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A  
GEOGRAPHICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL  
DESCRIPTION  
OF THE  
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

BY  
O. F. MENTZEL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL GERMAN

BY  
G. V. MARAIS, M.A., B.Sc.,  
*Librarian,*

AND  
DR. J. HOGE,  
*Lecturer in German, University of Stellenbosch.*

REVISED AND EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
AND FOOTNOTES

BY  
H. J. MANDELBROTE, M.A., LL.B.,  
*Professor of History, University of Cape Town.*

PART THREE  
(Volume II of the German Edition).

THE VAN RIEBEECK SOCIETY  
CAPE TOWN.

1944.



A COMPLETE AND AUTHENTIC  
GEOGRAPHICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION  
OF THE FAMOUS AND (ALL THINGS CONSIDERED)

REMARKABLE

# AFRICAN CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

*Wherein is described clearly and accurately  
the rural parts according to their division  
into districts, mountains and rivers; the  
Christian inhabitants and their customs;  
the agronomy and viticulture, stock  
farming, the ordinary expeditions,  
game hunting and finally also  
the aborigines, namely the  
Hottentots, besides many  
other lately discovered  
curiosities.*

BY

O. F. MENTZEL.

GLOGAU  
CHRISTIAN FRIEDRICH GÜNTHER

1787.

*(Title of Volume II of the original edition).*



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FOR THE  
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2. Mentzel, O. F.—Life at the Cape in the mid-eighteenth century; being the biography of Rudolph Siegfried Alleman, Captain of the Military Forces at the Cape of Good Hope. Translated from the German by Miss M. Greenlees, M.A. 1919. *Out of print.*
3. De Mist, J. A.—Memorandum containing recommendations for the form and administration of government at the Cape of Good Hope, with an English version by Miss K. M. Jeffreys, B.A., and a preface by S. F. N. Gie, Ph.D. 1920. *Out of print.*
4. Mentzel, O. F.—A geographical-topographical description of the Cape of Good Hope. Translated from the German by H. J. Mandelbrote, M.A., LL.B. Part I. 1921. *Out of print.*
5. Collectanea, Vol I.—With a preface by C. Graham Botha. 1924 [*Contains* Descriptions of the Cape by Ovington, 1693, Beeckman, 1715, Dampier, 1691; Rogers' Description of Natal, c. 1696; Cnoll's Dagregister van een reis naar het Warme Bad, with an English transl.: Dagverhaal wegens de reis naar 't Warme Water, opgesteld door Willem van Putten, c. 1710, with an English transl.; Letter dated 1708 from John Maxwell to Rev. Dr. Harris; Instructien gedateerd 30 Maart 1699 door Gouverneur Simon van der Stel; Instructien gedateerd 19 April 1708 door Commissaris Cornelis Joan Simons.] *Out of print.*
6. Mentzel, O. F.—A geographical-topographical description of the Cape of Good Hope. Translated from the German by H. J. Mandelbrote, M.A., LL.B. Part II. 1924. *Out of print.*
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10. 11. Lichtenstein, Henry,—Travels in Southern Africa in the years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806; by Henry Lichtenstein. Translated from the original German by Anne Plumtre. London, 1812—1815. 2 Vols. 1928—1930. Price to members, 12s. each.
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24. M. D. Teenstra.—De Vruchten Mijner Werkzaamheden, gedurende mijne reize over de Kaap de Goede Hoop, naar Java en terug, over St. Helena, naar de Nederlanden, 1830. Uitgegee en Toegelig met inleiding en Verklarende Aantekeninge deur F. C. L. Bosman, M.A., Litt. D.; met Taalkundige Beskouing deur Prof. Dr. J. L. M. Franken, Verkorte Weergawe in Engels deur P. J. Smuts, M.A., Kaarte en Afbeeldings. 1943. Prys aan lede, 12s.
25. Mentzel, O. F.—A geographical-topographical description of the Cape of Good Hope. Translated from the German by G. V. Marais, M.A., and Dr. J. Hoge; revised and edited with an introduction and footnotes by Prof. H. J. Mandelbrote, M.A., LL.B. Part III. 1944. Price to members 12s.

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## Foreword.

In the Introduction to Part II of the Van Riebeeck Society translation of Volume I of Mentzel's *Beschreibung des Vorgebirges der Guten Hoffnung* the hope was expressed that a translation of Volume II would appear as Part III 'next year'. For various reasons this has not been realised until twenty years after. The present translation has been carried out with care and accuracy by Mr. G. V. Marais, Librarian, and Dr. J. Hoge, Lecturer in German, of the University of Stellenbosch. The editor has, however, deemed it desirable to revise the translation primarily with the object of bringing the style more in conformity with that of Parts I and II which had been translated by himself.

The determination of the spelling of proper names has occasioned some difficulty. As is well-known, the contemporary writers used variable spellings of the same name, sometimes on the same page, and Mentzel is no exception to this practice. The editor has attempted to devise some uniform rules, though not always with success.

Place names of Dutch origin, for which there are recognised English forms in established use have been spelt in that way, e.g. Salt River for Zout Rivier, Cape Town for Kaapstad. Otherwise the Dutch form in contemporary usage was given e.g. Groote Rivier (for Orange River), Piquetberg, Zwartland, etc., Oliphants Rivier has been a problem. Mentzel writes *Elephanten-Flusse*, *Oliphants Rivier* and *Olifants Rivier* indiscriminately. The writer discarded the Anglicised form *Elephant* as not properly naturalised, but good precedents may be cited for either of the latter two spellings. Our main authorities on South African place names are in disagreement. Dr. C. Graham Botha uses *Oliphants* while the Rev. Charles Pettman prefers *Olifants*. On Barrow's and Lichtenstein's maps this river is also described as *Olifants*. It seems clear that both forms are admissible. Having to make a choice, however, the editor has after due consideration determined on *Oliphants*. This is the spelling on Sparrman's map and in the version of Brink's Journal given by Allamand and Klockner whom Mentzel followed closely. It seemed more in keeping with late eighteenth century usage.

Names of persons have sometimes been given in two forms, especially where Mentzel adopted a Teutonised spelling e.g. Kluthe for Cloete. Tribal names and other words of Hottentot or Bantu origin have been reproduced in Mentzel's spelling for historical interest, since no standard forms existed for these in the eighteenth century.

As Mentzel's *Description* is largely geographical and topographical it has been decided to reproduce two maps which he frequently consulted. The first of these, taken from the German translation of de la Caille's *Voyage au Cap de Bonne-Espérance*, published at Oldenburg, 1778, is illustrative of chapters 2 to 5; the other from the English translation of Sparrman's *Voyage*, London, 1785, was Mentzel's guide (in the German edition, published at Berlin in the previous year) for the district of Swellendam and the North-Eastern frontier.

For the footnotes, save where a specific source is given, the editor is solely responsible. In the preparation of these, valuable assistance was obtained from a number of persons and the editor gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness in particular to: Dr. E. E. Mossop for information on place names and on the Hottentot tribes mentioned in the Journal relating to Hop's expedition. To Professor I. Schapera who has written a critical note on chapter 14 relating to the Hottentots. To Dr. J. Hoge who has supplied him with some biographical information. To Dr. P. J. Venter and Miss M. K. Jeffreys of the Cape Archives, and to Dr. H. Hinderks and Miss E. Drus of the University of Cape Town. Mr. I. M. Murray was mainly responsible for the preparation of the Index. The work was expedited by pleasant association with Mr. W. Wood, the energetic Hon. Secretary of the Van Riebeeck Society.

H. J. M.

## Introduction.

[Reprinted from *V.R.S.* 6.]

Mentzel's "*Beschreibung des Vorgebirges der Guten Hoffnung*" was published at Glogau in two octavo volumes, the first appearing in 1785, and the second in 1787. There is no clear division in contents between the first and the second volumes; although one might say that the first volume is primarily historical, while the second deals mainly with the topography and economy of the Cape. Owing to the great length of the first volume (82 pages of introduction and 654 pages of text), it was found necessary for the purposes of the Van Riebeeck Society to divide this volume into two parts. The first part, published in 1921, closes with Chapter IX. of Volume I.; the second which is now offered to the reader, comprises the remaining chapters of this volume. Mentzel's second volume, being much shorter than the first, will require no such division, and it is proposed to issue that as part III. of the series at the end of next year. There is no evidence that Mentzel's "*Beschreibung*" has ever been reprinted or translated into any language. This book is now extremely rare, and so careful and thorough an investigator as George McCall Theal has apparently never seen a copy. In a voluminous list of books and writers on the Cape in the 17th and 18th centuries [Theal III., pp. 363-406], Mentzel's name is not mentioned, though Theal devotes a page to Sonnerat's "*Voyages to the East-Indies and China*," which contains merely 5 pages on the Cape. Mentzel's two volumes were resting peacefully on the shelves of the South African Public Library while Theal pursued his patient researches.

About the author himself we have been able to gather but the slightest information. The Archive records do not help us very much; Meyer's "*Konversations-Lexikon*" — which runs to 21 volumes — is silent about him. Nevertheless, his own writings contain, here and there, personal touches. Chapter XV. of the "Life of Allemann" is almost entirely autobiographical. References to himself are made, not in any spirit of braggadocio, but almost deprecatingly, to strengthen an argument or to illustrate a point. On the whole he keeps himself very much in the background, too much so, perhaps, from our present point of view. His writings give us a few facts about himself and yield material for a number of strong inferences.

The facts are as follows: He was born on the 26th February, 1709, somewhere in Brandenburg. He came out to

the Cape as a soldier in the Company's service in 1732 or 1733, and he left the Cape unintentionally on the 2nd or 3rd of January, 1741.\* During the last four or five years of his stay at the Cape he was tutor to Captain Allemann's children, and for a little while in 1737, he had the charge of Governor de la Fontaine's little son. In addition to the tutorship, he held an official post with very light duties and at a salary slightly higher than that of a corporal. After his return to Europe he spent about a year in Amsterdam, and then proceeded to Silesia. We hear no more about him till forty years later. His preface to the "*Biography of Rudolph Allemann*" is dated "Glogau, 1781"; that of the concluding volume of the "*Beschreibung*": "Glogau, 26th February, 1787, on my 78th birthday."

From casual remarks, scattered through his pages, it is possible to supplement this lean skeleton of fact with something more substantial. He was a Brandenburger, he told Allemann, and had been in the service of the King of Prussia. At that time, Frederick William I. was paying phenomenal sums to attract prize recruits for his "model" army. Young Mentzel may have been drawn in by the bait of good pay. There are strong grounds for believing that he belonged to an impoverished junker family. His brother, he tells us, was in the Prussian foreign office, and a member of the Prussian delegation at the election of the Emperor Charles VII. Such posts were open only to men of noble descent. In his writings, Mentzel reveals an occasional impatience with opposition to authority, as, for example, when he states that he cannot see why the burghers should object to the control of the sale of their wheat by the Company, or why they should complain about the banishment of natives of Batavia to the Cape if their High Mightinesses so decreed. His education was also above that of the average common soldier who enlisted in the East Indian service. Too much should not perhaps be made of this point. He was tutor to three of Allemann's children, but the eldest of these had not reached his tenth year when Mentzel left; our author was likewise, for a short while, tutor to the governor's son, but this was a mere stop-gap appointment upon Allemann's recommendation, as Mentzel himself modestly explains, pending the governor's return to Europe. Mentzel naïvely adds, "I could not carry his education any further than it had already gone — for I had no school books at my disposal — I was, at all events, able to prevent him from forgetting what he already knew." ["Life of Allemann," p. 104.] Mentzel refers almost sneeringly to the deep mathematical knowledge of Kolbe and de la Caille and allows us to

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\* For a graphic account of the manner of his unexpected departure, see "Life of Allemann," Ch. XV.

infer that they were not on that account competent to write of everyday things and everyday events. When he deals with botanical and zoological topics, he reminds us that he is no naturalist, and he gives his opinions as a layman. He does not seem to value knowledge *per se*, for he tells us that there were no high schools and universities at the Cape because they would not help the inhabitants to make a living. He himself must have obtained a good grounding in a Prussian school, and learned the rest in the school of experience.

We do not know the reasons why, nor the circumstances under which, Mentzel entered the Dutch East India Company's service. Perhaps the iron discipline of the Prussian military system had proved too much for him, perhaps the glamour of the East had a fascination for him, as it did for so many of his countrymen at that time. Fabulous tales were being circulated in every German town about the wonderful prospects of the Eastern service. A steady stream of adventurers flowed into Amsterdam, and knocked at the Company's recruiting doors. Those who returned kept silent about the hardships, but flaunted in the faces of their envious neighbours the wealth which they had brought back. It did not matter that this "wealth" comprised the entire cash balance that had been paid out to them for their five years' service in the East. It is intriguing to note that the Cape was a magnet for adventurers long before gold and diamonds were discovered. Whatever the cause, Mentzel found himself in Amsterdam at three and twenty, awaiting his turn to be enlisted as a soldier on any of the Company's East Indian stations.

No pages of his writings are more vivid than those that describe the hardships that recruits in the Eastern service had to suffer. This part of the narrative must have been based upon personal experience. He was clearly disillusioned, and he sounds a strong note of warning to all future aspirants who seek a short and easy road to fortune.

"Hütet euch vor das Land

Wo man die Glocke schlägt mit der Hand."

Mentzel must have arrived at the Cape at the end of 1732 or at the beginning of 1733. When he first met Allemann, he tells us, he was very hard up. Allemann patronised him almost from the start, as soon as he had learned that this humble soldier was a fellow Prussian. Patronage counted for everything in those days, and Mentzel knew how to win, as well as keep men's friendship. The duties of common soldiers varied considerably; those who were stationed on the *buyten posten* had a much easier task than those on duty at the Castle. There were, besides, some soldiers who were "loaned" to farmers as overseers or schoolmasters. Such men received much better pay and lived in greater comfort

than those who were on garrison duty. Mentzel tells us that he spent two years in the country — probably as schoolmaster; his host was Paul Keijser. By the end of 1735 or the beginning of 1736 he was back at the Castle, and became tutor to Herr Allemann's eldest child.

During the last four years of his stay at the Cape, he was very comfortably off. Through the good offices of his patron, he had been entrusted with the duty of superintending the waggons that brought wood to the Castle, a task which occupied him an hour a day, and sometimes only every other day; his pay was 15 gulden per month — slightly better than that of a corporal — with a free house and firewood. Captain Allemann's table was always at his disposal, and, besides regular emoluments, he received numerous presents from him. Ample leisure and versatile gifts enabled him to earn a good deal in other ways. He drew designs and patterns for lace work and embroidery; made armorial shields or coats-of-arms for weddings, and, like every official, did some private trading by speculative buying and selling. All these, he tells us, brought him in more than his pay and kostgeld. Under these circumstances, we might well believe that he had no desire for promotion, and that he refused to accept a civil clerkship for the same reason. He had fallen into the easy-going and comfortable mode of life of the Cape burgher of that day. He was young, and, judging by his popularity with the ladies, handsome; he loved the good things of life and was satisfied with little. He praises Cape wine as among the best in the world, though more reliable sources take a much less flattering view. South African burghers and farmers already had a reputation for hospitality; wine was offered as freely as water; slaves were ever-ready with a well-filled pipe; tea or coffee was to be had at all times of the day. Any stranger who was polite and affable was soon taken into the family circle. Mentzel had the proper disposition for making friends; he was courteous and obliging, and, judging from the many stories and anecdotes in his writings, he must have been an entertaining conversationalist. Though he had no relations at the Cape, he was twice best-man at weddings — a sure sign of popularity. Easy circumstances had made him a convert to the philosophy of old Omar. Was there anything pleasanter than to saunter from stoep to stoep, partaking of hospitality, and exchanging gossip? He mixed freely with all classes, officials as well as burghers, and was *persona grata* in the best houses. He had made up his mind to make the Cape his permanent home; he had thoughts of marrying and settling down. When he stepped on board the "Hartenlust" to despatch some letters to Germany through the good offices of a friend, he little dreamt that he would never set foot on the shores

of Table Bay again—but as he states, “Man proposes, God disposes.”\*

When he found that the ship had weighed anchor, and that there was no prospect of his return, he, for a time, lamented his fate; he had no money beyond a few gulden on his person, no clothes, no belongings. Soon, however, his philosophic disposition came to the rescue, and when the ship reached Middelburg, four months later, he hung about Amsterdam for a time, probably weighing in his mind whether and how he should return. Ultimately he decided to join his brother in Silesia, where he arrived in September, 1742. Silesia had been ceded to Frederick II. by Maria Theresa only a few months previously. No doubt the good influences of his brother found him a post in this newly annexed Prussian province. Mentzel tells us that since then he has loyally served his King and fatherland to the best of his ability; that throughout he enjoyed good health and a sufficiency, sometimes an abundance, of everything needed for his happiness. His last years were spent at Glogau, a town in Silesia. The “*Biography of Rudolph Allemann*” is dated, “Glogau, 1781,” though it was published in 1784; the preface to the second volume of the “*Beschreibung*” bears the imprint “Glogau, 26th February, 1787, on the anniversary of my 78th birthday.” He ends this volume on a stoical note, that he is ready to meet his Redeemer like a Christian and a philosopher. The date of his death is not known.

It is surprising that Mentzel did not publish any of his impressions on the Cape until forty years after his departure. He makes the explanation that he had no ambitions to be an author or to enrich publishers. He was attracted by a name which

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\* Since writing the above, Miss M. K. Jeffreys, of the Cape Archives, who has been indefatigable in her search for official information about Mentzel, has at last found something definite. His name appears in the Muster Rolls for June, 1734 and 1736 as “Otto Fredrik Mensel from Berlin,” soldier in Lieut. Coehus’ Company. In June, 1737, 1738, 1739 and 1740 his name appears under “Diverse Bedieningen” (Miscellaneous Services), Houtschrijver (timber-entry clerk). He had probably to write up the loads of wood everyone received or brought to the Castle.

This information tends to confirm the conjectures made about him. During the years when his name was not mentioned, 1733 and 1735, he was probably in the country as schoolmaster or other assistant to Paul Keijser. During the last four years he held a light post, and was tutor to Allemann’s children. His work as a tutor does not naturally fall within the province of official records.

Miss Jeffreys adds that she finds no evidence that Mentzel ever sent any money overseas. Mentzel, however, states definitely that on his return he had some money in Berlin which he could claim. On what grounds he does not say. His name has so far not been traced in any other Archive document.

reminded him of Allemann. In 1778 Allamand and Klockner compiled a treatise on the Cape entitled the "*Nieuwste en Beknopte Beschrijving van de Kap der Goede-Hoop.*" A German translation of this work appeared in 1779, and was brought to Mentzel's notice. He then decided to write a biography of his patron as a mark of esteem and gratitude, though he had every reason to believe that Herr Allemann was long since dead. Incidentally, he corrected certain errors in the "*Nieuwste Beschrijving*" from his personal recollections. The more ambitious "*Beschreibung*" which followed a few years later, is an outcome of his desire to correct popular misconceptions, and to give a true and accurate account of the real condition of the Cape as he had found it.

The above incomplete sketch of Mentzel's life and character will throw light, in many respects, both upon the value and the shortcomings of his historical work. This is not the place for a detailed criticism of his "*Description.*" Some of the author's errors of commission, as well as omission, have been referred to in footnotes in various pages of the text. Mentzel must not be judged in the severe light of modern historical criticism; all that can be expected of him is that his work should compare favourably with better known 18th century narrations on the same subject.

Among the long list of writers mentioned by Theal, Kolbe alone had resided at the Cape for about the same length of time as Mentzel; Thunberg spent about three years there, and de la Caille two years. The most important of the remainder, Tachard, Dampier, Vogel, Silliman, Leguat, Bogaert, Valentijn, St. Pierre, Sparrman and Vaillant were mere "birds of passage," who took hasty glances and made a point of narrating strange customs for the astonishment of the European reader. They were all more concerned with the Hottentots than with the white population. There was no point in devoting pages to the doings of a people who differed little in civilisation and mode of life from their kinsmen in Europe. Besides, they wrote for effect. Mentzel does not tire in pointing out that travellers' tales must be taken *cum grano salis*; that it is easy to tell lies about strange peoples and queer customs; of

"Anthropophagi and men whose heads  
Do grow beneath their shoulders."

Those who made a long stay — Kolbe, de la Caille, Thunberg — were trained scientists who came here with a purpose; the first two were mathematicians, the last a botanist. Their main concern was to give an account of their scientific work and not of the life of the Cape inhabitants. Mentzel had no such limitations. During his eight years' stay he had infinite opportunities of



meeting and talking to all sorts of people, farmers, burghers and officials, poor men as well as rich men. In the last four years of his stay at the Cape, he had ample leisure. He was a keen observer; he listened as well as talked. Like Samuel Pepys, his curiosity is insatiable and there is nothing too trifling to escape his attention. On one page he will discuss high politics, on another, how to prepare a new and appetising dish, on a third, he will laboriously demolish an unimportant remark made by Kolbe or de la Caille. Mentzel's "*Description*" is valuable mainly for atmosphere. His chapters on the social life, occupations, industries, pleasures, amusements and customs, throw much light on the condition of the Cape as it was during the years 1732-1740. His account of the military establishment, of trade, revenue and expenditure, contains a mass of information on many obscure points, and is marred merely by minor errors. True it is, that he wrote more than forty years after the event, that he apparently had no notes, since there is no evidence to show that he recovered any of his belongings which he had been obliged to leave behind at the time of his unexpected departure. These impressions were, however, indelibly stamped on his memory, they had become part of him. During his stay at the Cape he had become thoroughly familiar with Dutch. It is likely that he spent some years in Holland afterwards since he makes excuses for his style, as being influenced by Dutch idioms and Dutch constructions.

His work is also a running commentary upon the accepted standard books of his day. Allamand and Klockner's "*Nieuwste Beschrijving*" he considers excellent, but it is a careful compilation of other people's experience. He complains that there is no evidence that either of these authors had spent a single day at the Cape, and this involved them in ludicrous errors. He gives, as an instance, that a calabash is described as a sort of cocoanut. For de la Caille he has a great respect, but he considers that the Abbé was fatally handicapped by his ignorance of Dutch, and his narrow scientific interests. The Frenchman could never break down social reserve and enter intimately into the life of the people of the Cape; he consequently failed to obtain a deep insight into their characters, customs and mode of life. It is for Kolbe, however, that he reserves his severest criticism. Kolbe's "*Caput Bonae Spei Hodiernum*" held a high reputation, and had been translated into many languages. Mentzel accuses him of superficiality, of slovenliness, of affectation, even of plagiarism. His rounded sentences and pompous periods, he complains, conceal the poverty of his thought and matter. There seems to be a touch of bitterness in these charges, perhaps because Mentzel's own style was dull, flat, uninspiring, in comparison, full of repetitions and redundancies; and yet, Mentzel can be just,

even to Kolbe. On the famous Adriaan van der Stel controversy, Mentzel says that Kolbe was bitterly hostile to the governor, against whom he bore a personal grudge, but he, himself, had gone through the "*Deductie*" and the "*Contra-Deductie*," and other evidence that he could lay hands on, and had found that the charges made by Kolbe against Adriaan van der Stel were substantially correct.

It is easy to pick holes in Mentzel. His chronology, especially of the earlier period, is often ludicrously at fault; even a schoolboy could point that out. We may infer that his memory, after he had passed his 70th year, played him tricks as regards facts that he had learned from books. These, however, matter little, and do not impugn the value of his personal observation. It is far more important that his account of events during the years 1732-1740, does not break down under the acid test of archive records. For the later years, he admits, that he is no authority, that he follows standard writers like Allamand and Klockner, Thunberg and Sparrman, but he does not hesitate to correct them when their statements conflict with what had come under his own personal observation. Although writing after 1780, he seems unaware of the radical changes that had set in in the Company's fortunes, and of the real crisis that had arisen in the political life of the Cape settlement, since Tulbagh's death. He had no evidence to go by, and he does not stoop to guesswork. His judgment is seldom at fault, and his political insight is often deep. His criticism of the weak condition of the Cape defences and his assertion that it would fall an easy prey to the English is almost prophetic. His estimate of the population of the Cape, without having any census figures of recent date to go by, is a creditable piece of work. Whatever errors may have crept into his work through lapses of memory, owing to the long interval that had passed since the time of his observation, and the time when his impressions were recorded, is more than compensated for by his spirit of disinterestedness and desire for truth. At 78 he had no axe to grind, no favour to seek. His praise of Allemann is an old man's mark of gratitude. Had he written in the same vein forty years earlier, it would have given ground for suspicion that it was the flattery of the sycophant.

Mentzel's "*Beschreibung*" is thus, all things considered, a living document, containing much that is of interest to the general reader, and is not altogether without value to the more serious student of the beginnings of South African History.

H. J. MANDEL BROTE.

The University,  
Cape Town, December 10, 1924.

## Introductory Note to Part III.

A recent publication\* has made it possible to supplement the biographical information concerning Mentzel that was given in the Introduction to Part II. He was the son of Johann Christian Menzel (or Mentsell) and Loysa Maria Hendreich. The surmise that he came of good family is confirmed by the fact that his father was a Prussian *Hofrat* and Court physician who lived in comfortable circumstances in his own house in the *Heiligengeiststrasse*, Berlin where Otto Frederick Mentzel was born. His baptismal date is 27th February, 1710. Young Mentzel attended the Joachimsthal Gymnasium at Berlin, but we may safely assume that he gained most knowledge by browsing in his father's extensive library, one section of which, the Chinese, was deemed worthy of inclusion in the Royal Prussian Library. In regard to his stay at the Cape where he arrived on the 5th July, 1733 and left unintentionally on the 2nd January, 1741 there is nothing material to add to the information already given. In 1742 he entered the Prussian Civil Service in Frederick's recently acquired Province of Silesia and rose to the rank of *Polizeibürgermeister* (Chief of Police). He died at Neustädtel in Lower Silesia on the 8th of August, 1801. The only reference to his life after he left the Cape, contained in Volume II, is a casual remark that he was married. It is gratifying to discover that he survived the completion of the *Beschreibung* for 14 years notwithstanding the pathetic note of his farewell to the reader at the end of Volume II.

Mentzel's *Beschreibung* was published shortly after the appearance of a number of better known books on the Cape, in particular the works of de la Caille, Thunberg, Sparrman and Allamand and Klockner. It was not got up in a style to catch the eye, having neither pictures, nor maps nor plates. It was not so up to date, as most of his observations were based on his own experience, some forty years back. It attracted little notice and fell into obscurity, but an undeserved obscurity. Well known writers of a generation later seem not to have read him. Barrow does not mention him and Lichtenstein makes such an inaccurate allusion to him that he could hardly have read him with care.

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\* *Die Deutschen am Kap* p. 71-2, by Prof. E. Moritz (Weimar, 1938). Prof. Moritz derived some of this information from Meusel: *Das gelehrte Teutschland oder Lexikon der jetzt lebenden teutschen Schriftsteller*, Volume V. p. 173 (Lemgo, 1797) and Volume X. p. 281 (*ibid.* 1803). I have to thank Dr. Hoge for drawing my attention to Moritz.

In the preface to Volume I on his *Travels in South Africa*, Lichtenstein writes 'Le Caille and Mentzel are severe upon Kolbe, Sparrman criticises Le Caille and Mentzel', forgetting that Sparrman wrote *before* Mentzel. Modern writers have rediscovered him, since the Van Riebeeck Society translations began to appear. Mentzel may well be called the forgotten author.

It may be said at once that as a primary source Volume I is more valuable than Volume II. About Cape Town and its inhabitants, about the Civil and Military Establishments, Mentzel could write with the authority of a man who saw and understood the conditions at first hand. When it came to the rural areas (the subject matter of Volume II) his knowledge was less intimate, for his personal contact with the country districts was slight. It is true that he lived with the Keijser family between October 1734 and February 1736, but this was on the farm *Hartenberg* in the Bottelary, within 30 miles of Cape Town. It may be safely surmised that Mentzel did not travel beyond a radius of 50 miles from Table Bay. Hence even in the description of Drakenstein and Stellenbosch, Roodezand and Zwartland, he had to rely to some extent upon information received from others. For factual knowledge he draws upon Kolbe, de la Caille and Allamand and Klockner whose book was the nearest equivalent to a secondary History of the Cape by writers who had never visited it. The chapter on Swellendam is based wholly on Sparrman whose inaccurate map involves Mentzel in geographical errors. Chapter 8 is a summary of Hop's expedition based on the German translation of Brink's Journal as published by Allamand and Klockner.

There is much in these chapters which is neither new nor accurate, but there is also some sound criticism *en passant* which only his experience of local conditions and an understanding of local character made possible. Valuable as primary sources are the chapters on the social life of the rural inhabitants and on the prevailing industries: Agriculture, Viticulture and Horticulture, and Animal Husbandry. Here he wrote mainly of what he had seen, supplemented by what he had heard from farmers whom he knew and to whom he could speak in their own language, and who were unable to palm off upon him the 'tall stories' with which passing travellers could be taken in.

Mentzel's work is not merely informative, nor is his criticism wholly destructive. There is much sound common sense and insight in his comments. He is frank in his exposure of weakness, stagnation and apathy, but withal he is sympathetic. He condemns the Colonial outlook of that time, the rigid adherence to prescriptive methods of trade and culture. He is constantly urging the opening up of new areas and the undertaking of new enterprises, praising W. A. van der Stel as a progressive farmer

and pioneer in promoting a wool industry and Schwellengrebel for reforms in land tenure that might lead to a more settled mode of life in the interior. He laments the neglect of tree-planting and the waste of much of the natural resources. It was a bold prophecy, at a time when the Cape had less than 20,000 European inhabitants, to suggest that the country could support a million Europeans (p. 156). To the doubters he offered the example of Holland which had developed in all directions in spite of overwhelming natural obstacles. He reveals the cultural poverty of the frontiersman in spite of his wealth in cattle and sheep and warns the people that without a constant infusion of fresh blood from overseas the Colonists might degenerate to the level of the aboriginal.

His lengthy chapter 14, on the Hottentots, is in the main a criticism of Kolbe. For this he used not only such knowledge as came within his own experience through speaking to detribalised Hottentots that lived within the areas he knew, as well as with tribal Hottentots who occasionally came thither from their kraals, but also gleanings of information derived from elephant hunters and pastoral farmers. He had also read the more important literature on the Hottentots, from Dapper to Sparrman. His brief references in chapter 15 to the Hottentots in the Eastern Cape are of little value, being drawn wholly from Sparrman.

His humanitarianism comes out again and again. He has pity for the overworked trek-ox; for the ill-treated slave. He has faith in human nature, however primitive. The Hottentot he regards as normally honest and trustworthy and he has a good word even for the Bushman whose predatory habits, he maintains, were due to the instinct of self-preservation. 'Having no cattle and often lacking even edible roots and other wild fruits, they are forced to steal and in desperation have to risk their lives to fill their stomachs'. (p. 261)

Mentzel wrote for the German reader, being doubtful whether his writings would ever reach the Cape. His object was to correct mistakes and misconceptions of better known and more popular writers, who through the shortness of their stay at the Cape, their ignorance of the Dutch language, their limited interest or narrow field of travel or observation fell into errors which he believed he could correct. His principal butt was Kolbe who then held the field as leading authority on the Cape, but he was equally critical of other writers, including de la Caille and even Sparrman whom he held in high esteem. Mentzel's work is, therefore, of two-fold value. It is a primary source on much that he had seen and understood; it is also a critical commentary on the writings of his contemporaries.



## Author's Preface.

HEREWITH I deliver the Second Volume of the *Description of the African Cape of Good Hope* as far as this Settlement has been populated and developed by the Dutch East India Company up to the present. Although, since my departure, much more of this large country than I have mentioned in the First Volume of this work has been occupied by colonists, I have taken the greatest possible trouble to bring up to date in the Second Volume all that I could reliably ascertain. And even if a few more isolated farm houses have been occupied in some other areas, this fact would not prevent anyone from getting a complete picture of the nature of the country from my narrative. I stated in Volume One that there were impenetrable mountains that were not only uninhabited by Europeans but were as yet unvisited by them; this still holds good. Apart from wild animals it is only the Bushmen that dwell in those regions; and since the Bushmen hide there to escape being molested by the Europeans, it is self-evident that these wastes, ravines and valleys cannot maintain such persons as seek an honest livelihood by grain-farming or animal husbandry.

In the meantime, an exploration of a large area of the mountains towards the East and along the Indian Ocean undertaken with great danger and trouble, has led to the discovery of a vast but hitherto unknown mountain range, as well as some of the finest pasturages for cattle raising and for grain farming. Everything is indeed still in its infancy, and we can only speculate on the future growth of such a settlement which, by progressive cultivation may compare favourably with the already profitable settlements and may provide if not more yet at least as useful products as these do.

The lands where the Europeans and their descendants have up to now raised cattle and practised agronomy and viticulture do not entirely lack the wood so necessary for household purposes; but what has hitherto been discovered serves only for firewood. Timber for building and other purposes is either very scarce or

entirely lacking and even firewood is scanty in the city and the settlements to the north of it.<sup>1</sup> Hitherto all timber for building purposes was supplied to Holland by the Northern Kingdoms of Sweden, Norway and Denmark and was sent thence to the Cape, where it had to be bought at a very high price by the colonists. For this reason it has come to pass that the majority of the inhabitants of the plains could only build themselves modest dwellings, and the most remote ones had to be satisfied with the poorest houses in spite of their great wealth in cattle. But since the increase in the number of families has compelled the numerous descendants of the first European colonists to find new habitable spots, they have discovered in those mountains which formerly no one dared to climb, not only the finest pastures, but also forests which can furnish timber as well as other products. The gum arabic which had hitherto to be fetched from the African Coast between the tropics, especially from Senegal, and the wax-myrtle which was known to exist only in America, were actually discovered here.<sup>2</sup> The Aloe or Goree plant, which grows in abundance in different spots of our Cape, has up to now been considered superfluous and useless. But since a faithful slave of a burgher living in the town has shown his master how the Aloe-gum, which is very useful for medicinal purposes, is prepared from it, this material has become such an article of trade, that the afore-mentioned burgher has obtained the monopoly of it, and out of gratitude has appointed this slave as overseer of the workmen.<sup>3</sup> Since these dense forests of the Grootvadersbosch, in Houtniquas land,<sup>4</sup> Quammedacka, Agter Bruyntjes Hoogte and in the still untravelled Zitzikamma (which parts all lie to

<sup>1</sup> Barrow in his *Travels* (II. p. 29) remarks about the shortage of firewood in Cape Town. 'A small load', he says, 'costs 5 to 7 Rs. and in some families some slaves are kept for the express purpose of getting firewood from the slopes of the mountain'.

<sup>2</sup> A tallow derived from the wax myrtle (*myrica cerifera*) was used extensively for candle making.

<sup>3</sup> During the first British occupation a ready market was found for aloes in English breweries. The trade fell off under the Batavian Republic and Lichtenstein (V.R.S. 10. p. 207-8) records that the low prices scarcely paid for the trouble of collecting it. For its medicinal preparation see Marloth, *Flora of South Africa*, (IV. p. 96-7.)

<sup>4</sup> Outeniqualand.



the East of the Cape) give promise of furnishing very useful wood, one may naturally surmise that when they have been somewhat cleared and freed from the thorny bushes growing between the trees, they will provide more than mere firewood. Even in 1734 Lieutenant (later Captain) Allemann claimed to have discovered black ebony during an expedition made with Governor Jan de la Fontaine to Mossel Bay and from there two days' journey further.<sup>5</sup>

It is true that here and there at the Cape there are some trees that furnish wood of a red colour, but it is only a kind of red alder-wood, which, according to a test made by me personally, does not produce a red pigment. In the year 1761, however, on occasion of the dispatch of an expedition to the country of the great Namaqua Hottentots<sup>6</sup> fine, tall and thick trees of red wood were discovered at the Draai-river, which one may presume to be suitable for dyeing. The hides of the buffaloes that roam in countless multitudes in these forests and uninhabited spots, could become an important source of trade if these animals were hunted as zealously as in America.

The thorn bush, *Wacht een beetje* ("Wait a little", because one is always compelled to disentangle one's dress in passing) may possibly be the same as that which yields dragon-blood in Madagascar (*sanguis draconis in guttis*).<sup>7</sup> And who can tell what plant products lie hidden in woods so impenetrable and never examined? One can however imagine that in the course of time, the tables may be turned and that instead of a great deal of wood coming from Europe to Africa, more may be sent from Africa to Europe, especially since all the forests already discovered lie near the shores of the Indian Ocean into whose bays small ships may enter almost everywhere and carry wood or other products to Table Bay.

Sparman, the learned Swedish doctor, a zealous and untiring naturalist, who scorned all dangers and difficulties, and

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<sup>5</sup> See V.R.S. 2. pp. 94-5.

<sup>6</sup> See chapter 8 below.

<sup>7</sup> The most common local type is, according to Marloth, the *Asparagus Capensis* first described by Thunberg.

put no higher value on reports than they deserved, and who has personally examined and seen with his own eyes what he states to be the truth, has explored little known parts of the Cape from Cape Town to the land that is actually Caffraria, to the country of the Tambuckis, that is, to the Sneeuwbergen of the Camdeboveld, and has gone thus even farther than Doctor Thunberg and Francis Masson.<sup>8</sup> This man after my own heart, who is truthful and reliable, I have consulted a great deal in this second volume and made use of the account of his travels relating to the Cape of Good Hope. His travels, however, only cover the stretch from the rocky mountains that extend from False Bay to the Camdeboveld, places which have only been populated and cultivated during the last 25 years. The Camdeboveld is that part of the country lying furthest North of Cape Town, beyond which no European has yet passed. Indeed several farmers have for a long time established cattle farms in the most remote North-easterly parts of this Camdeboveld,<sup>9</sup> and Messrs. Thunberg and Masson as well as Mr. Sparrman have been at the farms of the two farmers living furthest from the city, Jacob Kock<sup>10</sup> and Jacob van Rennen,<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Dr. Charles Thunberg and Mr. Francis Masson travelled through the Cape between 1772 and 1775. Their most extensive expedition, between September 1772 and January 1774 took them as far as the Sunday R. Their main interest lay in Botany, and the historical value of their narratives is slight.

<sup>9</sup> The Camdeboveld was included in the newly formed district of Graaf-Reinet in 1785. Loan farms in this area were granted from about 1770.

<sup>10</sup> Both Thunberg and Sparrman write with affection and respect of Jacob Kock, a one-time elephant hunter and later a wealthy cattle farmer on the Eastern frontier. Thunberg visited him in 1772 and 1773 'near the mouth of the Sea Cow River and the Meulen Riviers Mountains'. Sparrman spent some weeks with him in November 1775, and again a few days in March 1776. In his *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope*, (vol. I p. 351) Sparrman speaks of him as "an honest old colonist, by nation, if I remember right, a Hessian." The Kocks were then quite elderly having come from Grootvadersbosch some twenty years previously. Jacob Kock may probably be identified with Johannes Jacobus Kock who came from *Sachsenhausen* and married Johanna van Rooyen on 8 October 1747 (de Villiers, *Geslacht Register*, II p. 136).

<sup>11</sup> There is no mention of a Van Reenen in Sparrman, while Thunberg (*Travels*, vol. II p. 79) has an entry under date 9th Dec. 1773 'on Cabeljaus River where the last farm now laid out was looked after by a servant and belongs to Van Rhenen, a rich burgher at

who were already old, respectable and rich in cattle. But when these made a journey to town perhaps once yearly, they did not dare to use the nearest route through those mountains, which Sparrman had braved. They always journeyed through the interior of the land, which was already settled and cultivated; that is, on this side<sup>12</sup> of the Langekloof, through Anthoniveld,<sup>13</sup> through the cold and warm Bokkeveld, and through the Zwartland and Roode Zand regions to Cape Town.

Herewith then I produce my authority, which has given me evidence of some districts that still lay hidden in the darkness of the unknown at the time of my presence at the Cape. Anyone having read this present description of mine, and being interested enough to read also the journey of Dr. Sparrman to the Cape of Good Hope, which was published in this past year (1784) in Berlin by Haude and Spener, may discover whether my witness is irrefutable.<sup>14</sup>

In the third section of the Fifth Chapter of Volume One,<sup>15</sup> where I spoke of the public buildings of the Company, I also

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the Cape.' The owner may have been Jacob van Reenen whose baptismal date was 11 May, 1727, son of a Jacob van Reenen who had emigrated to the Cape from Memel in 1721. Jacob (II) was one of the delegates chosen by the colonists in 1779 to voice their grievances against the Government before the Chamber of Seventeen. He was the father of 14 children, a number of whom were prominent in the annals of the Cape at the end of the 18th and at the beginning of the 19th century. Jacob van Reenen III (born 1755, married to Cathrine Persoon in 1781) led an expedition to the wreck of the *Grosvenor* (published as V.R.S. No. 8); another brother Willem made a famous journey into Damaraland in 1791 (his *Journal* is included in V.R.S. 15). Among the other brothers, Johannes, Sebastian, Dirk and Daniel were mentioned as adventurous explorers and enterprising farmers. Lichtenstein writes of the Van Reenens with admiration.

<sup>12</sup> i.e. the northern side.

<sup>13</sup> This name, sprawling across Sparrman's map, was given to the arid country east of the Roggeveld, corresponding to the central Karoo, also known as the *Droogveld*.

<sup>14</sup> The first of many panegyrics on Sparrman whom Mentzel persistently overrates just as he undervalues Kolbe. Dr. Andrew Sparrman visited the Cape in 1772 and then accompanied Captain Cook in a voyage round the world. On his return he made an extensive journey through the Cape during 1775-6. The narrative of his travels was translated from Swedish into many languages, and Theal regards him as a most trustworthy observer. But he was in the main a naturalist, giving very considerable attention to the fauna. His topography is hazy as his map (here reprinted) will show. Mentzel who follows him closely copies his errors as well.

<sup>15</sup> V.R.S. No. 4 p. 107 *et seq.*

described the three gardens and contradicted those who said that beyond the garden situated in the city and towards Table Mountain, a large space had been fenced in where various wild animals were kept, as in a zoological garden. Both they and I were right; with only this difference, that in my time not a single animal was found there except some trek-oxen which grazed there for the time being when their owners came to town to transact their business. Mr. Sparrman has put me right. He recounts in his description that he saw in it zebras, several kinds of antelopes, ostriches, cassowaries<sup>16</sup> and even a wild Cape hog and many other kinds of animals. Sparrman is far too reliable for anyone to doubt his narrative, and after having made careful enquiries in different ways about the truth and real nature of this zoological garden, I have been authoritatively informed that the former Governor Ryk Tulbagh established and maintained it in its present state. This upright philanthropist, who did his utmost to make his fellowmen happy as far as lay in his power, also took great pains to promote and support the natural history of animal and plant life in Europe. He enriched the collections, and the zoological and botanical gardens of eminent persons, especially of the Prince of Orange, with rare specimens, which were up to that time either entirely unknown to scientists or very imperfectly known. The French author, who described his journey to Isle de France and Bourbon under the name of "*Officier du Roi*"<sup>17</sup> says, inter alia, of this Governor, that he used his large fortune only for the happiness of the burghers at the Cape, and that nobody ever passed his house without lifting his hat as a mark of appreciation and respect, even though the Governor were absent. How few are the governors in this world who do not seek in their lucrative posts their own profit rather than that of their inferiors, and when they have filled their chests and coffers with riches, do not leave again to enjoy their fortune in peaceful tranquillity!

In the Seventh Chapter of the First Volume, I have also recorded that, in all their widely scattered possessions, the East India Company had a Major-General only in Batavia, under

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<sup>16</sup> Birds resembling an ostrich.

<sup>17</sup> Probably J. H. Bernardin St. Pierre. (see V.R.S. 4. p. 13).

whose direct orders all other Captains of the forces stood, excepting those of the Cape of Good Hope, and that there were no intermediate or staff officers between this Major-General and the Captains. This is a rule of the East India Company which has always been observed. Therefore I know not how it is at present with the very famous (and among learned naturalists well-known) Mr. Gordon, whom some call Captain, others Major and even Colonel. I can give no information as to whether the East India Company on occasion of their last naval war against England found it necessary to appoint a Commander-in-Chief of higher rank and character at the Cape, or whether his position as Commanding Officer was rated in accordance with his authority, and honoured on this ground with the title and rank of Staff Officer. In any case, a Captain at the Cape is equivalent to a Colonel or Brigadier-General of the entire military establishment, while the subaltern officers command the companies as Captains. Those, therefore, who are unacquainted with the military system may have applied the title according to the position the Captain held, or perhaps they may merely have imagined it.<sup>18</sup> It is quite clear then, and as I have shown in the proper place, that the Abbé de la Caille was greatly mistaken both as regards the person and rank of the Captain of the militia.

Perhaps many of my readers expect to find in this Second Volume a description and illustrations of the divers animals, birds, fishes, snakes and insects; but I have not promised to write about these nor are they within my province. I am neither zoologist nor naturalist. I limit myself to external things that my eyes see, my hands touch and what my brain can grasp in matters of policy. I have promised a geographical, topographical description of the entire Cape; I may not meddle with anything

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<sup>18</sup> Mentzel's conjectures were right. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century the Cape garrison was enlarged and the burgher militia expanded. Besides, foreign regiments were recruited. The allied French regiment of Pondicherry was stationed here from 1781-4. A Swiss regiment of mercenaries (Regiment of Meuron) reinforced it in 1783 which was later replaced by a Württemberg regiment (1788-1791). The Commander of the garrison was given the title of Colonel in 1779. In the same year Captain Gordon succeeded to the supreme command with the rank of Major, but was promoted to the same status as his predecessor in March, 1780. (*Kaapse Archiefstukken*, 1780, edited by Miss K. M. Jeffreys.)

that lies outside this sphere; I should only run the risk of revealing clearly that I do not understand anything about it. Had I been guided in my youth or at the time I was still in Africa, by such a very learned man as Doctor (now Professor) Sparrman, my naturally inquisitive disposition might have accomplished more than now, since I have learnt the little I know about nature study only after returning from Africa. At the same time, I want to acquaint the gracious reader, as far as lies within my power, with such animals as are generally hunted in the most distant parts of the country. I cannot speak of the birds, the different varieties of snakes and other poisonous animals, or insects and butterflies, because I would be going too far beyond the limits I have set myself, and besides would show that I can describe very little of it that has any value.

For the rest, everybody is welcome to compare what I have written about this African Cape, with any other author's work, and to judge which of us has given the correct and most reliable reports. Although it is asserted in the Abbé de la Caille's "Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope" (on page 295 of the *Altenburg* edition) "M. de la Caille has finally determined the value of Kolbe's *Caput bonae spei* by his critical comments on it, and by his observations of the manners and customs of the inhabitants of the Cape", I hope for my part to have explained and corrected that which the Abbé de la Caille, for lack of time and ignorance of the Dutch language, could not properly investigate, and that which he reported when relying on the trustworthiness of the people who pulled his leg after the very objectionable local fashion.<sup>19</sup>

The last two chapters, that treat of the original inhabitants, the Hottentots, I could have made much more comprehensive and longer for the pleasure of those who take delight in the wonderful and uncommon habits of uncivilized nations; only, had I told only the truth, as I am obliged to do, the rest would have consisted of

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<sup>19</sup> For de la Caille see footnote in V.R.S. 6. p. 146. Theal, who gives no evidence that he has ever heard of Mentzel, sums up de la Caille's work in similar terms: "Perhaps their chief worth, historically considered, is the exposure given in them to some of Kolbe's errors, though in correcting his description of the Hottentots de la Caille really made almost as great blunders himself". *History of South Africa before 1795*, Vol 3, p. 389.

trifles and eventually have seemed to sensible minds to be superfluous and unpleasant. This however, I can say with certainty, that everything that Kolbe and several others on his authority have written over and above what I have mentioned, is inconsistent with the truth, in so far as they have written down exaggerations of unimportant things to lengthen their accounts, and one can truthfully say of them: It is easy to tell falsehoods about distant countries. Had any more customs, characteristics and habits of this nation that were genuine and worth relating been known to me, it would have been easy to write a few more pages. But since such is not the case, I have written less, so as to write more truthfully and reliably. For I leave it to the judgment of any intelligent reader, what one must think of it when Kolbe says on page 505: that they understand the furrier's trade just as well as Europeans because they rub cow's dung and fat into the skins, and by that means make them soft and evil-smelling. On page 508 they are extolled by this author as leather-workers, on page 509 as butchers, on page 512 as matmakers, on page 513 as rope-makers, on page 514 as potters and on page 515 as surgeons; although in all their handiwork they are miserable bunglers, especially the way they slaughter cattle, which amounts to pitiful torturing accompanied by prolonged bellowing, bleating and alarming groaning of the unreasoning animals. Finally: that the Hottentots knew how to smelt copper after a fashion and to cast it in a formless way, has been fully proved as can be seen from Chapter 8 of this Volume, but that they understood how to smelt iron from iron-ore according to Kolbe's testimony — that is a Kolbean fairy-tale.<sup>20</sup>

I do not wish to concern myself with any more refutations: it is enough that I have shown what Kolbe's work is worth: my work still has to be judged and I submit it to every intelligent and critical reader to whom I offer my best respects, and whom I commend to the grace and protection of God.

Glogau,

O. F. MENTZEL.

26th February, 1787.

On my 78th birthday.

