IN MATABELELAND.*

Lieutenant-Colonel Plumer's contribution to the literature which has been published concerning the recent rising and suppression of the Matabele, if not a work of a very serious nature, is at any rate instructive to those whose duty it is to make themselves acquainted with the methods and weapons of native warfare in South Africa. Like others who have written on the same subject, he admits that the Matabele had not hitherto been conquered, but were merely awaiting the opportunity to rise, an opportunity which was given them by the absence of the bulk of the police, who by one of those curious mistakes in our South African policy were suddenly despatched to England at the height of the unrest, and left to carry out the consideration of the serious consequences such a step might possibly ensue. Colonel Plumer, for the inside information he has afforded us as to the jealousies created the tribute of cattle fixed as a war indemnity after Dr. Jameson's defeat of Lobengula and the lording over the native behaviour of the native police the danger might have been averted, although there is no doubt that the undercurrent, and the stringent measures adopted to bring about its suppression, greatly aggravated the Matabele, and helped to stir up feelings of animosity against their white rulers, feelings which were finally fanned into a flame by the conceit of the Mlimos, or witch doctors, who urged the natives to rebel as soon as the result of the Jameson fiasco became known in Rhodesia. To Colonel Plumer was entrusted the task of raising and equipping at Mafeking a force of five hundred mounted men, with the double object of escorting mails, ammunition, and food supply to Buluwayo and of operating against the insurgents in Matabeleland. Naturally, the writer lays much to say about the plan of organization, which, of course, included the selection of the men and the purchase of suitable horses, a task which was simplified by the generosity of the British South Africa Company, who not only defrayed all expenditure, but avoided the close-pairing economy so commonly characteristic of Government in similar circumstances. The relief corps was ultimately raised by direction of the High Commissioner at Cape Town, and full feeding and