direction of the
High Commissioner recently appointed a Commission
of enquiry &c) by discrediting him &
circulating reports that if war now comes
Natal will be the cause of it. Some go so
far as to say that this family (like Samson
of old) will not fall unless they pull
down the house with them; and even assert
something like instigation of the Zulus to proceed
to war.

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For my own part I believe this family
from the eldest to the youngest to be ca-
-pable of anything, therefore nothing would
surprise me. Every day adds to my
conviction that S. E. Africa will never
materially improve its status so long as this
family retains its power. - I have long
asserted this & believe it more & more. The
Whole Press of the Colony, through the son's
influence, in the shape perhaps of Mortgage Bonds
(then Cheats & money) or old associations with
Executive control seems to me suborned
to misrepresent public affairs in favour of
Sir J. S. I never witnessed a more
complete demoralisation of a Press, & this is
saying much after my experience as a
contributor to the London Press. - As far as
Colway is concerned he does what he can to
insult the emissaries of Sir J. S. Why is this?
My belief is that Sir J. S. has broken faith
somehow with him, as he does with any one
after they cease to subserve his purpose, &
hence this undeniable hostility. Of course it
is impossible to demonstrate ^{in quite a case} by the rules of evidence
what has taken place orally between these two.

yet if Sir J. S. did, as Pragera asserts
direct the assembling of the Zulu army to use
against the J. V. Boers. & afterwards refused to
give all the land Citways asks this is - form
a potent reason for hostility. The Natal Commission
was received by the Zulus with every politeness. But
H. Shepstone - the J. Van Riey for N.A., they refused
to greet even in presence of the Commission.
Amongst thinking men here the belief gains
ground that Pragera's statement has much
of truth in it. -

At last I have read Trullips' book & find how
appropriate - was my caution to you not to give
heed to it. - To write such a book is simple
impudence. Unfortunately it influences English
minds. - I was purposing to write a review
upon it - but have written so many papers for
the English Press without receiving the ordinary
attention of life that I hesitate to take the
trouble. Its pleasing style renders its perversion
the more dangerous. -

The oppressive summer is ended at last. Not
much of local news to communicate.

With kind regards

believe me

Yours very truly

John Shepstone