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<sup>20</sup> Refer to V.R.S. 4 (pp. 16 *et seq.*) for biographical sketch of Kolbe. cf. Moritz: *Die Deutschen am Kap*, 69-71.





## CHAPTER ONE.

### Introduction to a general description of the rural parts at the Cape of Good Hope.

As the term African Cape of Good Hope is generally applied not only to the extreme Southern point of Africa, but also to the extensive land belonging to it as far as the Dutch East India Company has taken possession, including that which it still intends to colonise, it has been found necessary for the sake of good arrangement and clarity to separate the description of the actual Cape from the country around it. In the First Volume we have already treated of everything that concerns the geographical description of the country and its extreme boundaries towards the East, West, South and North. We have given a minute account of the Government, military establishment, civil organisation, administration of justice, police and finance; public buildings and private houses; of the manners and customs; and of the slaves.

Table Valley proper is to be regarded as the heart and centre of the entire country, where everything produced, harvested, bartered, gathered, delivered and contributed in this country, is accumulated and thence re-distributed in all directions. The surplus is to be regarded as profit of the Dutch Government or of the East India Company; and although not everything received can be considered and accounted nett profit, for the expenses, which amount annually to several casks of gold, must be subtracted, all receipts are credited to the Company's account, and then only is a statement of disbursements from the Company's Pay Office drawn up as well as a special expenses account, a loan advances account, and a discount account. On the expenditure side are put salaries and such expenses as are necessary for the maintenance of all the Company's servants and slaves, for increasing the number of public buildings and for their upkeep, for bartering for the necessary draught-cattle and

the like. Among the cash advances I include what is needed for the provisioning of the Dutch ships and replacement of stocks consumed, as also what is acquired or bought in the country and delivered free of charge to Holland and Batavia. The final balance sheet includes a statement of everything that the Cape Government has received for sale from Holland and the Indies, and also payments for the transportation and other advances to the employees, as well as the savings made on the salaries of those who return to Europe; all of which has to be deducted from the expenditure account.

Everything pertaining to the city and civil community has been mentioned in the First Volume of this Description and, as I hope, explained clearly and intelligently enough. We have also dwelt upon the bonds that link up the peasantry with the townsmen whereby they maintain friendly relations. But since all that is limited to Table Valley, we have first of all to bring up-to-date what concerns the whole rural area, especially that called the Cape District. At the very beginning, as soon as the Cape had been occupied by a considerable number of Colonists who had settled here and there in different parts of the country, it seemed advisable to divide the settlements into definite districts according to their situation, and the inhabitants into different judicial areas, so that one might not only know and point out to the Company how and where the land has been cultivated, but also that the land-owners might be kept in proper order and ruled according to the interests and circumstances of all, and at the same time shown whither anyone might take his refuge and obtain law and justice. Besides Table Valley and the neighbouring area, the early colonists settled in and around the part afterwards known as Stellenbosch, where owing to the erection of some neighbouring houses, a village came into being, consisting of some thirty houses which, together with the entire vicinity, was called Stellenbosch district. Thus arose a natural distinction between this district and that cultivated nearer the City and round Table Valley, on that account called the Cape district.

In view of the greatly increased growth of the Colony, the recently-arrived French refugees chose three places for their

settlements, the first of which they called "Little Rochelle", but which the Dutch called "Fransche Hoek", or "French Corner". The second and third areas occupied by the next refugees were called by the Governor Simon van der Stel by the general name Drakenstein, prompted by the following incident. A dispute had arisen between the Governor and the colonists at the very time that the East India Company (in 1685) sent to the Cape a Commissioner-General called Baron van Rheede, with unconditional powers to arrange and order everything at his own discretion. Governor van der Stel, who had an inkling that he might be called to account by the Commissioner-General by reason of the disputes, tried to anticipate him; and since he knew that the said Baron van Rheede had an estate of his own in the Dutch Province Utrecht, called Drakenstein, he called both the settlements of the refugees Drakenstein, in honour of the Baron. This idea made such a favourable impression, that the dispute was amicably settled on both sides and the Governor was not even troubled about the matter.<sup>21</sup>

Both the districts just mentioned, Stellenbosch and Drakenstein, lie North-East of Cape Town; a vast mountain range

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<sup>21</sup> This highly colourful account of the origin of the name of Drakenstein is most improbable. Kolbe merely says that van der Stel gave it that name because the 'High Commissioner was very powerful'. The suggestion that the name was changed in '1685' is based on an incorrect statement by Father Taclard. Theal who read the documents meticulously for this period is silent on this point. He mentions that Ryklof van Goens the younger whose stay at the Cape overlapped that of van Rheede had granted some land and privileges to Simon's son, Adriaan, an action that was highly unpopular. Van Rheede, however, had been appointed six months earlier as chairman of a Commission to investigate the affairs of India and Ceylon. As he was visiting the Cape on the way, he received a general instruction 'to rectify anything he might find amiss at the Cape' (Theal II 267, 268). Miss Böeseke, in a scholarly study of the *Nederlandsche Commissarissen aan de Kaap*, shows that van Rheede queried a certain grant of land made by the Council of Policy in excess of the extent authorised by van Goens (p. 25) but that did not reflect upon the integrity of the Commander. In the *Instructie van Commissaris van Rheede*, published in Theal's *Belangrijke Historische Dokumenten*, the Commissioner speaks very highly of van der Stel, and the grant which he made to him of the extensive estate, *Constantia*, was intended partly as a reward for good service, and partly to encourage farming. Finally, the name Drakenstein was given in October 1687, more than *two years* after the Commissioner had left the Cape because says Theal (p. 326) 'it had as yet no name'. All the evidence therefore points to an innocent compliment to the Commissioner.

separates them from the true East of the Cape so that the land towards the Indian Ocean remained uncolonised and untilled for the first hundred years. Only in the last half-century were there people, sufficiently courageous, to scale the mountains and to seek and cultivate new tillable lands on the other side.<sup>22</sup>

In the centre of the Western part of the country (about 12 to 13 miles<sup>23</sup> North-East by North from the City, and North-West by North from the centre of the Drakenstein district where a small church has been built), a parochial district was formed at the beginning of this century and named the Land of Waveren by Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel after a distinguished family in Amsterdam related to him.<sup>24</sup>

The fifth district, which lies to the north of the Land of Waveren and Groenekloof, is called the Zwartland on account of its black soil. It is supposed to be a parish, but has never, to my knowledge, possessed a pastor, and I doubt whether one has yet been appointed.<sup>25</sup>

The sixth district, founded by Governor Swellengrebel about the year 1748 and called Zwellendam after him, was likewise intended to be a parish, but nevertheless like the two just mentioned districts, had no church nor pastor of its own.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, all three of them could hardly form separate congregations and each receive a separate pastor, since their inhabitants live widely scattered and thus, owing to their remoteness from the Church, can very rarely attend its services. In Europe we have a proverb: "*proximus ecclesiae semper vult ultimus esse*",<sup>27</sup> while those who live in *ecclesia pressa*, and can worship only in Churches, which often lie two, three, four and more miles from their homes, are generally the most eager

<sup>22</sup> In this connection see Mossop E.E., *Old Cape Highways*. There were other factors besides geographical that hampered expansion. *vid.* Van der Merwe P. J., *Die Trekboer in die Geskiedenis van die Kaapkolonie*, ch. 3.

<sup>23</sup> The Mile, unless otherwise stated, is always the German or Westphalian mile, corresponding to about  $4\frac{1}{3}$  English miles.

<sup>24</sup> In the Land of Waveren a church was established at Roodezand (Tubagh) in 1743: its first minister was A. M. Meyring.

<sup>25</sup> The church at Zwartland (Malmesbury) dates from 1745, about 4 years after Mentzel left the Cape. R. A. Weerman was its first clergyman.

for God's Word and most zealously attend the Churches, even those most distant from them. But in the rural areas of Africa the situation is entirely different. The Sabbath is celebrated only by laziness and rest from work. Seldom is a book of sermons or some other spiritual work opened at some farmer's place on Sunday, and very rarely does one find a Bible among them. Fortunate are those slaves whose masters still have so much religious feeling as not to grudge them their Sunday's rest.

At harvest-time however, any idea of Sabbath observance is given up; and indeed it can hardly be otherwise, for when the grain starts ripening there, there is hardly sufficient time for the reaping even with the use of all hands; the uplands which ripen first are reaped first. What still appears soft and green in the evening becomes so overripe during a really warm night as to shed its grain. If one were to leave large fields unreaped on account of the Sunday and allow the corn to fall and rot, this were just as sinful as desecrating the Sabbath. On the other hand, most of the farmers are so fair that after completion of the harvest, they assemble their labourers on a week-day for a day of recreation and treat them to wine according to their number or persons. The farmer is accustomed on such a festive day, to amuse himself and his family together with the hired help and some of his neighbours. Should he have a slave or mixed-breed Hottentot who can strum a bit on the fiddle, the latter would be present and then a dancing or rather jumping about follows. Among the slaves and Hottentots there are generally womenfolk who can pluck the strings of a *Raveking* which will be described below, and to whose highly unmelodious sound another slave or Hottentot adds a few discords on the *Gom-Gom*,<sup>28</sup> to the dancing of the slaves.

The country taken as a whole, consists of many mountains, cliffs, hills, valleys, plateaus, bush, forests, sandy stretches,

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<sup>26</sup> Swellendam district was proclaimed in 1745 and the village laid out the following year. According to Dreyer, *Geskiedenis van die Gemeente Swellendam*, a Congregation was formed in 1798 and the church was completed in 1802, but Lichtenstein who visited Swellendam in December 1803 states that this church replaced a little church built at the foundation of the village (*Travels* I, p. 200).

<sup>27</sup> 'Those nearest the church always want to be furthest from it!'

<sup>28</sup> for description see below P. 306.

wheat- and grasslands, large and innumerable small rivers; the latter however all running dry in summer. There are also salt pans here and there, hot baths, rich copper mountains and places where saltpetre could be gathered in abundance. The two last-named cannot, however, be utilised on account of their remoteness and lack of wood and water. There are few lakes and no ponds at all. Yet Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel caused a large reservoir to be dug in Hottentots Holland to collect the water flowing from the surrounding mountains during the rainy season, which served a water mill erected by him. In the year 1776 according to Sparrman's account, a lake was discovered somewhat to the north of Roode Zand. He was also informed by some farmers, living in the Sneeuwbergen, that a method of distilling brandy from the large cactus of the same excellence as that made from grain and grapes had been devised. But what is meant by "cactus", or whether the whole story be not the usual African fable, I do not know.

Water mills are rare. Only in the city is there a water mill belonging to the Company and a wind mill belonging to the community.<sup>29</sup> Besides these, none is known to exist in the entire country, that is at Stellenbosch, Drakenstein, Hottentots Holland and Simon's Valley. That erected by the former Vice-Governor Elsevier<sup>30</sup> at Elzenburg has to my knowledge either been demolished or is at any rate not of much use, since it has sufficient water only during the rainy season. For this reason, the farmers who live at a distance from the said mill have to use hand mills which are really large iron coffee-mills like those the grocers who have a brisk trade in coffee use in Germany, and which are fixed to the counter. The inhabitants of the Cape, however, attach them to the walls and

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<sup>29</sup> The water mill was Hope Mill in the present Government avenue. The site of the communal mill is vague, indicated by Mentzel in Part One as 'behind the Devil's Mountain'. In the *Monuments of South Africa* it is stated that 'the remains of a communal wind-mill is to be seen in the grounds of the Alexandra Institution' (p. 35). The well-known restored Mostert's Mill in Rhodes Avenue was owned in the late 18th century by the van Reenen family.

<sup>30</sup> Samuel Elsevier of 'sGravenhage was Sekunde or Vice-Governor from 1697-1707. He was involved in the charges of private farming and trading lodged against W. A. van der Stel and was dismissed on these grounds.

it is a fatiguing task for the slaves when they have to work at them in turns and, as usually happens, have to grind a quarter muid of grain with it every day.

The reason why so few mills have been built is to be found in the nature of the rivers. For excepting the Salt River near the City, the Little Berg River, the "Great" River (Great Berg River) and the Great Fish River, as well as the Oliphants Rivier, that is, the one that flows eastward into St. Sebastian's Bay, and is there called the Gouritz River, all the other rivers dry up in summer.<sup>31</sup> In winter during the rainy season, all the rivers flow strongly, overflow their banks and would on account of their swift current wash away the mills built on them. It is further impossible, owing to scarcity of wood, to build a weir and thus conserve the water by leading it into mill furrows. Indeed, everything would still be possible, but that the advantage to be obtained would not offset the cost of erection. The only way of remedying the lack of water mills would be to construct several wind mills in Holland and send them in parts to Africa. Even this would not be a paying proposition, since generally the farmers live widely scattered from one another, so that it would be far too much bother for them to transport their grain even if it were only three or four miles to the mill, and, as often happens, have to wait many days for the grinding when wind is lacking.

I am always embarrassed when I am questioned in company about this land of Africa, and have to give a short sketch of it; since one can call it, not improperly, a land of contradictions. If one says, for example, that it is a land of high and partly unscalable mountains, one knows on the other hand, that it possesses most beautiful plains and very rich corn-fields. The whole land is irrigated by many large streams and innumerable small rivers, brooks and fountains, and yet lacks water. Game is amazingly plentiful, indeed there is a superabundance of antelopes, gazelles, waterfowl and other birds, yet in

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<sup>31</sup> According to Sparrman's map. Mentzel adds "It is, however, not entirely certain whether the last-named Oliphants Rivier is not the same as the one called Great River or Great Berg River". This is a typical example of confusion caused by the common South African practice of giving the same names to many rivers and other places, a practice upon which all travellers comment.

most districts roast venison is uncommonly rare. Forests exist in immeasurable stretches, partly already explored, partly still impenetrable, and yet there is a growing scarcity of both firewood and other useful wood and timber. Viticulture produces to excess an exquisite juice, nevertheless one finds wines that are sour and sometimes good for no better purpose than to serve as vinegar and brandy; indeed many inhabitants do not have a sufficient quantity of it to give as a tonic to an invalid. There is salt in the salt pans in such abundance that the greater part of it is left to dissolve again, and is carried away unused by the water flowing from the mountains: and yet I have known a great scarcity of it in my time.

There is also a great diversity of climate in this otherwise fairly temperate country. In some parts the heat of the sun seems to dry up and parch everything, while at the same time everything freezes in the mountainous regions, especially around the Sneeuwbergen which lie nearest the tropic of Cancer. On the 3rd December, 1774, which is at the hottest time of the year, the soil in the Roggeveld was, according to the account of Dr. Thunberg and Francis Masson, white with frost and in the swamps the ice lay thicker than a florin, but on the same day they suffered more from heat at the foot of the mountain than from cold at its summit. In different parts of the country some inhabitants have to leave their farms on account of the great drought while others have the greatest reason to complain of the floods. This happens especially near the Great Fish River, which sometimes, although no rain has been observed, in a short time comes down and overflows so rapidly that travellers who spent the night on its banks were hard put to save themselves, their cattle, wagon and possessions, and some have even on occasion been swept away by the stream. Many a farmer who counts his cattle by the thousand, has to go hunting to obtain lean eland, buffalo and buck meat to eat with his fat beef and mutton, for want of bread. In some of the bays and creeks on the sea coast there is fish in abundance which also occasionally enter the river mouths and are caught there; but in the rivers there are none. In only one single river—the Great River or Great Berg River (called by Sparrman the Oliphants Rivier and Gouritz



River), carp is found comparable to those of Europe. A certain Jesuit, whose name escapes me, writes thus of the city of Genoa in a little cosmography which he published: "the waters are fishless, the women dissolute, and the men faithless and irreligious". Were one to apply this to the rivers of Africa, and to the slaves, male and female, I believe one could say it of Africa with greater justification than of Genoa. But, whatever the contradictions, the intelligent reader will understand that the diverse accounts quoted are due to differences of locality and circumstance.

At the same time, however, a person may be suspected of being untruthful in society through such stories as cannot on the spur of the moment be analysed and explained; to give but one example of this, the observant reader will remember that in the First Volume I wrote that the burghers of the Cape gave no banquets because they could not serve their guests unusual foods, especially venison. So when later it is stated that antelopes and gazelles (which include deer, roebuck, bush buck, springbuck, klipspringer and many other types of game) were found, shot, and eaten in abundance in their hundreds and thousands, and in many places also hares, partridges, pheasants, wild duck, snipe and waterfowl, it would seem to the ignorant as though one were contradicting oneself. If then the conversation did not continue to the point where one could immediately give explanations, one could easily pass for a liar and one might even be regarded as having been caught in the act of telling an untruth. It is, therefore, risky enough to tell one thing or another about foreign parts, which are unknown in our fatherland, particularly when one does not possess enough common sense and intelligence to examine an unusual object closely or to observe it as it really is. In this way has Kolbe (and relying on him, the Abbé de la Caille and others) proved himself a very poor naturalist when he writes that the rainwater that flows from the mountains during the rainy season draws out salt from them, and that when the rivers dry up in summer, the deposits that remain behind in deep holes coagulate into salt. Quite unnecessarily he tries to make his pretence still more plausible by saying that these salt pits have no subterranean connection with the sea.

What poor reasoning! What connection with the sea then, have the salt mines of Halle in Saxony, in Swabia and the Inn Valley, also at Salz near Magdeburg, at Salzkoten in the district of Faderborn and in many other parts in the centre of Germany? How close to the sea are the salt mines of Wieliczka in Poland? And does one not find fresh water in these very holes which are the deepest of all mine pits? The parts of Africa where salt is gathered, are real salt pits and are also not very distant from the sea. When the rainwater flowing from the mountains during the rainy season fills and overflows these pits, the salt contained in them is indeed dissolved and carried along, but later when the superfluous water has run down, fresh particles of salt form in the water that was left in the pit and as soon as this water is evaporated by the heat of the sun, solidify into crystals, providing in many places a very fine white salt; elsewhere a coarse salt. In many pits the salt is impure on account of the adjacent sand strips. The proof of my contention is as clear as daylight for before the rivers which fill the salt pits dry up altogether, one finds at distances of between 200 and 500 yards from the salt pits, and even further, other small cavities or holes in which some of the same rain and mountain water has not yet entirely dried up. In these cavities one finds water that has indeed become malodorous but by no means salty. Therefore, if the rainwater flowing from the mountains were to dissolve the particles of the mineral mountain salt and carry them along, then in all such cavities, where water can remain and evaporate, salt should collect, be deposited and crystallize, which is not the case. If Kolbe's physics had any foundation, then the water flowing from the mountains would at least have a somewhat salty taste. But not in the least is this so. In this country, all the water flowing from the mountains into or over the salt holes has the purest and most agreeable taste. No better test of this can be made than by using it for making tea. All tea at the Cape made with water flowing from the mountains, has a far more delicious taste than when made with water drawn from other parts. A certain proof that the African salt pits have their own particular kind of salt, is furnished by the large salt pan of the Groenekloof. This pit supplies far more salt than

water that has remained in it, and the guards stationed there testify that the salt in the middle of the pan is deeper than the height of a man. Most of the salt found in Africa, but especially that of the salt pans in Groenekloof, is white, granulated and of a pure flavour, so that one may say the same of the salt collected in Groenekloof as of good wine, viz.: that it is fine and good *odore, sapore* and *colore*<sup>32</sup>; and it has in common with the salt of Halle and Luneburg the quality that it has no smell, a pure taste without bitterness, and the colour white as snow; the grain, however, in transparent crystals.

Besides the larger and smaller streams, of which the latter dry up in summer, especially during the dry season from November to March or April, the fertility of the soil is greatly stimulated in many places through the numerous springs and brooks originating in them, which the inhabitants turn to good account in that they lay out their gardens and vineyards below the springs; then they lead the rills from one place to another between the vines or garden-beds so that next to these everything grows very luxuriantly. If the summer is unusually warm and dry, even these generally dry up during the day or flow weakly; they overflow during the night only. Then in many places swarms of birds would assemble to quench their thirst. There is at the Cape a kind of bird called a finch, which should not be compared with the European kind, that always keep together in large flocks. It is nearly twice the size of the European sparrow, of a lemon yellow colour and has black wings with a black patch on its head, which during the summer is as black as velvet, but during the winter is tinged with grey especially in the female.<sup>33</sup> These birds, which keep together in large swarms throughout the year and cause a great deal of damage to the crops, gather in large numbers at these springs and streamlets, and I can truthfully assert that I have often shot at them, causing little or no damage to the wheat. When roasted they are as tasty as our fieldfare,<sup>34</sup> are uncommonly fat after

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<sup>32</sup> 'in smell, taste and colour'.

<sup>33</sup> Probably the Cape Bishop bird — Kaapse Kaffervink (*Euplectes Capensis*) see Roberts A. *Birds of South Africa*, p. 347.

<sup>34</sup> *Turdus Pilaris*.

harvest time, and in this state, resemble our ortolan. On the occasion of a wedding at a farm which I attended, I shot on the previous day so many of these birds as were sufficient for two large pies which, on account of their excellent taste, were wholly consumed by the wedding-guests.

Beasts of prey are a great nuisance to the inhabitants of the farms. From twenty to twenty-four miles from the city only the tiger-wolf or spotted hyena and the *Schakal* or jackal are a menace to the sheep. The eagles,<sup>35</sup> which the inhabitants call *Stroutvogels* (since they are ignoble and eat carrion), and the hawks seize many a fowl. The many beasts of prey may indeed be blamed for the lack of much game in this region, such as hares, partridges and the like; for the hyena and fox steal upon them at night while the birds of prey kill and carry them off during the day. It is surprising that though one sees no eagle in the air yet an animal has hardly fallen down when half a dozen of the largest eagles perch on it. The country has plenty of snakes, adders, scorpions and vermin of this type, but still (at least in those parts up to 24 miles from the city) by no means in such numbers as many travellers mention. Since the Europeans have colonised this country, the number of these destructive creatures has perceptibly decreased and for this reason, that it is the custom during autumn to set fire to and burn the driest parts of the land after harvesting has been completed; animals such as these cannot escape the fire, for it spreads very rapidly, and they are burnt together with the stubble on the fields.

Hospitality rules everywhere. The draught-cattle, both horses and oxen belonging to the travellers, are everywhere driven to the meadows to find their own food, though, in many parts, this is rather scarce, especially in the dry season, consisting of bushes and woody plants. The traveller himself cannot rely on the length of his purse for service and entertainment, but must be content with the fare his host is able and willing to supply according to his domestic circumstances. Still, everyone does everything possible to provide his guest with food

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<sup>35</sup> Vultures, of course; the most common type is the *Ausvoël* (or Kolbe's vulture.)

and drink. It is very difficult to travel in those parts where no farmers live, and one sometimes has to journey two or three days without coming across a farmstead; then one has to take food for oneself and one's men. This cannot so easily be done, and since there are no inns, one should enquire carefully from the inhabitants how far one would have to travel from one farmer to another, so that one could obtain sufficient necessary provisions from the farmer last visited, either for money or goods. Meat can be had everywhere in sufficient quantity, but bread is sometimes lacking. Tea, coffee, sugar-candy and tobacco are in such cases the best "cheques payable on sight" for which one can get all manner of things at their disposal from the farmers living in the most distant places and in the deserts. But water, the indispensable drink for man and beast, is on such journeys sometimes very scarce and not to be had for money. Should travellers perchance have to let their cattle graze in a spot where much pisgras grows, which prevents the animals from urinating, or another grass from which the horned cattle get *Lam-siekte* (lame-sickness) and lose their hooves and claws, then the traveller would be in dire straits and would sometimes have to stop for a long time, or have to buy other draught animals at great expense.

No less do the streams of this country obstruct and hinder the traveller. For they either flow so quickly on account of their steep fall from the high mountains that they dry up and deny water to man and beast, or they rise so high above their beds in the rainy season that they overflow their banks and the adjacent land which they turn into morasses, not easy to pass through. In only one spot does one find a small ferry-boat; small boats or punts on scarcely two of the rivers, and hardly ever a bridge. Travellers are therefore compelled to make a detour of many miles to find a ford for their wagons; in this way many an accident has taken place, whereby the men and their animals have lost their lives. *Mannig braaf voor of achter os* (many a fine front or back ox), as those born there are accustomed to say, has had to forfeit its life in this way; and when afterwards the owner again passes these spots where he lost one of his most cherished oxen, he will not fail to remember his lost

*Schieman*, *Bootsman*, *Schipper* or *Stuurman* (by such names do they call their oxen and address them) to mourn for him and extol his distinguished qualities: for the reader should know that the farmers of Africa give special names to all their trek-oxen, horses and cows; and although they are able to keep their oxen at an even pace to right and left with an extraordinary long whip, still a shout, especially at the foremost pair, gives the best result; so that one must not be surprised at how obediently they listen to the shout: "*Stuurman hot*"! "*Schieman haar*"!<sup>36</sup> and how soon they regulate their pace to a full trot, to the left or to the right. But I do not wish to dwell any longer at this stage on general matters, but will hasten to a description of the rural districts where I shall still have the opportunity of recalling some general facts about the country.

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<sup>36</sup> To the left! To the right!

## CHAPTER TWO.

### Of the Cape District.

In the year 1712 a quarrel arose between the Acting Fiscal Willem van Putten and the Landdrost of Stellenbosch Johann Starrenberg, on account of the arrest by the latter of some escaped convicts.<sup>37</sup> The delinquents had been in the service of the Company as sailors, but escaped and were committing theft and robbery. The Acting Fiscal, under whose jurisdiction the servants of the Company fell in cases of serious crimes, considered that it was his duty to prosecute these also and obtain his fee for the case; but the Landdrost had undertaken the search which led to their arrest by his *veldwagters*<sup>38</sup> and therefore insisted that it was his duty, according to instructions received from General-Commissioner Baron van Rheede, to institute criminal proceedings and execute the penalty imposed. The matter was brought before the Council of Policy who decided according to the well-known axiom: *prior tempore potior jure*. However, to avoid similar unnecessary disputes in future, it was decided that the Fiscal's jurisdiction should extend, within definite boundaries and specially named places, from Tygerberg straight across the country to the Mossel Bank River. In spite of this rule, however, it would not be considered that one was trespassing on the jurisdiction of the other, if the Fiscal sent his men or a burgher-commando in search of a criminal beyond these confines into the Landdrost's district, or if *vice versa*, the

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<sup>37</sup> An indirect reference to this incident is found in the official records (*Resolutions of Council of Policy*, 15 December, 1711, Cape Archives, c. 8.) The landdrost was Jan Mulder, not Starrenberg who was involved in the charges affecting W. A. van der Stel and was dismissed in 1707.

<sup>38</sup> generally translated as 'field cornets' but P.E. Roux in *Die Verdedigingstelsel aan die Kaap onder die Hollands-Oosindiese Kompanjie*, p. 175 points out that 'field cornet' was first used by the English after 1795 as equivalent for *veldwagter* or *veldwagmeester*. The office of *veld kornet* in the modern sense dates from 1805.

latter caught and arrested criminals in the Cape district. As in cases of this kind the administration of justice should come before all secondary matters, and as the fugitive might easily escape the net while his arrest was being retarded by long drawn out formalities and requirements, it would be foolish to set boundaries to the law which it could not cross. Besides, everyone without exception was bound by the laws of the land to stop and arrest any criminal, and hand him over at his convenience to the nearest law-office, without prejudicing anyone's perquisites by this procedure.

The district which was then allotted to the Fiscal has been called the Cape district from that time, and we are now going to describe it.

In the fifth chapter of the First Volume we have described the two gardens of the Company, Rondebosch and Nieuwe Land<sup>39</sup> which lie in this district, together with the public buildings; all that remains then is to consider the other estates situated in this district, and some further noteworthy features.

It is obvious that the entire Table Valley, the City, the Castle and the three<sup>40</sup> gardens already described lie in this district, and that their inhabitants fall under the criminal jurisdiction of the Independent Fiscal. The first object that meets our eye when we travel in this district is the Salt River (Zout Rivier) which flows into Table Bay at a distance of about one-third of a German mile from the Castle. It received its name from the fact that the tide forces its way in and makes its water salty. One may observe the ebb and flow of the sea for a long distance in this river. At ebb-tide the sea-water recedes quickly and the genuine river water becomes drinkable. But the following flood tide again mixes the waters; the river water becomes salty once more and is then called "brak", that is "salted". One must not suppose, however, that all water that is called "brak" is undrinkable or so salty that one cannot drink it. There are fountains and streams which the inhabitants have to use daily for cooking and drinking and yet are called "brak" because they

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<sup>39</sup> Newlands.

<sup>40</sup> i.e. the above two and *De Tuinen* (the Gardens) in Cape Town.



have only a slight salty taste. Through drinking it one gradually gets accustomed to the taste, but it imparts an unpleasant flavour to tea.

The Salt River springs from Table Mountain. Several small streams that flow from the South-South-East side of the mountain unite at its base and discharge their waters into its bed.<sup>41</sup> This river, which on its course to the sea is reinforced by several other streams, irrigates other parts besides the two afore-mentioned gardens of the Company. At a short distance from it lies the world-famous Constantia, which consists of two vineyards that provide one of the most delicious wines that compares best with Persian or "Schirach" wine. In this neighbourhood too lie several "Buyten Posten" namely the "Schuur" where a waggon park with oxen is kept; also the "Paradys" which is a small forest connected with Hout Bay by the so-called "Hell" that furnishes wood for fuel and building. The names "Paradise" and "Hell" were given to these two forests because the wood can be conveniently fetched from the former but with difficulty from the other, situated as it is between high hills and steep rocks. In this vicinity there is also a "Buyten Post" called the "Witte Boome" after a small tree growing there, whose wood is very spongy the leaves on one side being beautifully green while on the reverse side they are silver, presenting a very pleasant sight even with only a slight wind blowing; for when the leaves are ruffled there is an interplay of light forming a dazzling picture with green and silver intermingled in many different patterns. According to Sparrman's account these African silver-trees are the largest of their species.<sup>42</sup>

Not far from here is the beer-brewery which we mentioned in the First Volume, chapter 13, in connection with the leasing of land. But were we to describe by name all the farms situated in the neighbourhood of Salt River it would serve no good purpose, since one could say nothing about them except that their owners have few cornfields but considerable vineyards and also grow fine vegetables for sale in the City; that, besides, they also

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<sup>41</sup> among them the Liesbeeck and the Black R.

<sup>42</sup> *Leucadendron argenteum*. For description see Marloth, *op. cit.* I. P. 145.

keep some sheep, and cows from which they obtain most of the fresh butter which is brought to the City where it is sold dearly enough, mostly up to 16 stuivers per pound.

Were I to tell the truth about these estates lying in the vicinity of Salt River and not very distant from the City, then I must say they are generally very pleasantly situated, have excellent vineyards and orchards and the dwellings are sturdily and comfortably built, being even provided with glass windows, which are seldom seen in the platteland; but these farms are not so profitable that the owner could make a good living from them; therefore they belong, as a rule, to such town burghers as have means and are not forced to live on the products of their farms. A certain young man, a shoemaker named Jasper Martens, who while still under the age of 25 had married, with the consent of the Master of the Orphan Chamber, the daughter of a deceased burgher called van Laar, ventured to invest his own earnings and the inheritance of his wife in one of these farms in the hope of being able to make a living from it. The farm was called (unless I am mistaken) *Wyn en Brood* on account of its fertility. Whether he understood cobbling better than agriculture, I do not know; only this I do know, that he had to sell the property a few years afterwards at a loss: thereupon he took over a wine-shop and finally returned to the shoemaker's last.

In the Salt River one sometimes finds fish brought in by the flood tide, but which are later carried back to the sea with the ebb.

The Mossel Bank River, flowing with many windings along the Salt River and eventually emptying itself into that river,<sup>43</sup> originates only from the rain-water that falls on the surrounding hills. During the period of the customary "Monsoon" it is swollen with water, but dries up again immediately after the rainy season: or to put it more clearly, the water flows away quickly leaving some stagnant evil-smelling pools in holes and cavities until they dry up altogether.

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<sup>43</sup> The Mossel Bank R. flows into the Diep R. which was in Mentzel's time included in the Salt River.

Another river in this neighbourhood is called Kaiser's River because a man called Kaiser had been drowned in it. It flows through the arid Zand Vallei<sup>44</sup> and dries up completely in summer. This river one could aptly call the river without beginning and without end; because it starts purely from collected rain water and sinks away in the Zand Vallei, so that it resembles a long motionless lake while there is water in it. But when during a long rainy season the volume of water becomes too large, it breaks with the aid of the North-West wind, through the opposing sandbanks as through an embankment, overflows the land in front of it, spreads, and eventually empties itself into False Bay. Similarly another stream which rises in the Stellenbosch mountains flows through the Zand Vallei into False Bay in winter, but becomes stagnant until it dries up in summer.

To the north-east of Table Mountain and the City, about two miles off, and to the east of the Bay, lie the Tyger Mountains, whose name Kolbe derives in a very simple way from the fact that from a distance they appear to be spotted like the skin of a tiger. They are a low belt of hills which hang together in one line like a chain and are about four miles in circumference. When the country was first settled, a few tigers or leopards may have existed in these hills which prompted the first inhabitants to call them the Tyger Mountains. But even so, it is certain that they did not receive their name from their apparent spots. I should indeed like to ask what special spots are to be seen on these hillocks different from other mountains on which corn-fields, vineyards and shrubs are also intermingled? When on a dull day the sun breaks through the clouds and shines now and again in an otherwise gloomy sky, it is indeed pleasant to see many an illumined cornfield between dark spots or shadowy parts overgrown by shrubs; but in this the Tyger Mountains are no different from other mountains of the same kind that sparkle with cornfields and vineyards; they have this quality in common. It is a fact that on and around these Tyger Mountains very fertile grain fields have been cultivated and that the adjoining vineyards are also quite

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<sup>44</sup> Zand Vallei is the old name for Muizenberg valley; the Keyzer's R. loses itself in Muizenberg Vlei.

profitable. But the wine made there is the worst of all the wines that can be sold to the dealers and is only palatable if mixed with other mellow wines. It does improve with age, but becomes harsh and very heady. In this state, one may verily call it old and settled, but also "crass" and "grande" that is raging causing a splitting headache, and he who has drunk too much of it, feels pretty sick the next day. The general dealers (chafferers) who sell most of this wine to soldiers, sailors and slaves, usually stock two kinds: old dry wine, and new sweet wine, and supply to everyone according to his desire, either kind separately or the two kinds mixed. The old wine is mostly such as comes from Tygerberg and the sweet type from grapes grown around the Salt River. Wine from all the other parts is kept unmixed; for it is mellow, finer and not so detrimental to man. Even so, most of the ordinary Cape and inferior country wines have the drawback that they make those who become drunk on it bilious, for which reason the drinkers are all too soon incited to quarrel and fight. Such fights sometimes end in murder and man-slaughter, unless stopped in time. Daily instances of this occur at the above-mentioned general dealers. In the respectable wine houses, on the other hand, the proprietors generally take pains to secure wine from grapes grown in Hottentots-Holland, around Stellenbosch, Salt River, Roode Zand and Zwart Land, Drakenstein and Fransche Hoek. Covetous wine merchants, who sell a great deal of wine in the small quantities of a pail or half a pail to deck- or non-commissioned officers on board ship, who they may presume will soon consume the wine on the voyage, have an additional inducement to mix the Tygerberg and other unpleasant wines with the so-called "flat" wines (of which more will be said in the tenth Chapter which deals with viticulture) for the purpose of improving their taste. But it is an obvious fraud; for such mixed wines do not keep long, start fermenting again, turn sour and are injurious to health.

Water is rather scarce in the Tygerberg region during the fine season. Although some small streams trickle down the mountains from springs, there is just about sufficient water at every farmhouse (of which there are about twenty) for the use of man, but not for the animals, which mostly have to drink

the standing water left over from the rainy season and often suffer much from thirst during the dry summer. In years of great drought when the small fountains dry up altogether, the local inhabitants obtain most of their drinking water from a neighbouring spring, but its water is "brak". Kolbe's assertion that the lack of water is compensated by a mist which spreads over these mountains during the night, moistening the land with an abundance of dew, is quite wrong. In the rainy season, particularly when the North and North-West winds blow, these mountains, like the three at the Cape and all other mountains of this region, are covered with thick misty clouds; but during the summer and when the South-Easter blows, they can be seen clearly like all the other mountains without misty clouds either by day or by night. Still, one must admit that the soil there is very rich and fertile. But this applies to all other grain fields and is not the consequence of moisture from exceptional clouds. It is well-known that very little or no rain falls at the Cape in the four to five months from November to February or March, and even when it does, it is only a small local shower that does not last long. Nevertheless the African lands are generally fertile and the cornfields stand in full flower even when rain is scarce and most needed, yielding ten, fifteen and sometimes twentyfold returns in grain. Consequently it is not necessary for Nature to care in an extraordinary way for the Tygerbergen and make them fertile with mists at night.

The vegetables planted round the Tygerbergen and in the gardens in their vicinity have no very pleasant taste, nor are they ever brought to the City for sale, for there is scarcely sufficient for home consumption. Lemon trees and a few orange trees, which are however thought little of, are also to be found in these gardens; other fruit trees are uncommon, and fruit, such as apples and pears, are of indifferent quality. Plum and cherry trees are not planted, since the multitude of birds never allow them to ripen properly; I did also observe a few nut and almond trees but had no opportunity of tasting their fruit.

In a somewhat Easterly direction from the Tygerbergen lie the Koebergen. They are called thus purely to distinguish them from other mountains and to have a name of their own. Water

is very scarce around there, most of the soil is poor and only a few farmsteads lie in this neighbourhood. Some sheep farming is practised, but cattle especially trek-oxen have to be brought from elsewhere. Nearest these and hardly four miles from the City, lie two blue hills,<sup>45</sup> which like many other such hills, present a bluish appearance from a distance, and are small, uncultivated and uninhabited. Just as in the case of the Koebergen, no game is found in these hills, least of all elephants, which are not found on this side of the Berg River. But that there may be some hyenas and an occasional tiger on these hills, I shall not contest, for these beasts of prey have no definite lair in any particular place.

From these Koe- and Blaauwbergen the Cape district extends to Mossel Bank, through a sandy country called the Tyger Valley<sup>46</sup> which is mostly uninhabited. Between this sandy desert and the City a few isolated houses have indeed been built and a few sheep kept, but no sowing is done nor is there any viticulture. Since we have to turn back in our description to the other side and to False Bay, I wish, as it were in passing, to supplement what I had no opportunity of mentioning above, namely, that it was considered expedient on first establishing the Colony, to form a cavalry outpost at the Salt River. Later a large stable to contain about 50 horses was built. The first Commander, Riebeeck, had a twofold purpose in view. First to prevent the aborigines, the Hottentots, who could not yet be fully trusted, from making a surprise attack on the new colonists in Table Valley; secondly and chiefly, to see that the cattle bartered with the Hottentots did not cross the Salt River and return to their homes.

The Hottentot cattle still retain this habit on all possible occasions up to the present day, and thereby make it clear that they prefer staying with the more animal-like Hottentots to being forced to do hard labour for more civilised people. The expedition described in the eighth Chapter of this Volume lost 30 head of bartered oxen in one night and believed they had been stolen by Bushmen. This party must have watched its cattle poorly; but to me it seems more probable that the missing oxen

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<sup>45</sup> Blaauwberg.

<sup>46</sup> the area which includes the present village of Parow.

turned back and returned to their former masters, the Hottentots. The just-mentioned military post established at the Salt River was called *Keer de Koe*<sup>47</sup> but later when it was considered of no further use after a large portion of the country had already been colonised, it was demolished and at the present time a solitary house stands on the further side of the river where it is crossed at low tide, in which wine, tea and coffee are sold for the convenience of travellers who sometimes have to spend a few hours there at night when the tide is high.

This crossing is marked by a few stakes planted on the banks of the river and a person should be careful not to wade through the river or drive through it far above or below this sign; since, because of the quicksand present, more than one has got stuck there, been submerged and lost his life, if help did not reach him in time and the tide had overtaken him.

To the south of the Cape and to the west of False Bay but adjacent to it lie the Steenbergens after which the north-west side of that Bay is called Steenberg's Hoek.<sup>48</sup> About half way between this "corner" and Cape Town lies the famous Constantia. It consists, as already stated, of two vineyards and two homesteads, the older one of which was erected by Governor Simon van der Stel, and the other in better architectural taste by a later owner, a burgher. Both vineyards are planted alongside on similar soil, but the former is a bit more elevated and commands a view of False Bay. Both are abundantly provided with water and the adjoining gardens are very fertile. Both produce similar red and white wine; only connoisseurs can distinguish some difference in flavour. It is certain that the first vines planted there came from Persia. Later many vines were also brought from the Rhine in Germany and from Spain. Naturally the vines whose grapes did not taste well were allowed to die, and shoots

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<sup>47</sup> see Walker, *Historical Atlas of South Africa*, Map 4. Walker says that *Keert de Koe* was a block house and that the cavalry outpost was on the site of Camp Ground, Rondebosch, both were part of a chain of defences along the Liesbeeck to guard against the Hottentots. Graham Botha in *Place Names in the Cape District*, p. 36 mentions a farm by that name owned by P. J. de Wet with whom Clive stayed in 1767 on his homeward voyage from India.

<sup>48</sup> Muizenberg Mountain.

of better vines were planted instead. At first vines were planted very sparingly until a German showed the African colonists how the runners could be made to grow again, for they took root if cut off and sunk in the ground. Through these roots or shoots the types of vines have become so intermingled that it would at present be impossible to say whether the grapes now grown originate from the Persian or the Spanish vines, especially in regard to the Muscatel type. This much is certain, that at Constantia the vines from the Rhine have been entirely outgrown by the others; since in this vineyard one finds no grapes at all that have any characteristics of Rhine wine. For the making of this delicious wine, so pleasant to taste, the owners of this vineyard cause all the berries to be picked from their stems before pressing, lest the slightest trace of the sour and harsh juice of the stems be pressed out and mixed with the wine. In several other parts of Europe where good wine is produced, the same procedure is followed, but here the quality of the wine depends mainly on this method of production.

Both these vineyards have changed hands very often since their first cultivators, and I do not remember having heard of a single case where a son inherited it from his parents. As far as I know, they have always been sold by public auction at a rather high price after the death of the owner. In 1769 M. Bougainville<sup>49</sup> was the guest of the owner of one of these vineyards, a Mr. van der Spuy (not van der Spie). According to the latest report from Africa, a certain Kluthe<sup>50</sup> has become the

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<sup>49</sup> Louis de Bougainville (1729-1811) famous French navigator and writer visited the Cape during his voyage round the world begun in 1766. Some notes on his stay at the Cape are contained in his *Voyage autour du Monde*. He fought with distinction against Rodney in the Battle of the Saints (1782).

<sup>50</sup> The Constantia estate was divided on the death of Simon van der Stel (1712) into Groot Constantia and Klein Constantia. The first purchaser of Groot Constantia was Captain Olof Bergh, the energetic officer of the Company who led several expeditions into Namaqualand. Jacobus van der Spuy was its owner from 1759 to 1778. Hendrik Cloete became the owner of Groot Constantia in 1779 and this estate remained in the Cloete family till it was purchased by the Cape Government in 1860. Partially destroyed by fire in 1925 it was restored by F. K. Kendall and declared a National Monument. See D. Fairbridge, *Historic Houses of South Africa* and F. K. Kendall—*The Restoration of Groot Constantia*.



owner of one vineyard, but whether he is the owner of both vineyards can only be surmised but not confirmed from the extract of the first part of the letter. According to this same letter, the said Kluthe prides himself on corresponding with several European potentates, because of his trade in wine with them; but of course this may just be the usual African habit of boasting. Still I would not dispute that when English, Danish, French and Prussian ships touch there they may order some wine from him and when they return from China or other parts of the East, take it with them for their rulers; but surely that would always have to take place with the consent of the Company or that of the Governor as their representative; for this is certain: a third of all wine made at Constantia, whether it turned out well or not, has to be delivered to the Company at a fixed price, and since the Company (as we explained in Chapter 12 of Volume One) according to statistics published of the money realised at a public auction of Constantia wine in 1762, makes an almost incredible profit, it may well be that it also buys the remainder at the yearly market value, makes a gift of a portion to the European Courts, and sells the remainder at great profit at public sales. The little that is sold by the owners per bottle to friends returning from India is of no consequence for the inhabitants of the Cape do not think much of it since to their taste it is too racy. The cost is also too great for them as they have to pay two guilders for a flask containing little more than two champagne bottles.

If then the European ships obtain a few casks of Constantia wine for their sovereign or even in his name only, nothing is more certain than that it is done by special order of the Company or by consent of the Government. It is therefore evident that there is no foundation for the correspondence of the potentates with the above-mentioned farmer, who seems to be a son of Jacob Kluthe, a wealthy farmer of Bottelary, not far from Klapmuts.<sup>51</sup> For the rest, the wine sold in various parts of Europe under the name of Constantia wine or *Vin du Cap*

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<sup>51</sup> Notwithstanding Mentzel's doubts the claim seems to be authentic. See note V.R.S. 6, p. 113. A biographical note on Hendrik Cloete will be found in V.R.S. 15, p. 272.

is no other than the wine from Hottentots-Holland, which bears the closest resemblance to the Constantia type. It may also at times be mixed with Madeira or de Palma wine, but that it should besides have been boiled, brewed or adulterated and treated in other ways is absolutely incredible; for its own body cannot be imitated as it shows an immediate effect on the faces of the drinkers and warms their blood in a noticeable but pleasant way. If the wine lacks this quality, it disavows its fatherland and is no true African wine, least of all from Constantia, and not even from Hottentots-Holland. A disgraceful allegation regarding the adulteration of Constantia wine is made by the author of a philosophical and political history of India,<sup>52</sup> namely "that the Governor finds it profitable to permit those who grow these wines to deliver them only when mixed with wine from neighbouring vineyards". Verily, the successive Governors for sixty years, de la Fontaine, van Kerwel,<sup>53</sup> Swellengrebel, Tulbagh, and Baron van Plettenberg, did not have such base minds as to allow deliberately and with their own consent such knavish tricks. Indeed, such corrupt devices would give the Fiscal, were he to find them out, the welcome opportunity to show that he is independent of the Government for the very purpose of rapping the fingers of these gentlemen should they stretch them too far. All such armchair critics should be ashamed of themselves for concocting stories based on what they read in books to the disadvantage of honest men, without investigating matters on the spot and making sure of all the facts. What idea ought the directors of the Company to form of their representatives whom they entrust with all their wealth, when they receive such information? It is easy to slander an honest man, but the author of such slander ought to prove his statements. Take men like the Abbé de la Caille, Kolbe, P. Tachard<sup>54</sup>, Foerster<sup>55</sup>, Valentyn<sup>56</sup>, Vogel<sup>57</sup>, Merklin<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Raynal: For fuller reference see note V.R.S. 4. p. 180.

<sup>53</sup> for van Kerwel see V.R.S. 6. p. 68.

<sup>54</sup> Father Tachard like the Abbé de la Caille was an astronomer who made observations at the Cape in 1685. He paid another short visit in 1688. His references to the Cape in his *Voyages to Siam* are of slight importance.

<sup>55</sup> Johann Forster visited the Cape in 1772 and 1775 when accompanying Captain Cook on a voyage round the world. He published an account of the voyage in 1777.

and others, as instances of how difficult it is at the Cape itself to obtain definite knowledge of public affairs and matters of policy. Besides, such frauds, if they really happened, would remain secret and it would hardly be possible to talk of them so openly and cry them out to the whole world. But enough of this; let us pass on.

At the summit of one of the Steenbergens there is a large hole in the rocks called Prince's Castle which is 90 feet deep and 40 feet in length and width according to Kolbe's account. I have no doubt as to the correctness of the height, length and breadth, not having measured them, nor even gone as far as the entrance; but I hardly believe that Kolbe has seen it from the inside or that he ever saw it at all. The opening or entrance to it faces False Bay, from which it is not far. Kolbe is of opinion that it is artificial and made by human hands; this is evidently wrong and cannot be proved by the fact that a fragment of red flint lay near and that he took a small piece of stone from this cave with him. This cave was certainly there before the Dutch took possession of the Cape; and as to the Portuguese one knows definitely that they did not tarry there, still less did they undertake work of this kind. Signs as though digging had gone on there before this time is no proof that this cave was dug. Governors Simon and Willem Adriaan van der Stel who were very avaricious had digging done at many spots in a vain search for fine mineral ores. Had I, like Kolbe, found a small piece of heavy stone inside and taken it with me, I should have crushed it, washed and melted it, or tested it with nitric acid or *aqua regis*; but it was impossible for me to enter on account of the dense bush. Could there be a sillier story than that Kolbe and his friend Rossouw fired a rifle into the cave to discover

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<sup>56</sup> Francois Valentyn's *Beschryvinge van de Kaap de Goede Hoop* (1726) ranks high as an authority on early South African history. It is based on various visits between 1685 and 1714.

<sup>57</sup> Johann Vogel visited the Cape in 1679 and 1688. Theal says: "he left nothing on record which is not to be gathered from the colonial archives".

<sup>58</sup> Johann Jacob Merklein was a surgeon in the service of the Dutch East India Company. He published a book of travels *Beschreibung... unserer neunjährigen Reise im dienst der... Niederländischen Ost-Indianischen Compagnie*. In this book there is a reference to the newly-founded Colony which he visited in 1653.

whether there was a lion, tiger or wolf in it? What if such an animal had been there and attacked them? Kolbe goes even further and wants to make us believe that in this cave which consists of naked rock there were trees which they had first to burn down. I was on very friendly terms with Mr. Frederik Rossouw when he was about 60 years old—a worthy man, a watchmaker by trade; we spoke a good deal about African curiosities, but he did not once mention this trip to Prince's Castle with Kolbe. This cave is indubitably a freak of nature, but what is miraculous about that? Since many more are found in all four corners of the civilised world, for example Baumann's Cave in Germany, consisting of four caves, is far more wonderful than Prince's Castle. The stone figure in it called Erasmus of Rotterdam, bears only a vague resemblance to a statue. But at Adersbach in Bohemia near the Silesian frontier and close to Schömberg, nature has carved far more life-like figures: the inverted sugar-cone, a rock figure standing on its apex, having a slight support at the top; the monk, the old woman, the dog and the water-basin with its running water, are much cleverer freaks of nature than the Erasmus of the Cape. Kolbe cannot have seen many such natural phenomena since he is afraid of giving the Almighty credit for the Prince's Castle, but prefers to believe that the creature is more potent than the Creator. But, as already said, he did not see it himself, and to make the world believe that he has carefully examined it, he disputes a thing about which there has never been any doubt. Governor Simon van der Stel started a quarry here. Some of the red stones quarried were sent as samples to Holland, but the Company forbade this kind of ballast for the future.

There is here also a cave in a rock, now called Nero's Cave. Whence it derives its name is unknown. At least I have never been able to discover it. It is better known by the name "Madame haar Gat". The story goes that once a ship's officer gave a woman, for that lady's favour, four canisters of tea, a slave, a bag of coffee and a few bags of rice, which taken together fill a big space, thus giving rise to this expression whenever sailors in India wanted to give the impression of a large receptacle or hole. The discovery of this cave was.

however, more extraordinary. The following incident was the cause of it. Some eighty or ninety years ago a ship from India, which had gone off its course, finally reached False Bay after an unusually long voyage, whether through an error of the steersmen who had taken this for Table Bay, or of set purpose because the ship lacked victuals and especially water, is not known. However, as soon as the ship lay at anchor in the Bay, some of the crew were landed to look for water and for some people from whom the purser could buy provisions. But this part was still uninhabited. In the meantime this cave was discovered and its interior which had the appearance of a large oven was inspected by the ship's officers. Since the ship's biscuits (*beschuyt*) and the rice had been consumed and only a few barrels of meal left, it was decided to bake bread in what was supposed to be an oven. They presumed not incorrectly that an oven in a rock would naturally be very cold and consequently difficult to heat. For this reason the fire kindled in it was kept burning for 24 hours. Meanwhile a cask of meal was made into dough, but yeast was lacking. Sailors, however, are never at a loss for expedients. The lees in a wine-cask may serve this purpose just as well and even better in an emergency; and if need be some potash may be used. Venetian soap or Soap of Marseilles, of which the ship's surgeons stock a little at all times, also makes fine bread—which however tastes a little soapy. After heating the oven for 24 hours the dough was fashioned into small loaves, put in the oven whose opening was then filled with stones and smeared with clay and left overnight. But after opening the oven, they found that the flattened dough was as raw as when put in, and had to be fed to the swine.

The craving to eat bread with their pickled meat and smoked ham caused a second attempt to be made. The fire was kept burning for 48 hours with plenty of wood and double the heat; after that, the newly kneaded dough was put in the oven and left to bake for 24 hours. Again all the trouble was in vain for the molten dough was uneatable and had likewise to be fed to the swine, of which, as is well known, every ship carries a fairly large number. For this reason then, this cave obtained from the rough sailors the name "*Madame haar gat*" which I do not wish to translate.

But this much is clear from this story, that this cave could not have derived its name "Nero's Cave" from a Hottentot who is said to have lived in it, seeing that, though spacious, it has such a low ceiling that it would be impossible for a human being to inhabit it.<sup>59</sup>

On the western shore of False Bay lies another range of mountains called the Norwegian Mountains that extend to the space between the sea and False Bay. Formerly when the Company had instructed the Government to slaughter cattle to provide meat such cattle used to graze in the valleys of these mountains, which were close by. But since the meat contract has been leased from time to time, these parts were divided up and given to the colonists. Cattle-rearing is more convenient there than grain-farming hence the owners of this part take greater pains with the former than with the latter. The mountains project about six miles further towards the sea than the rest of the land.

After 1753,<sup>60</sup> when the East India Company commanded that all their ships that had to touch at the Cape during the unfavourable "Monsoon" should lay at anchor in False Bay, a new post was started there as mentioned in the First Volume. Some houses were built and a resident with other officials stationed there. It is evident that this part was added to the Cape district which was thereby enlarged. But of this new settlement, started after my time<sup>61</sup> I can give no account. Finally there remains to be stated that the quality of the vegetation of the Cape district is of a very mixed character, and that the Tyger Valley or the big Sandy Tract<sup>62</sup> occupies the larger part of it. It is here that the rootwood described in the First Volume is dug out to serve as fuel for the Cape community. Except for these roots, only patches of weak low shrubs grow here; much heath, and weeds

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<sup>59</sup> I have been unable to identify these caves with certainty. The locality suggests the Fish Hoek caves in the Skildergat ridge. The measurements do not rule out the possibility of Prince's cave being Skildergat. The low Nero's cave might be the Tunnel cave. See Goodwin and Lowe, *Stone Age Cultures of S. Africa*.

<sup>60</sup> The date was 1741.

<sup>61</sup> Two years after (in 1743).

<sup>62</sup> Cape Flats.

that are more ligneous than succulent. For this reason little sheep farming is undertaken in this widely extended sandy tract.

I would not fail to mention by name the estates or farms situated in this district; but few of these names are known. It is customary to call the farms by the names of their owners. These however change regularly through sale and re-sale and I therefore consider it very unnecessary to increase the length of this Description by useless labour; particularly since these houses are not such works of art as to need special mention. They are built in the same style throughout the country, except that some are smaller, others larger. Their floors are laid out either in clay mixed with cow-dung or paved with rubble-stones; very few have glass windows and that in the living room only. The other rooms have only shutters and there is no plank ceiling, the beams resting on the walls. Consequently there are no lofts or garrets, and immediately a person enters a house, one is also in the kitchen, and the thatch-covered roof meets the eye in every room. The so-called cellars are nothing but sheds built on a level with the ground and without windows, their entrance being on the north side.

## CHAPTER THREE.

### Of the Village of Stellenbosch and District.

Since the best lands in the Cape district had been divided among the colonists and made productive, and as more and more settlers, keen on agriculture, were sent out from Europe by the Company, the Governor at that time, Simon van der Stel, was impelled to discover other fertile fields, distribute them and have them cultivated. The parts round the Stellenbosch of today seemed at the time to be the most suitable, convenient and fertile, after the Governor had appropriated to himself the best portion of it i.e. Hottentots Holland. The lands had, however, first to be cleared of a great deal of shrub and undergrowth. This happened in the year 1680, not in 1670 as mentioned by Kolbe and others after him, using him as their authority. For it was only in that year that the second Commander (later Governor) Bax came to Africa. Later, he built the present Castle within the space of three years and left afterwards for Batavia. In the year 1672 Governor Simon van der Stel was still serving the Dutch army in the war against France, and was not sent to the Cape of Good Hope as Governor until 1675.<sup>63</sup> The colonists who settled in the above district had more reasons for keeping close together than those in the Cape district, since the latter could in case of need or when attacked by the Hottentots, easily be supported and protected by the soldiers in the Castle; for this reason, the former built their houses close together, but in such a way that each had a vineyard and garden next to his wheatfield and near his house, as is still the case to-day.

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<sup>63</sup> Here as elsewhere (cf V.R.S. 4. p. 60 and 62) Mentzel makes elementary mistakes in chronology. Johan Bax was Governor from March 1676 till his death in June 1678. Simon van der Stel arrived and was installed as Commander in October 1679; the title of Governor was revived for him in 1690. The Castle was begun in 1666 but work was suspended until 1672. It was partly occupied in 1674 but not completed till about 1679. (the dates 1772 and 1775 in the German text are obvious misprints.)



On both sides of the houses forming two streets they planted oak trees which have now grown very big and are in their prime. In the planting of trees, they carried out strictly the orders of the Company. Thus arose a village, which had grown to 30 houses with two streets, and been given the name Stellenbosch by the then Governor.<sup>64</sup> Since the soil in this neighbourhood proved very fertile, more people eager to settle as farmers arrived. They were given 60 morgen of land allotted according to the Company's orders, and had to build their houses in such a way that every estate lay an hour's walk from his neighbour's. Thus it is difficult to understand how some of these lie hardly 500 yards apart, when every dwelling-place had to be exactly an hour or half a mile distant from the next. It really comes down to this — that the distance between the centre of one's property had to be half a mile distant from the centre of one's neighbour's. This district was colonised so quickly that the Government had to build a church at one end of the village and provide a preacher for the community at the Company's expense. In 1685, this settlement together with the one founded shortly afterwards in the Drakenstein district, were placed under a separate jurisdiction by the General Commissioner Baron van Rheede who was there at the time. For this purpose, the said Baron appointed a Landdrost or "Balju" with several assessors called "Heemraeden", and Johann Mulder<sup>65</sup> was installed as first Landdrost and given detailed instructions. The Government was also commanded to build there, a suitable Raadhuis, a residence for the Landdrost, a gaol for arrested persons, and a dwelling for the Assistant Landdrost and for the veldwagters (or gendarmes).

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<sup>64</sup> i.e. by Simon van der Stel in 1679.

<sup>65</sup> Johan Mulder of Rotterdam was landdrost of Stellenbosch from 1685 to 1691 and again from March 1711 to December 1712. Kolbe who was in the later period Secretary to the Stellenbosch Board of Heemraden holds a high opinion of his ability and integrity. Mulders Vlei commemorates a grant of land made to him in 1714.

<sup>66</sup> A brief account of this fire is given in the *Dag Register*, 18 Dec. 1710, (Cape Archives, c. 602). The fire occurred the previous day and broke out in the *Raadhuis* but the cause is stated as 'not known'. According to Theal, de Meurs retired in March 1710, but this is incorrect as he signed the *Notulen* during December, 1710 and as late as January, 1711. In March 1711 Jan Mulder took over.

Twenty-five years later, in 1710, this place had the misfortune to burn down within two hours with the exception of two or three houses, the fire being aided by strong winds prevailing at the time. The Landdrost, Samuel Marinus de Meurs, had ordered one of his slaves to bring him a light for his pipe; this careless slave put some glowing coals in a small coal pan which he carried without cover through the courtyard. The wind blew one coal out onto the thatched roof which was immediately set alight. The blaze spread so quickly that the inhabitants could barely save themselves and had to abandon to the flames all their furniture and possessions.<sup>66</sup> The village was rebuilt about four years later in a better and more regular manner. It is very charmingly situated in a broad valley, flanked by fairly high mountains that loom in the distance, save on the south-west where there is an uninterrupted view of False Bay; a small river flows straight through it. Its distance from Cape Town is reckoned an eight-hour journey according to local custom<sup>67</sup>; but with a good horse one can do it in four hours.

The inhabitants and free burghers derive their living principally from grain growing, vegetable gardening and viticulture. Besides, all of them either engage in trades, for instance as blacksmiths, wagon builders, tailors, bootmakers, carpenters and thatchers, or they keep a general dealer's and wine shop. On Sundays nearly all the inhabitants provide accommodation for people coming to Church or on a visit. Those coming to church usually have their midday meal with their hosts after the service. However, they do not pay for either the meal or lodging in money, but have an arrangement whereby they make a yearly present of one or more muids of wheat according to the size of their family and the frequency of their visits. But that is not all; for if the hosts are willing to let the trek-oxen graze on their fields for the time being and serve plenty of tea after the meal etc., then the guests would bring some victuals with them occasionally; for the African farmer does not value his own *Denrées*<sup>68</sup> very highly. In this village then, there is neither free hospitality nor are there boarding-houses where one could lodge

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<sup>67</sup> reckoned by the pace of the ox at 3 to 4 miles per hour.

<sup>68</sup> delicacies.

and get food for money. The motto here is: one hand washes the other, and one good turn deserves another. Travellers seldom pass this place or spend a night there, and when this happens such traveller would always have a good friend with whom to stay. He could have wine fetched from a wine shop and nobody would charge for a meal. In my time the congregation had a very charming, benevolent, venerable and courteous clergyman called van Eghte.<sup>69</sup> He always stood in the pulpit with powdered hair and white kid gloves. His enunciation or voice: a tenor, was very pleasant; his delivery concise, to the point; edifying, yet intelligible to all. I once heard a sermon of his on these few words: "His blood come over us and our children" which I shall never in all my life forget, or want to forget. I also remember that the second preacher in the City Church, Mr. Kock<sup>70</sup> undertook to interpret in a series of sermons the Epistle of Jude.

This erudite Clergyman preached for three successive Sundays, three separate sermons, on the first verse of this epistle: "Judas, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ," during which he displayed really excellent scholarship; and yet his delivery was so unpretentious that both learned and unlettered understood him and were edified.

The Stellenbosch district extends on the East to Hottentots Holland and the mountains bordering on it; on the South to False Bay; on the West to the Tygerbergen, and the Tyger Valley as far as the boundaries of the Cape district; on the North, to the Mossel Bank River and the Paarlberg. It is much larger than the Cape district, even if the big sandy and almost uninhabited Tyger Valley were excluded from it. Since the Stellenbosch district is on the whole much more fertile and better cultivated (than the other), it will be necessary to consider it according to its four regions into which it is generally divided. The first and most important is called Hottentots Holland, the second Moddergat, the third Stellenbosch, and the fourth and smallest, Bottelary.

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<sup>69</sup> Salomon van Echten, from 1732 to 1736 at Stellenbosch; then at Drakenstein, 1736 to 1753.

<sup>70</sup> see V.R.S. 4. p. 80.

Hottentots Holland is the most southerly part of the Stellenbosch district. It derived its name from the Hollanders settling there next to the Hottentots.<sup>71</sup> For at that time they still treated the aborigines like maidens not to be offended. This territory is undoubtedly the most beautiful and most fertile in the entire Cape. It is irrigated by three rivers, and everything sown or planted there not only grows admirably but all the products can be conveniently conveyed to the City and Castle and sold for cash.

Grain and wine growing as well as cattle and sheep raising are very successful, since the mountains are covered with grass and the valleys richly watered. All this the fourth Governor of the Cape, Willem Adriaan van der Stel, knew how to turn to good account for himself. He appropriated to himself the entire region, built an excellent manor and some workshops and dwellings, planted vineyards, laid out gardens, a mill and such like, so that this land, originally consisting of 400 morgen, resembled a small European principality. I say this land originally consisted of 400 morgen, for in 1700 the Governor persuaded the Commissioner and Ordinary Councillor for India and later Governor of Batavia, Wouter Valckenier, then present, to confer upon him by deed an estate of 400 morgen. But at the instigation of the same Governor, the head gardener of the Company, Johann Hertzog<sup>72</sup>, also received from Valckenier a piece of land of 120 morgen which, however, after the departure of the Commissioner, he had to surrender to the Governor under conditions of purchase and sale. The latter

<sup>71</sup> Theal's version that it was so named by the Europeans because it was 'the choicest portion of the whole country' seems to be borne out by the passage in the journal quoted in Pettman, *South African Place Names*, p. 64. For a different interpretation of this passage see Graham Botha, *Place Names in the Cape Province*, p. 45.

<sup>72</sup> This farm was aptly named *Overwacht*. Jan Hertog or Hartogh was virtually the manager of W. A. van der Stel's private estate. Fouché in *The Diary of Adam Tas* is of opinion that Hartogh undertook illicit cattle 'bying' for the governor when he accompanied an expedition in 1705 ostensibly as a 'botanist', yet in Nov. 1707 (after A. v.d. Stel's removal from the office of Governor), he led a cattle buying expedition. Mossop, *op. cit.* pp. 81-85.

immediately added to the area about 520 morgen; finally the estate grew to about 4000 morgen.<sup>73</sup>

The activities of Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel are very well known to me. I have read the entire contents of both the Governor's defence, the *Deductie* and the *Contra-Deductie* of the burghers, have spoken with several of his opponents about the matter and can testify truthfully that old Kolbe in his summarised report, which he includes in the third part of his *Caput bonae spei* has not exaggerated but reported everything in a strictly truthful way.

By virtue of a writ and resolution of the Chamber of Seventeen, dated at Amsterdam, 30th October 1706, the Governor had to give up not only the entire Hottentots Holland, but also *Vergelegen*; the farm of his brother François van der Stel, situated close by,<sup>74</sup> and all the land was surveyed anew and divided among several colonists, but the magnificent manor of the Governor was demolished and razed to the ground, although the out-houses were bought from the Governor by the new owners.

The wine obtained from Hottentots Holland is the next best after that of Constantia and is produced from such vines as the Governor obtained from his predecessor and father, Simon van der Stel. He had planted vines on no less than 60 morgen of land at different places; 60 morgen he had used for fruit and vegetables; there were vast wheat fields, and since he had collected an unusually large number of livestock, 1200 cattle and 20,000 sheep, he was compelled to appropriate to himself still more land where he could have plenty of summer and winter grazing; but of this Kolbe can tell us more. As for me it is enough to say that the entire Hottentots Holland was divided among the Colonists by order of the East India Company, so that each possesses an area of 60 morgen of land and can make a very good living on its products.

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<sup>73</sup> The extent of the arable land at *Vergelegen* was 613 morgen. Mentzel probably includes some of the adjoining cattle runs held by the governor. For illustrative material regarding *Vergelegen* see D. Fairbridge, *Historic farms of South Africa*.

<sup>74</sup> This farm was called *Parcel Vallei*. F. van der Stel was exiled from the Cape but was allowed to keep the proceeds from the sale of his farm.

Three rivers irrigate this land; the largest is called the Laurens River. It springs from a mountain called *Keer weer* or "Turn back", since a person approaching it from Drakenstein is forced to turn back again to avoid the danger of getting lost and being unable to find the way out again; for one can travel by two very different roads from Hottentots Holland to Cape Town. Of these one, though shorter, is inconvenient, the other longer but much pleasanter to travel on.<sup>75</sup> Near its source, the Laurens River flows through deep shady valleys and therefore its water remains cold even in midsummer until the sun has passed over the tops of the mountains. If this water be drawn before the sun has heated it, and kept in a cool place, one may have a cool and refreshing drink of wholesome water the whole day, which must be very invigorating after the abundant but rather heady wine. Some small fish similar to our Schmerl<sup>76</sup> or Grundel<sup>77</sup> can be caught in the river and, at the mouth where it flows into False Bay, a few salt water fish sometimes enter with the flood tide but leave again with the ebb.

Governor W. A. van der Stel, as an expert farmer, knew how to turn this river likewise to good account. Like all other mountain streams, it had water in abundance during the rainy season, but in contrast very little in summer. During the wet season it overflowed its banks, submerged the land and ruined the crops; on the other hand, during the warm season everything perished through lack of water. The Governor therefore had a very large reservoir dug at the foot of the mountain and collected all the superfluous water of the rainy season in it. From this he had a threefold advantage. Firstly he stopped the overflow; secondly he led the water through a furrow onto his estate; and thirdly he had a water mill built on the lower part of the estate, driven by the flow of the water. This mill where he ground the grain necessary for his own establishment and also for others at a charge of 16 stuivers per muid, paid handsomely. One must admit that the Governor was an excellent, wise and farsighted farmer, and he could have become a very rich man, and that quite

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<sup>75</sup> For the various routes see Mossop, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-29.

<sup>76</sup> Bearded loach (*cobitis barbaticca*), a fresh water fish.

<sup>77</sup> black goby — a rock fish.

deservingly, if he had not been so brutal, selfish, avaricious and unjust, nor extorted everything from the colonists by force; but his motto was: "*sit raptum vel captum modo fit aptum*"<sup>78</sup> and this led the East India Company to forbid any of its servants, high or low, to own the least bit of farm land, vineyard, cattle and so forth.

The other two rivers in Hottentots Holland should rather be called streamlets than rivers. They have their source in the mountains through the confluence of rain water and flow into False Bay during the rainy season but in summer they either become stagnant or dry up altogether; for which reason they have not yet been given distinctive names. At the mouth of these streams likewise a few salt water fish may be caught at high tide.

Approximately in the centre of Hottentots Holland there is a fairly high mountain, which on account of its very fine and grassy pasturage, is called the Schaap Berg. On it the Governor intended building a summer house which would have been the more attractive inasmuch as from this mountain one could see ships entering and leaving both Table Bay and False Bay. But while he was entertaining this idea, he was recalled to be severely censured in Holland.

In my time, a farmer named Michael Otto<sup>79</sup> (commonly known as Michel Os or Ox) owned the best farm in Hottentots Holland, noted for viticulture; but he was a savage, tyrannical to his slaves. Consequently he lost through desertion many of his slaves who fell into the hands of the Fiscal and the law. Flogging seemed to him far too mild a punishment for the smallest offence. Generally in summer he used to bind slaves who had committed some offence naked to a tree or pole in the sun, had their entire bodies smeared with honey and thus they were tortured unbearably for hours by flies, wasps, bumble-bees and other pests, especially by the African blind flies, called "Mosquitoes" in India. But after he had suffered great loss of slaves and also been severely

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<sup>78</sup> 'It does not matter whether it be stolen or seized as long as it is convenient.'

<sup>79</sup> Michael Otto of Stettin. He became owner of *Vergelegen* in 1722 through his marriage with the widow of Barend Gildenhausen who had purchased part of the confiscated estate of W. A. van der Stel.

punished several times by the Government on account of his inhuman conduct, he became annoyed, left his wife to farm alone on the estate and bought himself a house in the city; there he sold his own wine at retail and what he could not sell he drank himself being never quite sober. When any farmer had a disobedient slave, the mere threat to sell or give him to Michael Otto unless he improved, was often more effective than other punishments would have been since every slave was afraid of this man. The last slave that Michael Otto lost because of brutal punishment had been a wagon-maker's apprentice, for whom he had paid a thousand florins (gulden). It was the loss of this man that put the idea in his mind of getting rid of his farm and of drinking away his money in peace and comfort.

In these mountains there is a warm spring highly thought of by the inhabitants of Africa; also recommended by the hospital doctors to the officials of the Company in certain cases and prescribed for treatment. The results have been very satisfactory, but it is a pity that the Government does not provide better accommodation for the bathers. Lately a solid building has indeed been erected there, consisting of a vestibule, two large rooms, a kitchen and a small room for the use of the caretaker. This building, however, is generally too small for the many visitors who come there in summer. Those who arrive too late to find a place in the two rooms, have to make themselves at home in the vestibule or on the ground or camp in a tent. A doctor is needed to instruct patients in the correct use of the spring, and also to provide them with proper medicaments. The building which is situated on the slope of a mountain suffers much damage from the penetrating water and one room in particular is very damp and musty. Every patient has to have his name entered in a book kept for that purpose. From this book it appears that every year up to 200 patients stay there. The bath is about 100 yards from the dwelling-house. It is about 4 fathoms long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms broad; two sides are sunk into the ground, the other two being walled. The water is run into it through a gable by means of furrows, and has an outlet from the bath. The bathers stand up to their necks in the water but they cannot, until they get used to it, stay in longer



than eight or ten minutes because they might faint. For this reason, nobody bathes alone for one would then be entirely without help and might easily collapse and drown. After using the water, the bathers lie down to perspire, this process being aided by drinking some of the warm water. Usually a person bathes twice daily, some even thrice. Two other nearby springs are provided with huts only and roofed with brushwood; these are intended for slaves and Hottentots. The water in the springs contains no sulphur, but only ferrous and vitriolic matter and deposits ochre when flowing away. Hardly fifty yards below the warm springs, there is a cold spring whose water is of a very fine flavour. The worst of all is that the patients, if they do not bring their own servants, obtain very poor service or none at all; besides, they have nothing to eat except what they bring with them, or fetch from the neighbouring farms to cook for themselves.<sup>80</sup> The soil around the warm spring would be fertile enough for the planting of some greens and vegetables, for the surrounding herbs and shrubs thrive well and grow very sturdily and luxuriantly, only nobody takes care of it. Further out, across the Palmiet and Botter Rivers along which several farms lie, the soil is of an entirely different composition and the wine made there is fit only for vinegar and brandy.

To the north of Hottentots Holland lies the Zeekoe Dal. I do not know whether such an animal as the zoologists call Hippopotamus or Nylyperd and the Africans call "Zeekoe" lived there formerly, and I can hardly believe this to have been the case; since these animals prefer living in rivers whose water is sweet. But this so-called Zeekoe Dal, which probably has a circumference of half a mile, is neither a river nor a lake, nor can it be called a creek. It is simply a hollow in a valley where mountain water collects during the rainy season. But since it lies below the level of False Bay, the South-East wind drives the sea water into it at flood tide as well as a quantity of fish;

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<sup>80</sup> A narrative of two journeys to these hot springs (now known as Caledon Baths) undertaken in 1710 is to be found in *Collectanea* (V.R.S. 5.) Lichtenstein who visited the baths on the 'Black Mountain' in 1803 still found conditions primitive. But the Government alive to the curative value of the baths made provision for a resident doctor, and a new guest house was begun in 1805.

but these cannot survive long in it owing to the difference in the water. This factor also causes the water to become putrid and evil-smelling after the rainy season when the flow from the mountains ceases. Meanwhile the luxuriantly growing rushes and reeds are frequented by many wild ducks and other water fowl, which provide good shooting for those who stalk them.<sup>81</sup>

Whether the often-cited amphibia are falsely called sea-cows and should really be named hippopotami, I cannot decide nor do I wish to do so. But as long as no other animal can be shown to deserve the name sea-cow in the true sense of the word, I fail to see how the inhabitants of Africa commit a sin against science if they retain the name sea-cow according to tradition. At the same time it is very remarkable that a specimen of the other gender has never been found, namely a sea-ox. This suggests the question "were there hermaphrodites among them"? No answer can yet be given.

Moddergat (mudhole) is so called from the morasses and many holes in which water flowing from the mountains gathers a great deal of mud, and in this way renders the roads unusable or at least inconvenient, but fertilises the fields and serves as a substitute for the best manure. It lies between Hottentots Holland and Stellenbosch, being surrounded by the two rivers flowing from there, forming a sort of island. Since this feature makes the land very fertile, the farms situated there are very profitable; they have only one disadvantage, that the several rivers flow so strongly in the rainy season that for a while they cut off all communication between the neighbours; but much vermin is also destroyed thereby.

As soon as the inhabitants of this part see or sense from the weather or from other circumstances or signs the least increase in the flow of the rivers, they hurry their cattle into the kraals or stables; since the flood rises in a short while to such an extent that it would sweep man and beast with it. The inhabitants have often discussed the question of building a few bridges, and although no suitable wood for the purpose is at hand, it could

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<sup>81</sup> Probably the Zeekoe Vlei near the Eerste R.; the larger Zeekoe Vlei (Lakeside) is, of course, well to the West.

be obtained from the Company's stores for money which they do not lack. The only thing that has kept them from doing so up to now is nothing but the obstinacy of the individuals concerned; for each one insists that the bridge must be built at a place most convenient for himself; and as the many heads cannot be brought together under one hat, the important thing is left undone.

After Moddergat follows the part of the district properly known as Stellenbosch. Of the village which received its name from Governor van der Stel (while the district received its name from the village) we have already told the essentials. This region is very fertile and charming. The hills abound in firewood which, however, is too spongy and therefore unsuitable for building or carpentry. The mountains are adorned with lovely herbs and flowers, especially at the end of the rainy season. Dr. Sparrman, Thunberg and Masson have greatly enriched their collections of plants here and also discovered many roots and herbs useful for making medicines. It is in this neighbourhood towards the Bottelary that the first discovery was made of a shrubby plant, whose small berries, the size of a pea, furnish good wax. Since I have often visited this spot and seen the shrub, I regret that through a lack of better knowledge of botany and natural science at the time, I left it unexamined. The valleys around Stellenbosch abound in vineyards, vegetable gardens and orchards, and provide a good living for their owners. For this reason I fail to understand what the author of the "*Concise Description of the Cape*"<sup>82</sup> means by saying that the inhabitants cannot sell their produce as they please. Presumably he means the wine which they may not sell at retail. This would have been unfair (to the Company) in view of the fact that the East India Company apportioned the land free at the beginning, spent a good deal on the colonists, and reserved only a few sources of revenue which are not very oppressive. The Stellenbosch mountains to the East are the highest in the district and somewhat resemble Table Mountain in altitude and shape, but are not so precipitous. When the South-Easter blows, they too are covered with white clouds, but the

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<sup>82</sup> *Beknopte Beschryving van de Kaap der Goede Hoop*, by Allamand and Klockner, Amsterdam 1778.

winds blow differently down the valley than around Table Mountain, for they calm down towards evening until about midnight. In the harvesting and vintage season, that is during January, February and March, they generally rise towards the afternoon only, but with far less force than in Table Valley. At threshing time this is of no little advantage to the farmers, as we shall hear in greater detail in the ninth chapter which treats of the tillage of the soil.

The Laurens River<sup>83</sup> which flows through the centre of the village, dividing it into two parts, had, from the very beginnings of the settlement, a small bridge by means of which communication was maintained between the inhabitants on either side. But the bridge had been built so narrow that a wagon could just barely cross it. Since it became dangerous and eventually quite unserviceable from age and much use, a patriotically minded farmer called Joris Grimpen<sup>84</sup> (according to Kolbe: Johann George Grimpen) asked permission to erect a new and more convenient bridge at his own expense. This was gladly granted on condition that no bridge-toll was levied on anybody. Since that time it has been well cared for and many accidents were thus prevented. For this reason Grimpen and his descendants were exempted from all communal duties as long as they kept the bridge in good repair.

Governor W. A. van der Stel did indeed have a bridge built over this river at a different spot at the Company's expense, in order to reach his estates in Hottentots Holland more conveniently, but after his departure it went to rack and ruin and nobody worried about it any longer.

There are not many Joris Grimpens, who in cases of emergency step into the breach and alone shoulder the burden of a whole community. On this river too, there lie several homesteads built in Cape fashion on a pleasant site. Among these the outstanding one is that built by the former Clergyman Kalden.<sup>85</sup> He

<sup>83</sup> This should read the Eerste R.

<sup>84</sup> Hans Jürgen Grimp(en) of Gehrden in Brunswick, Burgher and heemraad of Stellenbosch was owner of the farm which passed to Adam Tas who married his widow in 1703. Grimpen died in 1701 or 1702. Tas renamed the farm *Libertas* in 1706.

<sup>85</sup> Rev. Petrus Kalden was minister of the Cape Town congregation from Dec. 1695 to April 1707. He was recalled and dismissed for private farming. His farm *Zandvliet* is near the mouth of the Eerste River.

spent large sums on beautifying the gardens with flowers, fruit and greens and practising viticulture. Even today the wine made there is excellent. When the Clergyman Kalden had to give up his property in 1707, like all other servants of the Company, he received 20,000 Cape florins or 3047 ducats for it, which is well worth mentioning for a small farm with few wheat lands. Meerlust<sup>86</sup> and Welmoed<sup>87</sup> two residences which lie next to another place on the river, built by Appel<sup>88</sup>, the ex-mayor of Stellenbosch, are built just as pleasantly but not as luxuriously. Nevertheless, it is certain that all these residences were kept in far better and more attractive condition formerly, when they were possessed by their founders who were in the service of the Company, and who did not have to rely for their living upon the land alone. But since farming and even trading in grain, wine and cattle has been forbidden to all servants of the Company, the farms have come into the hands of such persons as have to depend for their living upon them and have to obtain their sustenance from them. These are therefore not so much concerned about the decorative effect of their gardens, but use even the smallest pieces of ground for cultivation, vine planting and vegetable growing; and the rest of the land for cattle-raising.<sup>89</sup> Even then they could have greatly improved them if they had seen fit to grow European grasses such

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<sup>86</sup> *Meerlust* — the farm of Henning Huising the wealthy meat contractor and one of the chief opponents of W. A. van der Stel.

<sup>87</sup> *Welmoed*, farm of Jacobus van der Heyden near *Meerlust* on the Eerste R. According to Kolbe it surpassed all the others in fertility. Mossop, *op. cit.* p. 33 states that v. d. Heyden also owned a farm near Cape Town. (*Welgelegen*, just off the De Waal Drive at Rosebank.)

<sup>88</sup> Ferdinand Appel (1665-1717), one of the first South African born Europeans, was a prominent burgher and heemraad of Stellenbosch who held the farm *Geduld*, on the Eerste R. Took a leading part in the opposition to W. A. van der Stel and was deported to Holland in 1706. On his return he obtained grazing lands across the Hottentots Holland 'aan 't warm water' (Caledon Baths). The office of 'Mayor' was unknown in South Africa during the 18th century, but the Senior Heemraad presided over the Board during the absence of the Landdrost and signed the minutes as Vice-chairman. Appel may have acted in this capacity.

<sup>89</sup> Interesting historical data on these farms with numerous illustrations will be found in D. Fairbridge *Historic Houses of South Africa*. The best modern map is contained in Fouché: *Diary of Adam Tas*.

as Spanish clover, lucerne, esparce<sup>90</sup> and the like. For the soil is in many places covered with heath and woody plants, among which the cattle have to pick out only the softest and most succulent herbs and feed very sparingly on these in the dry season; especially since in the entire country no thought is given to stall-feeding even for afternoon and evening. I am well aware that an experiment has been made with Spanish clover but this gave no seed and was afterwards abandoned. But this type of grass should be sown not on hills and dry ground, but on the fields, and I know of many places which are not now of any value to people where the above grasses would be a great success. For example (in case this book may at some time become known at the Cape — one never can tell) in the Bottelary between the two farms owned by Willem Plooy and Jacob Kluthe (Cloete) there lies a large vlei or meadow, filled with juicy herbs which no cattle eat, on which cranes spend the entire day. This meadow should be ploughed and the above grasses sown on it. I would guarantee that for the next ten years these could be used without any further sowing.

The whole Stellenbosch district seems formerly to have provided good hunting; but today the game has become rather scarce, and little is to be found except a few Cape roebuck. Waterfowl, such as wild duck and the like are more easily obtainable. Consequently when churchgoers bring their hosts a roast of this or another type of game, it is a very acceptable gift, as sample of which I once tasted myself. Salt-water fish may be often obtained more easily than venison. Fresh-water fish is not to be had in the entire Cape except around Groot Rivier<sup>91</sup> which carries carp. It can hardly be otherwise, since all rivers except two or three dry up in summer.

The Bottelary which lies to the north of Stellenbosch has (on account of its name which means "dining-room") already tempted many to make a very fertile region of it. But it has no advantage above other parts except a few grassy meadows which I shall presently describe. This is the smallest division of all and in it there are only six farm-houses and a Company buyten

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<sup>90</sup> Esparcet (*onobrydus sativa*), a forage plant resembling lucerne.

<sup>91</sup> i.e. the Great Berg R.

post called Klapmuts. When the Cape was first settled, cattle for slaughter and a few cows were kept in this part which is not more than six hours or three miles from the City. During the dry season the cows were fed with grass from Klapmuts because this locality which consists of a mountain and several hillocks has better grazing in summer for sheep than for horned cattle. Yet it might formerly, as virgin soil, have been much more productive than now; since it was exhausted by the owners who laid out wheat-fields in every corner. Further, the so-called pisgras afterwards made its appearance there. This causes the sheep and young cattle to eat so much of it that they cannot stale. Another type of weed which gives cattle *lamsiekte* (lame sickness) that causes them to lose their hooves or the horn of their feet also grows in this part, but only to a small extent. The farmers here can keep cows only for three or four months, from April to August, otherwise they sicken and die. In this part lies the Bottelary, a steep mountain with a broad base and almost quite barren. Still its owner once risked having a fairly level piece of arable land on it cleared, ploughed and sown; the result was astonishing. At harvest time the reapers could hardly clasp with their hands all the stalks that had grown from a single grain of wheat. The straw was as strong as thin reeds and the seed rendered more than a thirty-fold return. But the clearing, ploughing and especially the manual labour involved in carrying down the grain from the mountain were too toilsome and difficult. For this reason no grain has been sown there since. On this mountain, too, I saw for the first and the last time two animals unknown to me; a mountain hare and a honey badger (*mellivora capensis*). The mountain hare was no larger than a lap dog and had a fiery red tail or scut, just like a squirrel. While I was aiming my gun at it, a honey badger came along to hide itself under a heap of stones: apparently it had been stalking the mountain hare. With little hesitation I let the hare go and aimed at the honey badger. It escaped me, however, for just as I was about to fire it slunk among the stones. It was dull blue or ash grey in colour, somewhat long in body, the head resembled that of a dog, but with shorter snout; the tail was long, extended and broad as a cat's; its height seemed not much more than that of a dachshund, if its feet had not been somewhat longer.

I did not know the animal, but when I described it to the owner of the farm, he said that it was a honey badger, and his wife assured me that if I had shot this animal and brought it with me, she would gladly have given me a reward of a ducat, for it stalked fowls and ducks and had already robbed her of a considerable number. She thought it could not have a strong scent or trail, since it could creep up nimbly to the fowls and slink away with its prey without the dogs scenting it.

The most noteworthy object in this area is the buyten post of the Company, which is called Klapmuts. A corporal with ten or twelve men and a span of small grey donkeys are stationed there. The homestead with the stables, coach-houses and barns, are according to the custom of the country, somewhat scattered. Around these lie only meadows which are under water in the rainy season, but on which the finest grass stands in October. At that time some twenty convalescents from the hospital, or for lack of these, as many sailors and soldiers as have not yet been equipped, are sent there to mow the grass, dry it and bring it into the barns. The hay obtained there amounts to about four hundred wagon loads a year. Twice weekly 4 laden wagons, each drawn by four donkeys, are sent to the stables for the horses of the Company and of the Governor. But I must not forget to remark in connection with this great amount of hay, that the wagons are not as big as in Germany, where 10, 12, 15 or even more cwts. are loaded on one wagon, whereas in Africa hardly 4 or 5 hundredweight are loaded. A second crop of hay is never gathered, since it is useless in the dry season, and therefore is left standing for the donkeys to graze on. The farms in the Bottelary are not so profitable as in other districts, and are consequently cheaper. A farmer named Jacob Kluthe did have an exceptionally fine farm there, but the soil was spoiled with oats and "drabok" (cockle) which could not be eradicated, even though he bought and sowed the finest wheat procurable. Other farms hardly fetch four to five thousand Cape gulden. During my eight years' stay at the Cape, I attended three sales of farms in the Bottelary whose owners had become insolvent. The reason for this is that the ground is of a too mixed variety with large stretches of barren soil between the wheat fields.



Nothing but small shrubs and renoster-bush grow on the barren lands which consist of sand mixed with small stones and even these shrubs have to be saved for firewood. If the owners of the Bottelary farms leave the land in the valleys lying fallow for one or two years, thorns and thistles immediately grow on it, which have to be eradicated by chopping and burning before the land can be ploughed.

The wine grown in the Bottelary is of mediocre quality, but could be improved if the owners knew how to treat it better. Sulphur and wine-soaked isinglass are their only aids in preparing the wine. Only two farmers in this locality have proper wine-presses; the others have the grapes pressed by feet and hands alone. The lees would be put into barrels, water poured over, and after a while turned into brandy. After water had stood for a few days on the squeezed out grape shells and fermentation set in, an intoxicating liquor like wine, called dop-beer, is produced. The slaves and Hottentots are unusually avid of this drink and when they get the opportunity nothing is safe from them. An ordinary "squeezer" would have pressed out far more wine than could be pressed out by hand; but the lack of casks which are very scarce and expensive, makes them forget that they might be able to make more wine.

On the northern side of this district, where it adjoins the Drakenstein, lies a mountain called Paardenberg by Kolbe, but Paarlberg by de la Caille. Both are right and both are wrong. Paardenberg, separating the Bottelary from the Drakenstein district, is the highest in this part and is fairly grassy at its base. Whether it obtained its name from the wild horses to be found there or merely to give it a distinctive name, I do not know, but this I do know for certain, that in my time none of the oldest colonists could remember having seen wild horses or zebras in that part. The Joostenberg lying next to it is not so high but is much greater in area, so that large farms lie on and around it. Among these the finest is the one laid out by the former Vice-Governor Samuel Elzevier; before his time it was cultivated for the profit, or as afterwards appeared, more to the detriment of the Company. Even to-day this part is called Elzenburg, and has a small water-mill, on a stream which flows from the

meadows of Klapmuts, which in the rainy season overflows the mill-wheel but in summer dries up. It is here that M. de la Caille locates the Paarlberg (in reality the Paardenberg of Kolbe) undoubtedly on account of a misunderstanding and ignorance of the Dutch language. I shall show where it is in the Drakenstein district, to the description of which I now hasten; but let me pause to add that in the just mentioned locality wood and water are present in very small quantities; shrubs and renoster-bushes have to serve as firewood and a few small springs supply drinking water. The rain water that remains in deepened holes very soon becomes dirty and foul in summer and partly brak too: an infallible sign that the soil is saturated with many salt particles and could furnish salt in case of need. It is certain that at one time the entire Cape had brine pits in very many places, not only in the Groenekloof, Zwartkops river, Zwellendam, Saldanha Bay, between the Soete Melks and Gouritz Rivers, but indeed in a hundred spots besides, even lying above ground in summer in the Cape district, so that one had merely to gather up the salt and carry it away.

## CHAPTER FOUR.

### Of the Drakenstein District.

We have already mentioned that the Drakenstein district was named by Governor Simon van der Stel in honour of the General Commissioner Baron van Rheede on his visit here in 1685; we shall therefore not repeat, but rather proceed to its description without any further introduction. As early as 1678<sup>92</sup> as most of the Stellenbosch district had already been colonised, a beginning was made with the opening up and colonising of this district when a few servants of the Company were discharged and on their application declared free burghers. The first colonists chose to settle in the northern parts of this land. By and by others were added, but in particular the number of colonists increased through the arrival from 1685<sup>93</sup> to 1690, of the French refugees who, after the so-called Fransche Hoek had been occupied, settled in the neighbourhood and had the land divided among themselves. This district consists of a long low-lying valley, mostly of flat land, that lies between two high chains of mountains, interspersed with hills. It extends North-East by North along the mountains from Cape False in the South to the Piquetberg range in the North. Eastwards it touches upon the Lange Kloof and Westwards reaches as far as the Zwartbergen which are close to Saldanha Bay.<sup>94</sup> This district is the largest and most remarkable for its agriculture; for although some parts remain uncultivated because of sandy soil so that many farmhouses are somewhat distant and isolated from the others, yet the country contains a

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<sup>92</sup> 1687.

<sup>93</sup> The first Huguenots arrived in April, 1688.

<sup>94</sup> The author adds: "We have to thank the Swedish Doctor Sparrman for being able to include in this *Description* a special chapter on these mountain ranges which were unknown until a few years ago".

An official expedition to the Great Kei led by Ensign A. F. Beutler had, however, paved the way for Sparrman. Beutler's journal is printed in Theal: *Belangrijke Historische Dokumenten*.

large number of houses which obtain their water from, and are irrigated by small streams flowing from the mountains. Wine-making which is most profitable here, along with a little agriculture, furnishes a type of wine that is not to be despised and holds fourth rank among the Cape wines. It has an advantage over the other wines of the country that it can be better preserved and, if it can be matured for a few years, tastes like sack. The streams which come from the mountains, flow into a river which runs through the middle of the valley and is called the Little Berg River. This river, which has its origin a little to the south of the Drakenstein parish of which we shall speak presently, never dries up completely and irrigates a few very good farms lying on its banks, then runs with many windings through a sandy and uninhabited tract of land, sometimes north, sometimes north-west, up to the Piquetbergen. Thence it turns in a south-westerly direction falling into St. Helena Bay. The region through which it flows is hardly forty miles long. But if one could measure all its curves in a straight line, Kolbe's estimate of hundred miles would not be far out. So far, however, no one has taken the trouble to examine its proper course, which is hardly possible in those sandy parts on account of the many thorn bushes growing on its banks.

Almost in the centre of this district but more towards the South-East, lies the Church of this parish which together with nine or ten isolated houses, constitute a small village. This hamlet with the Church is not called Drakenstein but Paarl and the mountain near it is called Paarlberg, which explains the difference of opinion between Kolbe and de la Caille as to the name, a trifle of which quite a fuss has been made. In Kolbe's time this parish had its own reformed minister whose name was Beck, and who, according to his own admission, had the misfortune of being excommunicated by a woman; how far this was justified I do not know; this however is certain that the congregation would no longer allow him to administer the Sacrament.<sup>95</sup> They applied several times for a minister called

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<sup>95</sup> The Rev. Henricus Beck, one of the most prominent of the early Dutch ministers in South Africa, served the church uninterruptedly for 30 years. At Drakenstein, 1702-1707 (for a while

le Boucq who had been sent to the Cape from Batavia, but they did not get him.<sup>96</sup> To support Kolbe a little where he is right, I must confess that I knew Beck well as an old man, of eighty, and he gave me the impression of having been a man of the world in his youth. He had a very fine garden near the city and was fond of gunnery. He owned six "Prince's guns" of 1½ to 2 lb. calibre and these were fired at all festivities. Eventually he sold both garden and "Prince's guns". When the garden had been sold, the pieces were fired, and when the same buyer also purchased the "Prince's guns" at the auction, they had by request of the old man to be loaded once more with powder and fired. I do not know whether the Drakenstein Congregation was ever provided again with a minister after the Rev. Beck had left that parish. On the contrary, I recollect

officiating on alternate Sundays at both Drakenstein and Stellenbosch); at Stellenbosch 1707-26; and finally at Cape Town 1726-1731, when he retired. He died in 1755 so he was probably nearer 70 than 80 when Mentzel knew him. The story about his excommunication is taken from Kolbe who states that on one occasion while administering the Sacrament to the Congregation he would not partake of it himself on the above ground. Thereafter Kolbe adds, the Stellenbosch community would not receive Communion from him, nor would Drakenstein allow him to baptise their children (*Caput Bonae Spei*, German edition, p. 780, 811). Moorrees, the standard historian of the Dutch Reformed Church, is silent on this incident, nor is there any reference to it in the official correspondence of the period — the *Bouwstoffen* edited by Spoelstra. There are no official records extant of the Paarl (Drakenstein) Congregation before 1715.

That Beck was on bad terms with part of the Drakenstein Congregation is well-known. Adam Tas records in his *Diary* p. 116 'ek hebbe de Franse niet wynig over de Paap hooren klaagen'. The chief reason was that after 1706 Beck had refused to preach in French, though the older members of the community could not understand Dutch. The opposition, therefore, was partly on language grounds and more widely on political grounds as Beck was suspected of siding with the Government in the conflict between Adriaan v.d. Stel and the colonists. The scandal, if there was one, must have been highly exaggerated by Kolbe. A full account of Beck's relations with his various congregations will be found in Moorrees: *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika*.

<sup>96</sup> Engelbertus le Boucq was for a short while a stormy petrel in local church history. Mentzel's reference to him is quite misleading. Sent out in 1707 as minister to Drakenstein, he returned post haste to Cape Town as he found neither church nor pastorie: 'nóg skool, nóg kerk, nóg woonhuis vir die predikant, nóg kerkhof, nóg selfs 'n krankbesoeker' (Moorrees p. 104). He was a man of strong views and outspoken in his opinions, hence his presence soon became unwelcome to the authorities and he was recalled to Holland in 1708.

that the minister of Stellenbosch not only christened the children born in the Drakenstein district, but also held Communion service at fixed times in the Drakenstein (Paarl) church. The church building is very poorly constructed. The walls are just high enough for a man to stand erect under the beams lying across them. On these rest the rafters and the roof is thatched like all farm-houses, and is visible like the rafters from within the Church. The walls are not plastered with lime nor even white-washed. The pulpit is only a desk and each member of the congregation brings his own chair.<sup>97</sup> The congregation has never shown any inclination to build a pastorie, being a very small community on account of the remoteness of the farms. For this reason they had in my time, and as I think very likely even up to the present, only a reader, who read them a sermon on Sunday mornings and led them in singing a few psalms.<sup>98</sup> The inhabitants whose homes adjoined the Church then offered a few articles for sale, such as coffee, tea, sugar-candy, tobacco, rice, linen, needles and similar trifles, which the church-goers could buy in case of need and for lack of opportunity of buying them cheaper in Cape Town.

South-East of the Church lies a smaller valley between the mountains which is included in the Drakenstein district and is called Fransche Hoek, which we have already mentioned several times. This valley is on account of its extraordinary fertility the best portion of the Cape. It was unusually well cultivated through the diligence and untiring industry of the first French colonists and has been maintained in this state by their successors. If I can rely on my memory and am not hopelessly mistaken, there are no more than eight farmsteads which,

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<sup>97</sup> A congregation was established at Drakenstein in 1691, with the celebrated Huguenot, Pierre Simond, as first minister. At first services were held in a private house. Three years later Simond obtained a site where a 'hut' was built to serve as a church, 'een stukje land verkreeg daar wy selve een hokje op timmerde'. [Quoted by G. J. Oberholster in *Kiraartmillenium van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Paarl (Drakenstein)*]. A new and commodious church was built at considerable expense in 1720. Mentzel is apparently referring to this one in uncomplimentary terms.

<sup>98</sup> From 1714 there was a succession of permanent ministers to Drakenstein. The reader was additional to the preacher, unless in temporary cases of emergency.

however, fetch a very high price at sales or at any rate are always taken over by the heirs at a very high valuation. The fertility of this little district can be imagined from the fact that the first colonists arrived there destitute of all means, and like all others had to borrow from the Company their cattle, farm implements, seed and bread-corn and everything else they needed; yet were the first to repay their debt amounting to many thousands of gulden. Their industry and thrift very soon enabled them to erect the most comfortable homes after paying off their debts, although they had in the first years to be content with very bad huts for houses. One would have supposed that if not all the French who settled in the Drakenstein district, at least those who live in the remoter part of this district, would have retained their mother tongue and handed it down to their descendants; but nothing could be further from the truth; their grandsons and great-grandsons at present do not understand a word of their ancestors' mother tongue. Their intercourse and daily association with the Hollanders or German Hollanders and South African born persons, and especially their intermarriage with the daughters of the land, have caused this language to be forgotten and as it were extirpated. According to an extract from a letter from the Cape quoted in the First Volume, the women of Cape Town diligently made use of the French language during the presence of the French army, but it is to be presumed that this language of fashion will soon die out again.

West of Fransche Hoek lie Simonsberg and Simons Valley, which compromise only a single farm and must formerly have been a splendid place, when held by the Independent Fiscal Blesius,<sup>99</sup> since he sold it to the servant he had hired from the Company for 24,000 Cape gulden or 3657 specie ducaten to be paid off within twelve years. At present this farm has no special feature beyond an ordinary comfortable house with glass windows, but that it provides a very good living for its owner. Next to this Simons Valley lie a few farms around a hill called Babilon's Toren. One must not assume that the hill is called thus on account of its height as this is quite

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<sup>99</sup> Johannes Blesius of Breukelen in Holland was fiscal from 1694. He died in 1711. His farm was *Stellenberg* in De Kuilen, some 20 miles to the West of French Hoek.

inconsiderable. The first settler on a farm founded at the foot of the hill had to name it for registration purposes; on the spur of the moment and without trying to think of any other name, he had it registered according to the first name that occurred to him, namely Babilon's Toren.<sup>100</sup> After all, what did it matter! If only the child got a name; whether it was suitable or not did not make any difference.

We have already told the essentials about Paarl-, Jooste- and Paardenberg which separate the Bottelary from the Drakenstein district. Beyond there follows a valley, which was called Wagenmakers Vallei by its first settler, a wagon-builder by trade.<sup>101</sup>

But for its fertile soil and the few farms lying on the bends of the Berg River there is nothing remarkable about this valley. The mountain, Riebeecks Kasteel, received its name from the first Commander and founder of the African settlement on account of being the most distant part of the country to which Riebeeck had travelled and set eyes upon. The peak of this long and high mountain is accessible only from the west. It was not Riebeeck, but his successor, Governor Bax, who was compelled to send a Commando against the savage Bushmen, who were very restless at the time, and after having subdued them and deprived them of some of their cattle he stationed a few soldiers and field-guns on this mountain, but these were soon required elsewhere and withdrawn. There is much grass and bush suitable for firewood on this mountain, but no timber. At its base lie several farms of striking appearance whose names at least would be worth mentioning but the foolish custom of calling each farm by the name of its owner and not according to the particular distinguishing name given to each, makes any such geographical description useless, since the names change too often. This fertile spot could undoubtedly be still better cultivated but the lack of water prevents it. There is indeed no scarcity of water in the rainy season, but as soon as this is past, the inhabitants have to be content with a few small springs and a

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<sup>100</sup> Tower of Babel. Graham Botha, (*op cit.*, p. 88) says the name is appropriate: 'It rises abruptly and stands isolated' at the right entrance of the Drakenstein Valley.

<sup>101</sup> This is Kolbe's opinion, but the origin of the name is doubtful.



dug-out well. The cattle, which during this period can only find a little evil-smelling water in a few holes, prefer to do without water or slake their thirst with succulent plants growing on the mountains, among which there are a few that look as if they have been frozen or candied. Some of these have thick, triangular shoots, instead of leaves, and at first sight appear as though many hundreds of small drops of water hung from them, but these are only small offshoots and excrescences filled with sap or water.

The part known as Vier-en-Twintig Rivieren to the north of the Berg River, is inhabited only by such people as make their living by cattle raising. The land which lies across these rivers, has no definite boundaries; it extends through the cold and warm Bockland<sup>102</sup>, the Karroo and perhaps even to the Camdeboo and Sneeuwbergen; for the Company's territory stretches as far as the colonists wish to settle. This land has not yet been divided into definite districts, nor can it be since all its farms lie too far apart. Many well-to-do farmers, who have their homes in the six districts mentioned, but cannot keep their surplus cattle on them, have made a request for a piece of land on the farther side of Vier-en-Twintig Rivieren, where they have built only houses of poor quality and started cattle raising on account of the good grazing to be had there.

The Government which was beginning to be more economical in apportioning the land, wanted to serve the interests of the Company better and did no longer grant land on a heritable basis. Whoever wished to settle in the neighbourhood of Vier-en-Twintig Rivieren or even to have merely pasture rights, had at the start to pay the Company a monthly sum of one rixdollar, and have his concession renewed every six months (at a profit to the Secretariat). Later this regulation was changed to the extent that those who had obtained a concession could settle there without further renewal and build houses, but still had to pay an annual rent of twenty-four rixdollars.

In their joy at the invention of this source of revenue, the Government went still further and forbade grain farming on this land, intending to keep it solely for grazing purposes, and when the possessor of such a cattle farm died his heir was allowed to

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<sup>102</sup> Bokkeveld.

keep the pasture rights only at the discretion of the Governor. Consequently these lands could neither be inherited nor sold, and as often as a change occurred through death and a second concession, the heirs of the previous possessor could either sell the dwelling house and outhouses to their successors or demolish and remove them elsewhere, for which reason they are merely known as *Opstallingen* or *ad interim* homes. In this financial arrangement the Council of Policy paid more regard to the present cash revenue than to the profit that the Company could expect in the future with far greater advantage. For the holders of this land looked upon their rented pastures in the same way as the peasants in the Luneburg Heath and in other places where they were serfs and the farms belonged to the noblemen who can replace one peasant by another. Since, therefore, the holders of pastures beyond Vier-en-Twintig Rivieren and as far north as Africans might want to settle had no title-deeds, their *Opstallingen* were so badly built that the poorest cottager in Germany has a better home than a farmer here who owns more than 200 head of cattle and 2000 sheep. Governor Swellengrebel, acting undoubtedly on the suggestion of his kindly and intelligent father, and also his humane brother-in-law and successor, Ryk Tulbagh, entirely changed this regulation. He granted every occupier his leased land with hereditary rights and title deeds at a low price, but with the retention of an annual quitrent of 24 rixdollars. As soon as the owners were allowed to dispose of their property as they pleased the finest grain fields arose among the grasslands, and houses were built that fully reflected the wealth of their owners. By this arrangement not only did the Company's capital increase by some casks of gold but the tithe levied on the grain harvest yields more than the ground rent. In time to come a tax may be expected on wine though this cannot be grown everywhere, and since farms may henceforth be bought and sold the usual  $1/40$ th d.<sup>103</sup> would also yield something, which was impossible at the time when the farms could not be sold. Hence Governor Swellengrebel was a better Minister of Finance than all his predecessors, and furthermore gained many blessings. Since then those farmers can win their bread by the sweat of their brow

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<sup>103</sup> i.e. a transfer duty of 2½%.

and drink a glass of wine to the health of their benefactor, whereas formerly they had to eat with their fat mutton lean dried buck, eland and buffalo meat in place of bread. Because farming has undergone an entire change since this reform, the earlier period must not be confused with the present otherwise everything would seem contradictory and the author of this Description would sometimes be suspected of untruthfulness.<sup>104</sup>

The Vier-en-Twintig Rivieren are nothing but a single river, consisting of many brooks flowing alongside each other and, since these are deeper than the main bed are very dangerous to cross in the rainy season; because then it overflows the adjacent land and is deepest at the brookbeds. In summer, after the water that runs into it from the mountains at the end of the rainy season has flowed into the Berg River, it dries up to such an extent that only a few small shallow streams remain. The number of streamlets flowing alongside each other is not the same everywhere, but in one spot no less than twenty-four of them actually lie so close together that if one were to cross them with a wagon and a team of ten oxen, the front pair would enter a second stream while the hind wheels of the wagon would just be leaving the first one. In some places several brooks flow in one channel in such a way that one can count only 15, 16 or 18 of them.

A few miles towards the East lie the Honig Bergen. These derive their peculiar name from the bees which find abundant nourishment in the many veld flowers and store their harvest in the crevices of the rocks. The Hottentots clamber up these mountains like baboons to look for the honey which they discover the sooner because the sun often makes it fluid, so that it runs onto the rocks, is again collected by the bees and carried back, but in this way their store-rooms are soon discovered. Though some honey is brought to town by the Hottentots for sale or barter for other trifles, very little is consumed since there are no chandlers nor gingerbread-bakers and the burghers use little of

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<sup>104</sup> This reform was instituted by van Imhoff, the visiting Governor-General of India, in 1743. Mentzel overestimates its benefits. The 'Perpetual Loan' tenure was limited to an extent of 60 morgen and did not suit the cattle farmer who preferred to hold 3000 morgen on the ordinary Annual Loan basis as it enabled him to wander afar for pastures new. See Botha; *Early Cape Land Tenure*. De Kock; *Economic History of South Africa*, pp. 29-33.

it as they do not like licking it from the hairy skins in which it is carried. Thus most of it is used in the rural areas for a drink consisting of water and honey. Nowhere in the whole country are to be found bees that are kept in hives or in hollow trees. Nevertheless there are three types of bees. Firstly those that carry their honey into the crevices of the rocks as already stated. Another kind buries its honey in holes abandoned by foxes and ant-eaters. A third type of bee prepares the honey without wax, encloses it in green leaves no larger than myrtle leaves, and conceals it in holes found in stone or clay walls. This honey is delicious but scarce and never obtainable in any quantity. Children look for it everywhere.

The Piquetberg lies still farther north and constitutes the extreme boundary of the Drakenstein district. Kolbe is correct in saying that these mountains lie an eight days' journey from the City; de la Caille is also correct when he writes that they are no farther than 30 miles (that is, 60 hours) from the City. For no African farmer can or will travel more than seven or eight hours a day with his ox-wagon. He leaves at daybreak and travels until about 8 o'clock, when he has to outspan and drive his cattle to graze. In the afternoon at 4 or at the latest 5 o'clock he inspans again and treks until about 8 p.m. when he has to allow his men and cattle their night's rest, otherwise he will ruin all of them. Even then, unless he takes a day's rest on an 8 days' journey and lets his trek-oxen feed on a fine grassy spot, they will become mere skin and bone. For the nature of oxen is not like that of horses which can be fed sufficiently on grain in two hours. It is therefore no extraordinary feat that the Abbé de la Caille made a journey of 30 miles in three or four days with Mr. Bestbier's<sup>104a</sup> four horses. To those who do not know it, it does not occur that there is a difference between miles and African hours, the latter having been introduced not without good reason, for the work of the ox-teams. The different national customs in distant parts of the world have to be correctly explained and made intelligible if one wishes to give a trustworthy account to one's countrymen.

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<sup>104a</sup> Jan Lourens Bestbier of Offenheim, prominent burgher and one-time Master of the Orphan Chamber. The Abbé de la Caille stayed with him during his visit to the Cape (1751-3).

There are only a few farms in the proper sense of the term below the Piquetbergen where cattle-rearing rather than agriculture and viticulture is practised. There is some good soil, but most of it is sandy and not very fertile; the appearance of the country is rather wild and displeasing. This is the extent to which the Drakenstein district stretches to the East and North-East. To the West lies the Land of Waveren.<sup>105</sup> But before we take a look at it, we still have to discuss a few facts pertaining to the Drakenstein district. According to de la Caille's measurement, which is correct, it is 30 miles long and about 12 miles broad, which is therefore far from being as large as the seven United Netherlands, to say nothing of all the seventeen provinces according to Kolbe's statement. But nevertheless, if one understands Kolbe correctly one cannot say that Kolbe is entirely wrong. He tells that Governor van der Stel let his cattle graze in the northern districts where he could keep as much land for grazing as the area of the seventeen provinces, and that is putting it mildly; for there the land stretches far and wide, and was neither inhabited nor cultivated in van der Stel's time. Even now the boundaries of this land have not been fixed, though towards the North-East in particular considerable farms have been laid out which, like those of Jacob van Reenen and Jacob Kock, are situated 120 miles from the City, and between the Drakenstein District and these two farms more than a hundred places, scattered far apart, have been taken up on lease for cattle raising and later as heritable farms. If one also takes into account the land as far as the Sneeuwbergen in the North and North-East, one could include a space more than twice as large as the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands.

The Berg River is one of the African rivers that does not dry up completely. It may be surprising that no bridges have been built across it for the convenience of the inhabitants and travellers; and that only a few small boats, actually only large punts, are to be found for crossing it. But then, in summer one may drive or ride through the river wherever it is necessary; in winter, however, when bridges are most useful, they would have to be demolished or taken away, otherwise the rising waters would

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<sup>105</sup> rather to the South-east viewed from the Picketberge.

soon carry them off; besides, the river then overflows its banks to such an extent that the bridges would have to be unusually long and would, for lack of suitable wood, cost much more than a similar stone bridge does in Europe.

Though the Drakenstein district is under a jurisdiction of its own, it is yet combined with that of Stellenbosch, for which reason no court house has been built there; hence its judicial officials who as Heemraden represent the landdrost, are obliged to come to Stellenbosch for the Council meetings. As already mentioned, a water mill has recently been put up there; apart from this one and those at Elzen- or Alzenburg, and in Simons Valley, no others are to be found in the neighbourhood, nor can they conveniently be put up for reasons already stated.

Finally, whatever Kolbe may tell about the excellent farmsteads in and around this district in the mountains, which are called Keerom and Bange-Hoek, and about others, extolling their beauty to the skies, this may have been right in his time; but now, when their owners are more concerned with their usefulness than their beauty, all grottoes, cascades, fish-ponds with strange fish (whence these originate I cannot imagine) and all caves and dens filled with finest porcelain figures and ornaments have disappeared. But that in his time Indian fruits were also found there I doubt very much. For with the exception of the guava and pine-apple, both of which have a very poor flavour, no Indian fruits are to be found; indeed nobody ever cares for them unless one wants to reckon among them the genuine pomegranate tree which gives a very perfect fruit here.

In the Drakenstein district near the Piquet, Honig and other mountains to the North, one still finds a few Hottentot Kraals whose inhabitants, as also those camping in the Land of Waveren, are called the Koopmans nation. Since this is a Dutch name, it is likely that their Captain received it from the Government,<sup>106</sup> or that the whole nation has accepted the name or received it from the fact that cattle was often bartered with them (which still happens to this day), and in this way business was done with them. Today, however, cattle is obtained in larger numbers from the Great Namacqua Hottentots.

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<sup>106</sup> Name given (about 1672) to a Hottentot captain, described as an 'ally of the Honourable East India Company'.

## CHAPTER FIVE.

### Of the two districts Land of Waveren and Zwartland.

To avoid prolixity I take both these districts together in this chapter, since they present little that is remarkable. Both were settled and intended to be formed into separate parishes and magistracies, but for reasons already mentioned, and because the inhabitants live too far apart, they have obtained neither their own churches nor ministers. The criminal cases of both districts have been referred to Stellenbosch for which reason it was unnecessary to build a separate court-house. The colony of Waveren, the older of the two, was formed at the end of the last and the beginning of this century by W. A. van der Stel, who also gave it its name. Though the "*Concise Description of the Cape of Good Hope*" mentions that both these districts have their own ministers, churches and pastories, these did not exist in either Kolbe's time or my own. On page 107 Kolbe says that in the Land of Waveren neither church nor town hall existed; Zwartland however had not been colonised in his time. At the same time, I do not wish to contradict Professor Allamand who may have had better and more accurate reports since the time of my departure; but in my time there were no churches in these districts.<sup>107</sup> The district of Waveren is separated from that of Drakenstein by some mountains, mostly consisting of red sandstone; hence it is also known as Roode Zand. This district is some 24 hours North-East by North from Cape Town, but North-West from the Drakenstein church. The land there is very heavy and harsh, arable only with difficulty in the rainy and sowing season. No plough is drawn by fewer than 10 or 12 oxen and, if the soil has been thoroughly soaked with rain, the farmer may have to add another yoke or two.

It may be compared with the soil in the Altmark and the Lentzier Lea. The soil clings to the shoes like pitch so that one

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<sup>107</sup> See notes on p. 14.

has continually to remove it, since one cannot drag it along; but in summer when it is thoroughly dry, it cracks, forming fissures in the ground. At the same time this district possesses the most fertile grain fields which yield both abundant sheaves and grain. It has often happened that one farmer reaped more than 600 to 700 muids of pure wheat from thirty odd muids of seed. The wheat is generally strewn in front of the plough and ploughed under without the use of harrows, since these would only drag the crust of the soil with them. Hence at harvest time one sees the grain standing in parallel rows with bare lanes between them, because the grain strewn on the furrows is lifted up by the plough-share and thrown out so that nothing grows in the furrows. Some farms such as Vogelkraal, Nylkraal, etc., have taken the word "Kraal" as part of their name from the Hottentot Kraals which were once situated there, but which have since been removed elsewhere. This district also has two hot springs, one of which is much warmer at its source than the other so that one cannot bathe in it until the water has cooled off a bit. There is no doubt that both could be good health-giving baths, but no medical experiments have yet been made with them. A certain burgher, called Ferdinand Appel, who had got into serious trouble with the Governor W. A. van der Stel, and had been sent to Holland by him as a rebel, but had been found not guilty and sent back with great honour, asked Governor van Assenburgh for a grant of land in this region with the idea of bringing this bath into fashion. He laid out a farm there at great cost; but as the value of the bath had not yet been established or made known, he made no money from bathers, and the one in Hottentots Holland has remained in greater favour with the colonists.<sup>108</sup>

To the west of the district of Waveren lies a mountain on which yellowish white flowers grow, which bear a silky sort of cotton that can be used in place of feathers but does not last longer than two or three years and then crumbles away almost to dust. It is called kapok and resembles a kind of wool called

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<sup>108</sup> The baths referred to point to Brandvlei (with a temperature of about 145°) and Malmesbury, but the reference to Appel confuses the issue, as Appel had a grazing farm on the Zwartberg which included the Warm Springs of Hottentots Holland (Caledon). See Graham Botha in V. R. S. 5, pages 58 and 80.



kapok in India, but incorrectly since the actual cotton tree is there called by this name. However, the mountain on which this plant grows has received the name Kapokberg.<sup>109</sup> The summit of this mountain is flat, overgrown with grass, and easily accessible both to man and animals, and from it one has a view of the entire country from Saldanha Bay to Hout Bay. The inhabitants of Africa sometimes use another kind of kapok for their beds. These are club-rushes which grow on a stalk or reed in the swamps and are called in some parts of Germany "*Schmackedutzen*". If these rushes are cut off at the right time and dried they fall apart like down, being more comfortable in the first year than the best stuffed mattresses. In the second year one can still use them, but in the third year they crumble away to dust and become as heavy as sand. A curious feature is that in the first four weeks many small maggots make their way through the bed-ticking and let themselves down by tiny threads, but afterwards disappear.

Contre Berg which the Abbé de la Caille examined for measuring a degree in the Southern hemisphere, lies only three hours to the South-East.<sup>110</sup> It is frequented by baboons and the Abbé had a visit from five such guests. The adjacent smaller mountains are called the Baviaans Bergen and have no special features. On the north side of Kapokberg and west of the Land of Waveren, lies Groenekloof about 24 hours from the City. This is a valley rich in grass between Kapokberg in the south and the Lange Berg; it extends North-westwards to the sea. This strip of land may be compared to the land of Goshen in the Arabian desert; for from Cape Town on the west till far north of St. Helena Bay everything is sandy and almost uninhabitable, except this valley which provides unrivalled pasture land. We have already mentioned Groenekloof in Volume One, chapter 12, in connection with the meat contract, that it was ceded to the meat contractors for fattening the slaughter cattle, therefore nothing remains to be said but that a Buyten Post has

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<sup>109</sup> Another theory is that the name is based on the snow sometimes seen on its summit (Pettman. p. 74).

<sup>110</sup> Considerably more to the West.

been established there<sup>111</sup> in charge of a Corporal and a few men to keep order at the loading of the salt drawn from the salt pans in that area. A small river, arising from the water which flows from both sides of the mountain in many small streams, irrigates these grasslands, and flows into the sea to the north of the Cape district opposite Dassen Island. This island is commonly called Dachsen Island by writers when they want to translate the Dutch word into German; but this is wrong, for its name is derived from the Dutch word "dasje", an animal which is a sort of marmot, but is not the biting badger. The other district which I have included in this chapter, is called Zwarte Land (Black Land) from the colour of its soil. It was meant to be a parish and magistracy from the very start; but if it has not recently received a church, minister and magistrate, everything is still in the same state as in my time when it had none of these; this district is fairly but not fully settled and cut up into farms; yet it is little different from the Land of Waveren in the good quality of its soil.

One part of it is called Roode Zand which is also the name of a mountain in this locality. This mountain is fairly high and steep and is difficult to climb and still harder to cross by wagon. But as this region has become more densely populated, and the mountains have been crossed more frequently, the road has been improved for vehicles by removing stones and shrubs. One has now reached the stage where travellers do not have to unload their wagons as formerly, take them apart and carry them, load and all, over the mountain. Kolbe in his "*Caput Bonae Spei*," page 108, recounts two adventures that befell him personally. Firstly he tells that in 1709 he encountered six wild elephants at Hout Hoek<sup>112</sup> that scared him very much but did him no harm. When a person reads a story of this type and wishes to distinguish clearly between truth and falsehood, he has to bear in mind the time and conditions under which an event is supposed to have taken place. Hence, one who is thoroughly acquainted with the history of the country will not on this account

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<sup>111</sup> Groenekloof military post was established in 1701 and abandoned at the end of the 18th century. The Mission Station Mamre stands on its site.

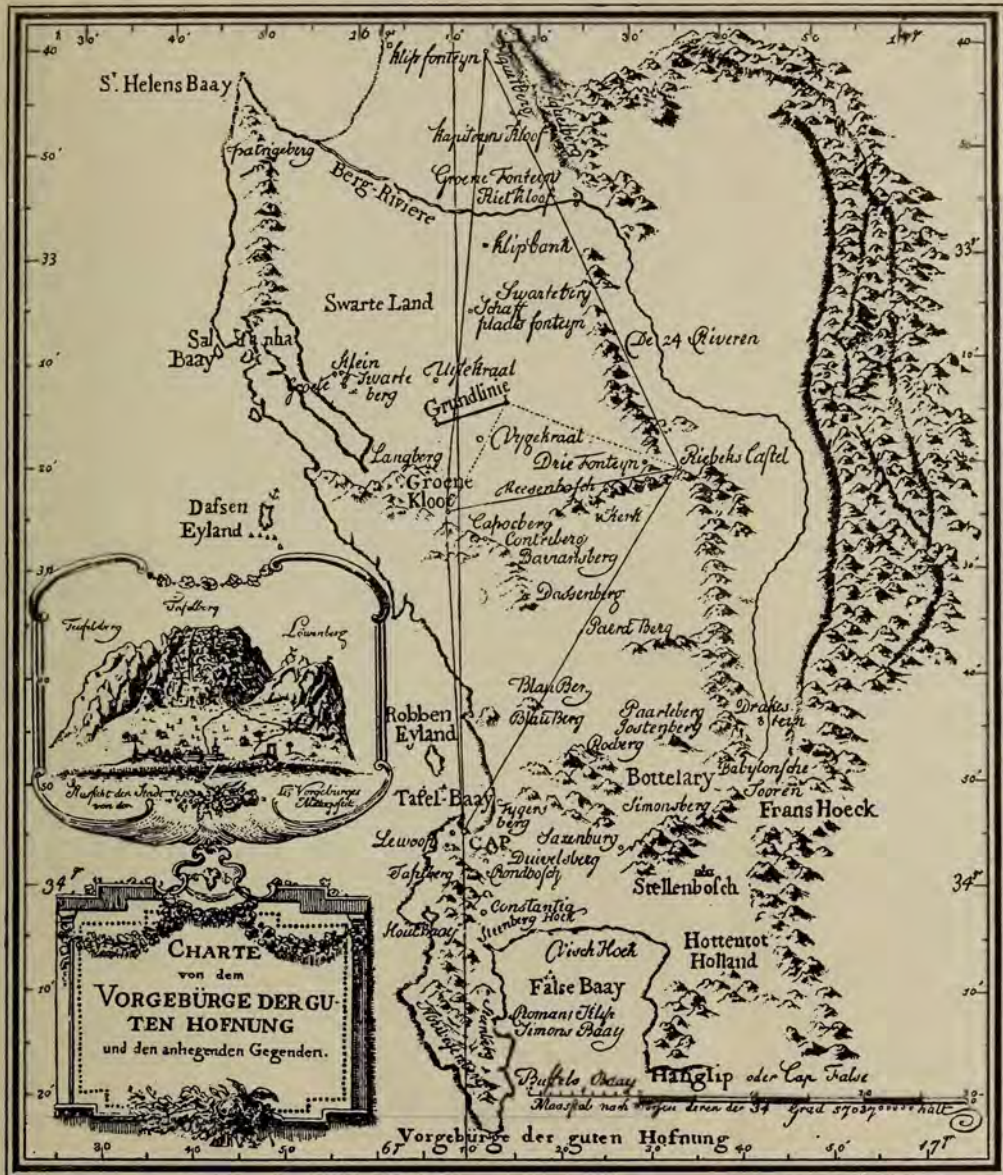
<sup>112</sup> From the context this is not Houwhoek near Bot River, but in the Groene Kloof.

call old Kolbe a liar. To understand it, one has to know that in Kolbe's time and even some ten years later, a herd or troop of about forty elephants existed in the Groene Kloof and as they were still young and had no tusks, they were not hunted nor shot at, wherefore they too did no harm to anybody. Of this herd of elephants a few might possibly have strayed in the dry season for lack of water and met Kolbe. But after the arrangement whereby Groene Kloof was consigned to the meat contractors for fattening the cattle, an attempt was made to drive them away little by little as the elephants ate up much of the fodder to the detriment of the pasture. On the arrival of an increasing number of farm-labourers and cattle-herds, they were sensible enough to withdraw to the further side of the Berg River. This they still occasionally visit in years of drought for drinking purposes and stay there for a short while. But they never cross the river any more and would have an unpleasant reception if they did.

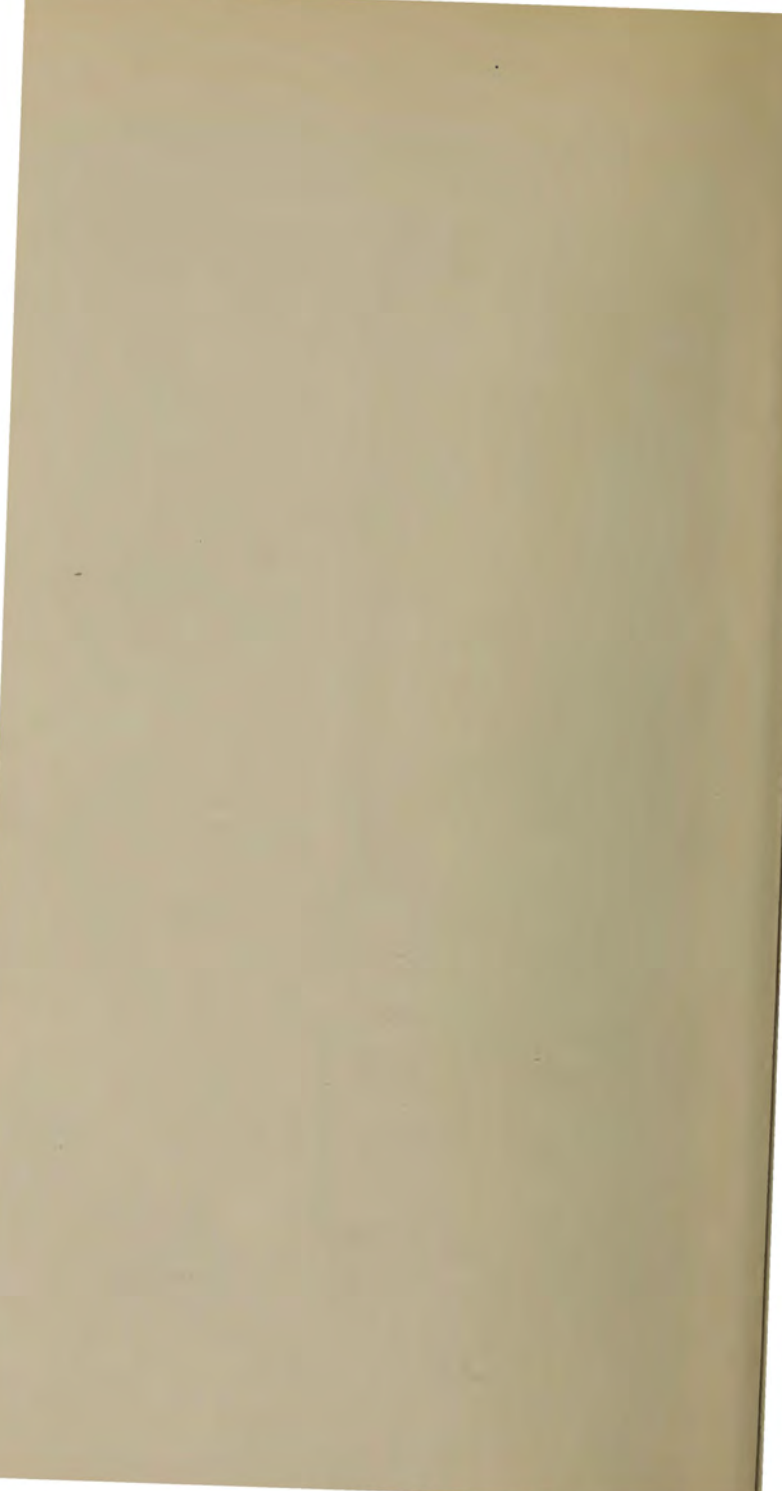
The second adventure which Kolbe tells is this: that in the neighbourhood of the Warm Springs he had a visit from eleven lions during the night, and that they gave him a sleepless night with their terrifying roars. That in Kolbe's time a lion may still have existed here and there on this side of Cape l'Agulhas I cannot dispute; for besides the story told me by trustworthy people of a lion shot with a trap-gun by an emancipated slave, several incidents of this nature still took place afterwards. On this account, too, the Government withdrew the reward promised for lions and tigers except when they were killed point-blank. But if it had not been expressed in clear figures that there had been exactly eleven lions, I would have imagined that it was a printer's error, and that the letter-setter had in his haste put in the figure "1" twice. Nevertheless, Kolbe may have erred accidentally and not on purpose; for he awoke in great fright from his sleep. It was night time and he could not make out the number of the lions. Indeed, anyone hearing a lion roar near at hand, and that at night, might become frightened like Kolbe. Lions have a natural habit of holding their mouths near the ground when roaring, whence it happens that the sound re-echoes everywhere, and prevents one from knowing whence it comes. This roaring therefore, combined with the dark night, the shock, sleep and his

fear, may well have intensified the roar of one lion tenfold in Kolbe's ears. For surely, if eleven lions were observed in one troop, the Government would not have hesitated to summon everyone in that region and have promised a double reward for every lion killed.

Perhaps Kolbe, as an astronomer, had two telescopes with him; an ordinary one and a polyhedral one, and perhaps in his fear he mistook the latter for the former, in which case he could easily have seen eleven or even twelve lions. I make this conjecture merely to exculpate him from possible suspicion of telling a falsehood.



Enlarged Reproduction of Map in the German Edition of the Abbé de la Caille's Voyage au Cap de Bonne-Espérance (Attenburg, 1778).



## CHAPTER SIX.

### Of the Newly established District of Zwellendam.

Hitherto we have described a large tract of land, divided into five separate districts; but this is only a part of the entire Cape, which is enclosed on the West and South by the ocean and on the East by an almost incredible number of inaccessible mountains, but to the North there are regions that are still mostly unknown. Since the part described is only a portion of the whole, I say frankly that anyone who thinks that he has obtained a complete picture of the entire surface of the Cape of Good Hope from the description already given is making a serious mistake. I do not think that we have yet explored or discovered a third of the southern part of Africa lying between the Ethiopian<sup>113</sup> and Indian Oceans, which goes by the name of "the Cape." A moderate estimate of the country, as far as it has been explored and become known to Europeans, must put its area at 6,000 square miles at least.<sup>113a</sup> We shall see in the eighth Chapter from an extract of a diary kept of an expedition undertaken in 1761 and 1762, that in the one region through which this journey was made, more wildernesses and uninhabited places were found than inhabited ones; and of the recently colonised district of Zwellendam, which we are to describe in this Chapter, probably only a hundredth part is inhabited or cultivated. About thirty or forty years ago little was known of this eastern part of the Cape. Even now its boundaries can only be described as follows: to the East the Indian Ocean, and to the North-West the Lange Kloof alongside an inaccessible mountain range, but to the North and North-East the extreme boundary has never been properly explored, still less described, though a few farmers, rich in cattle, have been living there for a long time.<sup>114</sup> Francis Masson and

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<sup>113</sup> The Atlantic.

<sup>113a</sup> Equivalent to about 130,000 English square miles.

<sup>114</sup> For the geography of this district Mentzel follows Sparrman's map.

Dr. Thunberg were the first to explore part of the eastern zone of the district of Zwellendam. Professor Sparrman, however, braving all danger, has traversed these regions more thoroughly with praiseworthy steadfastness. His fine book recording his voyage to the Cape of Good Hope from 1772 to 1776, was published by Haude and Spener in Berlin in 1784. This "Voyage" of Sparrman has been freely translated into German from the original Swedish by Christian Heinrich Groszkurd, rector of the Gymnasium at Stralsund. Without this, I would have been unable to say more about the Zwellendam district than that Governor Swellengrebel founded it about 1748<sup>115</sup> and gave it that name. It also ranks as a parish, but has so far neither church nor clergyman, nor is it likely to get one easily, because its inhabitants are scattered over such a vast area. Meanwhile, the settlement is under the jurisdiction of a Landdrost and several councillors, called "Heemraeden". One may form some idea of the situation of the farms if one knows that on account of the inaccessible mountains lying between them the most distant inhabitants of this district cannot reach the seat of their Landdrost otherwise than by water. If this is the condition of the inhabited parts, one may imagine what it must be like in the immense mountain chain in which the ordinary person supposes only snakes and dragons dwell.

Meanwhile, it is remarkable that though Masson and Thunberg had set out with the same purpose as Sparrman they took two different routes and passed over Zwartkops Salt Pan to the place of the last Dutch farmer Jakob van Rennen and still further up to the Sundays River on the very border of Kaffirland.<sup>116</sup>

But how can I talk about matters which I do not know myself. I want to produce an unimpeachable witness for all I have to say. He is the afore-named learned and truthful Professor Sparrman of Stockholm, who does not pretend that

<sup>115</sup> 1745.

<sup>116</sup> Thunberg began his journey eastwards from Saldanha Bay and travelled by way of Piketberg and Old Roodezand Kloof; Sparrman starting from Cape Town went via Hottentots Holland's Kloof (Sir Lowry's pass) past Bot River and Caledon. He returned by way of Tulbagh.



anything is true and correct unless he has seen it with his own eyes, heard it with his ears, and touched it with his hands. In his excellent book he may speak for himself. I, however, wish to present to the kind reader only such extracts from it as may serve best to give him a preliminary idea of these districts until more is known about them.

I have briefly mentioned before that for some time a few farmers had been settled far inland to the North-East among the mountains, and that they already possessed much wealth in cattle. These settlers sow hardly as much grain as suffices for their households, but the expected harvest, even when it grows most promisingly, is yet occasionally destroyed by cold and snow. Since their farms lie at least 100 miles nearer the Southern tropic where one might expect a warmer climate than in Cape Town, where neither frost nor snow is to be seen, one may imagine what changes in the climate high mountains can cause. To plant vines in this region would therefore be still more fruitless. These farmers, living in a remote corner, could supply very little information about the geographical situation of their lands; for they went no further than their farms and pastures. Sometimes they did not know their nearest neighbour, since they are separated from one another by high mountains, rivers and sandy stretches, often being ten to twenty and more miles apart.

On every occasion when they travelled to the City and back, they did not take the straightest and shortest route, but the most convenient road known to them through the middle of the inhabited land. Governor Swellengrebel had already heard from his predecessor, de la Fontaine, of a project to found a colony on the east side of the Cape between the City and Mossel Bay, to which he had himself made an expedition. But Governor Swellengrebel did not go so far into the interior, and contented himself with gradually getting to know the land better. He founded a new settlement between Hottentots Holland, Fransche Hoek, Drakenstein, Roode Zand and the warm Bokkeveld on the one side, and the Indian Ocean on the other, i.e. between the Breede Rivier, Gouritz River and the small van Straat River not far from Grootvaders Bosch. He called this settlement Zwelldam after his own name. Before anything else he

appointed a commanding officer styled, as at Stellenbosch, "Landdrost", and joined to this district the land called Roode Zand, whose inhabitants were therefore considered as falling under the jurisdiction of this Landdrost and also had to perform their military exercises under his supervision. That this new settlement represented a parish and had its own court need not be repeated here.

The extensive Grootvaders Bosch (Grandfather's Forest) situated in this district, has long been known by name; but since it had never before been explored the wood growing there was believed to be suitable only for firewood, like that in other forests, and was disregarded owing to their remoteness. But after this forest had been more thoroughly penetrated, it was discovered that timber trees were growing there. For this reason the Government has established a Buyten Post in the Riet Vallei close by.<sup>117</sup> The men posted there are instructed to fell trees which have to be brought to the City by ox-wagon under great difficulties until such time as arrangements can be made to haul them to the Breede River to be loaded on small boats for transportation by water. Since Grootvaders Bosch had been known for a long time, one might ask why was it not explored long ago? But what was our German fatherland like a thousand years or more ago, when entire regions were covered with impenetrable forests? Were not more than a thousand pairs of hands set to work before one square mile was cleared? Did not the bears, wolves and other roaming animals first have to be exterminated? And remember, Grootvaders Bosch lies in Africa where lions, tigers, buffaloes, rhinoceroses, even snakes and scorpions are far more plentiful in the woods than formerly bears and wolves were in Germany. Besides, Grootvaders Bosch and all other forests we shall describe later have a thick undergrowth of thornbushes that have first to be destroyed slowly and patiently, for which a large number of workers are necessary and these are at present still lacking.

At Zwellendam a beginning has already been made with viticulture and a vineyard planted; but the wine falls far short of

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<sup>117</sup> As early as 1724 a loan farm was authorised at Grootvadersbosch. In 1744 a school with a sick comforter to conduct religious services for the scattered farmers in the vicinity was also set up there. (Botha, *Place Names*, 92. 110).

the ordinary Cape wine, and will probably not thrive in this cold climate. A new hot spring has been discovered here, but its effect is yet unknown and it is therefore not visited by patients.<sup>113</sup> Further on, behind the large forest towards the mouth of the Gouritz River, lies a very big salt pan, from which the local inhabitants may fetch the salt they need free of charge; it is supposed to be a mile in circumference. It is a singular thing that the wind always blows from the North when it blows from the South at the Cape.

The most recent dwellings erected by the colonists in this district are still of very poor quality. Some of them are built of stone cemented with clay but in most the entire walls are of clay or mud just like the "Weller" work in Germany. All of them lack glass windows; the rooms are without ceilings and the roofs rest on the four walls, thatched with rushes, reeds or straw.

The farther the colony expands in the land between the mountains towards the East coast, the worse become its organisation and amenities. Between the hot spring in Hottentots Holland and Zwelendamburg village (where the Landdrost lives), lies a place called Tyger Hoek; there from 1739 to 1742, lived a Herrnhuter missionary called George Schmidt. He was, according to his own account, a butcher by trade. He carried on his apostolic calling in the neighbourhood of Rivier Zonder End and the Sergeant Rivier where he taught a few Hottentots to read Dutch and instructed them in Christianity. As a High German and a born Saxon he could neither read nor speak Dutch correctly; his teaching in both respects was not of much value. According to his own narrative in the "*Büchlein Sammlung*" of 1742, he made 32 Hottentot converts (later 5 more). But he was a fraud, wanting to make himself Chieftain of the Hottentots, trying to enrich himself with presents from them, and was finally banished from the country.<sup>119</sup> He was definitely a

<sup>118</sup> This probably refers to the Montagu baths.

<sup>119</sup> George Schmidt, Moravian Missionary, arrived in 1737 and conducted Mission work among the Hottentots near Baviaans Kloof (renamed Genadendal in 1806) for 6 years. He was given a free passage back to Europe in 1744. There was local and official opposition to his work, some of the burghers regarding him as 'heretic', in view of his brand of Protestantism. There is nothing to support Mentzel's low opinion of his character. Mentzel bases some of his facts on Sparrman, I, p. 213-4. For sketch of his career see Moritz *op. cit.*, 303-307.

hypocrite and a sham; sometimes climbing on the low roof of the house of Captain Rhenius<sup>120</sup> with whom he lived for a while after his arrival; there he knelt so that all the inhabitants of the Castle could see him, and pretended to pray. Whether he did actually pray only God and he knew. Since I knew him very well, but saw no Christian expression on his countenance, I was even at that time surprised that Captain Rhenius was so eager to take care of him from the very start. He accommodated him in his house, and procured quarters for him in the region mentioned. Schmidt brought with him a fellow missionary, but the latter proceeded on his way and sailed for India on the ship by which he had come.

To reach Mossel Bay beyond the Gouritz River entails a journey of many miles; in fact one may have to travel several days through and around the mountains before striking a farmhouse, and, although hospitality is the rule in the entire Cape, the inhabitants of these regions are unable to entertain a passing traveller properly and provide him with a good meal. It is true that they generally own much livestock; but some have only cattle, others only sheep; a few have both according as their pasture permits. But they cannot as yet sell enough butter or fat mutton to provide themselves with all the means of a comfortable existence. One may therefore easily realise that the present rural existence is not yet very Arcadian; and one must not look in this new Settlement for that abundance that one imagines all African farmers without exception to possess. Further to the North-East near the Great and Little Fish Rivers, near Bruntjes or Bruyntjes Hoogte towards the Camdebo Veld, and as far as the Sneeuwbergen near the real Kaffirland, one actually finds a few old established farmers<sup>121</sup> that are well-to-do, who possess more than a thousand head of cattle and a few thousand sheep and sell so much fat mutton yearly that they can pay for their other necessities. But even if they come to town once a year, particularly if they have to take their wives and children with them for fear of Bushmen and Kaffirs, their wagons are laden with so many

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<sup>120</sup> Johannes Tobias Rhenius was captain of the garrison between 1728 and 1740. He plays a prominent role in Mentzel's *Life of Allemann* (V.R.S. 2). His son became the first landdrost of Swellendam.

<sup>121</sup> For Loan farms in this area see Botha, *Place Names*, p. 112.

bare necessities that they can hardly take enough drink, such as wine and brandy, or other refreshments as are indispensable for the journey. Besides, they own very few slaves. They live among the Hottentots whom they employ to look after their cattle; otherwise, they have little service from them in return for their pay. Although this pay consists only of a few head of cattle, a little tobacco, dagga, some knives, glass beads or other trifles, even these must be considered good recompense in view of the difficulty of getting them.

The esteemed Dr. Sparrman, later Professor of Medicine at Stockholm, along with Immelman, a son of the Lieutenant of the Cape garrison, who had already accompanied Dr. Thunberg on a similar journey, ventured from the 25th July, 1775 to the 15th April, 1776, to undertake an expedition due East of the Cape, through unexplored mountains which had up till then been considered quite inaccessible. The two travellers had no other companions than a few Hottentots whom they needed for their wagons and to look after their horses. These they dared not let far out of sight because they were so unreliable, lazy and untrustworthy; in addition they had to bear with much of their insolence. This expedition was one of the most dangerous, toilsome and difficult ever undertaken in the interests of the Sciences; of natural science, of the fauna and flora and the acquisition of knowledge of an unknown land. They had to fight in those desolate and uncivilized regions not only against the hardships of travelling on unbeaten tracks over mountains and rocks, over broad and dangerous rivers, but also against hunger and thirst, and savage bloodthirsty animals. Sparrman, a man of the greatest honesty and integrity, therefore deserves eternal thanks for the discoveries he made known which it is to be hoped will provide the opportunity of investigating more closely the principal features of the country explored by him, and of looking for everything that may become most profitable to the Dutch East India Company. As has been shown in Volume One, the settled part of the Cape has become very useful and profitable to the Company, but now I have been thoroughly convinced by Sparrman of what I had always thought, that in the eastern part of Africa are to be found the sources that

could yield the greatest profit to the Company. Of course, Sparrman has not yet travelled through every part, nor found and discovered everything; nor has he yet finished the investigation of all the reports he has got. To accomplish all these several years, perhaps more years than have passed since the first settlement of this Cape, will be necessary.

At any rate, Sparrman has broken the ice and proved that more important discoveries can be made. Is it not important enough that, on his first expedition in this land, he found the Egyptian acacia or "Schoten Dorn" from which gum arabic is obtained? May there not be treasures in the unknown land of Zitzikanma thus far hidden from Europeans by an impenetrable forest? Would the almost inaccessible mountains, that he passed en route between the Oliphants Rivier, on the left towards the Cold Bokkeveld, the Cango and the still unexplored Camdebo Veld, have been brought forth during the Creation, entirely without any use for man? In my humble opinion I have always considered (although I have only discovered a few traces of it), that treasures of nature lie hidden in this unknown mountain range that may perhaps be discovered only centuries after; then only will the real value of the unexplored country be realised.

Although hitherto many complaints have been made about the lack of wood at the Cape of Good Hope, I am confident that the East India Company will one day establish a timber trade in this country that will be considerable, useful and profitable. Black and yellow ebony is certainly to be found in some parts; I have seen several pieces brought by the expeditions. Ironstone abounds in this country. If one were to find it where the great forests lie, one would also be able to set up iron foundries. Now, if one should discover suitable wood for ship-building, as may hardly be doubted, what would be lacking except a convenient shipyard for building the largest ships at the lowest cost?<sup>122</sup> This little flight of my imagination aside, the thickly-wooded Houtniquas Land starts, according to Sparrman's account, at the spot where the Gouritz River crosses the boundary of the Zwellendam district, and extends

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<sup>122</sup> A remarkable forecast of the possible development of the Knysna region.

from Mossel Bay to the point where the Keurbooms River flows into Algoa Bay.<sup>123</sup> This land is at present still peopled almost entirely by Hottentots, who however do not constitute a single or special tribe. They consist of several kraals or hamlets and families who live scattered here and there, partly under their own chiefs, but disunited; they cannot be considered one single nation at all. One finds small communities, from 50 to 150 souls all told. The Bushmen, who also live in these mountains, rob the other tribes when they have an opportunity. But before going further, I must mention that between Zwelldam and Mossel Bay there is a river to cross, called the Buffeljagds Rivier. Next to it lies a small wood where a kind of black meercat is to be found, no larger than our domestic cat.

In the Grootvaders Bosch tall sturdy trees have already been found, whose genus and species have up to now been quite unknown and which have not yet been given a distinctive name. No doubt, one will find more kinds for all sorts of uses and probably also for shipbuilding when the thornbushes that are almost impenetrably intertwined between the trees have been cleared away a bit. Among these there is a special kind "*Wagt- een-Beetje*," (i.e. "Wait a little"), so called because it immediately clings to one's clothing at the least touch; indeed it almost draws the clothing towards it and compels the passer-by to stop and free himself. This thorn bush, which resembles closely the thorn bushes of Madagascar from which Dragon's blood is gathered, may, if properly examined, perhaps prove to be identical with it and who can prophesy what gums and resinous herbs may still be discovered? I myself found a shrub, bearing a ligneous fruit enclosed by a thorny peel like a chestnut, but forming a cluster as in a bunch of grapes, whose kernels furnish a palatable oil.

Further along, the route continues across the Duyvenhoek Rivier<sup>123a</sup> and the Gouritz River to a green valley called Honig Klip which must not be mistaken for the Honig Bergen mentioned previously, and from there to Mossel Bay. Here it is that the Houtniqas region starts. At the Duyvenhoek Rivier Sparrman

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<sup>123</sup> According to Sparrman's map. The Keurboom's R. flows into Plettenberg Bay about 100 miles to the West.

<sup>123a</sup> see note p. 330.

found the first Egyptian acacia or Schoten Dorn tree from which gum arabic is obtained. Surely no unimportant discovery?

The few lonely farmers dispersed in this region have used this land to good advantage for stock-farming, for which the Karroo Veld of mixed sour and sweet soil is well suited. The Karroo Veld is very arid in general, but the pasture, though scanty, is very good for sheep farming. In winter during frequent thunder-storms, a good deal of rain falls on this barren land which is quickly revived thereby, and then brings forth unusually fine pasture. "Sour" land is the name given by the colonists to such regions as lie at a somewhat higher level than the sea, which are cooler, get frequent rains, and are richer in grass. On such pastures, cows give less milk but better butter than on sweet soil by which one understands the kind that surpasses the other in fertility.

There is a common belief that gold was formerly found in the Gouritz River. But after this region became better known it was proved that this story was due to a misunderstanding and that the error arose from the pronunciation of the farmers, who when speaking of the Gouritz River try to say it too quickly, and pronounce it "Gouds" Rivier (Gold River).<sup>124</sup> This river also has two names, being called the Oliphants Rivier (Elephants River) in the interior of the country or the Karroo Veld. But it must not be confused with the one of the same name on the West coast since this can easily give rise to an error in geographical description. The Houtniquas Land does lie parallel to the Lange Kloof, but it is impossible to travel directly from one to the other, since they are separated by a chain of mountains, densely wooded. From some traces in the rocks and certain peculiarities such as rising mists, some of the finer metals are presumed to be found in these mountains. Cobalt from which a blue dye is made is positively among them.

Since the long-known Algoa Bay as well as several small bays, into which flow the Keerom, the Tradutiku and the Zwart Rivers, by means of the Keurbooms River,<sup>125</sup> are situated on the

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<sup>124</sup> Gouritz named after a Hottentot tribe. For variety of spellings see Botha, p. 63.

<sup>125</sup> Even Sparrman's map doesn't bear out this statement. The *Tradutiku* may be a variation of *Trakudiku*, one of the many corrupted Hottentot names for the Trekkentouw (Pettman, p. 24).



East coast, Sparrman is right in believing that a profitable trade in local products could be carried on from these regions. But although such business would be quite advantageous at present, it would be far more considerable and lucrative if the country, called Zitzikamma by the Hottentots, were to be properly explored and exploited. It is known what profits are derived in America from buffalo hides which are salted there, tanned in Europe and sold at a high price by the name of "English Butz".<sup>126</sup> Not only in Zitzikamma, but also further along between the Camtours,<sup>127</sup> Sunday, and Great Fish Rivers, there are so many huge wild buffaloes that a special trade could be established in their hides alone. But between ourselves, without offence to anyone, the officials of the Cape Government, as was indicated more than once in the First Volume, came to Africa without exception in their younger days, and have there risen to their position by doing clerical work; it is therefore not to be imagined that financial matters of this kind would enter their heads. The East India Company will not get full value from this Cape, until such time as a Governor is sent out who can visualise the world as a whole and centralise what now lies scattered about and which in other countries, particularly in America, has been patched together. As examples, I would mention only the West Indian fur trade, beaver skins, gamboge, vanilla, cocoa, cochineal, and the like, all of which have to be gathered laboriously and transported in small quantities. Nay, if suitable spots were to be sought for at the Cape of Good Hope, there is no doubt but that oil, coffee and cocoa trees would flourish as well as, if not better, than in other countries lying in the same zone. Only the gentlemen in charge of the East India Company do not know the nature of this country, and the local Government does not understand how to make use of it. But I will not labour this point, but hasten to the further description of the Eastern part of Africa.

The settlers living in the Houtniquas Land in spite of all their wealth in cattle are still very poorly off in general. In consequence of their distance from the City they have to put on

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<sup>126</sup> Probably a kind of buckskin.

<sup>127</sup> Gamtoos R., the Eastern boundary of the Colony in 1770.

their bare feet veld shoes of raw ox-hide, wear the shabbiest clothes, and be satisfied with a few meagre articles of furniture.

The country itself has no industries, and whatever is needed for clothing is brought from Europe and sold at a very high price. Even the African wool which though not the best, but can be had in abundance, is not used at all, and people even make shift with the meanest bedding, instead of making themselves mattresses filled with fine washed and combed wool. Whenever a sheep is slaughtered a slave or Hottentot takes the skin and uses it on his bed. The real cause of the lack of all necessities and conveniences for the scattered colonists is that the latter cannot easily find a market for their products. For lack of markets, a great deal is wasted and much that could be put to good use is not valued but is carelessly neglected; all of which could be traded in with good profit for both parties, if a neighbour were close at hand.

Of the wild animals, most of the elephants in this Houtniquas Land have already been shot. Lions have been completely exterminated, and should one cross over from the Zitzikamma, it would immediately be discovered and shot. Tigers or rather tiger cats, as well as wolves and black meercats are not plentiful but still have their lurking places in these forests. On the other hand, buffaloes, forest buck, different kinds of gazelles and antelopes, both big and small, are to be found in large numbers, nor are wild fowl of all sizes entirely lacking.

Above Houtniquas Land come Hagel Kraal<sup>128</sup> and Artaquas Dal (beyond the Geel Zwavel Rivier) which extends to Saffraan Kraal. This Artaquas Dal<sup>129</sup> is counted among the cold and sour regions, where a certain plant, called pisgras by the inhabitants, grows abundantly. This plant grows also in the neighbouring districts on many farms and, since it prevents the cattle from urinating, is a noxious weed; if timely measures are not taken against it, cattle eating it die. The most effective remedy, which I have seen used with good results, is this: the cheese-like matter was pressed out of the urinary passage and then a drink was given to the cattle consisting of vinegar, crushed shell of ostrich eggs

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<sup>128</sup> Hagel Kraal was granted as a Loan farm in 1729.

<sup>129</sup> ? Attaquas.

and of thinly cut vine twigs. If this mixture does not give relief within ten or twelve hours, it is best to slaughter the animals before their bladders burst and spoil the meat.

Beyond Saffraan Kraal there is a poor piece of land called the "Land of Canaan" by Masson in the "*Philosophical Transactions*"; at the same time he remarks that it should rather be called "Land of Deception". As an Englishman, he had misunderstood the Dutch meaning of the name; since it is really called "Kannas Land" and derived its name from the *Kanna-bosch* which grows there in abundance. Similarly the road leading further South from there, between the Artaquas and Lange Dal over a high mountain, is called the "Kanna Hooghde" (Height).

The Kromme Rivier, so called on account of its many bends, separates the land just described from Lange Dal towards Zitzikamma, where many elephants are to be found, which are killed and eaten by the Hottentots; but the settlers living there have an aversion to it. At the border of the Zitzikamma Land there were in Sparrman's time, in 1775, no more than six Dutch farmhouses, which lay directly next to and in front of the forest. On the east side of the Leeuwenbosch which shuts off the approach to the interior of this country, the land lies quite open, since the mountain range ends there altogether. In this region the wax tree, discovered near Stellenbosch about ten years ago, is found in abundance. Cape buck, or to call them by their real name, "*Antilope dorcas*", and small Steenbok-gazelles are also plentiful.

Numerous elephants and buffaloes are to be found in these forests where they have opened up and tramped footpaths and ways in all directions; but it would be very dangerous to follow such paths for one would still be unable to find the end of the forest. Once upon a time two Hottentots ventured in and vainly tried to penetrate them, but had to return after twelve days with their task unaccomplished.

The mouth of the Krom River which flows into the sea in this region, is wide and deep enough for ships to lie at anchor with ease. Thus Nature itself gives a hint for the transaction of a profitable trade. Hippopotami may be seen in this river in broad

daylight. Beyond are the rivers Zeekoe, Kabeljauw, Kamtour and Loorij; after crossing them one reaches the Camdebo Veld where the real Kaffirs wander about with their cattle. A forest lying in this region called the Galgen forest by the Africans, contains many lions and buffaloes and is therefore dangerous to pass through.

Just across the Van Staden River there is a small nation of the Gonaqua<sup>129a</sup> Hottentots; the settlement consists only of two villages that subsist on cattle raising. They seem to be a hybrid of Kaffirs and Hottentots, since their language is akin to those of both peoples. They are bigger, stronger and more virile than the ordinary Hottentots, and also darker in colour. They practise circumcision like the Kaffirs, but always wait until it can be performed on a number of youths of different ages at one and the same time. Sparrman actually performed this operation in a few cases. They also do a little farming. Their grain consists of Sorghum<sup>130</sup> which they grind between two stones and bake from it round flat loaves of bread underneath glowing ashes. They also let this grain ferment in water with a certain root resulting in an intoxicating beverage of which they are fond. In this spot one finds large herds of wild asses (Quaggas), deer and buffaloes.

At the Zwartkops River, in which the ebb and flow can be clearly seen, Sparrman and Immelman came across two farmers who, with their wives and children, ate venison dried by the sun, entirely raw and uncooked. One would hardly suspect such an unnatural diet of people who, though not born in Europe, are still of European descent. At the same time, when I once met a Bastard Hottentot eating a piece of beef likewise uncooked and dried by the air, and I showed my disgust he answered in broken Dutch "Baas! but you too eat raw uncooked bacon. The air dries meat just as well as smoke and makes it as good to eat". In this region Sparrman found several flocks of guinea-fowl, which look for their food in the open fields, but roost in the trees at night; of these he once brought down six with one shot. Up to now it was believed that they were only to be found near the Rio de la Goa. Here Sparrman also took into his service as

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<sup>129a</sup> See note below p. 332.

<sup>130</sup> Kaffir corn.

guides a few Hottentot-Bushmen who call themselves "The Good" in their own language. Gum arabic, which one may gather from the Egyptian mimosa, is well-known to them and they eat it if they have no other food. A product to be had here for nothing must surely be profitable! They also saw a whole herd of African wild boars which Pallas<sup>131</sup> in his "*Specilogia Zoologica*" called "*Aper aethiopicus*" in the region just described. The Hottentots accompanying Sparrman feared them very much and asserted that they would rather fight lions than wild boars which make a very swift attack on human beings. When driven to flight, they carry off their young ones in their mouths.

On the upper t'Kurenoi or Little Sunday River there was a kraal of Bastard Hottentots, who originated from intermarriage between Hottentots and Kaffirs; their language was more like that of Kaffirs than of the Hottentots, but they resembled the latter more than the former. From the Sunday River the journey proceeded to the Bushman River, across which our travellers saw a herd of quagga and an eland, which was entirely unlike the European species. Quaggas are shaped like Zebras, except that they have fewer stripes, especially around the legs, and may more easily be tamed. From Bushman River, Sparrman's expedition proceeded towards Quammedacka, where one finds in a valley, a great deal of wood which makes one sneeze if one smells it. Another forest in this vicinity is called Assegaai-bosch.<sup>132</sup>

A little further on is the Nieuwjaars Drift, a charming spot where Egyptian mimosa grows in abundance. At the Kurckoiku River, Sparrman shot at a herd of seventy or eighty buffaloes — fortunately for him not hitting any otherwise he would certainly have been pursued, overtaken and killed by them.

A whole herd of Springbok (*antelope euchore*) which Sparrman estimated at 2,000 came quite close to him and of these he shot one: this is proof that there must be an abundance

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<sup>131</sup> Peter Simon Pallas (1741-1811), German naturalist and traveller, born in Berlin but spent most of his life in Russia in the service of Catherine II. Travelled widely through Siberia. Numerous publications on Natural History, mainly concerning the Russian Empire.

<sup>132</sup> AUTHOR'S NOTE. Assegaai wood is the name given by the Hottentots to a straight annual sapling which grows on the uplands and which they use for the shafts of their assegais.

of game in this region. The first rhinoceroses were killed here by two Hottentots; afterwards more were found and shot, our two travellers discovering at the same time that their meat was quite good to eat; to which Sparrman adds that according to his own examination this animal has no gall-bladder. There was likewise no lack of eland; they kept together in herds without being particularly shy.

From Quammedacka which is actually only a pool of water, the journey continued to Agterbruintjes Hoogte, where springbok are very plentiful, then the expedition turned towards the Little Fish River in search of hippopotami. Two lions came within 200 yards of them in broad daylight (between 9 and 10 a.m.), but neither horses nor the gazelles feeding nearby were scared, probably because they are naturally aware of the fact that a lion does not attack openly but stalks or lies in wait for its prey. For that reason these two lions were soon put to flight by our travellers. They also chased a male ostrich that was sitting on eggs in its nest; from which it is clear that the ostrich lives monogamously and takes turns with the female to sit on the eggs as Thevenot testifies.<sup>133</sup> This is well known at the Cape from information given by the Hottentots.<sup>134</sup>

From the Little Fish River they journeyed to the Great Fish River and shot a buffalo and an eland. Sparrman also saw a t'Gnu<sup>135</sup> but could not hunt it down. Between these two rivers they saw many springbok, quaggas and deer. Here our travellers for the first time found shelter again in a house belonging to an old elephant hunter called Printsloo<sup>136</sup> who had settled here a short time ago.

<sup>133</sup> Jean de Th venot: d. 1657. His *Voyages* describing his travels through Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia and India were in great vogue in the 17th century. His reputation as a Naturalist has not stood the test of time.

<sup>134</sup> On the contrary Barrow and Lichtenstein remark upon the polygamous nature of the ostrich. Lichtenstein found a nest occupied by one cock and five hen ostriches.

<sup>135</sup> Mentzel proceeds: 'actually this animal is called *Xgnou* by the Hottentots. By keeping the tongue against the upper palate and jerking it loose so that it clicks in pronouncing the letter *X* and the word "*gnou*" the correct Hottentot pronunciation is obtained'.

<sup>136</sup> Willem Prinsloo defied the law by trekking beyond the colonial boundary in 1772. He was followed by others and, as orders to return were of no avail, the Council of Policy in 1775 extended the boundary to the Little Fish and Bushman Rivers.

The Agterbruintjes Hoogte, which encloses the upper part of the Little Fish River and is separated from the Camdebo by high mountains, lies near the Sneeuwbergen whose summit is covered with snow the greater part of the year. The lower Sneeuwbergen are inhabited throughout the year, but because of the intense cold the inhabitants have to leave the high Sneeuwbergen in winter and move to the Camdebo. Hereabouts live the wildest Bushmen who often cause great damage to the farmers and even oblige them to move away.

There formerly lived in this neighbourhood a tribe of Hottentots of somewhat lighter colour, yellower than the others, called on that account Chinese Hottentots; they were on very peaceable terms with the settlers. Their present abode is near the Great and Little Fish Rivers, but a section of them has trekked an eleven days' journey farther North and split into separate Kraals, which live in community and engage in cattle breeding.

Among the rivers that flow through the Hottentot land, the t'Kamsi-t'Kay, the t'Nu-t'Kay<sup>137</sup> (or rather X Kamsi-X Kay, and X Nu-X Kay) are the smaller and the great Zomo the largest; they flow through Kaffirland into the Indian Ocean. Beyond the Zomo there is a tribe called the "Tambucki"<sup>137a</sup> by the Chinese Hottentots, similar to the latter but much more powerful and warlike. According to these Chinese Hottentots, another tribe, still more warlike called the "Mambucki" borders on the "Tambucki." A few colonists, who visited the Zomo river, saw much smoke rising in the mountains about a two days' journey northwards. The Chinese Hottentots assert that the "Tambucki" melt a kind of metal from which they make ornaments that resemble pistol-gold.<sup>138</sup> Upon examining a ring of this kind, brought home by Sparrman, the Director of Mines, Engelström, found it to be a mixture of silver and copper. It would be a very important discovery if great quantities of copper rich in silver were found in this country.

A somewhat obscure and as yet doubtful story of a real unicorn, having the shape of a horse with a horn in front of its

<sup>137</sup> The White Kei and the Zwart Kei.

<sup>137a</sup> See note on p. 336.

<sup>138</sup> Gold of 21 carat (Grimm: *Deutsches Worterbuch.*)

head, was told Sparrman by an honest fellow called Jacob Kock, with whom Thunberg and Masson also stayed at the Zeekoe River. The story may be read in Sparrman's Travels, page 453, and everything taken into consideration, is not entirely improbable.

According to the settlers on the extreme boundaries of the Cape, the land of the real Kaffirs lies to the east of the Great Fish River, close to the shore of the Indian Ocean. They are ignorant of sheep breeding, keep only horned cattle, and dress in cowhide like the Gonaka Hottentots. Their little four-cornered huts are woven together with rope and covered with clay and cow dung. Their weapons are shields of ox-hide, and spears of iron with a light shaft of wood.

Camdebo Land, which is bounded by Agterbruyntjes Hoogte and by the Sneeuwbergen on the South, is according to Sparrman, partly inhabited by Christian sheep farmers; a sure proof that the boundaries of the Cape are not yet fixed and definite. It may be questioned whether even the Government of the Cape knows all the inhabitants of the country and where they have built their homes? Agterbruyntjes Hoogte is the most northerly part of the country visited by Sparrman and Immelman. It is also one of the finest, for it is as green as a meadow, an unusual thing in this country. This greenness is intensified by the shade of the *Viesinn* plant and by its many yellow flowers.

From Camdebo there are two different routes back to Cape Town. The northern one runs through Anton Land, Koe Land, and Bok Land; the southern towards the Oliphants Rivier, but one may also turn sooner towards Platte Kloof, Hex River and elsewhere. Sparrman made his return journey to Town from here, a description of which may best be read in his own narrative; for that reason there is no need to give an extract of it. Nobody desirous of obtaining knowledge of a hitherto quite unknown region would regret buying this remarkable "*Description of a journey to the Cape of Good Hope*" and reading it. The present Governor Baron van Plettenberg has already started to establish a new Settlement at Krake-Kummas and towards the Sunday River. The river on which the settlement is being made is called Bushman River. It arises in Assegai



Bosch, running in a wide curve through Keuri-Kanniagli, where a few Gonaka Hottentot families still live. This Settlement is, however, still small and insignificant; nothing can as yet be said about it.<sup>139</sup>

Further, Professor Sparrman shows in every page of his often-praised "*Description*" that he is a man of a most honest character, and no lover of miracles, but concerned only with increasing knowledge of Nature in regard to its fauna and flora. His writings are fully trustworthy. He does not write merely to make a name for himself in the learned world through the medium of print. He has no need to boast about his exploits. It is with him as with Virgil; his works speak for him. What, then, has become of the highly-praised "Terra de Natal", which the Company according to Kolbe, bought for 30,000 guilders worth of merchandise? Surely it cannot be such a small piece of land, lying in a corner of the Cape, that it cannot be found again. At any rate, I for my part have never heard of any such place in Africa and, therefore, fully believe that the Portuguese called by this name, a place on the Indian Ocean, which name afterwards fell into disuse; according to Masson's account, it should border on the land of the kaffirs where no Hollander has yet reached.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> The 'colonie' indicated on Sparrman's map would fall within the present district of Alexandria. There was no settlement in the proper sense of the term. Sparrman himself explains that all that happened was that 'several peasants, with the permission of the Governor, Baron Plettenberg, had removed hither in order to inhabit this part of the country'. (*Sparrman's Voyage* II p. 309).

<sup>140</sup> For once Kolbe was right and Mentzel wrong.

## CHAPTER SEVEN.

### Of the Mode of Life of the African Farmers or Inhabitants of the Country Districts.

Nobody can deny that there are rich farmers at the African Cape of Good Hope. But anyone who imagines that all African farmers are rich and live like European noblemen would be greatly mistaken. These good people may be suitably divided into four classes. In the first class I count those free burghers who live in the City and have a considerable fortune and are comfortably off; and who, besides, also possess one or more farms in the country. These would either hire an able man from the Company, called a "knecht", or engage the son of an African farmer and appoint him manager of their property. No employer expects such a man to do any work himself. He only supervises all the work and sees to it that the slaves perform their tasks in the field and elsewhere properly and at the right time; that they take good care of the sheep, milk the cows, make butter, press the grapes in season and in short, obey his orders in everything pertaining to the management. If, as is rarely the case, his employer has two farms lying next to each other or close together, the manager of both would from time to time go to see whether everything was in order on the other farm; but then his pay would also be increased. Generally these rich landowners have one farm which is used for agriculture and viticulture, and another situated far inland, where only cattle is kept for breeding and fattening. In that case the "knecht" or manager is not required to oversee both; except in so far as he may have promised his employer to visit the cattle farm once or several times a year. Such urban landowners visit their country estates at least twice a year, namely at harvest and vintage time. If possible, good landlords also visit their farms at sowing time during the rainy season. But when such a free burgher does appear on one of his farms, he cuts a figure like a European nobleman, and is a strict master to his slaves. If the knecht, or if one

prefers to call him the manager, is a good overseer and the slaves are obedient and industrious, they have nothing to fear from the arrival of the master; he would always bring with him something extra, not included in their wages or food.

The knecht who is faithful to his master and has his interests at heart, lives as comfortably on such a farm as the owners of at least a medium-sized farm. In hiring a knecht it is understood, without a special agreement being made, that he must be adequately supplied with coffee, tea, sugar and tobacco; otherwise he would simply send a slave to town to ask for it. If there is a vineyard on the farm, as is usually the case, the knecht, when the wine is marketed, would keep back a barrel for himself and his employer against the event of his master visiting the farm. But if there is no vineyard, as on a farm where only cattle is raised, it is a courtesy on the part of the master, not an obligation, to bring a small barrel of wine for his knecht or send him one at times. The most important duty of a knecht is to see to it that the servants, whether they are male and female slaves or Hottentots, have sufficient meat and bread at the proper time. No proprietor would scold or complain that too many cattle have been slaughtered and consumed: for in such case the slaves would give evidence for the knecht and tell the names of the cattle that had died, as well as the number of "ouwen Ooyen" (old rejected ewes) that had to be slaughtered. For the slaves and Hottentots have to eat the meat of animals that die which, however, they enjoy just as much as that of slaughtered animals; only in this case all the entrails are thrown to the dogs. But, if the knecht does not give the servants enough to eat, the slaves would on occasion complain about it and the proprietor would have to consider such complaints: for in such case every slave assumes the right to say: "Kammene Kumi, Kammene Kuli" which means: "If I have nothing to eat, I cannot work". The loose female slaves however, whose favours the sailors might wish to enjoy gratis say: "Kammene Kas, Kammene Kunte" ("If you have no money, I have no —"). No master will listen with patience to complaints about ill-treatment and blows, but would rebuke the slaves, and even command the knecht, in their hearing, to give them a good thrashing if they refuse to obey him; but at the same time he would in private reprimand the

knecht for such brutality, and point out to him that the slaves were human beings and that he had to pay a high price for them. I myself knew a knecht who, on account of his too drastic actions, was not only taken back into the Company's service before the end of the year, but was sent back as a sailor to Europe by the Council of Policy before completing his term of service; this may be considered as little short of banishment. As we already mentioned in the First Volume, if these knechte are good managers and faithful to their employers and are no drunkards, they usually make their fortune at the Cape and are in some way or other provided for by marriage. But it must be understood that for these positions men are chosen who are acquainted with farming, especially grain-farming. Who are they? None other than European peasant lads, and one may well say that they have made their fortune if they become owners of even an ordinary farm.

In the second group of African farmers I class those who, as the saying goes, have feathered their nest; who possess excellent farms, paid for and lucrative, who live on these farms themselves and produce more than they consume. One may readily understand this. A farmer, possessing grain fields and vineyards, raising cattle, and having an orchard and vegetable garden, has all the necessities of life. He sells 300 to 400 or more muids of grain, peas and beans, several leaguers of wine, and some sheep in proportion to his stock. How could he spend all that money, unless he were a dissolute drunkard? He has to buy tea, coffee, sugar, rice and some spices. His main item of expenditure is for clothes of very ordinary quality for himself, his wife, children and slaves. Even if he occasionally buys a male or female slave, that costs him no more than about the price of 30 muids of wheat. The smith and wagon builder do indeed also earn a little from him yearly, but the farmer makes his wagon last a long time and manages to do most of the repairs himself. In spite of these things he will save a good deal of money annually; of course, he may still have debts and have to pay interest; but then he could not yet be put in this group. But of those who actually belong to this second class, it may truly be said that they live like gentry and many of them even better; especially if they

do not live too far from the City, that is not further than 20 or 30 hours; they may then conveniently turn everything into money and obtain everything they want for their money. Such well-to-do farmers keep knechte for their own convenience, and school-masters for their small children as much for the benefit of their society as for the education of their adolescent children. At these people's homes, the coffee is already on the table when they rise in the morning. At 8 a.m. breakfast is taken, being a proper meal with warm dishes. No one leaves the breakfast table before he has drunk half a dozen cups of tea, and the men have smoked a pipe of tobacco. At 12 o'clock the midday meal is taken; at 3 p.m. the tea kettle is again on the table. After this, it depends on the season of the year whether one walks a little in the veld, in the garden or vineyard, or whether one remains at home and plays cards, if there is nothing urgent to do. At 7 p.m. the evening meal is ready. One sits from three quarters of an hour to an hour at table, and at none of the three meals is table-wine wanting; but well-bred people never drink more than three or at most four glasses between the courses at every meal. After the evening meal one might also drink a few glasses of wine over a pipe of tobacco, and play a game of "Gravejas" either for a stuiver or for a glass of wine at the host's expense; one makes merry at the unlucky ones who do not win a glass of wine and have either to remain thirsty or drink water. These meals are by no means scanty, and the hostesses show a thorough knowledge of cooking in the preparation of a fine dinner. Most farmers slaughter a sheep daily and a pig every four or five weeks, except in the hottest season. They are never without fresh, smoked, dried and pickled meat, but the best ham is saved for festive days, or eaten when friends or neighbours come on a visit.

An African farmer may have as many pigs as he likes for they cost him practically nothing; unless he wants to fatten one unusually by feeding it with barley and bran. It is well-known how prolific these animals are in Europe, and here the same is true. And since there is no market for them, they would become too numerous if they were not slaughtered. As they cannot all be allowed to grow up, the young pigs are turned into a tasty preserved food for the summer. They are slaughtered when six

or eight weeks old; the meat is chopped into small pieces, boiled for a while, then soaked in vinegar, seasoned with spice and Spanish pepper for a few days, and then eaten cold. Now, although such well-to-do farmers do not put a shoulder to the wheel themselves, they are nevertheless good overseers and give daily orders as to what work must be done and cared for by the knecht. They believe in the rustic proverb: "the best manure is that which the farmer carries on to the field himself on his shoes". It is clear that by this "manure" is meant the supervision of the proprietor or employer. For this reason, unless the weather is bad, these people go out once or twice a day to look at their fields, vineyards and gardens; at the same time also paying a surprise visit to their shepherds. They never go out without a loaded rifle in their hands or on their shoulders, but seldom do those who live near the City bring a head of game home with them, but mostly shoot snakes or on occasion a bird of prey rather than edible game. Nor is this strange, for up to twenty-four miles from the City little game is to be found; further, game shooting is forbidden. They are more versed in catching a Cape roebuck at night by means of a trap in the vineyards or gardens, than in shooting one in the daytime. Even then it has to be done on the quiet for the Governor's huntsmen, the assistant Landdrost and his subordinates, the field-guards, have strict orders to watch the hunting ground. While there is no reward for reporting a breach of the law, these men profit more by keeping silent than by reporting a case, and I myself along with the Assistant Landdrost, who had been specially commanded to keep an eye on the game, once helped to consume half a roebuck, from which two very nice dishes had been made. During the meal the Assistant Landdrost repeated these words several times: "I do not know what I am eating, but it is delicious".

In the country districts the members of the opposite sex are not brought up to be as fashionable, polite and well-mannered as in the City. One may seldom call them handsome, though they are not actually ill-favoured. They rarely, or hardly ever, visit anybody but their nearest neighbours. Many reach the age of twenty without having seen the City or a church. Concerning religious instruction, I have already noted the main facts with

regard to the women of the town, and this applies also to the country women. The country maidens who know of no female arts other than those taught them by their mothers, are put to women's work, as in the kitchen and at the sewing-table, but especially to work in the fields. Though the father be ever so wealthy, all the children have to go to the fields at harvest-time and help to reap the grain; the youngest having to collect the stalks in small heaps to be bound into sheaves. Who would suppose that even in this work the ambitions of the children are aroused? They are hardly twelve when they refuse to make heaps any longer but, like the older ones, want to take the sickle in hand and cut the corn, though it is harder work. To describe the true nature of the country women, one can say no more than that they are indeed not very polite, but neither are they rude. They are not good-looking, generally, but neither are they ugly, but have a lively and healthy appearance. They are not very talkative, but neither are they shy; not forward, but not dull either. They speak quite frankly and naturally to people whom they see for the first time, and look everybody in the eye straight and unabashed, but their conversation does not go beyond household affairs. They are flirtatious but not coquettish. They are chary with their kisses in private, but at a social gathering and in the presence of other people they are not shy: then, one can without trouble get some kisses from them but they are not so generous as those in the City, where one gets three kisses at every greeting. Slightly equivocal speeches they do not take amiss; they acknowledge them either seriously in a harmless sense or in silence and with a faint smile. Sparrman tells that at one place he ate a good dish of testicles cut from newly-born bull-calves and the young girls had likewise eaten of it, without blushing. That is not strange, for when such gelding is performed, the grown-up daughters are present, bringing butter and ashes for bandaging and carrying the parts cut out home in their hands or in a vessel. I have several times seen a daughter holding lambs by their four legs for her father to geld them. From the little testicles of the lambs a tasty dish is prepared, and I was held up to ridicule because I did not at first like to eat it. No account is taken by the women of such ordinary acts. I do not even think that thereby any untoward thoughts are provoked in them.

In general there are more marriageable women at the Cape than bachelors. Hence if at some time one finds four, five or more daughters in a house, and only one or two sons, and one teases the daughters by saying that there are so many girls and so few men in the country, they immediately reply: "Oh! That is no trouble. The suitors come from the Fatherland (Europe) and therefore no spinsters will be left over"; and truly one hardly ever meets an old maid.

The country girls have few opportunities for a tête-a-tête with men, so that one seldom, very seldom hears of a girl having gone too far and fallen. But in Cape Town they are not so strict; they also have more opportunities of being seduced. Still, there was a case where a white girl in the country had given birth to a black child: and at the Salt River, at a wine shop adjoining the crossing on this river, a former proprietress had a quite well educated European husband, and yet gave birth to a black child; but she declared to her husband and everybody else, that she had been frightened by unexpectedly meeting a very black slave: *Mater dicit, pater credit*, etc.

All women at the Cape have bad teeth, both in the City and in the country. In this they resemble the women of Holland; it is believed to be caused by the large quantities of sugar-candy they take in their mouths when drinking tea or coffee. Not only the daughters of the poorer farmers, but also of those we are talking about, the well-to-do class, walk barefoot from childhood, without shoes and stockings. Except for the children of free-burghers in the City, the Cape shoemakers have no occasion to make children's shoes.

When the country girls do get shoes and stockings on their feet either to attend a wedding or as brides to appear with their bridegroom before the Marriage Board, it is comic to see how high they lift their legs so as not to knock against something with their heels; for they have a feeling as though they were walking on stilts. As soon as the honeymoon is over, the shoes are laid aside and not produced again until such time as they go to town or attend a wedding or church service. The men, on the other hand, even if they wear no shoes except on such festival days, do wear little "veldschoens" of raw hide and also wrap their feet



in fine many-coloured handkerchiefs, and then think themselves very smart in their way.

The language of the country people is just as far from being pure Dutch, as that of the German farmers is from pure German. The men have a broad accent and the women folk use certain expressions that are sometimes really ridiculous. For instance, if one were to ask them whether they have no Bible, the reply is: "*Onz heeft geen Bybel*"; which means "Us has no Bible". If one were then to ask them: "How many '*Onze*' (ounces) in a pound?" they would blush. They are very fond of hearing High German spoken and still more of hearing it sung. They also understand a High German better than one from Lower Saxony, at whose Low German tongue they usually laugh and call it a crooked language which they cannot understand.

I have given a detailed account of the country women within the second class of farmers, since they represent that group of their sex that stands between the higher and lower class, and one can judge the others in relation to them. The daughters of the landowners of the first class rank with the City ladies, while those of the third class may be reckoned with the working class, but those of the fourth class with the simplest and uncivilised kind, for these latter are brought up more among the slaves or rather among the Hottentot men and women and show the least degree of good breeding.

The third type of African farmers may rightly be called the industrious class. Among them there are no slovenly owners, drunkards, or such as find the weather too cold and wet during the ploughing and sowing season and too warm and windy during harvest time and who neglect and diminish their sources of income by leaving all the work to a few slaves. Industrious farmers let no hour pass unused. Even in the season between sowing and harvesting, when the countryman could sometimes have an easy time, they keep themselves and their servants busy: and when the weather is so inclement that nothing can be done outside, the slaves under cover of a roof, in the barn or in their dwellings, will at least make ropes and cords out of old anchor cables, for tying oxen and knee-haltering horses; for when horses are driven to the fields and meadows, a rope is bound to their

necks and one leg, so that they walk on only three legs and thus cannot stray far. One must not imagine these barns to be buildings provided with bays and a threshing-floor, such as one finds on the farms in Germany. They are merely wagon-houses or sheds, of four walls and a roof, in which the farmers store straw for mixing with the manure, keep their wagon tools, and into which they drive the sheep to keep them dry during the rainy season, when it is very cold and wet. For during such unpleasant weather they prefer to keep the sheep a whole day in the barn without food, rather than have the rain fall on them and let them freeze, since they do not stand the cold well. Concerning the local cattle I would mention in passing that they prefer to eat shrubs and bushes rather than straw, even when grazing is scanty.

These are the chief characteristics of the third class of farmer. They are both master and knecht. They are always busy. At sowing time they are their own sowers. In the harvest season their own binders. They sow the garden seeds themselves on suitable beds and on transplanting divide the rows by means of lines. Their wives and grown-up children or the female slaves put the plants into the soil. In the spring they mostly prune the vines themselves or direct the slaves how to do the pruning. After the harvest they are present at the threshing of the grain, gather the threshed grain, and measure it out straight-away. The grapes are trodden, pressed, and the barrels filled in their presence. The barrels are washed under their eyes, rinsed and scalded with boiling water and peach leaves. Muting, maintenance, tapping and clarifying with liquefied isinglass is their own work. When cattle are slaughtered, the farmer is his own butcher and if an animal should die, he does not mind skinning, cutting up and salting it. Before harvest time, when there is no pressing work, they cause the slaves to mould some bricks that are burnt at the time when they have enough wood. They are generally capable of doing any woodwork on wagons and ploughs; also carpentry and coopering. They are fond of saying: "If you learn a thing, you can do it; necessity knows no law; one cannot always obtain necessities in this country." I knew farmers who made their own wagons including the wheels, except

the naves and even these they would have made, had they had the proper drills. Should a shaft or ladder-beam break, the farmer would take a piece of raw ox-hide, soak it in water, and sew it strongly round the crack with thongs of the same material. When this leather band dries, it lasts as well as and sometimes better than an iron ring. They carefully remove the still usable iron from unserviceable wagons, especially the rings, and are able to fix them skilfully to other wagons. There are very few who do not build their own houses and make the rafters as well as the thatched roof. Of course, one can see that no master mason and master carpenter have made it, but the farmer makes shift with what he can have, and not with what he would like to have. It is a simple task for them to make a plough and, if they were unable to do the indispensable coopering for pails, buckets and similar utensils, I do not know how they would manage, for excepting a few coopers in the Company's service, there are none; nor is there any wood for coopering to be had except from large disused barrels or leaguers. From a leaguer cask which holds six Berlin or eight Breslau pails, no more than two separate half-pails or at most two whole pails of the kind that is used at the Cape, can be made and that would be too expensive. Old coopered vessels are bound, however, either with iron bands or Spanish reeds.

With these unremitting workers, the hours for meals are not fixed throughout the year as with the wealthy. In this hemisphere the days are not as long in summer nor as short in winter as in the latitude of Germany. Therefore the farmer and his men rise every morning at dawn, that is at half-past four in summer and at six o'clock in winter, and go to bed after supper at 9 o'clock in summer, but at 8 in winter: unless the farmer with his wife and children, teacher, or other friends with perhaps a grown-up son or daughter, stay up a little longer to shorten the long winter nights with a game of cards. Indeed these farmers do not live at all badly. They have plenty to eat, and seldom lack wine though they may run short before the vintage if they have consumed rather more than they had calculated. While one must not expect delicacies, their food is not to be despised. For their roasts they can choose from chickens, ducks, geese and fat legs of mutton. Fresh, pickled, smoked and dried beef, mutton and pork constitute their daily fare. For additional dishes there is no lack of vegetables

and greens. They have plenty of eggs for a variety of egg-dishes, but few milk dishes, the reason for which will be shown in Chapter 11 on animal husbandry.

I wish to make clearer what I said a little while ago about the meal hours. The winter or rainy season is generally reckoned from the middle of April until August, but not *de dato in datum*, for sometimes the rain sets in earlier, sometimes later. As soon as the rainy season has started and the land has been soaked, the ploughing starts. The farmer usually divides his work into two shifts per day, namely in the morning from dawn to 10 o'clock, and in the afternoon from 12 o'clock to 4 or 5. His meals are arranged accordingly. Before going to the fields, the slaves receive a glass of brandy and a small slice of bread, but the farmer and his men drink coffee; those who like may have a slice of bread and butter with it, or leave that for later if they feel so inclined. About 10 o'clock the slaves return, having already driven the outspanned animals to the herdsman. Now the midday meal is taken both by the men and the household. After the meal, at about 12 o'clock, the herd drives the animals nearer to the house and the slaves inspan fresh oxen to the ploughs. Two o'clock is tea-time and since the day is then not very long, it is customary to drink it out of rinsing basins rather than out of separate tea-cups in a more leisurely way. When the slaves have finished their work in the field, they outspan the oxen and drive them to pasture for another hour or a little longer. At six o'clock, or if it rains hard, a little earlier, the herds return with the cattle, horses, sheep and pigs. Each kind is driven into its own kraal, but the saddle-horses are put in a stable. But unless they are wanted for riding the next morning, they are not on that account given forage at home. When the cattle have been driven in, the evening meal is taken; afterwards anyone who wants to may retire to rest. Only the house-slave must remain on duty until the mistress has gone to bed; for she is accustomed to stay up a little later during the longer nights and keep herself busy. Spinning is not practised in this country; for neither flax nor cotton are to be had, and weaving is unknown.

As soon as the weather changes at the end of August, or at the beginning of September, and spring starts, these farmers also

change their work and with it their hours for meals. They rise at dawn but most of them take no coffee nor anything to eat until about 8 o'clock. Then the table is properly laid and both master and servants take a breakfast of warm meat courses: except during the vintage time, when the farmer and his family prefer a slice of bread and butter with some of the choicest grapes to warm food. This kind of breakfast I have myself found very enjoyable in this country. After breakfast tea is served and the men generally smoke a pipe. Then everyone goes to his work. About 12 o'clock the midday meal is taken; after the meal the farmer lies down for a while and rests till about 3 o'clock, when tea is ready again. About 7 p.m. at the latest, the herds return with the cattle and when these have been taken care of, the evening meal is eaten. Afterwards, all those who do not wish to remain up any longer, go to bed. At these farmers' homes, as soon as definite order has been established, everything goes like clock-work. Generally speaking the servants themselves know what their daily task is, and it may be said that even the slaves are quite happy in their bondage. This may be clearly perceived in fine weather and on moonlit evenings. For although the slave has worked fairly hard and suffered from heat during the day, yet he is happy and sings, and plays on his *raveking* (ramkie) and even dances. But on winter evenings they sit round the fire with a pipe of tobacco and tell each other stories of their fatherland in Portuguese (*lingua franca*). Sensible slaves want nothing but food, clothing and tobacco; sensible masters do not deprive them of any of these, but take into consideration the heavy yoke of slavery and do not treat them unreasonably nor have them flogged unduly. If a slave does wrong maliciously, he is punished for it and endures the well-deserved chastisement rather than continuous abuse. A certain tribe among them, called Buchinese or Buckinese, brought from the mainland of Asia near the South-Western islands, will even thank one for a well-deserved hiding; but if they are made to suffer undeservedly, they become very indignant and often vengeful. They stand no rebukes from women, still less blows; but would defend themselves at the risk of their lives. For this reason, it is forbidden to import them into the Cape. But the ships' officers who bring them along do not disclose their country

of origin and who can recognise them? On occasions such as the end of the sowing season, during the harvest, after the vintage, or for work on Sundays and other special days, well-meaning masters would give their slaves some wine which has an immediate refreshing effect on their tired limbs. Sensible farmers also allow them to cultivate a small piece of land whereon they sow peas or beans for sale. For the money received, they buy ornaments and fine coloured kerchiefs to bind round their heads; puffs: i.e. small pieces of taffeta to sew to the edge of their trouser-legs, and articles of like nature. People may say what they please about the wickedness of slaves, but there are those among them who, if they are reasonably treated, behave themselves well and if, in addition, they suffer no want, are so faithful and attached to their masters, that they would lay down their lives for them if the need arose. Of this I could give many instances; and if many historians have a good deal to say about the extraordinary wickedness of slaves, they should also point out the unchristian, often inhuman treatment they receive from their masters. I have already mentioned the case of the farmer M. Otto of Hottentots Holland. Who would not shudder at such barbarity? I have known slaves to say frankly that if they should be freed and could return to their fatherland, they would not desire to do so; because there they had never had nor could have such a good time as with their masters. I cannot remember ever hearing of a slave deserting a master who treated his servants fairly. I think it is the author of the "*Voyage a Isle de France et Bourbon*" who gives more credit than other authors to the people of the Cape for their conduct towards and their treatment of their slaves. But M. de la Caille makes no mention of this.

According to my classification above, I consider the fourth class of African inhabitants those who should rather be called cattle-herdsmen than farmers. Among these there are also rich and poor; but the former, with all their super-abundance of cattle, have to eke out a miserable existence just like the poor, and are very badly off for the amenities of human life. They form a striking contrast to the miser. The miser possesses plenty and begrudges himself the enjoyment of it, being like the lock that hangs in front of his money chest; but these, who have

plenty of cattle, would gladly give up a part of it to obtain other necessities and comforts. We shall here give a fuller description of these cattle-farmers.

If a well-to-do farmer, who may properly be assigned to the latter class, has several sons, the inheritance, naturally, usually goes to the eldest; the others have to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Should they not be lucky enough to become the owner of some property by marriage to a widow or eldest daughter who has no brother (provided that the father has no means of buying them a property or at least paying the first instalment on it), they have to try and establish themselves somewhere else. Some, given an opportunity, hire themselves to other farmers as knechte, especially on such farms on which the owner does not live himself and only uses as pasture. Here they are not considered knechte but rather as partners and receive no salary, only food, but may keep their own cattle with that of the owner and make their profit on them. Every head of cattle is then separately marked, and the knecht may acquire a large herd in a few years' time for, except for cattle that die, he slaughters none of his own, sells only wethers and butter and keeps the money for himself. For this reason such overseers are usually married men, and farm as it were in partnership with the owner, until they have the opportunity and the means of buying their own property; or, they may when their herd is large enough, move to a different part of the country where they can settle and make their own living. By that time they are already fairly well-to-do cattle farmers. But those sons, who can find no such opportunity for their maintenance and yet wish to marry and set up their own homes, are soon compelled to travel about the country looking for a decent place where to settle, if possible next to a Hottentot kraal, and to build themselves a house which at first is little more than a big hut. Once such a piece of land suitable for cattle-raising has been found, the first and most essential piece of furniture is a wife. Should they have no sweetheart in the neighbourhood, they would ride about at random to see the daughters of the country and choose one for themselves. Though there is no lack of women, not all of them would care to go with a man to the most distant wildernesses. Still, it is not difficult to find a daughter who will leave father and mother and

cling to her husband; but her dowry would consist mainly of a few head of cattle, cows or sheep. The country women of Africa do not need many clothes; rarely does a wife or maiden have more than a long dress for Sundays which, made of East Indian chintz, costs little more than four or five rixdollars. Beds are scarce, and of other furniture there is very little. I have seen daughters of such farmers as I have put in the third class leaving with their husbands after the wedding, and I would hardly have given fifteen rixdollars for all their belongings. Yet these, at their father's death, would inherit a few thousand gulden. If there had been no objection, and the marriage had been arranged, the husband's father would contribute his share towards his son's establishment as well as he could. A wagon and span of six, eight, or ten oxen, according to the father's means, is the most important gift. The son's father does not like to give cows; he would shrug his shoulders and say "these must be part of your wife's dowry". He is more likely to present them with a young bull. A hundred sheep with a few rams may be considered an excellent wedding present and an investment that would give a specially good return in this country. A saddle horse and a few mares the son would already possess: for before we continue, I must mention that the farmers have the laudable habit of giving their children a head of cattle at birth—to the sons a mare, and to the daughters a cow. These are usually called by the baptismal name of the children for whom they are destined and everything reared from them, especially the females, are carefully preserved and given to the children, so that the daughters, if they are lucky with cattle-breeding, and their cows give birth to more heifers than bull-calves, may take a considerable number of cattle with them at their marriage. The bull-calves are not set aside, but taken for draught-purposes and ultimately slaughtered, though some are also given to the sons. Now, when a son has received his father's present as indicated above, he can ask no more of him during his lifetime, but must wait to see what he may inherit at his father's death.

Either the father of the bride or one of her grown-up brothers escorts her to their future home in a wagon on which the household effects of the young couple are loaded. By



co-operative effort four limestone walls are quickly run up, a few windows let in, some beams laid across, a roof put up and covered with reeds, rushes or shrubs and a limestone chimney added. The dwelling is then ready, including the kitchen, the cellar, the loft and all necessary rooms, even the abode of a few Hottentots which the young couple hire as shepherds; for everything is at first contained within four walls until with the passing of time one or more rooms can be added. If, in addition to this, two or three pieces of ground are fenced in or walled in with limestone for cattle, sheep and horses, all the buildings are ready, cut and dry. Then, if the parents present them, as is customary and necessary, with some grain, dried and smoked meat, peas, beans, a few iron kettles for cooking, a churn, a few pails for fetching water and some other trifles, and the young man takes with him his rifle, powder and shot, tobacco, axe, hatchet, saw, drill, chisel and similar tools, while the young wife takes along tea, coffee, sugar candy, soap and some porcelain or other dishes, plates, tea cups and a hundred other trifles, it may readily be seen that there would be no room on the two wagons for bedsteads, tables, chairs and shelves, and these would have to be left behind. For a table, four posts are driven into the floor and a board nailed to it. The chest, in which all knick-knacks are packed and which is usually similar to those given to the soldiers and sailors of the Company, serves as a seat in place of a couch, and the bed has to be made on the floor until some big game is killed and their skins fastened with nails or thongs over a couple of bars on posts driven into the floor. A soldier, living in a tent during a campaign, is not so badly off as a young couple who settle in such a distant wilderness, isolated from all human society. For the former can at any rate obtain what he needs by paying for it; but the latter, even if they had all their pockets filled with money, cannot even get a tin spoon if they have taken none with them. And imagine the situation when such a wife should in time become pregnant, and have no other assistance than that of an old Hottentot woman, without being able to understand one another.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> It should be remembered that Mentzel was writing of the conditions prevailing on the frontier in the middle of the eighteenth century. Lichtenstein, half a century later, saw much improvement

After part of the grain they had taken with them had been eaten, and part had been hopefully sown, they have to subsist on lean dried meat, taken alternately with the fat; but if the husband has any luck in hunting and kills some buffaloes, elands, buck, gazelles or similar game, their meat could soon be salted and dried if not smoked. But remember, the young wife has no barrels except a churn and a few water pails, how is she then to salt the meat? Well! Providence has provided for this and given to animals a skin on which the meat of the cut up animal can be laid, salted, covered with the corners of the skin, and afterwards hung in the air and dried. Meat thus dried has the peculiar property when later cooked and carved, of showing a colour on each cut, that resembles that on the neck of a drake, or of those doves whose necks display a greenish blue colouring tinged with gold. At first it gives the stranger a feeling of disgust; but when he gets used to it and knows that it is caused by the knife with which it is cut and by the strong salt, he takes no more notice of it. But what happens when the only refreshments, tea, coffee, sugar-candy and tobacco have been used up; where can some more be obtained? Indeed, then things look bad, and there is no other course but to inspan the wagon, take along the supply of butter and drive some livestock, especially fat sheep, to sell to a cattle-buyer along the way (a few of these are always travelling about the country for the meat contractors), or to ask their parents whom they visit on such occasions, to act on their behalf; these would advance the money or advise them how to sell their stock in the city. It is noteworthy that on such a journey of more than a hundred miles from many of the cattle farms, the wife does not stay behind alone, but since she fears an attack from Kaffirs, Bushmen, roaming Hottentots, or runaway slaves, she always accompanies her husband, taking her children with her. All they possess is left behind under God's protection. Nobody knows whether, when the owner returns to his land, his cattle may not have been driven off, his home set on fire, or some other mischief been done him. What a miserable existence! Truly, if the Hottentots were not so honest, faithful and kindly by nature, no European or African could live in these

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in areas where wood and water were available, but the sheep farmers on the Roggeveld were still little better off. (V.R.S. 10. 130.)

regions.<sup>142</sup> But, taking for granted that the blessings of Heaven are clearly revealed in the increase of the cattle, that an abundance of grain is reaped and everything goes well, which of my readers would like to live such a pastoral life exiled from all human society? Quarrelsome and dissatisfied people who are usually the first to extol peace, unity and contentment, would probably retort: "At any rate these people lived happily in peace and harmony and had no quarrel or strife with their neighbours." Probably so, but who can tell how happily and harmoniously the married couple themselves lived together? If the husband has one fault and his wife another; he leaning his head on the right arm, she hers on the left; he having his meal in the one corner, she hers in the other corner. One day lions carry off a head of cattle; on another occasion a tiger or hyena makes a raid on the sheep and kills one or two of them, with the others jumping on and over each other so that ten times more are choked to death than torn to pieces: would the skies always remain blue and man cheerful and content? I for one cannot see anything pleasant in such a mode of life, and both the Abbé de la Caille and Professor Allamand are quite right in saying that these shepherds live little better than the Hottentots. I make an exception of a few decent men who are either Europeans by birth or at least children of a European-born father; I grant that these go in for cattle-raising in the most remote places and have, by their ability, industry and skill, succeeded in getting all necessary comforts and as the saying goes: have everything their hearts desire; but those African-born, who adapt themselves to such a mode of living, are the children of fathers who were themselves descendants of European parents, and they have accustomed themselves to such an extent to the carefree life, the indifference, the lazy days and the association with slaves and Hottentots, that not much difference may be discerned between the former and the latter. If, in addition, the sweet little wife has also grown up among slave and Hottentot women, one may easily form a conception of the kind of people their children will eventually be. Will they not, with the passing of time, forget that there is a

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<sup>142</sup> Mentzel, like all contemporary writers, uses *African* to denote the white person born in Africa in contrast with *European*, one who had arrived from Europe.

God who created them? Sparrman himself has noted that such men, though they had quite tolerable wives, consorted with Hottentot women and procreated children that were more like the father than like the mother. That sort of thing requires a peculiar kind of taste! I do not know whether I would have the courage even now, if I had an opportunity to look at and examine what Kolbe and others on his authority, have written about the natural aprons of the Hottentot women, which, however, according to Sparrman, is incorrect.

Of the customs of the African farmers at their weddings, baptisms and funerals nothing special can be said. At weddings, the couple about to be married choose a best man and bridesmaid and also bind a wreath without going to great expense over it; nor do they devote a special day to making it, and for lack of myrtle and laurel leaves it is made up of wild evergreen or other green shrubs and "*Zevenjaars*" flowers. The latter is a peculiar plant that bears on a bristly stem a white flower like a tiny snow-white tulip, but its leaves, though very thin, are horny and stiffer than parchment; it lasts a long time, but not as long as its name suggests, seven years. The monogram which is hung on the wreath also costs nothing, being merely cut out of white paper. But confetti, of gold leaf and gilded paper cut into small pieces, is considered a necessity and has to be strewn in front of the young couple at their exit and entrance; for how otherwise could one indicate that blessings would everywhere precede and follow them? The greatest expense incurred by the bestman or "*strooijonker*" at a rural wedding, is for a few coloured ribbons. For since the betrothed couple and their two attendants always drive to church for the wedding on a half-covered wagon with a span of six oxen, the driver and the guide must each have a coloured ribbon round their hats and left arms, as also on the driver's whip. If a *strooijonker* wants to be really gallant and generous, he provides ribbon for tying round the horns of all the oxen. Needless to say, for such a feast an ox, a pig, a few fat sheep and lots of fowls, ducks etc. have to be slaughtered; for how could the wedding guests gorge themselves unless an abundance of food were provided ad nauseam. And, how could one be inspired by poor music to dance when no

proper musicians were to be had, unless more wine were provided than could be consumed?

At a wedding in the country the ladies sit around a table, as is fitting, and do not have to eat from their laps as is the fashion in town. One has therefore a better chance to talk to them and make merry. In regard to wedding music there are also exceptions; for rich farmers, living not too far from the City, would ask the Governor for the hautboy players from the garrison, and then everything would be done more suitably, elegantly and in town fashion. Occasionally some of these musicians join in the dance, especially in the English quadrilles, even if no one else present can do them properly. The festival days last as long as the musicians have leave to stay out, usually two days. For the honeymoon there is no rule; it lasts as long as the bridegroom can afford to stay away from his farm; for I should have mentioned before that all weddings are held at the home of the bride's parents, or at least where the bride lives. But when the honeymoon is over, the young husband takes his new help-mate with him on his wagon and departs. His oxen would not have to tire themselves too much by drawing the heavy load of dowry and wedding presents, for if the bride's parents are still alive, she gets no moveable property except her few clothes and linen, not even a bed; the man is supposed to have everything prepared beforehand. But the cattle belonging to the woman is driven on, in front or behind.

If the wife in due course gives birth to a child, the baptism is postponed until she has got over her confinement; or it may happen, that a few weeks, months or years may pass, according to the distance of the place from the church, before they travel to the church to have the child baptised, the father acting as godfather and the mother carrying the child to the font. Should a child or adult die, or even a slave, the death has to be notified, in the case of the former to the minister, of the latter to the Landdrost. The deceased, if they had not lived too far from the church, are brought for burial either to the City or to Stellenbosch, Drakenstein, or Zwellendam. Those, however, who die at the more distant places, are buried on their farms. The graves have to be dug deep enough and covered with large

stones to prevent the hyena, a great lover of human flesh, from digging out the corpse and re-burying it in its stomach. In the country, the burial rites and ceremonies are as little in fashion as full and half-mourning. Only the wealthiest and those living nearest the church put on some mourning garments on going to church.

Nor can much be said about the conversation among farmers. They invite each other just as little as the town people. They do not often meet except when they have to discuss something, seldom otherwise. Then they smoke a few pipes together and drink a few cups of tea, or perhaps a glass of wine or brandy, according as the occasion arises. The sons and daughters of neighbours meet more frequently, the girls especially like to walk together on Sundays to look for "*Auntjes*", *Kruimekrantjes*,<sup>143</sup> aniseed, fennel, or other roots, and dig them out with a pointed piece of iron. These plants are first cooked and then eaten, taking the place of strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries, which grow in Europe but not in Africa.

It is easy to imagine the kind of conversation that goes on among young African farmers' sons, who are illiterate and have seen and experienced nothing except what they learned in their fathers' house about grain-growing, cattle-rearing and hunting. The head servant of a farmer in Europe is cleverer and speaks much more sensibly than such human calves, whose usual witticisms are mere coarseness, and whose jokes and amusements are mere foolishness, to which one cannot listen without disgust. To mention only one example of the tricks they play, I remember an occurrence which is really ridiculous, but which almost cost one of them his life. Among a group of such ill-bred youngsters there is usually one who is made the butt of everybody. The others made him believe that they wanted to teach him to fly in the air. He was simpleton enough to believe them and allowed them to bind a large eagle's wing to each arm and foot, upon which he had to climb to the roof of the house and then, as they had persuaded him to do, to fly down. He did so but fell so hard that he had to be attended by a doctor for several weeks, and might easily have fallen to his death if Providence

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<sup>143</sup> Uintjies; Koekemekranke.

had not saved him. I hesitate to offend chaste ears with indecent anecdotes of their doings with slave and Hottentot women. Their own flesh and blood, begotten of slave women, then bear the chain of slavery in their parents' house, and sometimes even in their own house, if the father takes over the child as a slave on the death of his parents. As soon as they are taken out of school, they generally forget everything about the Christian religion in which they have received some instruction from such teachers as they had; and since they neither attend church nor receive the Communion, they cannot be considered as part of the Christian congregation except in so far as they have been baptised. Likewise, they never go to church except to be married or have their children baptised. Sundays and weekdays are alike to them; and I do not want to express any opinion as to whether, when they gabble the usual grace before and after meals, they attach any meaning to it.

Since I have already spoken several times about hospitality, I must make a little clearer the natural disposition of the inhabitants towards it. Firstly, as there are no inns in the country districts, where one may stop and obtain service for payment, it would not only be somewhat inhuman to refuse a meal or a night's rest to a traveller, but anyone refusing would be paid in his own coin; for everyone has to travel at some time and cannot take a shelter with him. Secondly and particularly, the country folk consider it more as a pleasure than an honour if a city dweller, whether a servant of the Company or a free burgher, calls on them and stays for some time. This is quite natural. For he, who daily sees the familiar faces of members of his family, can talk with them about very little else but the daily work. Hence everyone in the house rejoices at the sight of a visitor, whether he knows him or not. A stranger always brings new material for conversation and new tales which keep the conversation going and make it pleasant. Therefore, when stopping with cultured, well-bred people, it is often difficult to get away, and continue one's journey. To please them one would like to stay several weeks with them. Even those living on the most distant farms are, when they stop on their way, warmly welcomed and invited with genuine heartiness to stay and rest

for a few days at their host's house. Everyone entertains his guest according to his means. He who has plenty gives generously, and he who has little gives that little with his whole heart, and what is more, one is sometimes not only given free accommodation but also something for the journey.

As long as the East India Company allows Europeans to buy land or settle at the Cape, the inhabitants will always intermingle and remain civilised and well-behaved. But should the land, after many years, be peopled only by Africans by birth, so that the Company would not consider it advisable to admit any more foreigners or Europeans, it is to be feared that the African nation would degenerate and become uncivilised. Their nature is wild, their education bad, their thoughts base, and their conduct ill-bred. One could imagine, not without reason, that in time they might become more uncivilised, more discourteous and unmannerly than the Scots, the Wends and the Scythians of old. Already they display a kind of secret hatred towards the Europeans, since the latter understand more than they do, are better behaved and have a poor opinion of them on account of their ignorance, bad mode of life and lack of manners. But do not misunderstand me: for I am now speaking not of the Africans as a whole, but only of those depraved ones who prefer to live in the most distant wildernesses among the Hottentots, rather than among civilised people; who have had a bad education, and are giving their children a still worse one.<sup>144</sup> In general the farm women surpass the men in natural intelligence, good behaviour and ability to learn and understand anything; wherefore they are almost held in higher esteem by the Europeans than the women of Cape Town. They are usually industrious, good housekeepers and excellent mothers. They are not so ambitious as the townswomen; they do not quarrel over precedence and it is immaterial to them whether they are seated at the table to the left or right, or whether they were served first

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<sup>144</sup> Even with this qualification Mentzel's gloomy picture is overdrawn. Lichtenstein who saw the frontiersman at close quarters takes a more charitable view. In warning the reader against Barrow, he adds "In the present stormy times, it has become the fashion to decide upon a person's moral worth according to his political principles". (V.R.S. 10, 443.) Mentzel, of course, was not actuated by political bias but he exaggerates the ill-effects of isolation.



or last. Their ingenuous simplicity is mingled with affability and therefore much more becoming than the affected conduct of small town people that appears too forced and stiff to sensible persons. I have already mentioned that if an African farmer feels merry and gay and has a slave who can strum a little on the violin, dancing is indulged in. If the young ladies like to dance a minuet without shoes or barefoot, and they keep time no more regularly than the musician: that does not matter, if only they are jolly; they dance for the pleasure of it; outward appearances do not count. I attended a wedding where the oboists of the garrison provided the music. After a little while, since no couple had come on the dance floor, two of the oboists took up their bugles and hunting-horns and blew a march. Immediately the bridegroom led the bride onto the floor and they danced a minuet to the march; the bridegroom kept on dancing so long that the buglers would have blown themselves out of breath if one of their comrades had not begged me to put a stop to the dance, and this I gave the bridegroom to understand during the dance. He immediately ended the dance by joining both hands with his bride and stood with her at the opposite end of the room to that from where he had started. None of those present had noticed it except the musicians and I, the former running from the room and laughing with all their might.

I should become too deeply involved in trifles were I to relate anything more of the customs of the Africans in this Chapter, therefore this must suffice. Yet I must still say a word about the upbringing of the small children. They are very rarely carried in arms. From the lap and the breast they are put on the ground, where they are given some toy. They crawl around on all-fours until they can stand and are generally able to walk in less than a year's time, without ever being led by strings or by the hand. Yet I do not remember to have seen a person who was lame, hunch-backed, or afflicted with some other physical defect.

## CHAPTER EIGHT.

### Of the Expeditions Undertaken, both at the Government's Command, and by the African Inhabitants by Permission of the Government.

It would, to be sure, be the correct thing, if I were to describe the industries of Africa, viz. cattle raising, agriculture and viticulture immediately after giving a description of the customs of the country. But too much remains to be said to give the kind reader a proper conception of the size and area of the land. Even in the First Volume of this Description, I said that the knowledge of the geography of this country is based partly on information obtained from its inhabitants and partly on the reports of those who have travelled through the Cape on an official expedition. It is, however, a pity that all these expeditions, almost without exception, traversed one and the same route, which leads to the Great and Little Namacqua Hottentots, from whom it was hoped to get most cattle and some elephant tusks. Sparrman, however, whose prime object was to study the "*naturae curiosa*," did a greater service to the geographic and topographic knowledge of the country than all the previous expeditions put together.

The most remarkable expedition in that region has been the one of which the Journal was edited by Professor Allamand and published in a German translation by the bookseller Weygand, (Leipzig, 1779). The expedition was arranged by the worthy Governor Ryk Tulbagh and the Council of Policy to look for a nation which according to persistent rumour, resembled the Europeans. I find it necessary to quote a short extract from the Journal mentioned, to prove that in this country there are still very many uninhabited regions which are unsuitable for habitation and thus cause the inhabitants of the country to live very far apart in most places. If only a similar expedition had been undertaken through the Karroo and into the Camdebo and

described, my estimate of the area of the Cape at more than 6000 square miles would be much easier to believe. But this has not been done and time will show whether it will be done in the future. Before I give the promised extract, I have to explain what is understood by an expedition. At intervals of three or four years the Government usually sends out a Commando of about 40 to 50 European soldiers and sailors besides a few bastard Hottentots under the command of a reliable officer, sergeant, or postholder at the "Schoor", to obtain cattle from the Hottentots in exchange for tobacco, dagga, brandy, glass beads, knives, small pieces of plate-brass and such like trifles. The Government does not barter sheep since it does not need any, getting all the meat required from the meat contractors. The commanding officer and the soldiers and sailors accompanying him are, however, allowed to barter a few which they generally sell on their return journey in the neighbourhood of Groene Kloof, and divide the money thus obtained among themselves. But the Commander keeps his for himself as may easily be supposed. This kind of barter is more like a tax levied on the nearest Hottentot kraals under the pretext of trade. The Hottentots, however, consider it an honour to trade in this fashion with "Jan Compagnie" (as they call the East India Company); and I have already mentioned that a small tribe with which they had often traded was called the "Koopman" nation. Since the Hottentots are given for an ox no more than a flask of the size of two champagne bottles of bad local brandy and a few spans of tobacco, or a piece of tobacco of the length of an ox from its horns to its tail, it would appear to the ignorant that this trade is very lucrative. But if one considers the matter carefully, all that the Company gains by it is a supply of cattle for draught purposes, but not for breeding purposes. These Commandos are away no longer than six to eight weeks, and bring back about 100 oxen, which the farmers may usually buy at eight rixdollars a piece, thereby increasing their stock of cattle. But taking into account the expenses incurred by the Company for such expeditions, it will be found that every one of the oxen bartered with the Hottentots, costs the Company more than nine or ten rixdollars. Let us take a simple example.

For every expedition the Company has to provide six wagons for provisions, baggage and ammunition, as well as a wagon for carrying a small boat or "schuit"; but wagons are very expensive at the Cape, as we have already shown. Since the Company has its own wagon-builders and smiths and provides its own wood, it may be that the wagons cost less—but more likely a great deal more. But be this as it may: let us take the minimum cost and assume that wear and tear on each wagon costs fifty gulden in repairs.

	Florins. <sup>145</sup>
For 7 wagons the cost of repairs @ <i>f</i> 50	350
For 10 oxen to each wagon, i.e. a total of 70 (of which 30 usually die on the road) @ 8R	576
The Commander's pay (supposing him to be merely a sergeant) for 2 months @ <i>f</i> 20	40
do. a Corporal for 2 months @ <i>f</i> 14	28
do. a Surgeon or junior surgeon for 2 months @ <i>f</i> 14	28
do. 50 common soldiers and sailors for 2 months @ <i>f</i> 9	900
Provisions including bread given to the Commando (even if reckoned at <i>f</i> 3 per person per month) amount in 2 months to	318
The few bastard Hottentots counted as 4 men, get in wages and food for 2 months	43
Ammunition used on the way	50
Sundry requisites "in folle" <sup>146</sup>	100
The goods taken for barter "in folle"	150
	—
Total expense	2583
	—

The 2583 gulden reckoned at 20 stuivers per rix-dollar<sup>147</sup>, amount to 1076 rix-dollars 12 stuivers. If all goes well, the Company gets in return 100 oxen, each ox averaging 10 Rix-

<sup>145</sup> For note on coins and currency, see Part I. (V.R.S. 4. p. 29.)

<sup>146</sup> As a lump sum (?)

<sup>147</sup> A missprint for gulden.

dollars, 36½ stuivers. But since the men are in the Company's service in any case and the other things are regarded as belonging to it, the cost is not debited nor taken into account, so that each ox is presumed to cost about 1½ florins although the entire profit is really imaginary.

As an expedition or commando, sent out by the Government in the Company's service, can add nothing to my exposition, I only want to say something about such expeditions as were undertaken by the colonists by permission of the Governor and the Council of Policy.

The Government has forbidden all the inhabitants once for all to barter cattle with the Hottentots and claimed this commerce as the Company's monopoly. This prohibition extends only to trade with neighbouring Hottentots, with whom the Company itself is engaged in barter. Beyond these limits and in the furthest districts the colonists are not forbidden to barter provided they ask for permission; especially since such expeditions are concerned more with barter for elephant tusks and with elephant hunting than cattle bartering, which is merely a side line. But they have to sell the elephant tusks to the Company at a price fixed according to their size. Now, if a band of young Africans join in an expedition and permission has been asked and given by the Government, each one contributes to the outfit as much as has been approved and agreed upon. Each has to supply a wagon with a team of ten oxen and two Hottentots or Bastard Hottentots. Slaves are never taken along, because they may easily escape in the remote regions and join the Bushmen or Kaffirs, by whom they are eagerly welcomed and accepted, since they are usually more daring and courageous. The tame Hottentots, however, do not harbour slaves but hand them over, for they not only have a natural aversion to them, but also know very well that they would have to feed them or they would be robbed by them. When an expedition has been equipped with food, ammunition, tobacco and other goods suitable for bartering, the day and place are fixed for meeting and making a start. An experienced person who has already taken part in similar expeditions is chosen as head or Captain, and the entire company carries out his commands voluntarily with implicit obedience;

for not only all their profits but often their very lives depend on such commands.

Such parties fix no definite time or region for their undertaking. They also take good care not to wear out their cattle; they travel by short stages and wherever they find good pasture and water they camp for a few days, rest their cattle and go hunting. Their purpose is rather elephant hunting than cattle barter, for a single shot that kills a large elephant is often worth more than 200 florins to them. They shoot game only when necessary, for they may have it fresh every day. Cattle bartering is only a secondary matter which is postponed until the return journey, unless some of their draught oxen die and have to be replaced. But if they can barter for elephant tusks with the Hottentots, that is a most profitable business. If, however, these tusks have been found by the Hottentots and have lain for a long time in the sun or in the ground, have got wet from rain and been dried again by the sun, anything made from these would be valueless since it would crack when used. Such expeditions are away not for a few weeks, but for many months and sometimes for more than a year. They do not follow a straight course nor stay in a definite locality, but travel in the spacious Karroo and Camdebo district from one spot to another like the Gypsies in Hungary; nor do they live any different than the latter. Their bed is on or under the wagon. Cooking and roasting is done when they return to their wagons after the day's hunting. A piece of venison rolled in its own skin and laid in the glowing embers, with a blazing fire on top, makes a most delicious dish. If the bread or biscuits taken with them have been consumed, lean or dried meat is eaten with fat meat. Since such an expedition cannot carry a small boat or "schuit" for crossing rivers, they must halt at a river until its water subsides, and they can find a shallow spot where they can wade and drive through. If, as often happens, they come across impassable places between mountains, they either have to travel back many miles or alongside the mountains until they find a spot where they can force their way through. But this does not worry them for as they have no fixed destination to reach, all places are alike to them provided they can find elephants and game. One may

compare them with beggars who wander round aimlessly, since they look for their sustenance wherever they can find it.

The most satisfactory thing about these expeditions, is that its members need have no fear of starvation, for their provisions are inexhaustible, since they have daily opportunities for obtaining sufficient game. They always salt some of the meat, bind it up in the animal's skin and lay it on the wagon; after it has absorbed enough salt, they hang the venison on the racks around the wagon and let the air and sun dry it. But as for drink: that is often wanting, and sometimes when they find no water for two or three days in the extreme heat of the sun, they and their cattle are liable to die of thirst; lack of water often compels them to think of returning sooner than they had planned.

When they finally tire of wandering and start on their return journey, they travel from one Hottentot Kraal to another to barter cattle and sheep, for these expeditions will accept both. The cattle is divided among them, the commander getting an equal share with the others, for their motto is: "share and share alike". If anyone has made a larger contribution towards the common fund, that sum is debited to the expenses account and the contributor is refunded, but has no claim to more cattle. After they had returned home and rested a bit, they meet again on an appointed day and place and thence go to the City and the Castle, to deliver to the Company for cash the tusks of the elephants shot or bartered by them. Unless they had obtained a few small tusks from the Hottentots, they would be paid 20 stuivers per pound by the Company, for no European or African elephant hunter would shoot any animal unless he judged that each tusk weighed over 40 pounds. The Company pays only 12 or 16 stuivers per pound for the smaller ones. The only profit the Company makes on such expeditions is each tenth pound of the elephant tusks, i.e. the fixed tithe. It lays no claim to the bartered cattle because many of the oxen taken on the journey die, especially in the dry season, when there is little grazing on the veld and little water in the rivers.

A young African who has taken part in such an expedition is henceforth a fine fellow who has attempted something great,

and imagines he has accomplished more and greater deeds than a veteran soldier who has been in ten campaigns and twelve battles. Of course, anyone acquainted with the country must admit that these people have to endure great hardships, discomfort and danger, but the boasting of the young Africans about it is sometimes unbearable especially when they had delivered their elephant tusks, received and shared the money. For then they consider themselves rich, and persons who like drink find plenty of opportunities to profit by the generosity of these elephant hunters at the taverns they visit; but in return they would have to listen patiently to their stories of their heroic deeds, and believe everything they hear, otherwise they would risk getting a good beating in the bargain. At times these youths become quite jolly and if the landlord is a covetous host who eggs them on to drink and boast, and incites them to further excesses by all kinds of wiles, more than one of them would bring home with him very little money for his troublesome journey, and would scratch his head very hard, especially if he has, even before commencing the journey, calculated in advance how he would invest his still unearned money.

I now give the

#### EXTRACT

FROM THE JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION UNDERTAKEN THROUGH THE LAND OF THE LITTLE AND GREAT NAMACQUA HOTTENTOTS, BY THE GOVERNOR'S COMMAND IN THE YEARS 1761 and 1762, under the leadership of its commanding officer, Hendrik Hop, of a company of 17 Christians and 68 Bastard Hottentots.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> These extracts are based on a German translation of Allamand and Klockner's *Beschryving van de Kaap der Goede-Hoop* published at Amsterdam in 1778. The *Beschryving* includes a verbatim copy of a '*Dagverhaal gehouden op een Lantogt door het Land der kleine en groote Namacquas*' which the authors assert was faithfully copied for them by A. Buurt from the original in the Archives of the Cape. The report consists of 3 parts. The first and main report is a general narrative of the expedition signed by the surveyor, Carel Fredrik Brink. It is with Brink's report that Mentzel is concerned in this chapter. The second report on the Hottentot tribes is signed by the burghers Tieleman Roos and Petrus Marais. A summary of this report is contained in chapter 14. The last, a brief reference to the mineral ores, is submitted by the surgeon, C. C. Rykvoet. Mentzel is not concerned with that. A comparison between these extracts and the German text has shown that Mentzel seldom quotes directly but



After the instructions drawn up by Governor Ryk Tulbagh and the Council of Policy for this expedition had been read to the entire company and handed over to the before-mentioned Captain Hendrik Hop,<sup>149</sup> it was mutually agreed that all of them, with their equipment, should be ready to meet at the latest on 16th August, 1761, at Hoekenaap on the Oliphants Rivier, and then to proceed from there with the journey.

As early as the 16th July, that is a month beforehand, three of the Company's wagons, each with a team of ten oxen, set out from Cape Town on this journey. In addition to a "schuit", or small boat, they were laden with 900 lbs. of gun powder, 2010 lbs. of lead, diverse necessary tools, and a few trifles.<sup>150</sup>

The occupants of these three wagons, sent in advance under supervision of the Surveyor Brink<sup>151</sup> and the gardener Auge,<sup>152</sup> very wisely travelled by short daily stages. Brink had to survey and

writes in *oratio obliqua*, sometimes paraphrases and curtails but there are few omissions. A more serious blemish is the inclusion of copious comments some of which might be taken as part of the report without close scrutiny. For the sake of clarity the editor has relegated the author's running commentary on these extracts to the footnotes.

<sup>149</sup> Hendrik Hop, the leader of this expedition, was born in 1716 and was the son of Jan Hendrik Hop an emigrant from Hanover. He held the farm *Slot van de Parel* and became a captain of the burgher militia in the Stellenbosch district. He was relieved from this office in 1767 on the ground of ill-health.

<sup>150</sup> Mentzel comments upon this: 'no worse means of conveyance for such an arduous expedition than the Company's ox-wagons can be imagined. They are always taken from the wagon park at the *Schuur* and though they may appear to be in quite good condition, have been very badly built by the military workers. The oxen, too, even if the best were chosen, were in poor condition owing to the scanty local pasture and had been overworked by having to haul every day loads of wood and other things to the City and the Castle to such an extent that they could not possibly complete such a difficult journey. As we shall soon hear, 18 out of the 30 oxen attached to these 3 wagons died shortly afterwards, which bears out my criticism'.

<sup>151</sup> Carl Friedrich Brink of Berlin; arrived in 1756 as a soldier but was attached as a clerk in the Council of Justice. He was surveyor (1760-69), then military ensign. Retired in 1779 with the rank of Lieutenant; then resided here as burgher until his return to Europe in 1784.

<sup>152</sup> Johann Andreas Auge of Stolberg in the Harz Mountains; Gardener of the Company, 1747-1785. He was a capable botanist and a keen collector of plants. Theal quotes from a pamphlet published in 1887 by McOwan, the then director of the Cape Town botanical garden, that "some of the finest specimen trees still existing are due to Auge's assiduous labours". Besides going with Hop to Namaqualand he also accompanied Thunberg and Masson on their travels.

make a map of the lands hitherto unknown; Auge to make a collection of all strange and unknown seed and vegetable plants.

On the day mentioned these wagons covered three miles to the farm called Oliphantsberg: 3 miles.

The 18th July, to the farm of Christian Bester in Zwartland at Diep River:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 19th ditto, to Riebeeck's Kasteel, at the farmer Witzke's:<sup>153</sup> 3 miles.

The 20th ditto, to the Honigbergen:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 21st ditto, to the Berg River, where they off-loaded their little boat, on which they had to transport both their goods and the wagons across the river, a task which kept them busy the whole day.

The 22nd ditto, they camped in a valley, called Knolle Valley, where there is no farm to be found:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 23rd July, to the Place "Groene Vallei", Piquetberg: 3 miles. Here they had to rest for a few days, reaching a place called "de Kruys" on the 26th ditto: 3 miles.

The 28th ditto, to the cattle farm Berg Vallei: 2 miles.

The 30th ditto, to the cattle farm Brandenburg:<sup>154</sup> 3 miles.

The 31st ditto, to Ratelsklip, where there is no farm:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 1st August, they camped at the so-called Heeren-Logement, where there is no farm:<sup>155</sup>  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 2nd ditto, to the cattle farm of the farmer Pieter van Zyl, at the Oliphants Rivier,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles.<sup>156</sup>

On the 6th August, these three wagons had already to be assisted with 10 oxen from the said Pieter van Zyl, but they went no further than across the above-mentioned river, and encamped on the farther side.

<sup>153</sup> Probably Heinrich Witsche of Lüneberg who arrived as a soldier in 1747. Became a burgher in 1753 and by his marriage with Susanna Muller, widow of Pieter van Taak, became the owner of the farm *Klovenburg* at Riebeeck Kasteel.

<sup>154</sup> *Het Kruis*, *Berg Vallei* and *Brandenburg* were farms occupied in 1725, 1728 and 1753 respectively.

<sup>155</sup> Botha says (p. 60) *Heeren Logement* was occupied as a farm in 1732. The Nederlands text is silent on this point. The cave in the vicinity has been proclaimed a National Monument.

<sup>156</sup> The author here warns us again that 'this Oliphants Rivier in the Western Cape must not be confused with the one lying to the East, and there called the Gouritz River'.

On the 7th ditto, they encamped at an entirely dry river, which flows into the Oliphants Rivier in the rainy season, where there is no farm:  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.<sup>157</sup>

The 8th August, they again camped on the Oliphants Rivier opposite the place of the farmer Koekemoer (Kukemur):  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

The 9th ditto, they chose their resting place at Salpeter Klip next to the Oliphants Rivier, at a place called Krekenaaap<sup>158</sup> or Bakoven: 2 miles. There the entire Company met.<sup>159</sup>

The 16th August, five wagons were ordered by Captain Hop to proceed on the higher road, but the main body went by the lower road. The latter camped at a spring lying near a mountain, called Oliphants Kraal: 4 miles.

The 19th ditto, to the Ronde Berg, no farm:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 20th ditto, to a mountain called Oliphants Kop; no farm:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 21st ditto, to Klipfontein, in the open field; no farm:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 22nd ditto, to the red Klipheuvel; no farm:  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

The 24th ditto, up to the junction of the Groen and Zwartdoorn Rivers; no farm:  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Here the five wagons sent in advance along the high road again joined the Company, since they had, on the strength of an unfounded report that that road was impassable, returned to the lower road. On the contrary, the leaders Marais, Greef, Badenhorst and Scheffer, who had explored the higher road on horseback, reported it in very good condition, and that they had even found water in some spots. But since the veld in this region was richly covered with grass and the oxen in bad shape (18 oxen belonging to the Company had died), the whole expedition rested here for a while and remained until the 30th August.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>157</sup> Dr. Mossop points out that the railway from Het Kruis to Klaver follows almost in Hop's footsteps. (*Old Cape Highways*, p. 160.)

<sup>158</sup> Koekenaap in the van Rhynsdorp district.

<sup>159</sup> AUTHOR'S NOTE: 'So far then, the wagons sent in advance had covered from 16th July to 9th August inclusive, that is in 25 days, 42 $\frac{1}{4}$  miles, and touched at ten farms or farmsteads'.

<sup>160</sup> AUTHOR'S COMMENT: 'Up to now, from 16th July to 24th August, they had travelled 64 miles in 40 days, that is little more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles daily average; and yet 18 oxen had already died'.

The stretch of land, from the Oliphants Rivier which the three wagons had crossed on the 2nd August to this place on the Groen and Zwart Doornbosch Rivers, is called Amacguas Land and stretches in the South to the Oliphants Rivier, on the West to the sea, in the North to Groen Rivier and Eastwards to the Bokkeveld; it lies in south latitude  $30^{\circ} 30'$  to  $31^{\circ} 30'$ . It is always dry and sandy, bounded on the West by high ridges and on the East by high rocky mountains, and has no flowing streams, only fountains. Small streams form along the mountains during heavy rain, but run dry quickly, leaving some water in a few holes, which too dries up and becomes stagnant in summer. Further, no timber is to be found here, the banks of the dry rivers being covered only with a few small thornbushes and the plains with a few small shrubs and grass. This region too, is thinly populated and does not abound with big game, except in a westerly direction towards the sea, where elephants are still fairly numerous.<sup>161</sup>

The 30th August, the expedition struck camp at the Groen Rivier and travelled from now on without coming across any region inhabited by Christians, to a small dry river:  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 31st August, to Klip Valley true North-East to an Amacqua Kraal: 4 miles.

The 2nd September, to a fountain to which the Amacguas brought with them for bartering a few slaughter cattle and sheep from several small kraals:  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile.

The 4th ditto, the party camped at Little Doornboom River, three miles distant from where it flows into the sea:  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

The 6th ditto, they camped in a ravine, called Aloes Kloof:<sup>162</sup>  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles. Hereabouts they found many aloes of various sizes, almost all of them provided with a corolla, whose leaves were about a foot long and three fingers broad at the back, pointed at the end and covered with small thorns on both sides.<sup>163</sup> Among

<sup>161</sup> AUTHOR'S COMMENT: 'Since this Amacqua Land stretches in a straight line from south to north from the Oliphants to the Groen Rivier one degree of latitude or 15 miles, and this expedition travelled in it for a distance of 29 miles from the 2nd to the 24th August, one may infer from that fact that the turnings and direction of the road to the north, north-west and north-east vary considerably from the straight line.

<sup>162</sup> Wolvepoort, the Kloof which leads into Namaqualand across the Koussie or Buffels River.

<sup>163</sup> the *Aloe dichotoma*.

other things they found, about half an hour from Sand River on the right hand side of the road, an aloe tree whose trunk was about seven feet high and so thick that it could hardly be spanned by three men.

The 8th ditto, the expedition went as far as the Great Sand River<sup>164</sup> whose water was fairly salty; the stream flows very sluggishly, in some spots disappearing altogether in the ground:  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

The 11th ditto, they continued their course up to the small Doorn River, next to which there is a strong fountain called Tygerfontyn by the travellers:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 12th September, they travelled to a similar small river, which lies in front of the ravine of the Koperbergen:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 13th ditto, they passed through the ravine of the Koperbergen where they found the very mountains which Governor Simon van der Stel had caused to be worked in 1685. These are actually six hills, situated next to the high mountain range, and look as though they were covered with verdigris. There were several holes dug in them of which the deepest was about the height of a man. On the right side of the road, the above date has been engraved on a stone as a memorial. After this the expedition went through a large plateau where three more of these copper mountains<sup>165</sup> were found, at the last of which they chose their resting place:  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Koussie or Buffels R.

<sup>165</sup> Near the present Springbok.

<sup>166</sup> AUTHOR'S NOTE: As may easily be inferred, these mountains derive their name from the copper mines present in them. It is commonly said: the copper is so abundant in these mountains that it is melted by the sun in the hot summer days and then flows down the face of the rocks. Kolbe actually let himself be duped to believe this and faithfully repeats it on page 236. To which he adds that according to a statement of Governor Simon van der Stel, which Tachard heard, these mountains are situated a few hundred miles in the interior of the country and their ascent would involve a journey of 40 days. But according to the calculation of this expedition, they are no further than 83 miles distant from Cape Town, and can easily be climbed within a few hours. Of all these different stories the one fact remains that the copper present in these mountains does penetrate to the exterior and reacts to rain and air, becoming covered with copper rust, a natural property of copper when exposed alternately to dry and wet conditions. It is an indubitable fact that these mountains are very rich in copper, but not rich enough that it would pay to send the ore to Holland for smelting. The mere cost of transporting it to Table Bay and loading it on the ships would be more than the

The 15th September, the expedition went as far as a spring called "De Poort" (The Gate) where the mountains of the Little Namacqua Hottentots end:  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

The 16th ditto, to a small dry nameless river, where they found a putrid spring:  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 18th ditto, the journey was continued through a sandy plateau but, finding no water for the animals, the expedition moved on.

On the morning of the 19th ditto, the expedition arrived at the foot of a high mountain range which stretches along the Groote Rivier. Here they gave the cattle some rest and towards evening reached the above river, which flows very swiftly between rocky mountains. Willow trees and thorn bushes grow along its steep banks. Normally the river is 1052 Rhenish feet broad and overflows both banks in the rainy season. It abounds in fish, especially carp, similar to those of Holland; multitudes of hippopotami also live in it. It rises at about 25 degrees South latitude and flows due South but, after being fed on both sides by small rivers, makes a bend at 28 degrees latitude and then flows West into the sea. The aborigines call the last part the "Charie", although on several maps a river flowing hereabouts appears by the name "The Three Antonies". Distance covered: 5 miles.<sup>167</sup>

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copper is worth. It would also be impracticable to smelt pure copper near the mountains, since the entire region lacks wood and water; that is, wood for smelting and water for washing and driving a stamping mill. Still less could a furnace be built, since the bricks would have to be brought a distance of 80 miles.

<sup>167</sup> AUTHOR'S NOTE: Neither the source nor the true course of this river has yet been discovered; in any case one cannot say that it rises at 25°, for no European has yet gone thither from the southern point of Africa; nor have the inhabitants of St. Thomas and Mozambique yet crossed over to give us an account of it. Locally it is known as the Great Berg River, the "Charie" and the Great Elephant River but according to Sparrman, it is called the Gouritz River at its point of discharge into the Indian Ocean; this being more probable than that it should turn to the West and flow into the Ethiopian Sea. For on this side nobody knows anything about such a river. It is true that at one spot in its course between very high mountains it forms a waterfall but I have forgotten the locality except that one has to approach it from Vier-en-Twintig Rivieren. I can only assume that this expedition must have struck merely a tributary of this river, or another river that flows into the Grootrivier; unless one supposes that there is an entirely different river in this region which flows into the Ethiopian Sea. Be that as it may, the great river in question never dries up. The Little Namacqua Hottentots live up to this point.

21st September, plans were made to transport the equipment across the river to the Great Namacquas.

The 22nd ditto, land surveyor Brink and burgher Coetzee<sup>168</sup> commenced a journey to examine the flow of the river and the territory lying in the direction of its mouth. They found that the high steep mountains were in some spots so close to the river that it was impossible to get past. Therefore they sought a suitable road behind the mountains and after the scouts had travelled for two days through a difficult rocky mountain range, and had been without good water, they found a narrow road to the river, a lurking place for Bushmen; and also noticed that some of the latter had been there a short time previously. They also discovered several small plateaus along the river where hippopotami lived in herds. The high mountain range stretched along the river without its end being visible towards the west. Since the scouts were uncertain of finding drinking water behind the mountains, they had to cease further investigation of this region, and returned on the 26th September to camp, from where the Captain had sent on the previous day, the 25th September,<sup>169</sup> a few little Namacquas who had followed them, to inform the Great Namacquas of the coming of the expedition. These messengers returned with fifteen Great Namacquas, two slaughter cattle and a few sheep.

Since the arrival of the expedition at the Groote Rivier the level of the river had been dropping daily, but on the 25th<sup>170</sup> it had again risen ten inches, without any rain having fallen. Furthermore, a strong westerly wind which blew on the same day<sup>170</sup> ruffled

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<sup>168</sup> Jacobus Coetsé Jansz: held a grazing farm "Klipfontein at the corner of the Piquet bergen" (V.R.S. 15. p. 277). In 1760 he received permission to go elephant hunting in Namaqualand and on this journey crossed the Orange (near Goodhouse), being probably the first European to do so. His narrative has been republished in V.R.S. 15. Coetzee was therefore the most experienced member of Hop's expedition. He states also that he could speak the language of the Little Namaquas, a most useful asset. There was another Coetzee (Jurgen) on Hop's expedition but the reference in the text is always to Jacobus.

<sup>169</sup> This passage is inaccurately transcribed. The correct version is: "We returned to camp on the 26th where we learnt that the Captain had on the 23rd sent a few Little Namacquas who had followed us to . . . (Allamand and Klockner, p. 151.)"

<sup>170</sup> For 25th read 23rd; and for 'same day' read 25th.

the water to such an extent that the transportation of the wagons had to be postponed on that day.

The land of the Little Namacquas is bounded on the West by the sea, on the North by the land of the Great Namacquas<sup>171</sup>, on the East by the mountains in which the Bushmen live, and on the South by the Amacquas. It is situated between 28°42' and 30°31' South latitude. It is a dry and sandy country without permanent streams. The largest rivers, but which yet dry up at times, are the Zwart Doorn Rivier, the Groen, and Great Sand Rivers. These rise in the high mountain range to the North-East and flow into the sea, mostly through high rocky mountains, on which neither trees nor grass grow, and among which are the afore-mentioned Copper Mountains. A few tall thorn trees are to be found along the river banks and some shrubs, mostly milk bushes, on the level ground.

The Little Namacquas are by nature very lazy and timid and, since they have few cattle, endure a very miserable existence; they are continually disturbed by Bushmen who not only steal their cattle but also take their lives. It is to be feared that they may within a few years be totally exterminated by the Bushmen.<sup>172</sup>

The 29th September, the entire expedition or commando crossed the river<sup>173</sup> without mishap; and about 100 Little Namacquas, men, women and children, went with them to visit their friends among the Great Namacquas, which they would not have done without such an opportunity, for fear of their enemies.<sup>174</sup> One Great Namacqua who had come to the Little Namacquas in the previous year was returning with them, but he was unfortunately drowned while driving his cattle across the river. Towards evening the whole expedition proceeded to a fountain whose water was stagnant; 1½ miles.

The 30th September, on the march again through rocky mountains to a Hottentot Kraal, next to a muddy spring. Caution prompted the Captain to make a regulation that two persons<sup>174a</sup> and

<sup>171</sup> 'actually at the Groot Rivier', adds Mentzel.

<sup>172</sup> 'How does this tally', queries our author, 'with Kolbe's description that declares them to be without exception big bold and courageous people, with 20,000 fighting men?'

<sup>173</sup> At Ramans drift.

<sup>174</sup> The report says 'the Bushmen'.

<sup>174a</sup> presumably white.



a Bastard Hottentot should always stand guard at night, and also that each member of the expedition in his turn should not barter more than six cattle at a time. This day's journey was  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 1st October, the expedition struck camp and marched through the mountains up to the Leeuwen Rivier,<sup>175</sup> which rises in the North at a mountain spring and from there runs South-East, flowing into the Groote Rivier. It is supposed to have derived its name from the many lions which lived there.<sup>176</sup> Along the river grow many thorn bushes and redwood trees. Though the river was dry at the moment, one could perceive that it became very full in the rainy season. The inhabitants of a Namacqua Kraal which was reached had fled as soon as they saw riders on horseback, although they had been informed of the approach of the expedition. Only a few old men and women were left, who seemed to be very ill at ease, but soon plucked up courage again when they received gifts of tobacco and dagga. As soon as those who had fled realized this, they began to slink back slowly and afterwards showed no fear.<sup>177</sup>

The expedition camped here at a waterhole, which was called Valse Drift: only  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles on this day.<sup>178</sup>

The 4th October, the journey was continued along the Leeuwen Rivier to a spring, which was called Vogelfontyn.<sup>179</sup> Here the mountains end; in contrast, a large plateau covered with grass begins. The journey hither was a distance of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.<sup>180</sup>

<sup>175</sup> The Leeuwen R. is the *Haum R.*

<sup>176</sup> 'Today there are none left', Mentzel comments.

<sup>177</sup> AUTHOR'S NOTE: 'This conduct is incompatible with the stories hitherto circulated that the Hottentots were vicious and cruel. The Great Namacqua nation may be considered pre-eminent among all Hottentots, and yet an entire kraal takes to flight and hides at the sight of a few horsemen. It seems that everything has to be exaggerated by writers who have no facts to record in order to astonish the reader.'

<sup>178</sup> Actual distance according to Report,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

<sup>179</sup> *Aleurisfontein*. The place is a haunt of birds because of the shade it offers. The Hottentots called it by a name meaning probably Bird Fountain or Bird Water.

<sup>180</sup> AUTHOR'S NOTE: The uninformed reader will wonder how it was possible that, in these wild and desert regions which a civilised person had hardly ever visited, the mountains, rivers, springs etc. should have names and Dutch names at that. It is necessary to know that these are only names given them by the Hottentots in their own language, and translated by the Hollanders.

The 5th October, the journey proceeded further along the Leeuwen Rivier up to a warm bath originating in a perennial spring whose water is moderately warm and is therefore suitable for bathing. This spring is situated about 200 yards to the east of the river on a small rocky hill. The water bubbles up like boiling water and has a somewhat stale taste, but this does not matter much and does not make it unpleasant to drink. The ground around it was marshy and the crystallized salt lay an inch thick round the edge of the water.<sup>181</sup> Hereabout too, were seen the first Camelopards (giraffes). A young female, accompanied by a young one, was killed;<sup>182</sup> the young one was caught, but did not survive long, since it soon died. This day's journey was only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 10th October, the journey was continued along this river and, since no drinkable water was found, to Rietfontyn:  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles. But at first only the company of burghers had arrived here, the wagons and tired animals having been left behind to follow the next day.

Up to this point, one of the members of this company, a burgher called Coetzee, had already come the previous year, and had started from here on the return journey.<sup>183</sup> Further, no European had yet come, and all that follows is quite new.

The 13th ditto, the camp was shifted to the Fresh Spring<sup>184</sup>:  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile.

The 15th ditto, still further to Rietvallei:  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile.

The 17th ditto, a male giraffe was shot by burgher Badenhorst.

The 18th October, the journey proceeded along the river to Springbokfontyn: 2 miles.

The 19th ditto, a halt was made at Renosterfontyn where, after a two hours' journey, the grassy plain ended, and in contrast

<sup>181</sup> The author comments caustically 'Did this salt also come down from the mountains with the rain water? Nonsense!'

<sup>182</sup> 'a description of the giraffe will be given in the twelfth chapter, which treats of hunting', adds the author.

<sup>183</sup> Thus the end of Jacobus Coetzee's journey came at about 15 miles north of Warmbad.

<sup>184</sup> 'Verse Fontyn'.

a high flat mountain range began. This journey was a distance of only  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

On the 22nd the expedition passed through a narrow road at a Hottentot Kraal, then came upon another plain and again camped on the Leeuwen Rivier: 4 miles.

The 24th ditto, the camp shifted to Paerelhoenderfontyn:  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile.

The 26th ditto, burghers Coetzee, Marais and Greef were sent in advance to look for water and a road. The two latter sent word towards evening by two Bastard Hottentots that they had indeed found water, but that there was little possibility of getting the wagons through the rocky ridges.

The 27th ditto, Coetzee returned with a report that he had found a way which was passable, although blocked here and there by heavy stones, and that afterwards a level sandy road would be reached. So in the afternoon the Captain started on the journey with the whole expedition and camped at Bergfontyn;  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.<sup>185</sup>

The 28th October, they went through the low mountains to Draai Rivier which was dry:  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles. This river rises in the steep gorge, and flows into the Groote Rivier in the rainy season.<sup>186</sup> Next to it one finds beautiful tall thick trees of red wood, and good cornfields between the mountains.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Dr. Mossop informs me that none of the names along the Haum R. translated from the Hottentot by the travellers now remains or is known to the Hottentots in the Bondelswort Reserve, even the *Bergfontein* is now known as *Goedgevonden Spring*, at the south end of the Karas and slightly north of the Kanus Railway siding.

<sup>186</sup> Dr. Mossop writes "the Draai R. is the Gei-nab i.e. *Kei-lab* or Great R. (*Kei* = great, *lab* = river). The Gei-nab flows S.E. from the Gt. Karas mountains to join the Orange, and when I was searching along the Eastern slopes of the Great Karas for Hop's route encountering this river gave me the clue to "de Style Cloof" (the 'steep gorge' of Mentzel) which is the *col* or *neck* between the Gt. Karas and its outlier hills, Naos".

<sup>187</sup> "The red wood is very like ordinary *Acacia giraffae* (Camel thorn tree), but is blood red on section, it is *Acacia haematorylon*, and called locally the *Vaal doringboom*. There is a lot at Aleursfontein "where the mountains end" which is 15 miles S. of Warmbad". [See V.R.S. 15 notes, pages 74, 281, 289 and Map I on which Hop's route is traced].

The 30th ditto, the advance guard, Coetzee, again reported that he had found fairly good pasture and water for a two days' journey.

The 31st ditto, the expedition marched through the mountains along the river over a fine grassy plain and pitched camp at Langebergen:  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

The 1st November, they had to travel in different directions in order to cross a dry river with steep banks. At Rietkuyl, where good water and pasture for the cattle were found, they camped after a journey of  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

The 4th ditto, the expedition camped at Klipkuyl:  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

The 6th ditto, they pitched their camp at the river North by East in  $26^{\circ} 58'$  South Latitude and  $37^{\circ} 43'$  Longitude.<sup>188</sup>

The 7th November, Coetzee reported that he had ridden a three days' journey in advance, and found that on the first day the expedition would have to pass along a steep and stony hollow and would obtain little water; but that on the second day they would emerge from the mountains into a beautiful grassy plain, where water and pasture were to be had in plenty.

The 8th ditto, some members of the expedition remonstrated that since they had hitherto not yet received any well-founded account of a brownish, linenclad nation,<sup>189</sup> and had according to Coetzee's report to travel through a region lacking in water, they were afraid that they might not make much progress with

<sup>188</sup> 'Since according to this account', explains the author, 'they had only advanced 2 minutes of Latitude and 1 minute Longitude, they seem to have progressed only  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile.'

He adds further: 'An explanation how this expedition calculated the longitude and latitude of each place would have been desirable. To measure latitude on land by means of the sextant or "Jacob's staff" (as the Dutch navigators call it) is very difficult and uncertain, since one cannot always observe the real horizon accurately on account of the mountains and hills: but to find the longitude, more science and skill is necessary. It seems to me that the surveyor calculated both merely by the number of hours taken for the journey and the places which they had reached according to the point of the compass, for otherwise it were impossible to indicate their zenith for every day; but this method is very unreliable.'

<sup>189</sup> The purpose of the expedition was to find such a nation about whom Jacobus Coetzee had heard from the Namaquas during his journey in the previous year 'whom they called Damroquas, having a tawny or yellow appearance, long hair and clothed in linen' (V.R.S. 15. p. 283).

their overtired animals and their damaged wagons. This was considered by all the members of the expedition, and some of them proposed that a few bastard Hottentots should be sent out to explore the road ahead and to obtain more exact information about that nation. Most of them voted against this proposal, and said that it would be better to proceed a little further, in view of Coetzee's report, than to remain idle in the daily increasing heat, and wait for the return of the Hottentots. One would also profit by the prevailing moonlight and perhaps discover the river Braragul which, according to the maps, lay only 50 miles North from here. Then they said it was very probable that if the tribe in question actually lived in this vicinity, they must live somewhere round the Braragul river: and, if they proceeded with their journey, there was a hope of discovering the so far unknown West Coast up to the tropic of Cancer. They also proposed that the best wagons with the best draught oxen should be chosen and sent in advance, while the other wagons and oxen of poor condition should wait for their return. But, as this idea was rejected on the ground that it was very dangerous to separate in these distant lands, Marais, Greef, Nieuwkerk and Badenhorst with a few bastard Hottentots, rode ahead, and the others waited for their return.

The 12th November, these four persons returned with the report that they had found the narrow path to be exactly as Coetzee had stated. Further, that they had been at three Namacqua kraals and there inquired about brownish yellow people: but some had replied that there was a nation farther north, clothed like the members of this expedition, having long hair, but of a browner complexion. Others, on the contrary, had said that these tribes wore no clothes but skins and karosses; none had actually seen the nation or spoken to any of its members. Most of the Namacquas, however, disclaimed knowledge of any such nation. But although the matter was still very doubtful, they decided to continue the journey for a few more days in the hope of finding something.

The 13th ditto, they therefore resumed their journey, but divided the expedition on account of shortage of water. They went forward in the early morning with half the number of

wagons, the others followed in the evening. For a day and a night they followed a steep and rocky path through a narrow passage and over stony mountain ridges, being fortunate enough not to damage their wagons. After resting their animals somewhat, they continued their journey on the 14th November, to the Buffelsrivier,<sup>190</sup> which at the moment was only a small dry tributary, but in winter flows into the Gamma River. Distance, 5 miles.

The 15th ditto, the first part of the expedition travelled ahead and the 16th ditto, the rest followed up to a Hottentot Kraal, called Dwaalhoek: 2 miles.

The 18th ditto, both portions of the expedition passed a dry river, emerged afterwards from the mountains into a beautiful grassy plain; in the evening camped at a Hottentot kraal: 2½ miles.

The 19th ditto, they camped at an old abandoned Namacqua Kraal: ¾ mile.

The 21st ditto, Coetzee reported that a good supply of water was at hand.

The 22nd ditto, they followed their guide, camping at a large Namacqua kraal on the Gamma river,<sup>191</sup> which was also dry; but normally flows into the Fish River.<sup>192</sup> The land lying before them seemed flat, with a few hills here and there. It was covered with grass and renoster bush.<sup>193</sup> On the plain were large herds of wild animals, viz. rhinoceri, giraffes, buffaloes, kudus, gemsboks, stags and aurochs. Distance, 2 miles.<sup>194</sup>

On the 2nd December, Coetzee and Marais, whom the Captain had sent in advance to look for water and a road to the Fish River, returned. They reported that they had reached the Fish River after 3 days and found the road very good, but water very scarce. The Fish River was also dry and had only water-

<sup>190</sup> The Buffels R. is the Gausob really the same word as Koussie from Nama: / *Gaosi*(b) from / *gaob* = buffalo.

<sup>191</sup> Dr. Mossop in footnote to Wikar's Journal (V.R.S. 15. p. 74) says the 'Gammo R. of Hop is the *Xamob* (Lion) another name for Lion R. *Xam 'ab* (Lion R.)

<sup>192</sup> This Fish R. is the Aub.

<sup>193</sup> *Elytropappus Rhinocerotis*.

<sup>194</sup> S. Latitude 26°.18', Longitude 37°.37'.

holes at a few places, but on the other hand, fair grassy pasture on both sides. They also related that the Hottentots living there were rich in cattle, and that there were large herds of wild animals, especially elephants. They had enquired about the Damrocqua nation<sup>195</sup> but could receive no reliable information about them. At the same time some of their guides had informed them that they had visited a certain nation living further along, which was blacker than the Hottentots, had long hair, with hairy breasts and ornamental scars on their faces, and also wore karosses of animal skins. These tribes lived in wooden houses and made their living by cultivating the soil and planting tobacco. In this region, too, there was plenty of cattle, also copper mines. These guides had pointed out to them a mountain lying due North where, according to their information, the land of the Damrocquas (or as they sometimes called them, the Tamacquas), began; this land extended westwards to the sea. The same guides had also shown them some copper and beads, which some of them wore and which they had obtained from the above-mentioned nation. They added that the beads, which were made of blue glass, square or round in shape, were brought to them by another nation, living still further off who were of a yellow or light-brown colour, called Sondarnoquas by some, and Briquas or Birinas by others.<sup>196</sup> Finally these guides had said they were prepared to take the Hollanders to the Damrocqua or Tamacqua nation, but that they would be taking a grave risk in the present unusually dry season, owing to the scarcity of water.

On the 5th December, the Captain told this news to the whole company and asked them to consider what was to be done next. They deliberated on the matter and after the Captain had, on the 6th December, called a meeting of all members of the expedition, it was unanimously decided that it was at present impossible to continue the journey with the exhausted cattle and the damaged wagons, owing to the daily increasing heat and almost total lack of water. Under no circumstances were they

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<sup>195</sup> *Hereros*.

<sup>196</sup> According to a note on tribal names in V.R.S. 15. p. 15. This is the BaThlaping, a Bechuana (Bantu) tribe, whom the Hottentots called 'People of the Goat', from *biri*, a goat. They called themselves 'People of the Fish'.

to remain here any longer but they should return to Cape Town as soon as possible so that they might not suffer from lack of water on their return journey. In view of this they decided to return by the same way as they had come. Whereupon they raised their camp and started the return journey on the 7th December.<sup>197</sup>

(According to the account given to the Governor and the Council of Policy by the expedition) "they had got as far as 120½ miles north of the Cape of Good Hope<sup>198</sup>, 5¾ miles westward of the straight north line and 21¾ further north than the burgher Jacob Coetzee had reached in 1760".

(They reported further): "The entire district from the Groote Rivier up to here (that is, the present position of their camp) is called the land of the Great Namacquas. Its boundaries are, on the West, the sea; on the North, the Land of St. Thomas; on the East, the Bricquas and the Enicquas; and on the South, the land of the Little Namacquas. It extends from 25 degrees to 28 degrees 42' south latitude.<sup>199</sup> As to the land, its southern and western parts are mountainous and rocky, on which neither trees nor grass grow. In the East and in the North there are beautiful grasslands where, consequently, a large variety of big game are to be found such as elephants, rhinoceri, giraffes, aurochs, buffaloes, wild horses, zebras, "Coedoes" (or Kudus), gemsboks and deer. The rivers flowing through the region are the Groote and the Fish Rivers, the Leeuwen, the Draai and

<sup>197</sup> Dr. Mossop points out that Hop's furthest North is marked on Brink's map as *Keerom*, at the junction of the Xamob-Gausob (the Gamma and Buffels rivers of the Journal). *Keerom* is now known as *Grundoorn* on the farm *Brauss*, where there is a permanent spring.

<sup>198</sup> Cape Town is meant.

<sup>199</sup> Mentzel's comment is 'according to their own statement they went no farther than 26° latitude and 37°37' longitude. This limitation of boundaries is therefore not entirely accurate'.

Actually the last reference to latitude was 26°18' on Nov. 22. It seems more reasonable to infer that the 25° was supposed to be the beginning of the 'Land of St. Thomas', a vague generic term for Portuguese West Africa, the actual boundaries of which were not known to them. The specific statement that they had gone 21¾ [German miles] further north than Coetzee is substantially correct. Dr. Mossop, however, points out that the latitude of 'Keerom' was 67' further South than indicated by the travellers. (27°25' instead of 26°18').



the Gamma Rivers; among which the Groote Rivier, otherwise called the "Charie" or "Eyn" is the only one that does not dry up. It has its source at about 25 degrees South latitude, then flows south,<sup>200</sup> joins the Draai and the Leeuwen Rivers on the west, makes a bend at 28 degrees and flows westwards to the sea. It forms the boundary in the East between the Great Namacquas and the Bricquas and Enicquas, and in the South between the Great and the Little Namacquas. The Fish River also rises at about 25 degrees latitude, flows due South through the centre of this region and after being joined in the East by the Gamma River, flows into the Groote Rivier close to the sea; it dries up entirely in summer, if it rains less than usual during the winter. The same is true of the Leeuwen, Draai and Gamma Rivers. All these rivers are usually bordered by meadows and thornbushes as well as by some other trees, which are generally the size of the common oak-tree, with wood very like red Brazilian, and leaves similar to the tamarind. These trees also bear crescent shaped pods, enclosing a few small seeds like brown beans.<sup>201</sup> The air is generally very pure and the climate temperate and salubrious. Yet it was observed that the small-pox epidemic which raged at the Cape in 1755, also wrought havoc among this nation at the same time. In spite of this, however, these Great Namacquas are still very numerous; they are generally divided into small kraals or village communities that live peacefully together without any paramount chief. Their wealth consists of cattle only, which they possess in abundance; iron and beads are the merchandise most prized by them."

On the return journey<sup>202</sup> nothing remarkable happened except that they lost 30 oxen during the night of the 20th-21st February: these being stolen from them by the Bushmen (unless the oxen had returned of their own accord). All of them reached

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<sup>200</sup> Wikar in his *Relaus* rightly criticises this wild guess about the course of the Orange, he had been told by many Blicquoas [Batlapin] that they had travelled 'more than 100 hours along this river which flows northward . . . as far as they could go'. This suggests the stretch of river from Prieska to Upington. (see V.R.S. 15. p. 146 note).

<sup>201</sup> the *Acacia haematoxylon*.

<sup>202</sup> Mentzel does not quote any passages describing the return journey. These were brief and of little significance.

Cape Town in good health and spirits on the 27th April, 1762. The observations made on Hottentot tribes, in a report to the Governor and the Council of Policy, will be found in Chapter 14, which treats specially of the Hottentots. This expedition, the most remarkable yet undertaken, once more failed in the attainment of its objective, that of discovering another civilized nation. It is evident from the diary that it followed the same route as that taken by Coetzee in the previous year (all commandos sent out do the same); therefore, as long as they continue to use the old routes, very little that is new will be learned about other regions.

In the fourth Chapter of Volume One, I remarked that the Cape of Good Hope, in so far as it is inhabited by the Dutch, represents an obtuse-angled triangle whose base was the mountain range to the North. The expedition just described had travelled due north near the western sea coast, afterwards veering slightly east to cross this mountain range; but it brought us no fresh information, except a few details which will be mentioned below, concerning the Amacqua and the Great and Little Namacqua Hottentot tribes. Sparrman made far more discoveries on his only journey towards the East, than all the expeditions towards the West put together. In my humble opinion, different preparations ought to be made when such a commando is sent out. Such an expedition has hardly been on the way four weeks before the wagons, and especially the trek-oxen, are a wreck; the reasons for this are clear and it is surprising that no improvements are made. I shall point out some of them.

Firstly, the method of inspanning the oxen is the most impracticable in the world. Kolbe demonstrated this best in the second figure to page 112, except that he represented the bars (*jukskeie*) thrust into the yoke as round, though they are broad like the bars in the cartracks. On the necks of the animals inspanned side by side, lies a round piece of wood, about four feet long and as thick as a man's arm. In it are four holes, through which bars (*Jukscheiden*) are pushed; two for each ox; these hang along the animal's neck and are fastened below the neck with a small piece of rope. One of these yokes, for the hindmost pair of oxen (called "*Achterossen*") is chained to

the front of the shaft with an iron ring and staple; but for the other four pairs of oxen it is fastened to a chain, rope or cord. There are no other ropes on the yoke attached to a swingle-tree as in Europe, so that the ox may strive to pull the wagon by the ropes; instead the animal has to move the entire load with its head and neck only. It is true that the African oxen have no hump on their back as some writers have alleged; still, the last neck bone, or the vertebra between the neck and the back, is a little stronger and more elevated than that of European oxen. With only this little hump, which the inhabitants call the "*schoft*",<sup>203</sup> the animal has to brace itself against the yoke lying on its neck, and draw the wagon without being able to rest its breast against the bars (*Schiennen*); or to put it more clearly, the oxen merely push the yoke before them, so that the wagon connected to the hindmost yoke by its shaft and to the foremost yoke by the long chain or rope, has to follow. I could not help pitying the poor animals that were tortured in this way. For since the hindmost yoke is tied to the front of the shaft and as both oxen are held under one immovable yoke, one may easily imagine how the animals are flung from one side to the other by the shaft whenever the wagon moves from side to side. On all rocky and uneven roads, such as have a high track on one side and a lower one on the other, the conditions are very bad, and it would not be surprising if the hindmost pair of oxen quite often had their necks broken; for if by chance a loaded wagon should overturn, the hindmost two oxen would have to fall with it, unless the bars of the yoke should snap and the oxen be thus freed from the yoke. But one can imagine what the animals have to endure when they are twisted and choked by the yoke in this fashion. No ox can defend itself with its head and horns against insects, wasps, gadflies and hornets, for since it is inspanned and imprisoned under one yoke with another ox, it cannot move its head. Should an ox stray a little from the track, it draws its team-mate with it by the yoke, and if driven back into the track, pushes the other back again with the yoke: and every time it is the neck that suffers.

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<sup>203</sup> or shoulder. The word is also used for a day's journey by ox-wagon. Lichtenstein (V.R.S. 10. p. 19) defines it thus: '*Schoft* is the distance an ox-wagon team of 12 with load of 2000 lbs. will cover in a day'.

The lever of a wagon (to speak technically) is to be sought and found where the swingle-tree hangs from the shaft just in front of the forepart. Now, if the oxen are harnessed to the swingle-tree at the back with ropes, they can lift and draw the forepart so much more easily on rising ground or when the wagon gets stuck; but in the African fashion the oxen draw the wagon jointly by the front end of the shaft only and lose most of their strength owing to the distance of the lever from the fulcrum. A slightly padded single yoke for each ox, fastened to a swingle-tree at the back, as is customary in Steyermark, Carinthia, Tyrol and other mountainous countries, would be far more serviceable for the animals, so that they could lean against it with their entire weight. I am prepared to wager that in this way six oxen would draw a heavier load far more easily than ten oxen by the other method.

Another big mistake committed on these expeditions by which the oxen are worn-out most, is this: In the early morning, at or near daybreak, the oxen are inspanned without having eaten anything. The journey continues till about 8, 9 or 10 o'clock, according to circumstances, then the oxen are turned out on the veld, but the grazing is often meagre enough owing to the quality of the soil and the dry season; and the poor beasts have no chance of eating their scanty food in peace, being pestered by flies and other insects in the heat. At about 4 p.m. they are usually inspanned again. The animals therefore have no leisure either for eating or chewing the cud, and consequently do not thrive. Then the journey is resumed up to 8 or 9 p.m. Now the day is done; the animals can no longer graze. Water, too, is often lacking and they have therefore to remain hungry and thirsty during the night; only being able to rest their limbs a little till the next morning when, without having eaten anything, they are again inspanned, driven along and tortured.

Thirdly, long journeys like these are never undertaken until the month of August, when the rainy season is almost past. One is afraid of crossing the swollen rivers sooner, and rightly so. But it is wrong to start such journeys from Cape Town with heavily laden wagons and thereby torture the animals before reaching the regions where the provisions have to be used and

the wagons are gradually lightened. For in the inhabited parts one may easily obtain provisions. It would be better to send the laden wagons in advance as far as possible before the rainy season, say up to Amacguas Land, and feed the oxen at a spot rich in grass and with sufficient water, through the winter. It is self-evident that the loads would have to be protected from the rain in huts or in some other way, and their escort provided with fresh provisions from time to time. Immediately after the rainy season the commandos could proceed thither on horseback and on foot, and start their march with the rested and well nourished animals. Then they would find pasture and enough water everywhere, before the dry season commences.

Fourthly, it would be practical if fewer laden wagons, costing a great deal of money, were taken. The above expedition had fifteen wagons, each with a team of ten oxen, making 150 oxen. Would it not have been better if they had taken six or seven wagons with them, and used the remaining animals for pack-oxen, loading the provisions on them? The Hottentots have pack-oxen, why not the Europeans? One would have more than double the service from them. An African ox can quite easily carry two muid of wheat weighing 360 lbs. in a long sack on its back, so that it could carry an equal weight of other provisions. Ten oxen would thus carry 20 muid of grain, but in one wagon ten oxen transport no more than 12 muid. In this way one would not only save more than half the number of wagons each of which costs 70 to 80 rix-dollars, and sometimes even more, but, since the provisions decrease day by day, consequently by degrees even fewer pack-oxen would be required, the free oxen could then be interchanged with the trek-oxen or inspanned in the place of the exhausted ones. In the mountain passes, and on narrow and uneven roads, pack-oxen would be far more useful than the wagons. Naturally, one cannot load everything on a pack-ox, e.g. the "Schuyt" or small boat for crossing the rivers. Such a boat, though small, is a clumsy weight on a wagon and exacts a good deal of care and labour in loading and off-loading. Could not the Government, since it needs a boat of this type in any case for different occasions, have a copper or tin pontoon of the same size made? It would outlast many such

journeys, and may not cost much more, or perhaps even less, than a boat for which the wood has to be imported from Holland; particularly if it could be made in Holland.

As a result of such arrangements, as we have seen from the diary quoted, the oxen and wagons are mostly in poor condition before the objective of the journey is reached. The dry season is then already at hand, and to prevent the animals from dying of hunger and thirst the return journey has to be commenced in headlong haste. This is no mere figment of my imagination; it has often been brought to the notice of the Cape Government by intelligent people; but there too the dictum of the learned Balde<sup>204</sup> is true:

Cantantur haec, clamantur haec, dicuntur, audiuntur,  
Scribuntur haec, leguntur haec, et lecta negliguntur.<sup>205</sup>

To tell the truth, they grudge the expenses and lose as much again.

I must remind the kind reader once more that the whole country is in the form of a triangle. At the point where the mountains end, which stretch across the country in a North-Easterly direction, there is an opening through which one can easily pass into the Camdebo and to where (according to the Chinese Hottentots, who live across the Zomo) the Tambucki and Mambucki dwell; further to the right (i.e. Eastwards) the real Kaffirs are to be found. Thither, in my opinion, expeditions ought to be directed. There one could make greater discoveries than among the already known and far-flung Namacqua, among whom, except for their wealth in cattle, nothing is to be seen but poverty, misery and savage life. Meanwhile it appears from the diary quoted that the Namacqua, especially those called the Great, are indeed a numerous tribe; but live far apart in small kraals, villages or families, acknowledging no paramount chief. Scarcely one kraal could be found by the said expedition in a journey taking two or three short days. So that according to Tachard's report, scarcely 2,000 fighting men could be raised

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<sup>204</sup> Jacob Balde (1604-1668), Jesuit preacher and teacher at the court of Maximilian of Bavaria. One of the greatest Latin scholars of his day. Holds a high place among modern Latin poets.

<sup>205</sup> "These things are sung and shouted, spoken and heard.  
They are written and read, but withal go unheeded".

among the Little and Great Namacqua, but not 20,000 as seen through Kolbe's magnifying glass, even if men, women and children were all counted in. One sees, moreover, from this diary and the report to the Council of Policy, of which we shall hear more in Chapter 14, that several clans, although they are included among the Namacqua, have adopted quite special names, such as Comeinacqua, Tradiamacqua, Cabona, Korikambes, Keinamacqua.

Supposing one were to form entire nations from such single families, how many tribes would come into being, to cover the country like locusts! Nevertheless, it appears from the remoteness and spaces between so many kraals, how big a stretch of land lies waste in the southern part of Africa as a vast wilderness. Millions of people would be able to make a living there if the country were properly populated and tilled. Lack of water would not everywhere be a hindrance to colonisation. Even the Hottentots dig water holes or wells in the dry season; and more intelligent people would find the means, as in Europe, to conserve the water of the rivers by means of flood-gates and weirs. Wood for this purpose is not indeed to be found everywhere, but abounds in many regions. If the first colonists of the Cape had kept their promises and planted trees immediately after their arrival, the land would already have been fairly afforested and could have had the finest oak-forests, for these grow very well there. I have seen oaks which were planted somewhat close together in a row and had, therefore, not grown so many branches as they would have done had they stood further apart; yet they had reached the height of pine-trees with trunks that had grown perfectly straight.

I have already mentioned in the First Volume of this Description that I experimented in different ways with chips of wood from red trees growing not far from Cape Town, without obtaining any dye from them. The expedition described above, however, found in the country of the Great Namacqua, at the Leeuwen, Draai and Gamma Rivers, trees with a red wood, the size of an ordinary oak, similar to Brazilian wood, with foliage closely resembling the tamarind, bearing crescent shaped pods containing small brown beans. There is more reason

to suppose that they would serve for dyeing purposes. But what is the use of all these discoveries if one cannot turn them to account owing to the great distance from the City, and the expense of transport by land. In my humble opinion the first thing to be done to make the best use of the country would be to connect one region with another by means of rivers and in this way to facilitate transportation, starting from the East and gradually proceeding to the West, North-West, North, and North-East. The still little-known lands Zitzikamma,<sup>206</sup> Houtniquasland, Krakekamma,<sup>207</sup> Nuku-kamma<sup>208</sup> and many other regions lying to the East, would give human hands plenty to do for perhaps more than a century; and since they lie near the Indian Ocean, would make water transportation feasible.

Only when these regions have been cleared somewhat and put to proper use, will it be time to penetrate into other parts. Let no one object that there are insuperable obstacles to this; just bear in mind the condition of Holland before the birth of Christ, after the inundation and destruction of the entire country, caused by the north-west wind, of which plenty of traces are still to be found at the present day; large trees (being found) in the depths of the soil, all lying stretched out towards the south-east. This position of the trees gives positive proof that the devastation of that time was caused by an extraordinary tempest from the north-west and actually happened in the autumn; for from time to time ripe and undecayed hazel nuts have been found in the ground.<sup>209</sup> In van Loen's well-known and esteemed works,<sup>210</sup> as well as in those of authors of ancient history, one reads how the inhabitants of the time, who lived by hunting game like the Germans of old, had to abandon the country on account

<sup>206</sup> A permit for a Loan farm *Sietsekamma* was issued in 1765.

<sup>207</sup> As marked on Sparrman's map; would fall within district of Uitenhage.

<sup>208</sup> Sunday R.

<sup>209</sup> Ripe and undecayed hazel nuts, after 2000 years in the ground! A surprising lapse into credulity.

<sup>210</sup> Gerard van Loon, a Dutch historian of mid-eighteenth century. The book referred to is probably *Aloude Hollandsche Histori . . . sedert der Komst der Batavieren . . . Gravenhage, 1734.*



of the destroyed hunting ground and turned to Italy, where they were three times victorious over the Romans, but the fourth time they were themselves vanquished by the Romans and entirely annihilated. Another tribe on the far side of the Rhine, the Batavians or Catti, separated from their countrymen and took possession of Holland as an abandoned land. How dreary, desolate and wretched were conditions then in the present Seven United Provinces! And what a flourishing State has sprung up there since about the eighth century! Human hands, if they are industrious, can in time accomplish much, perhaps everything that is possible. God created the world out of nothing; but since the entire destruction of the country as mentioned above, one may rightly say that in Holland too, God has created out of nothing everything that is conceivably fit for human need, use and convenience, merely by dint of human endeavour and labour. Holland itself is destitute of everything. It does not produce as much grain as will serve the city of Amsterdam for a mere year's breakfast; and yet one always finds a stock of grain to last four years. Where formerly there was land, canals are now to be seen, and where water stood, the marshes have been drained, and the largest cows and fattest oxen feed there, of which however the country raises few or none. Holland has no natural resources on land except peat, used instead of wood for burning or heating, and fish at the sea-coast, but no fresh water with which to cook them. Except for the water that God causes to fall from the sky, which is gathered in cisterns, all the water has to be fetched from the rivers afar in "water-Schuyten" and sold for money. Apart from the avenues planted with a great deal of trouble, no trees grow there, and yet in no country is more wood used for building ships and for other industries requiring wood than here. Though there is no firewood at all, yet one finds the largest breweries there, even glass factories, which are maintained with peat, which has to be used by all the inhabitants for fuel. The finest gardens have been laid out in places where there were formerly marshes, on which one could not walk, ride or drive, without the land appearing to move and quiver. But how does the manufacturing industry stand in Holland at present? Little or no flax is grown, no silk-worms are to be seen, and the sheep have poor wool. But where does one find better linen,

finer velvet and other silken ware, and except in England, more beautiful shawls and other woollen goods? In the whole of Holland there is no white clay to be found; and yet the finest, best and most elegant pipes are manufactured at Gouda, for which purpose the clay has to be fetched at heavy expense from the Cologne region. And incidentally: who has ever been to Holland who has not seen and admired the beautiful stained glass window in the church at Gouda? A magnificent picture has been burned into the glass panes with incomparably bright transparent colouring; for a single large church window over the main entrance on the West, a papal nuncio by command of his sovereign unsuccessfully offered 100,000 gulden. Nowhere else in the world does one find similar stained glass, but this art has been lost since the death of two brothers who had discovered the secret. The panes of glass are quite small, about eight inches high and six inches wide, and set in lead in such a way that the figures appear life-size. In front of each window, to prevent its possible damage by a stone thrown carelessly, a lattice-work of iron-wire is fastened on the outside, and after ten years the windows are removed and the panes reset in new lead. The glass panes, though stained, would obscure the light of the church very little on account of their transparency, but the wire lattice-work darkens it a bit. The kind reader will please pardon this brief but noteworthy digression.

No trace of iron ore has been discovered in Holland, yet nowhere is more iron manufactured than in that country; not even in Sweden, whence the ore is brought to Holland. This may easily be realised when I say that a single anchor-smith with his assistants can use four to five thousand pounds in a few days for only one large anchor. I say nothing of the abundance of all imaginable merchandise and works of art which are brought hither from the most distant countries of the world and are obtainable only from Holland. The learned Scaliger<sup>211</sup> wrote

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<sup>211</sup> Julius and Joseph Scaliger, father and son, are amongst the greatest scholars of the Renaissance. The association with Dousa shows that the reference is to Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609). Editor of Greek and Latin texts and founder of a new school of historical criticism. Though a Frenchman he spent the later part of his life at Leyden, where as a Protestant he found conditions more congenial.

aptly about Holland in a poetical letter to Dousa.<sup>212</sup> For the benefit of those who do not know this letter, I want to set down what specially pleases me in it:

Ignorata tuæ referam miracula terræ  
 Dousa! peregrinis non habitura fidem  
 Omnia lanicio. Lassat textrina Minerva  
 Lanigeros tamen hinc scimus abesse greges,  
 Non capiunt operas fabriles oppida vestra,  
 Nulla fabris tamen hic ligna ministrat humus,  
 Horrea triticeae rumpunt hic frugis acervi  
 Pascuus hic tamen est non cerealis ager,  
 Hic numerosa meri stipantur dolia cellis  
 Quæ vineta colat, nulla putator habet.  
 Hic nulla, aut certe Seges est rarissima lini  
 Linifici tamen est copia major ubi.  
 Hic mediis habitamus aquis, quis credere possit?  
 Et tamen hic nullæ Dousa! bibuntur aquæ.<sup>213</sup>

Holland is densely populated. In the largest cities, many lodgers have to make shift with the most cramped quarters; some live in cellars (*soutterains*), some in attics. But what are all these inhabitants of Holland compared with the multitude employed, maintained and fed by the State in the far distant East and West Indies, in Africa and on ships? Germany especially, would have twice as many inhabitants if Holland did not send so many thousands of people annually to other parts of the

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<sup>212</sup> Janus Dousa (Jan van der Dous) — 'Dutch statesman, historian, poet and philologist' took a leading role in revolt against Spain, particularly in defence of Leyden. Was first curator of Leyden University. Author of several volumes of Latin verse and of philosophical studies.

<sup>213</sup> *Translation:*

I shall narrate the unknown wonder of your country,  
 O Dousa! Everything cannot be entrusted to the woolgrowers  
 Of foreign parts. Minerva the weaver grows weary  
 Yet we know that woolbearing flocks are wanting here.  
 Your towns import no fabricated articles  
 Yet this soil provides no wood for craftsmen.  
 The wheat granaries are filled to bursting with stored-up grain  
 Yet is this no grain-bearing but a pastoral land.  
 A multitude of jars of wine are packed in stores,  
 Yet wine-growers are hardly worth counting.  
 Here is no flax-field or at least 'tis very rare  
 Yet linen-weavers everywhere abound.  
 Here we live in the midst of water, who would believe it?  
 And yet Dousa! No water is drunk here!

world, of which not a third return; and of those who return, not a tenth go back to their home country, but take service again on the ships or remain in Holland. If all these people that have left Germany during the last 200 years had married in their fatherland, founded a family and reared children, it is doubtful whether Germany would have been able to support the whole of its population. The yearly emigration is still considerable, and if the Cape of Good Hope were to be properly settled another million people would be needed for the purpose. They could all earn their living there and acquire wealth, if they followed the example of the industrious, thrifty and inventive Hollanders, and put their idle hands to work. But whether it is the climate or the habits of the country that cause every one, as soon as he has made a moderate fortune, to make only his slaves work while remaining idle himself, I am not prepared to say. One thing is certain, that if the inhabitants of that country were to have other activities besides grain-growing, viticulture and cattle raising; if they were to look for the still hidden treasures of the country and to attempt to combine nature and art, they would acquire far greater wealth. Their sheep, for instance, do have much rough hair on their skins; even in my time there was one efficient hatter, who made hats of fair quality from it, and made a good living thereby. One solitary farmer, according to Sparrman's account, taught his wife and children how to weave and to knit stockings. Why do not more learn it? Every second year the Company sends kit for the garrison from Holland, and every year poorly woven woollen dress material for the slaves. The Cape wool, which is entirely wasted, would make far better cloth, if establishments were set up for spinning, weaving and dyeing. Governor W. A. van der Stel had improved his herds of sheep to such an extent, as we shall see below, that he could profitably send the wool to Holland. I could recommend a hundred and one new means of livelihood for those people, if it were my business to make suggestions, or to induce our country's sons who have to eke out a miserable existence here to emigrate to Africa. But I shall end this chapter now and make no further revelations; yet it is unquestionably true that the Dutch East India Company drains our German fatherland the most of men and money. Perhaps I shall be able sometime to prove this clearly in a treatise.

## CHAPTER NINE.

### Of Agriculture at the Cape of Good Hope.

Just as bread is the best and supreme means of subsistence, which the all-gracious God has destined for appeasing man's appetite, for giving him strength and keeping him in good health, and which He has blessed to such an extent that a stalk containing more than 200 perfect grains of wheat has sprung from a single seed — so also the plant from which the bread is baked, though it has to be cultivated by the farmer by the sweat of his brow, is so productive that it gives him the greatest blessings and prosperity. A certain farmer in Silesia found on his land a plant containing more than 246 grains, which had grown from a single seed of rye. These he sowed separately, thinly scattered, and reaped next year about a third of a peck; which, sown again sparsely on a special piece of soil, produced a heaped Silesian quarter. This happened at the time of the Seven Years' War, and since the said farmer had sown this quarter of wheat on a special field, it made a very fine appearance; the Austrians reaped it for forage.

Bread is a gift of Providence, which of all foods has this advantage over all dainties, that one never gets tired or sick of it. To prevent man from becoming disgusted with foods which he has to eat often, the all-bountiful God has not only provided thousands of foods in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, but also created plants by the addition of which one may prepare simple foods in many different ways and make them pleasanter, more nourishing and more tasty according to one's desire. Our daily bread has, however, always an advantage over all other foods. With its pleasing acid it strengthens the stomach, preventing animal foods from putrefying too easily inside. Bread, though it is eaten daily at meals not only never nauseates one, but even if one feels sickly and out of sorts, as long as there is no aversion to bread, it is a reliable sign that one's heart is still hale and that one does not have to fear any

serious illness. Man can remain healthy on bread and water and sustain himself for a long time; but excess of dainties taken without any bread would soon ruin the human body. This I found out on a pleasure trip which I took with some friends to a distant but pleasant forest. We had taken several kinds of tasty food with us, but had forgotten the bread, so that very soon we declined all meats and would not have been able to eat any more, had not a lady of the company remembered that she had brought a cake which we ate instead of bread.

Now it was this excellent means of sustenance which the new colonists at the Cape first thought of producing. It was well-known that a land, lying on the other side of the equator and towards the South Pole, had to have entirely opposite seasons and climate to those of the lands lying on this side of the equator and towards the North Pole. Hence it did not require deep thought to understand that winter in the Southern Hemisphere would commence as soon as the sun turned over the equator towards the northern tropic. Thus, immediately after the first April rains, the soil was dug with hoe and spade and the seed sown, which would lie in the earth through the winter and only start growing with the coming of spring. White, yellow and blue wheat as well as rye, were sown first; later also barley and oats. Never were there finer crops than in the following year. The white and yellow wheat throve best, but the blue wheat yielded the most grain.

The rye was also good, but not nearly as good as the blue wheat; and after repeated experiments the blue wheat was preferred for home-made bread. Some rye was still sown here and there, but it is liked better for bread-making by the Europeans than by those born in Africa; it may be surmised that it would thrive better than wheat in cold mountain areas. Barley, though sown last, is the first to ripen, and to this day is first to be reaped and harvested; it grows so well that it may be cut twice before the ears have formed to serve as fodder for saddle and draught horses; it is then even more productive than if it had not been cut. The entire oat crop, however, was lost at the first sowing: for as soon as the ears began to change colour and turn yellow as a sign that the grains would soon ripen fully

the south-east wind lashed them to such an extent that the grains fell out, and empty straw was threshed. This first sowing of oats is still to-day, after 120 years, deplored and lamented by the farmers at the Cape: for the grains that fell out at that time have changed into wild oats, sowing themselves, crossing with the good wheat but producing only barren ears. Other grain or legumes, such as millet, buckwheat, lentils and so forth, fared no better, for the dry South-East wind beat it out. Care was taken in future not to sow such seed from which experience had shown that no harvest could be expected; still, these seeds did not deteriorate and become a nuisance like the oats. Nor could the settlers get on very well with the long runner or white beans. There were no stakes to support their growth and the few that could be found for the purpose, were overturned by the wind and the green runners torn to pieces. Gray peas or the Prussian kind (Ortges), yellow and green peas, and low-growing white beans called Dwarf, are the legumes still grown today which flourish very well. Flax-seeds would probably do well in the very light soil during the first months of spring, August, September and October, but since up to the present no spinning or weaving is done, there is no demand for flax. The labour would be too monotonous, wearisome and unprofitable for the African women. They prefer the East Indian cotton clothes and, since there are no presses, no flax-seeds are wanted for oil-pressing, and the white kidney-fat of the sheep makes fine candles which have a less unpleasant smell than those made of linseed oil. Hemp is very eagerly smoked by Hottentots and by some slaves, in spite of its awful smell, but they use mostly wild hemp; the genuine hemp is sown for the purpose of bartering when on an expedition, or for the use of Hottentots in their service, to whom they have to give their share. The attempts to grow Batavian rice were always a failure, and since the African farmer is satisfied with a good crop of wheat, barley, peas and beans and can make enough money out of these, he finds nothing more convenient than to live a carefree life and not to be concerned with investigations, study, experiments and tests.

The soil suitable for agriculture is generally of a very varied and mixed kind. One would find very few farms where there is not a mixture of stretches of good soil, with patches of sandy

and stony ground. A farmer, whom the Company has granted 60 morgen of land, each consisting of 60 Rhineland roods, can seldom use more than 30 morgen. He is compelled to leave the rest of the land untilled for grazing and shrubs for firewood. But when a property is so situated that there is no occupied and surveyed land adjoining, then the owner has a large piece of ground which he can use without interference; for if he does not encroach upon his neighbour's land, no one will prevent him from cultivating as much ground as he can. That is how it happens that many a farmer reaps twice as large a harvest as another whose ground is just as good but not as extensive. The soil is almost always free from weeds and no weeds are found between the wheat, except where the wild oats have established themselves. Yet, I did strike a few fields which were overgrown with "Drabok" (Tares) between the wheat, and every year the owners had great trouble to pull out this weed, or to separate its seeds from the wheat. In many places too there is a noxious weed called "Spurie"<sup>214</sup> by the Colonists. It multiplies rapidly, bears many small seeds which, even if eaten by the cattle and passed as manure, still retain their germinating quality and multiply. For this reason they do not allow the animals to graze on it, but rather dig it up or pull it out.

The purest wheat is from time to time spoilt by rust, which covers the ears with black dust and destroys the grains. The cause of this is supposed to be the continual sowing of the same seed on the same fields; no better remedy has yet been found than to sow seed wheat from other places where this has not occurred. Thus they were once compelled to order Zeeland wheat from Holland. To-day, however, it is a known fact that the change of seed for that of other African districts has the same effect.

Their methods of farming or management of the land is little different from the European except in Germany where there is cloverland. Still I want to give some information about it. Apart from the land lying fallow in the deep valleys, where many thistles usually grow which have to be dug up with the hoe, dried and

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<sup>214</sup> ? Spurry — *Spergula arvensis*; but Marloth (*op. cit.*, II p. 212) states 'occasionally cultivated in sandy soil as a fodder plant'.



burnt, no field is broken or turned by means of a rake. On the contrary the sower, after the manure has been spread, walks in front of the plough on the fallow land, scattering the seed which is ploughed in behind him, without being covered by harrowing. This is done at the beginning of the rainy season, as soon as the soil is moist enough to be ploughed, the plough being drawn by eight, or according to the richness of the soil, ten oxen. A small shrubby plant scarcely a foot high, with reddish, woody stalks, grows commonly on the untilled land, but not so freely on the grain fields next to it. Its name has either escaped me, or as I am inclined to think, it has no distinctive name<sup>215</sup>; but it grows roots of more than ten to twelve yards long that are not much stronger than licorice-roots (*radix liquiritiae*). Should these spread to the wheat-fields during the ploughing, and the plough-share get underneath them, the plough-head would stick and the plough stop even if drawn by a team of ten oxen. The roots have to be chopped off with an axe or hatchet, so tough are they. After the grain has been ploughed as described above, it grows in strips or rows on top of the upturned soil only; for in the deep furrow nothing will or can grow, since the plough has removed the seeds from there and thrown them with the soil onto the raised ridge. The plough itself is bigger and heavier than in Germany. The plough-share is probably three times larger, stronger and heavier than ours and is fastened to the plough head (a piece of wood  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, ten inches wide, and five to six inches thick), with an iron bolt through which a rivet is driven. The head, however, is chamfered below the share, so that the latter can be brought into a sloping position to cut into the ground. The mould-board is very broad and slanting so that a deep and clean furrow can be dug. The coulter is not very large and lies with its point just in front of the share. The two plough-wheels are not of equal size, but the one going along the deep furrow is more than twice the size of the one running on the field. Each plough has two handles at the back, and the plough-beam at the back of which the handles are fastened, lies in a semi-circular hollow in front on

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<sup>215</sup> Probably the *Vintje Kweek* (*Cyperus rotundus*) Marloth, 4, p. 38.

the *Schemmel*<sup>216</sup> over the axle, and has several holes in which an iron nail fixed to the *Schemmel* with a small chain, is put nearer or farther away from the *Schemmel* according as one wants the share to cut a deep or shallow furrow. Three persons are used for every plough. One, usually a slave-boy or Hottentot, walks in front and leads the oxen by a rope. The strongest slave or the active farmer himself guides the plough, and one walks next to the animals to drive them along with the whip which has a handle more than ten feet long and a lash more than twice as long.

Only a small or comparatively poor farmer uses fewer than three ploughs on the land simultaneously, one beside the other in such a way that the second draws the furrow next to the first and the third next to the second. Since African farmers have many cattle and consequently much manure, the fields are richly manured. They usually reap three crops and leave the field lying fallow in the fourth year. But not so much fodder can be expected from the fallow field as in many parts of Germany. When the land which had lain fallow is tilled, the plough is used on the low-lying fields which had been sown the previous year, after they had first been soaked by the rain. Then the fields which had been sown before are tilled in turn, but the sowing is done behind the plough, not in front of it, and the harrowing with horses. Such fields as had been sown the previous year are easier to till and can be ploughed with six or at most with eight oxen, except on such farms where the soil is very heavy, clayey, loamy and rich, where an extra pair of oxen may be needed.

Sandy places are not readily chosen for farms. But where the land is interspersed with such soil, as in the warm and cold Bokkeveld and in the Karroo, it is richly fertilised and only two crops harvested. Then it is left lying fallow again. Wheat grows abundantly on such soil, but not in such large stalks with so many ears as in sweet or rich fields.

After the wheat has been sown, the barley field is prepared and sown. Peas are sown still later and white beans last of all. As soon as these have been attended to, the cultivation of the

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<sup>216</sup> The *schemmel* is the part of the plough on which the plough-beam rests.

fields is finished until harvest time. Alternating periods of rainfall and fine weather continue until the end of October or at the latest until November; the last part of the rainy season from September may be regarded as the finest season here. For to say nothing of the fact that except on the highest mountains, it never becomes cold enough for snow or ice, the fairest spring days come in these months and may be compared with our month of May. When a few heavy rains have fallen, and the ground had become thoroughly soaked grass starts growing, in the month of July at the latest, and all nature seems to become rejuvenated; especially on those lands where the dry grass and shrubs had been set on fire and burnt down during the dry season, the green grass shooting up covers the earth as with green velvet. The fields ought really not to be set on fire and burnt down, nor do the farmers themselves approve of it, since what little food is still left for the animals during that time, is thus entirely destroyed; but one seldom knows or finds out where the fire had started. It always happens when the South-Easter is blowing and then the fire spreads so far and so quickly that it is almost impossible to stop it. As soon as the farmers see such a fire from afar, they call everyone, servants and children, big and small, and snatching up hastily branches of trees, set out towards the fire and beat it out as far as they can with these branches, so that even if it cannot wholly be put out, at least it should not be allowed to come too close to their homes, vineyards and other gardens. It has very often happened that such a fire has destroyed entire vineyards. For this reason, land-owners surround their vineyards with walls of stone mixed with earth, when enough stone is available. But if in the course of time the earth put between the stones becomes covered with grass and dries up from the heat, the fire crosses the wall and causes great loss. Usually it is the shepherds who start these fires so as to obtain the sooner new pasture for their sheep. If the culprit is caught, he is severely punished, and I have seen with great pity a slave whose age appeared to be over 100 years being flogged for it; on which account I intervened and interceded for him, since he said by way of excuse that he had done it to drive away two wolves that were concealed in a vlei overgrown with reeds. This old slave was one of the first to be brought over to the Cape from Madagascar. In his younger days he had had a daughter

by a slave girl, who belonged to a wealthy burgher in the City. This daughter had saved about 24 rix-dollars with which she bought her father's freedom; his owner gladly agreed as he was already very old. The daughter then took her aged father with her, intending to care for him until his death; but he had hardly been with her for four weeks before time began to hang heavily on his hands and he returned to his former master. Since he was now a freedman, he hired himself to him as a shepherd at a wage of 12 rix-dollars per year; but he only lived for a little while longer and so had to be buried by his old master. From this one sees that even among the heathen there are children who respect their parents. The rainy season then may be regarded as the most agreeable spring time; since, after a few days of rain, four, five or six fine days may be expected. Only long journeys are very difficult, and sometimes impossible, in this season on account of the swollen rivers.

The seed having been sown, the farmer and his men do other work at home or have the garden dug up and put in order. The rainy season passes and, even if the farmer knows beforehand that he may hope for little or no rain from the time the grain is in flower until long past the harvest, yet he is unconcerned and certain that God will grant him a rich harvest. Should it be a failure, he would have to console himself with the thought that others were in a similar strait and be patient, for he cannot, as in Europe, make up somewhat for his loss by charging a higher price for his grain. The price of wheat is fixed at eight florins and that of oats at seven florins; and woe betide him if it should be discovered that he has sold it to a baker or someone else for more. In case of a general failure of crops, the Government immediately takes steps to have the storehouses provided with as much grain as is needed at the Cape. The bakers have to be supplied for the provisioning of the City burghers and the Company's ships, and then the Government sends out commissioners to examine how much is left and to make up an inventory. The farmers are ordered to hand over what they possess, beyond what is necessary for their own consumption, for export to Batavia. But since a supply of grain sufficient for several years is always kept at Batavia, that place

does not suffer when there is a crop failure in Africa. As soon as the colour of the wheat begins to change and turns yellowish-white, which usually happens about the middle of December, every good farmer would walk twice daily through his wheatfields and note which portions ripen first. He does not delay the reaping of such ripening portions until the grain is quite ripe. The grains are often still half soft when reaping starts, but this does not matter, for when the reaped wheat has lain in swaths on the field for a night, the grain is quite hard and ripe enough for carrying in. On the evening of the following day, after sunset, the wheat which had been cut while still soft the previous day, is bound in small sheaves and carried to the stacks. The reapers dislike bending too low when cutting the grain, so that stubble a foot high remains on the field; but if they get enough straw all the same, they do not care. But in this way the reaped stalks are very short and yet the binder uses no other straw-binders for the sheaves than those from the same field and grain. He takes a bare twenty to twenty-four stalks in each hand, makes a half-knot below the ears at the top, and ties this band round a small heap of stalks, giving the straw a few twists below and inserting the end beneath the band. So the sheaves are no more than three span thick, and three may easily be carried under each arm.

The oatcrop is, as has been said, the first grain to ripen, and as soon as it is reaped, which usually happens just before the Christmas holidays, yellow patches appear in the wheat, on the high level fields. These are then reaped first, bound the following day and brought to the stacks. As the harvest always takes place about this time, it may with justice be called the Christmas festival of the African farmers, since at this time none of them can go to Church: and, while the children in our German fatherland are looking forward to a Christmas-box at this time, the African children on the other hand, usually weep for they have to rise very early and work in the fields the whole day. Meanwhile, all the fields ripen; and the farmer who does not have many slaves and children makes every effort beforehand to obtain more help for harvesting in order to keep up with the work and prevent the grains from falling out. Those who live near the City can also borrow a few slaves from the burghers, and pay their

masters, either for the entire harvest period or at the rate of four rix-dollars for a full month. It is understood that they also have to feed the slaves and provide them with tobacco, and at the end of the harvest give them a small present. A few poor colonists also hire themselves as binders, but not as reapers and are paid a daily wage of one Cape florin or 16 stuivers, besides their food and drink. Those farmers who live further inland engage Hottentots, give them enough to eat, and agree on wages for the entire harvest period, or a little longer until the grain which they have to deliver to the Company has been threshed. For since the threshed grain is immediately put into bags on the threshing-floor, loaded on the wagons and taken to the City, and as the farmer usually sends two wagons at one time and needs four slaves for the purpose, he would afterwards lack hands to continue the threshing; since the stable-boys, cattle herds and shepherds cannot be used for any other work.

If all the grain, except that growing in deep and shady places or in kloofs, ripens at the same time, and the reapers are, as it were, over-hurried, the reaped grain has to be bound immediately and the sheaves all laid down with the ears facing South-East. For during the harvest season there is a continual south-east wind; hence, if the sheaves do not lie with the ears pointing towards the wind, and the wind is allowed to blow into the sheaves from the stalk end, it may lift and break up the stalks and blow them away. The reaping of the grain is started early, at break of day: at 7 o'clock breakfast is taken, and immediately afterwards work is resumed as fast as possible up to 10 o'clock at the latest. By that time it is so hot that too many grains would fall out. From 10 o'clock to 4 p.m. no work is done. The reapers and binders have a meal at 12 o'clock and rest and sleep till about 4 o'clock; then they begin reaping again, and carry on as long as the light is good — until about 8 o'clock. Then, as soon as they have had supper, they inspan the wagons and bring the reaped grain to the stacks. This has to be done at night when the grains in their husks have become somewhat damp, otherwise most would fall out. Indeed, during very dry weather, it is often necessary to spread a canvas in the wagon and lay the sheaves on it; in this way many dropped grains may be collected.

The stacks are enclosed by circular clay walls, four to five feet high. Within these, the sheaves are laid systematically in a circle in such a way that all the ears point inward and the stalks outward. They pile up the sheaves as high as they can be passed from the wagon hand to hand to those packing the stack. No hay- or wheatforks can be used for the purpose since the sheaves are not bound so securely with straw-rope as in Europe. When the stack is high enough, the top sheaves are laid in such a way that they taper to a blunt point. They are then covered with some dry straw, so that if there should be an unexpected fall of rain which is very rare at this season, it should not penetrate very far into the stack.

Except in the mountains that lie far inland especially towards the North-East, thunder is seldom heard and even then only as a distant rumble; during my eight years' stay, I remember having heard a few distant thunderclaps hardly more than three times. Just as rarely is there any fall of hail during a heavy downpour. Consequently the inhabitants, Heaven be praised! need have no fear of loss through hailstorms or lightning. Only the rust occasionally causes some damage to the wheat, but even then only in certain spots. Birds and deer cause the greatest damage to the crops. The Cape roebuck are fond of the gardens where however snares are laid for them, but deer are not really plentiful between Cape Town and the Little Berg River, and on this side of the Great Berg River, being found in herds of no more than 20 or 24. But where they enter the grain-fields they bite off the ears only, trampling down more than they eat, and may thus cause a great deal of damage in a single night. When they are scared and driven off by a shot, they do not soon return. I myself once watched for them several times at a certain spot, where they had raided the crops for several nights running, and had already beaten their own path, but they did not appear. But I had scarcely returned to the farmhouse from my watching post when their heads and horns showed up in the crops in broad daylight. They always go against the wind, thus getting the scent of anything approaching them from the front. The birds that cause so much damage to the crops are the yellow finches, with black wings and heads, of which I have written that they keep together in

swarms the whole year. At a farm belonging to a good friend of mine, I saw, long before harvesting time, how they had devoured everything on a piece of land on which two muids of wheat had been sown; they ate up the unripe grains which were then, as is well-known, as sweet as green peas. The empty straw stood there like over-ripe wheat, and my friend, after all his labour and efforts to scare off the birds, hardly reaped more than the seed.

We saw how the grain is brought to the stacks; but I remember having said something about the way in which it is threshed with horses. On his first copperplate on page 112, Kolbe has shown six horses and a negro on an African threshing-floor with the grain spread out on it. Now, if a sensible person sees such a drawing, gives it some credit and examines it thoughtfully, he can come to no other conclusion than that those colonists are truly stupid people who do their work in a crude fashion, without knowledge or intelligence. One cannot deny that Kolbe saw a great deal in Africa, but he also obtained knowledge of many more things from hearsay; but what he saw, he observed without attention, without thoughtfulness (I almost said without intelligence); nor did he ascertain the cause, or the reason why a thing was done in a certain way and not otherwise; and from what he discovered by hearsay only, one can easily see that many fables were told him. But be that as it may; I want to come back to the method of threshing in that country once more, even though it may seem superfluous, and describe it a little more clearly and in greater detail. In the first place, a threshing-floor is a round level piece of ground, thirty-five to forty Rhenish feet in diameter, whose floor is solidly laid out and levelled with clay and cow-dung like a barn-floor. This barn-floor is surrounded by a wall of four or five feet high, solely for the purpose of preventing cattle from walking on it and befouling it, or damaging the surface during wet weather. Even then it has to be repaired and improved every year before harvesting time. Only horses are used for threshing the grain and never oxen, for these, when driven quickly, drop thin dung and dirty the grain.

Now during threshing time, in the early morning at daybreak, a slave throws as many sheaves from the stack onto the threshing-



floor as are necessary to cover the entire floor all round in a circle of such breadth that four horses coupled side by side can tread on the sheaves. The proper performance of this work (of threshing) depends chiefly on the proper covering of this floor with sheaves. Thus, for the circle to be formed, first a few sheaves are laid lengthwise at an angle up to a width necessary for four horses, walking abreast; for in the centre of the threshing-floor a circular spot remains empty around the slave who guides the horses lest the horses become dizzy or giddy on account of the sharp turn. When four or five sheaves have been laid end to end across the threshing-floor the other slaves start putting on the rest in an orderly way. The first are laid with their ears on the sheaves lying crosswise and now they keep on laying on the sheaves, going from right to left, so that the ears of the following rows reach no further with their tips than up to the ears of the sheaves lying under them. The ears, therefore, since they lie upwards and a little higher than the other end of the sheaf where there is only straw, which rests on the bare floor and lower, lie altogether on top of the straw, and when the entire circle next to the wall has been stacked, so that two or three rows of sheaves still have to be stacked, the sheaves first laid across are removed, but those laid on them lifted up, and the last batch to be laid on is pushed below those first put in place and now lifted up. In this way one sees nothing on the whole floor but the ears lying on top and hardly any straw; indeed one cannot see either the beginning or the end of the circle, since the last sheaves were as far as necessary pushed below the first; so that the ears all lie adjoining one another. On Kolbe's copper engraving on the other hand, the ears are quite wrongly placed and all turned towards the centre of the floor, which would give an entirely unsuitable position for treading them out. When the threshing-floor has thus been fully covered and seems to be filled with ears only, everything is left like that, for the sun to dry out the moisture which the grain may have absorbed in the stack, thereby having become clammy. Thus it is made more suitable for treading out. At 8 o'clock then, a solid breakfast is taken, and immediately afterwards eight horses, in two teams of four abreast and bound to two ropes, are led onto the threshing-floor and driven over the grain by a slave standing

in the centre of the floor with a small whip in his hand, not at a gallop but merely at a steady trot. The circular course of the horses has also to be regulated systematically; for, as the sheaves were laid from right to left, the horses have to be driven in the same direction, i.e. anti-clockwise, towards the ears, so that they first tread them from the straw, or break them off. Indeed, since the ears lie foremost and a little upwards on the sheaves, they are almost entirely ripped off when the horses have made hardly twenty rounds. As the horses tread with their flat unshod hoofs on the ears lying on top, they move and rub them at the same time, so that the grains have to fall out so cleanly that nothing can remain in the ears. When the horses have thus circled for two hours they are let out for a blow, and meanwhile the already half trodden-out straw is shaken up with wooden forks and turned over, so that the trodden-out grains can fall through onto the threshing-floor and the untrodden ears come to the top as much as possible. Afterwards the horses are brought back and driven round for about another hour. In the meantime noon draws near, everything is left lying as it is, and the midday meal is taken.

There is generally a light South-Easter every day at this season, seldom stronger than a pleasant breeze. After the meal, the straw is shaken up with wooden forks and the wind carries off most of it; unless the farmer has built a shed close to the threshing-floor whose side wall is open on top in the direction of the South-Easter, in such case the wind would blow most of the straw into the shed where it is kept for mixing with the manure. If the farmer has no such shed but still wants to keep some straw for litter, the slaves would have to gather it from the floor with their hands, shake it out and carry it to where it is to be stacked. But I have heard nowhere at the Cape that the horned cattle eat straw other than barley straw, and this only in case of necessity when there is no pasture in the fields during the dry season. For wheat straw, owing to the richness of the soil, is too strong and hard; but when it is chopped or finely cut the horses would eat it mixed with their barley. In the country, saddle or cart horses are stall-fed mostly on chaff<sup>217</sup> mixed with barley: wherefore when the

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<sup>217</sup> Mentzel explains that by 'chaff' is meant the husks in which the wheat grows as in a little shell or shuck.

wheat is winnowed and cleansed, the chaff is carefully kept together and collected. I do not wish to bore the gentle reader with an account of the winnowing and cleaning of the grain; for it is identical with the method used in Germany. But I want to describe another method of threshing very common at the Cape; it is the following: When the farmer needs some straw for thatching his buildings, he chooses such a part of the land where the longest straw grows. There the reapers have to bend a bit lower and cut the straw close to the ground, so that it remains quite long. These sheaves are kept apart and stored separately until all the other grain has been threshed. Then a couple of scaffoldings like two long tables are made on the threshing-floor; the slaves take from the sheaves only as many stalks at a time as they can hold in their hand and beat the grain out of the ears on the tables; put the straw aside neatly and bind it in bundles, no thicker than can be spanned by both hands. In this way the straw remains unbroken, is not crushed as with a threshing flail and yet is cleanly threshed out. The bands round the sheaves and any short and crooked stalks that drop on the floor remain there to be trodden out later by the horses.

As soon as enough grain for one or two wagon loads has been threshed, cleaned, measured and put into bags, it is immediately sent to the City the next night and delivered either to the Company or to a baker; for all these deliveries have to be made at night, so that the cattle may look for food during the day. The grain intended for sowing and baking is left to the last, and those who want to be really good managers usually leave a small stack for bread-grain standing until after the rainy season, and only thresh it in November; for they either know from experience or have a notion that then no weevils get into the grain. As one may easily imagine threshing time is the driest season of the year and the least pasture is then found on the land; but another African paradox! Now the cattle become fat and are in a better condition than at any time during the year: for as soon as a field has been reaped and cleared of grain, the cattle is driven into it; and since wheat-grains fall out abundantly during the reaping, binding and loading, the cattle eagerly pick them up and are, as it were, fattened on pure wheat. But the

sheep, which would eat the wheat-grains to bursting point, have to be kept away from the field, until the cattle have eaten most, if not all, the grain and the green fodder. Besides, it is believed in this country that the cattle refuse to feed in a spot which the sheep have fouled.

In regard to the fertility of the land in general, it is unquestionably true that agriculture is far more profitable here than in Germany. But Kolbe, who exaggerates everything, gives obviously untrue accounts of this too. That peas and beans which are mostly sown in gardens, or at least in such soil as is suitable for garden fruit, yield a twenty- to thirtyfold return, I shall not deny; for even in our fatherland they are the most productive field-crops: but that wheat can yield thirty to forty, rye forty to forty-five, and barley fifty to sixty muids from one muid of seed, is far from the truth. The usual harvest on an inferior field is ten to one. On a medium field I have myself seen and heard that from 32 muids of seed sown a farmer delivered 300 muids to the Company after the harvest, kept 32 muids for seed, and had enough grain left for his household of twenty-four persons including slaves, for the whole year; another 4 muids of fine white flour were sifted and stored for the kitchen. In really prosperous years, 20 to 24 muids may be obtained from one muid of seed in the most fertile fields of the Zwartland, Drakenstein, Fransche Hoek, parts of the Tygerberg, Hottentots Holland and Stellenbosch, and in some parts of the warm Bokkeveld. But be the soil as good as it may, medium and inferior soil are interspersed with some of the good; hence if the other fields are counted in and the average return taken, the farmer is very well satisfied if he gets fifteen or sixteen muids for one, and has certainly good reason to thank God for such blessings. That there are notwithstanding this some who reap six hundred to seven hundred muids of grain, is perfectly correct, for good reasons; for many a farmer has a larger property than the customary sixty morgen; or he has more fertile crop-lands, keeps fewer cattle, and ploughs nearly all his land; for this reason, during the sowing and threshing-time he has more cattle brought from his cattle-post. Since I have often said that many farmers have more land than others, and yet that generally only sixty morgen are set aside for every farmer, I must explain this more clearly.

Imagine a bare sandy spot several square miles in extent, where nobody can live. In the centre of this desert lies a piece of land of seventy to ninety morgen which has good soil and is very fertile. A farmer occupies this land; but although he is entitled to only sixty morgen, the remaining ten to thirty morgen do not constitute a farm, and no other farmer can live next to him; so he is given undisputed use of the remaining land over and above the usual sixty morgen.

I spoke above of a farmer who cultivated a piece of land on Bottelary mountain and reaped uncommonly fine grain there. This same farmer had a fixed amount of land of which he could use only half for agriculture; the other half consisted of dry land full of small stones on which only rhenoster shrubs grew offering very poor pasturage for cattle and sheep. In spite of this he had more than a hundred oxen and more than six hundred sheep. But the property lay near Bottelary mountain, behind which there was no farm for several miles, since the sandy Tyger Valley adjoined it. In this way he could at least use this mountain for feeding the livestock, and no one could have prevented him even if he had sown the entire mountain. This he actually attempted on a fairly large area from which he obtained an unusually rich and certainly more than twentyfold harvest. Only the trouble of transporting everything up and down this mountain prevented him from going on with it.

Further, the statement that the Hottentots understand farming better than the Europeans is quite without foundation and is not worth refuting. For, before the arrival of the Hollanders, they had seen neither grain, nor any other European seed or fruit and, since that time, not one of them has taken the least trouble to dig the smallest piece of soil and sow anything in it. When they can get some grain from the colonists, or cut it from the field, they rub it between two stones, mix it with water and make a thin flat cake from it, which they bake in the ashes under a strong fire. Only on the far side of the van Staden River did Sparrman strike two Hottentot kraals of the Gonaquas<sup>217a</sup> tribe who sowed a little grain, namely Indian millet (*Holcus-Sorghum*), and baked small loaves from it under the ashes.

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<sup>217a</sup> Gonaquas.

## CHAPTER TEN.

### Of Viticulture and Horticulture.

In Volume One of this Description of the Cape of Good Hope, we have said much in advance about the first planting of the vine: that the first vine stocks came partly from the Rhine in Germany, partly from Persia and partly from Spain. We have also heard that the propagation of the vine progressed very slowly at first; until finally a German taught the colonists how the cut off shoots are separated into smaller pieces of about a foot in length, laid in the earth and allowed to take root for transplanting. It will do no harm, on this occasion, to remind the gracious reader of what has already been said; but it would be tedious to repeat everything in detail; and for this reason I refer him to Chapter 3 of Volume One.

In order that every wine-grower may have fresh young shoots at hand to replace the old imported plants, or, if he has enough land, to enlarge his vineyard from time to time, he would lay in a few hundred shoots every year in August when the vines are pruned. They would be put in the ground quite close together, if possible next to a small stream of which there are usually some on all farms, at least during the rainy season. A few may fail to take on and perish during the dry season; the rest very soon grow small roots and leaves; indeed I have seen some of these laid-in shoots grow small grapes after a few months, which is credible since the germ was already present in the shoots of the previous year. After two years the owner of the vineyard would select the best and transplant them to suitable spots whenever the necessity arose. The first fruit may be confidently expected in the second or third year after transplanting. But in the three succeeding years the plant is the most fruitful. On ageing, it does not indeed bear as much, but the grapes and the wine improve.

Wild vines are also found at the Cape that carry berries of a very pleasant taste; but the bunches have not so many berries as

the cultivated ones. The berries of the wild vine are far more thinly distributed than even those of the Muscatel grape; indeed there are usually only fifteen to twenty berries on a bunch and scarcely four or six bunches to every plant. These wild vines grow only from the seeds which are swallowed with the berries. If excreted in a suitable spot it may be that such a seed grain is fertilised, shoots forth a small stem and, if this remains undisturbed, the plant grows to its full size and in the course of time bears fruit. These vines climb very readily round trees. I saw several of them in a small wood being very carefully looked after by the superintendent of the Company's *buytenpost*, the Paradise; since the Governor preferred these grapes to those of the vineyards. The vine hills at the Cape are really vineyards, so that de la Caille quite correctly writes of them: "Vines are here planted on the plains, and grain is sown on the hills". But not without a good reason. For if viticulture were practised on the hills, one would naturally choose the north side, that is towards the afternoon sun; but as in this way the hot rays of the sun would be reflected and make the heat twice as strong as on the level stretches of ground, the vines would very soon wither and die on the normally arid hills. Usually a piece of low-lying ground is chosen if possible in a valley towards the north or sunny side, with good and somewhat moist soil and not far from a spring for the leading of water to the vineyard, if only in a small brook. As for grain, it makes no difference whether it is sown on the mountains or hills, high or low, for the nature of the climate is such that between the end of October and April or May it does not rain at all or very seldom and very little at a time. All the land without exception is parched and so it all comes to the same whether the grain which gets no rain, either when flowering or ripening, grows on the hills or on the plain except that the former ripens a little sooner than the latter; but this is very welcome to the farmer as the harvest does not overtake him too suddenly and all at once.

He who lays out a vineyard and has previously dug the soil thoroughly, cleaned it of weeds and stones and manured it, does not plant the shoots which have taken root at random. The vines are all planted in straight lines four feet apart and, when a row has been planted, a passage of at least four or five feet

wide is left free between this row and the next, so that one can pass through them in comfort at harvesting time and cut off the grapes without injuring the plants. The vine itself, be it as old as it may, is never allowed to stand more than one and a half feet high above the level of the ground, but preferably only a foot high; and when the old vines which have borne grapes are pruned in August, not more than two or at most three buds are left on each branch or shoot, to put forth new tendrils or shoots. The South-East wind does not permit the training of vines on stakes, so that they may grow upwards; nor can one obtain stakes for that purpose, hence they have to be kept as low as possible and trimmed on top when the vines grow too long. But for this, one would certainly obtain far more grapes on the stakes and trellises; and I have already mentioned in Volume One a few extraordinarily large vines in the front yard of Mev. van Berg's house. In some gardens where the vines are trained vertically against a wall or trellis, on the south side, and extended sideways, one finds an astonishing quantity of grapes. Similarly, the South-East wind makes it advisable not to lay out the vineyards on the slopes of the mountains, but rather on the plains or valleys so that they can be protected by the mountains and sheltered from the wind. In the month of August, the real beginning of spring, the vine is pruned. In September the leaves appear, and in October small grapes are formed; at which time one could estimate whether much or little wine may be expected.

The first and greatest danger threatens the vine before the buds burst and the leaves make their appearance. For as soon as the vine has bled and the young buds break forth, a small worm or insect appears which the settlers call "Zuyger" (sucker). This insect is not easy to see for it resembles a small shrunken shrivelled vine-leaf. It does not appear at all during the day, but visits the vines early in the morning at daybreak and eats its way into the first buds on the two or three eyes left during pruning time; if it is not noticed in time it eats up the whole bud and the expected fruit-bearing shoots are destroyed. Later the vine does sprout new buds and shoots, but as these have not been fertilised in the previous year, they seldom bear any fruit this year. A good farmer must dig the earth around the vine as soon as it has been pruned and put in manure where necessary;



but this should only be done every three years, and even this period is considered too frequent in France as spoiling the taste of the wine or at least causing it to deteriorate. After the digging has been done, the young bud appears quite soon. Now is the time, as soon as it is light enough, to seek the sucking-worms, gather them in a small vessel for later destruction at home. After the sun had risen, the suckers have hidden again or have already eaten into the bud and the chance of gathering them is missed. I must, however, not forget to mention that not all vineyards are visited by the suckers. I have known many that were not in the least affected by them; whether these vermin afterwards multiplied (as usually happens), and spread further inland, I cannot say: for probably this insect too changes into a butterfly, which flies about and propagates its kind in other vineyards.

After this work is finished, nothing else needs to be done in the vineyard until harvest time except to have the grass between the vines hoed, to prevent it from becoming too luxuriant and sapping the vines of too much strength. If too many caterpillars appear they have to be picked off; but this rarely happens, and besides they harm the leaves more than the grapes. At the same time one does not like the shoots to be too much denuded of leaves, since it has been specially noticed that grapes which hang in the sun, entirely unprotected by leaves, do not ripen so seasonably or fully as those hanging below or between leaves. This view is not founded on a preconceived idea. I have experienced the truth of this. Once a farmer had to go on a journey with his family shortly before the vintage and desired on that account to postpone the grape-gathering. For this purpose he had all the leaves stripped from the vines and in this way attained his aim. Kolbe, of course, writes that the sucker also consumes the blossoms of the vine: but he was probably a better wine-drinker than wine-farmer. In fact he probably did not know when and how vines blossom. If one were to let the sucker live until such time as the vine-blossom appears, neither blossoms nor grapes would come forth. For it is a well-known fact that the vine only blossoms when the young bearers or stalks have already separated, making room for the berries to form into clusters on their small stems after the blossom-time; consequently, as the suckers straightaway spoil the buds, neither leaves

nor shoots, nor bearers nor blossoms can be expected from the ruined buds. We still have some time to spare before the vintage; let us therefore consider a few other aspects of viticulture in the meantime. For as soon as the grapes begin to ripen their enemies or rather their lovers make their appearance. These are birds and dogs. Before this time a little mildew may also fall on the grapes occasionally; but this does not cause so much damage as the former, for the grapes only become a bit flecked by it as though befouled by flies. But where many birds get into the habit of visiting the vineyards, boys and slave-children have to be employed to walk up and down all day long cracking long whips to scare them away. If they take the place of the birds and taste the ripening grapes, well! at least human beings enjoy them. I have noticed that, if at the time when the grapes ripen late-sown peas bearing green pods are still growing on the field, the birds prefer these pods to the grapes. This circumstance once gave me the opportunity, mentioned above, of shooting enough birds in a single day for two large pies. I had erected for myself a small hut on a field on which late-sown peas were showing green; on either side of this I stuck a dry branch of a tree in the soil, took two rifles loaded with small-shot into the hut with me and laid one on either side with the barrel pointing out. I also took two boys with me and told them to hide on the farther side of the field and to crack their long whips from time to time when I whistled. The birds then flew out of the peas and perched on the dry branches, whereupon I shot at the one where they sat thickest and at every shot brought down from ten to twelve of them. But when the pea-straw was later picked up and the peas harvested, many more wounded and dead birds were found than I had for the pies.

Dogs which have never been taught by their kind to eat grapes can hardly be kept from them with whips when they get into the vineyards. In the daytime the boys do keep them out with their long whips, but during the night, unless they are leashed or locked up, they eat so much that they can hardly stand and what they eat matters less than what is spoilt when they tear off a mouthful of the grapes, leaving the remaining ripe berries to fall to the ground. The slaves of course are also fond of ripe grapes; but since they get some at this time in any

case, and as they are allowed to eat as much as they like during the vintage, they do not care as much for them as they do for the new must and the husk-beer (Dop-beer) made from the husks of pressed grapes and water. Before we proceed to the vintage, we shall first describe the best types of grapes. I know, of course, that there are many more kinds of grapes in Germany and that many of these types are also to be found in Africa; but there, they do not have a special wine and fruit gardener to call every type by a French or Italian name, or to identify them like the florist does the carnations. Nobody will mind my starting with my favourite kind, though it is not pressed, nor does it produce any wine. It is the "Haanen-Kloote" (Cock's testicle), but called "Haanen-poote" by the ladies of Africa. These grapes have longish berries, larger but of the same shape, as the buttons the Hussars have on their dolmans. The berries do not grow in such thick clusters as those of the other types and hang more sparsely even on their stalks than the muscatel berries. The grape of which I am now speaking is not cut off with the others during the vintage, but is allowed to become almost over-ripe, quite a burnt yellow. It is not very juicy but rather fleshy, and in this respect resembles a very ripe plum or damson. In short, it is the grape from which the big raisins or *Cibeben* are made. To avoid repetition, I shall now describe the process of making raisins at the Cape. When these grapes are quite ripe and have been gathered, a large kettle containing wood-ashes and water is hung over a fire and boiled. A quantity of these grapes is then held in the boiling potash by means of a large perforated skimming spoon until it begins to seethe; then the grapes are taken out and dried in the sun. But a slave has to stand by the whole day with a fly-fan or bundle of straw to keep the wasps, bumble-bees and other insects from it, otherwise they would hollow out the grapes. At night the grapes are covered with mats or cloths. When these grapes have been thoroughly dried, they are put into small barrels and weighted with stones; in this way they keep for several years. At the Cape there is only the one kind of raisin known as blue raisins containing pips. The other kinds, especially the Turkish without pips, are much better. Another grape which is not used at the Cape for pressing — or at least is not pressed by itself — is the small black-red type of

which small currants are made on the island of Cephalonia, but *vinotinto* in Spain. This small but very dainty grape is nowadays very seldom seen for, since there was not a sufficient quantity for making either raisins or *vinotinto*, it was not appreciated and gradually allowed to die out, and other types were grown instead.

The red muscatel grape of which delicious red wine is made at Constantia, is undoubtedly also the most pleasant to eat, but only a very good friend can get any of the grapes. The white muscatel grape is nearly but not quite equal to the other type in taste. This white grape is not pressed separately at Constantia but together with other kinds. In other vineyards, however, white muscatel wine is made of this type alone, without being mixed with others, and makes a very pleasant, delicious and invigorating drink for those who have not made wine-drinking a mere habit. Whether I have myself drunk genuine muscat wine of Frontignan or Lunell, I cannot say. But instead of the muscatel wines which are openly sold in Germany under this name, I prefer the Cape wines. Besides the fine and really delicate muscat flavour, it has this virtue that it does not make one as sleepy and intoxicated as those which are sold in the present-day (German) wine-shops under the name of "Sack muscat" from which those who have been intoxicated by it, are dreadfully sick the next or following day. The blue grape also gives a red wine and is not to be despised but the fully red grapes are preferable. Though they do not taste like the muscatel, they are very pleasant and sweet. There is also a substance in their juice which causes the fingers to stick together.

Besides the muscatel type, there are many other kinds of white grapes which although they are not distinguished by a special name, are still in one respect preferable to the others, and are judged and appreciated according to their taste. The biggest and those whose colouring is more yellow than white are always the best. The grapes from which parsley wine is made, so called because their leaves, though larger, have the same shape as parsley, and the small hard grape with densely growing berries from which "steen" wine is made, are the most inferior, not much prized and on this account gradually discarded. Another type of grape which ripens as early as the beginning

of January is not very suitable for wine, but is eaten by lovers of grapes and those who like to have fruit at the earliest possible time. We have already mentioned the main features of the different kinds of wine, those of Constantia taking first place, and those round the Tygerberg being the most inferior. The wine made at Zwellendam appears to be much below the Cape standard, but I am quite unacquainted with it. A vineyard has only lately been planted there, so that I can give no opinion about it. Perhaps it may improve in time when it receives better treatment, or when an expert wine-grower knows how to prepare it better and season and cellar it properly. For the Abbé de la Caille is quite justified in saying that the inhabitants of the Cape do not yet know how to treat their wines properly. We shall point out a few defects, after describing the vintage.

The first wine-grapes to be gathered for wine-making are the red and the blue grapes which ripen first. If these are left on the stalks till they begin to shrivel the resulting wine is a little less in quantity, but of a much better quality both in taste and colour. The red wine is the first to be ready and the quickest to make. If a really good quality wine is desired, the berries have to be picked from the stems and then trodden; for otherwise, since the juice has to remain beside the husks and stems for a few days before being poured into the barrels, it acquires the acid taste of these. When the red grapes have been trodden and crushed in this way with bare feet they are left in this state in a vessel for four or five days without further treatment, so that the whole mixture may ferment for a while with the husks, or I should say putrefy, until the small veins in the skins of the berries burst open and release their red juice. It is this red juice contained in the tiny veins of the husk which colours the wine red. For all the juice in the red and the blue berries is white as in other grapes. Without this means by which the red juice from the veins is added, the wine pressed from red grapes would remain just as white as that from other grapes. Now, after four or five days according to the weather, when it appears that the wine has become quite red, it is pressed out either with a press or, better still for this wine, with a squeezer for it does not squeeze out all the dregs. He who possesses neither press nor squeezer has everything pressed out by hand but obtains less

wine as a result and can use what remains in the husks for brandy only. When the red wine has been crushed, squeezed or pressed out, one or two muscat nuts are taken (according to whether the barrel is small or big), stuck on a slightly bent iron wire, set alight and hung over the bung-hole of the barrel, the peg having been loosened on the bung-hole to allow the muscat nut a little air in which to burn. As soon as the nuts had burnt out, the wine is poured in and the barrel bunged tightly. Red wine, or rather the barrel in which it is contained, may not be muted, since this would remove the red colour of the wine. For this reason too, the pure unadulterated red wines are the healthiest, and invalids are allowed by doctors to drink them. After a few days when the lees has drained off somewhat, the red wine thus made is drawn off into another barrel, in which once again one or two muscat nuts have been burnt. This is repeated several times, until the wine appears to have become quite clear. Then, unless the barrel is very full, another muscat nut is burned over the wine and its fumes agitated over the liquor by constant blowing: then the barrel is tightly corked. The wine is then left undisturbed for a few weeks when it may be sold or transferred to smaller barrels for personal use. At the Cape little red wine is drunk and I doubt whether one leaguer of red wine is sold for every hundred leaguers of white.

Some of the inhabitants make a boiled wine for their own use, or more especially for the ladies, from crushed red grapes as soon as these are properly coloured. They boil the grapes, crush the husks and pour the juice into a barrel, perhaps afterwards in bottles as well; for this wine, however, the berries have all to be picked off the stems before they are crushed, otherwise an unpleasant taste results from the cooking. This boiled wine is very sweet and delicious to drink; yet woe to him who drinks too much of it; he has such a splitting headache the next day that he imagines he is going to die, and cannot but think his head is going to burst. As this boiled wine does not ferment properly, remains thick and retains all the crude stuff, it must needs be unhealthy, and choke the small passages through which it has to pass in the digestive process.

When the real vintage of the white wine starts from about the end of February or the beginning of March, one sees again

until the end of March, when the wine season usually closes, jolly people and industrious hands. Everyone engaged in this work, whether servant, child or slave, is absolutely free to eat as many grapes as he pleases. Nor do they ever pick the poorest kind, hence meat and bread hold little temptation at the usual three daily meals. It is certainly true, as I who once attended a vintage and cut grapes for a few days for fun have to admit, that one cannot help picking and tasting a few of the largest and finest berries from the select bunches, whose beauty one can hardly depict, and which are so large that one can scarcely hold one in one's hand. In the course of a day one consumes so many single berries that one has no inclination for other food, but one has even a slight feeling of nausea the next morning. Every grape-cutter at the vintage has a small basket, made of thin, split Spanish reed standing next to him, which when full, is carried by a slave to the pressing-house or as it is wrongly called there, the cellar; for it is merely a building on level ground, with no windows, with its entrance facing South, to prevent the sun from shining into it. A "balie" or barrel (usually a leaguer cask cut in two) which is pierced at the bottom and along the sides with many holes made with an half-inch drill, stands on a trestle in a second larger barrel, without holes except for a bunghole, through which the must that is trodden out, passes into a pail or barrel placed beneath it. A slave stands in the perforated barrel, holds on to a short piece of rope stretched above him, and treads the grapes with which it is filled with bare feet. Some farmers have the berries picked from the stalks while others leave them on. If the farmer has a press or a crusher, with which the trodden grapes may be pressed or crushed, he undoubtedly obtains more wine than when it has to be pressed out of the husks by hand alone; but in the case of white wine it does not matter much whether the berries are picked from their stems or not.

For the sake of cleanliness, however, it is pleasanter, if no spider's webs nor spiders that are found between the stems among the berries get into the press. Now, when those who possess neither press nor crusher put the husks that have been squeezed by hand, together with the stems into the same barrel, and after pouring water over it let it ferment to make brandy, this brandy acquires from the bitter stems a most unpleasant and

disagreeable taste, and can be sold only to the lowest slaves or to Hottentots. Even after clearing, or after being put twice through a still it is distilled a third time with spices and other condiments and sweetened with boiled sugar, it still retains something distasteful which causes one to shudder. Many a farmer, if only he had enough barrels, would certainly like to own a press or at least a crusher, and thereby obtain more wine without the necessity of first distilling bad brandy (which is very difficult on many farms in any case through lack of firewood). But barrels are very scarce and expensive. Every year many hundreds of barrels containing wine are sent to Holland and Batavia; from Batavia none come back except those into which East Indian arrack has been poured. Such barrels are, in truth, suitable for preserving wine but since they are made of brown teak, the first wine poured into them after the arrack, also acquires a nasty reddish-brown colour. Stave wood from Holland is very expensive and, as only iron hoops are put on the barrels, a new leaguer cask costs almost as much as the farmer gets for his wine; he can, however, rely on getting his barrels back from the wine-merchants after a few months or at the latest shortly before the new harvest, and they remain serviceable for many years.

To proceed: I have already remarked that good farmers (and who would not be a good farmer!) scald out their barrels before the vintage with peach-leaves and boiling water. Then the pressed-out must is immediately poured into a barrel or leaguer which had previously been strongly smoked with sulphur. The sulphurating process is as follows: A piece of cotton cloth is slightly moistened and drawn through liquefied sulphur. Of this, a strip of about two inches in length and three-quarters of an inch in width is cut off and attached to a bent wire as to a hook. The sulphur is then ignited and the wire lowered to the centre of the barrel while the barrel is closed tightly with the bung and a wet cloth. If too much sulphur is ignited, it sometimes happens that the great volume of sulphur vapour causes the bung to blow out or even the whole bottom may blow off; for this reason no one should remain standing in front of either end of the barrel since he may easily sustain an injury if the bung or the bottom blows out. The new must is now poured into a barrel thus impregnated with sulphur but the barrel is not entirely



filled and the bung is removed, so that during fermentation the husks and other dregs thrown up by the must, may drain off; otherwise the barrel would explode. Fermentation is in full swing the very next day and if the wine is desired mellow and sweet, it should soon be drawn off into a newly sulphurated barrel which process should continue daily until the wine quietens down and does not ferment any longer and lets the real lees sink. This may be ascertained by listening at the bunghole for the moment when the wine no longer makes a noise; for as long as it is not entirely quiet, there is an irritation in the barrel as though it contained crabs. The tapping off and transfusing into other vessels is done very frequently (sometimes three or four times within twenty-four hours) in the case of the so-called "flat" wine. The wine is not allowed to ferment, but as soon as the noises are heard, it has immediately to be drawn off again, and transfused into another strongly sulphurated barrel. But since not everyone can successfully prepare such flat wine, I am inclined to believe that there is still another trick to it, which I did not attempt to find out for it would have been of no use to me. Such flat wine cannot be drunk on account of its sickening sweetness. It is, however, bought at a much higher price by the winebuyers and merchants, and used for sweetening, or to be more correct, adulterating the harsh and sour wines, especially those of the Tygerberg. For when such wines are not drunk in a short time, they again start fermenting and go bad. Wine-buyers treat in the same way old, acid and harsh wine which nobody can drink because of its sharp taste. Such a wine, if sweetened with flat wine, then becomes a real headbreaker and makes those drunk on it quite violent. It must be understood that not all Cape wines are suitable for maturing. What is not good wine by nature and quality (or, as I think, has not been properly prepared) is not improved by long seasoning, but only becomes sharp and prickly as they say there. Really good, well prepared and well cellared Cape wines improve with age; only the vessels in which to store them are lacking. All the same I have seen on the farms of prosperous wine-farmers vats so large that they held eight ordinary leaguers, that is forty-eight Berlin pails, which were kept merely for seasoning the wine. A farmer called van der Liet, who lived about ten to twelve hours from the

City, had a very large one made of Batavian teak which held still more.

Now when the wines start fermenting as described above, the cellar or pressing-house has to be kept open day and night, and a draught caused where windows have been made, otherwise no man could risk inspecting his wine, for he would soon die of suffocation. Every second or third day all wines are drawn off and poured into other newly sulphurated vessels; for this reason every farmer, even if he should have no barrels left for his surplus wine, must keep one in reserve to draw off one leaguer after the other and pour it into a newly sulphurated barrel; it being understood that every barrel before being sulphurated has to be scoured and scalded. During the transfusing process, there will always remain in the empty casks some wine- lees that has been precipitated, but the heavy husks and stems are pushed upwards by the wine. Now I need hardly say that "Mother is baking cakes" is the word, and that almost daily. For the fresh wine- lees is excellent both for the usual egg- cakes and also for other kinds; for it makes the dough rise till it becomes as light as a feather. Good housewives and connoisseurs of all kinds of confectionery also keep some dry vine stumps for this purpose, for this kind of wood produces excellent embers for such baking.

When the wine has been sufficiently muted, drawn off and settled, it is left undisturbed for a few weeks. Then comes the *bereidsel* (preparation) which consists of drawing it off into a new barrel into which is put about half a Berlin quart of finely cut or crushed isinglass, well soaked in wine. A stick three feet long, to one end of which pieces of wood through which holes have been bored, is thrust through the bunghole and the wine thoroughly stirred with it. After the isinglass has taken any remaining lees to the bottom, the wine is after a few weeks drawn off once again into a new barrel and delivered to the buyer. If the wine cannot be settled and clarified by the isinglass, well-washed fine sand or well-scraped chalk and the ash of vine branches are put into it, but such devices are but patchwork, to be regarded only as palliatives for such a wine; for they help for a while and then make the evil worse. This then is the way in which wine is treated at the Cape of Good Hope, but every

sensible man will surely presume that for good wine-making something more is necessary than what has been mentioned. However this is how it is done and not otherwise, and if one speaks about it and wonders whether the wine does not need further treatment, the answer is always: "I should like to know what else could be done to it." — Truly, my friend, if you knew otherwise you would tackle the matter in a different way. There is no doubt that many colonists at the Cape do indeed know the secret of preparing good wine and therefore wines are made which stand the test, and grow mellow with age: but they are not such fools as to give away their secret and thus make the good wines more common. Now if all wines were equally good, none would be outstanding and be bought at a higher price than the others. Finally this every farmer knows that the wines in his cellar must be kept firmly bunged, and must be inspected from time to time, that the barrels must be aired at the vine-blossoming time, the wine drawn off, the barrels sulphurated and refilled; however, the quality of the wine changes somewhat after this treatment.

Wine is also made in the less warm mountainous regions, but the grapes are seldom ripened properly by the sun and brought to such maturity as to make the wine drinkable. In spite of this, the farmers earn as much profit as though the wine were equal to that made in the Tygerberg. For they make vinegar of it which they can sell at a like price in the City. An unbelievable quantity of grape vinegar is consumed at the Cape and the ships also take away a good deal. None of this, however, is exported to Batavia, for there they have other kinds of vinegar made from palm-wine and other vegetables. Once a farmer has had some really good vinegar he may, when the barrel is empty, pour into it inferior sour wine which is soon turned into such strong vinegar that those who retail it may always add boiled water to it. When this is done in proper quantities, and in such a way that the vinegar can absorb the water, it greatly increases the quantity and the merchant makes a good profit on it.

Now in regard to the gardens and the fruit grown in them, we have already mentioned in the First Volume, that the Company keeps in its three large gardens, three senior gardeners and seven or more junior gardeners, if available. Other owners

of gardens in the City as well as on the farms are their own gardeners and do all the work with the help of their slaves. One may be sure that after laying out his vineyard everyone chooses his next best piece of ground for gardening. To keep game, especially the Cape roebuck and the domestic animals, out of the garden it has to be fenced. But where may one obtain hedge-poles, laths, boards or planks? This want is soon remedied. Peach and quince bushes that have sprung up of their own accord are to be found everywhere. They are planted around the garden instead of a fence and in a few years' time there stands a fruit-bearing fence. The quinces are rarely used, but the peaches are eaten raw, sometimes also baked, and the worst left to the slaves and the pigs. I have also mentioned in the First Volume that I saw a quite impenetrable hedge of Aloe shrubs in a certain place further inland. There are several varieties of peaches but the largest which have a deep red flesh in the centre around the stone are extraordinarily good; no better are found in Europe. Quinces, so big that they weigh more than a Dutch pound<sup>218</sup> are common, but are, as stated, little used. In the City some women make a comfit of it which they call "marmelade" which is also known in Germany. I know of no other use to which the quinces are put except for this comfit and a so-called *Miserere*, that is (a dish of) herring in olive oil and vinegar together with bits of quince and apple cut very small. A few of the largest and finest are placed in the rooms on account of their pleasant odour. While we are speaking of fruit, I want to mention the other kinds at the same time. The apricots are of good size, very tasty and more wholesome than in Germany. Oranges and lemons are poor, even smaller than those of Portugal. But the small mandarins which are called *Narretjes* at the Cape are excellent, but not abundant. About this latter fruit I am not sure, but imagine it to be the Italian "Bergemot". Almond trees thrive, and one may easily grow as many as one pleases but they do not grow very high or big. The thin-shelled ones, called *Kraak-amandels*, are perfectly good. There are many kinds of apples and pears but few good ones. They do not, as a rule, keep long but rot quickly so that the wisest course is to bake them quite soon. The best apples are the white Borstorfer and the Renettes;

<sup>218</sup> The Dutch pound before the adoption of the metric measures was like the German *pfund* slightly heavier than the English pound.

the best pears: the Bergamotte and the Malvasier or *Bon Chretien*. It would be of no use to name the other kinds for these are given other unknown names there. I saw an uncommonly large green pear, of which each one weighed between one and one and a half Dutch pounds, but they could only be eaten cooked and even then had an unpleasant taste. Plums and cherries are not greatly appreciated for the reason that the birds do not allow them to ripen completely but peck at and spoil them as soon as they even start to redden. Still, I did eat quite ripe sound plums at one place, where a clever farmer had preserved them and protected them from the birds by shooting a few birds at the time when the fruit began to ripen and tying them with string by the legs above the tree or to its topmost branches. When afterwards a flock of birds that came from afar and wanted to settle on this tree saw the birds hanging there, they screeched loudly and flew past it. One might try this experiment on the best kinds of grafted cherries in our German fatherland, presumably not without success.

There are plenty of walnuts which are quite palatable even when green; but when picked, they soon become oily and rancid. Much good oil could be made from them but there is not much demand for it; it is also doubtful whether anyone besides pharmacists know how to handle it. There are several varieties of figs among which the large Adams fig is the best; especially if they are peeled and kept in the sun for a few days; still, they do not match the large dried Turkish type. Those who wish to eat the small varieties of figs, must take great care not to let the white milky fluid present between the fruit and the stalk touch their lips, for it burns worse than the *euphorbia*. Plantain figs, too, are not to be despised but scarce. For those who like them and take the trouble to remove the excellent ruby-red pips from its tough flesh which is bitter as gall, no better Pomegranate can be had than at the Cape. The red juice round the kernel tastes excellent, but the knife with which the pomegranate is cut and the kernel removed soon turns black as coal and bitter as gall. I once took the trouble to pick out a few pips but found it too tedious and the bitterness caused by the knife too unpleasant. Pomegranates are, however, not called, as M. de la Caille writes, *Gujave* or rather *Guajavos*. This is an entirely different

fruit actually imported from the East Indies. It looks like a small round pear, the skin being greenish-yellow, the flesh yellow with many small hard pips; it has a somewhat musky smell but is supposed to be very wholesome, though I never found the taste pleasant; but the Cape variety is regarded as much inferior to that of Batavia. Currants are good, especially the flesh-coloured ones, but as they are not greatly appreciated there are very few plants. I do not remember having seen gooseberries; on the other hand, the wild black- or brambleberry, which also grows in Germany on red thorny twigs, but which at the Cape is grown in the orchards and vineyards or as a creeper on walls and gates, is very large and dainty. Strewn with a little sugar, it is very like a sweetmeat in taste. Red and black mulberries are of large size, but usually sickeningly sweet. The medlar bears good fruit but is rather scarce. Chestnut trees grow very tall and bear rich fruit, but these do not keep well and must be eaten immediately otherwise they rot. Some filberts are also found in the gardens, though not in large numbers. Bananas I saw only in the Company's garden at the Cape but of very poor quality.

It must be frankly admitted that the inhabitants attach little importance to fruit. Such fruit trees especially those that serve only for delicacies are not much appreciated. Among these in particular are the pomegranate, mulberry, medlar, chestnut and guava trees. The case of garden plants is entirely different. With the exception of cattle-farmers living in the mountain outposts, it would be a poor farmer who had no garden with everything he needed for his family growing in it in abundance. He would also be called lazy and careless if he failed to gather his own seed of all kinds of garden plants; unless the birds had eaten all the seeds of some kind or other. Cape garden seeds never deteriorate, and French ships are only too eager to take garden seeds of the Cape to Bourbon, Isle de France and Pondicherry. Cape seeds are desired for all garden plants that usually grow in Batavia and the whole of the Indies. M. de la Caille has been totally misinformed or was mistaken in believing that melons are good only during the first and second years after the importation of seed from Europe and deteriorate in their third year. The good Abbé has been duped; for at the Cape one finds two kinds: the genuine big melons which have very many veins all over the skin, which appear

to be rent or pierced by worms. This melon has an excellent flavour, is eaten with sugar, and is not so unwholesome as in Germany. The other kind, with fewer external veins, but more deeply notched lengthwise and, as it were divided into parts, is called *Spaanspek* and is eaten with salt and pepper. I have never been able to accustom myself to this, and have always had to take sugar with it. These, too, are not considered unwholesome. As a general rule neither vegetables nor fruit are thought unwholesome, and it is not considered harmful to drink a glass of water afterwards.

*Ajurkges* or green cucumbers are grown in large quantities, and are used for salads, for preserving and for pickling. Once in the hot season when I stopped at a farmer's place in the country to refresh myself and rest my horse a little, I saw some children come out of the garden with green cucumbers they had picked for themselves. Each one took a little salt in his left hand, dipped the green cucumbers in the salt and consumed them with the greatest relish. Surprised at this, I asked whether such raw food were not very dangerous for children. "Oh no," replied the mother, "provided they drink water immediately afterwards." I for my part did not know whether I dared to tempt my stomach with such raw food. I can however, truly testify that a salad of cucumber with olive oil and vinegar, salt and pepper, is far tastier and more wholesome uncrushed than if it has been salted and crushed beforehand. Since I have learned and found out in Africa that cucumber salad is much tastier and more wholesome if prepared in this way, without the juice being pressed out first, I have had none crushed in my house any more. All those to whom I have recommended this method have thanked me after making their first experiment, as one need not fear that the olive oil will cause a feeling of nausea. At the Cape they are even accustomed to drink a glass of fresh water on top of the cucumber salad, and think it very healthy; but I never dared to try this. Certain it is that nothing is more harmful than to drink brandy afterwards. The inhabitants of the Cape maintain that God had created so much moisture in this plant to improve the many pips which contain a cold seed and also the fleshy part of which much is injurious. If then one squeeze the moisture out first, it would be better to throw the remainder away at once rather than to eat

it. Among the garden plants at the Cape there are also all kinds of lettuce and other salads: endives, purslane and the like are very good indeed; one may have some of them at table throughout the year.

Excellent cabbage, both white and red, grow to a big size. Much of this is pickled and sent to Batavia. A leaguer full without the cask is sold for ten Rix-dollars; it is the same with cauliflower, which grows so well here that none better is found anywhere. Much of it is salted and sent to Batavia, likewise at 10R. per leaguer. Two kinds of yellow turnips or carrots are abundant. The pale yellow kind is not appreciated as much as the reddish yellow or *Hoornsche* carrots that taste sweeter. White turnips or "French rape" are round and rather small, but very tasty. Small French carrots were successfully grown in his garden by Captain Allemann from seeds obtained from his brother General von Allemann. Besides these, there are no other types of carrots.

Parsnips are plentiful, as also another kind of this species called *Chartzeneelen* or wild parsnips, which are much sweeter but somewhat too fine to cook with meat. A little of it taken with soup is passable. The beetroots are as good as those grown in Germany. When cooked, peeled and preserved in vinegar with a little finely shredded horse-radish, they are eagerly bought by ships and enjoyed both as a wholesome food and as an anti-scorbutic.

Horse-radish is not so acrid as in Germany, but the other radishes, especially the black ones, grow to a huge size, and are equal in all respects to the Erfurt radishes. The small radishes, both the long ones with red tops and the small round ones, are plentiful.

Artichokes are good, but it is not customary to serve them at table as a separate dish. They are often cooked between the midday and evening meals and the fleshy part on the leaves dipped in melted butter is eaten as a snack in the late afternoon. Among the more fashionable people the cleaned lower stems are sometimes cut in pieces and eaten in soup.

Ordinary red and white onions are very common and sold in plenty to the ships. White braised onions are supposed to be an antidote against snakebite. Indeed, I saw it used for the bite



of a small black garden snake, but for the bite of other and bigger snakes, especially the *Coper-Capel*,<sup>219</sup> it is of practically no value.

Though parsley is grown in great abundance, the genuine parsley seldom grows well and soon becomes stringy. "Esparges" or asparagus is of very poor quality with a weak root. Of course, I did not see any asparagus bed properly dug, hoed and manured; that may be the reason why the asparagus does not do well. Similarly celery plants are worthless. Green and blue cabbage is not particularly cared for and consequently not much of it is grown.

Soup vegetables such as spinach, chervil, garden-tarragon, leek, orpine and many others are very fine and healthy, especially in the first months of spring; and for this reason they are often hawked in lots at two stuivers. At this time of the year they are not unjustly considered as a kind of medicine.

Sweet potatoes grow fairly well there either from the seed potatoes or the roots, but not in all kinds of soil nor on all farms. They are sometimes confused with the Jerusalem artichoke imported from America and at present so much in vogue in Germany; some writers even state that these artichokes are the sweet potatoes. They may possibly be called thus in America, but I can definitely state that the African *Batatters* or *Batatas* is an entirely different plant, much sweeter and tastier. They are not as large as, but resemble more our Kohlrabi than the artichokes.

Sugar-peas are plentiful, as also white beans, but as already stated in the previous chapter, they are only low-growing dwarf beans. There are also small black beans which, when cooked with vinegar and melted butter, and eaten as a salad are quite tasty.

There are two kinds of watermelon. The inferior kind has white flesh and seeds. The other has black seeds and the eatable flesh is red. Watermelons look exactly like green pumpkins, are of the same size and have the same kind of flesh below the rind. The edible flesh of the pumpkin is that round the white pips; in the watermelons, especially the red ones, this flesh resembles half-frozen snow coloured red. On warm days it is a cooling, wholesome and refreshing fruit which quenches thirst

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<sup>219</sup> Koper Kapell: Egyptian or banded cobra (*Naja Haie*) (Fitzsimons *Snakes of South Africa*, p. 164.) As its habitat does not include the Cape Colony, the Geel Kapell or Cape Cobra is probably meant.

better and more quickly than wine, beer or water. To ascertain whether watermelons are sufficiently ripe, a triangular or square hole is cut through the rind into the flesh, before severing it from the plant, and the piece taken out and examined. If the fruit is not quite ripe, the piece is replaced in the hole and the fruit left for a few days to ripen thoroughly and then cut off.

The garden strawberries are large and tasty, but not nearly as good as those that grow wild in the forests of Germany. But these are just as unknown in Africa as the bilberry and raspberry.

Haws, sharp-spined hawthorn, sloe trees and wild cherry I do not remember having seen there.

Pineapples and bananas are very poor and scarce.

Fennel, marjoram, common or lemon balm, sage, thyme, lettuce, pepper-wort, anet, speedwell, sorrel, mint, common cress, carraway, veronica, and similar well-known and common plants, are everywhere to be found in abundance. At the hospital dispensary, I saw a detailed catalogue of medical herbs which are gathered each month by the female slaves according to the seasons.

White and blue poppy, especially the double multi-coloured varieties, are sown freely for their flowers, not for the seeds, hence only for the decoration of the gardens.

The African women are very fond of cayenne pepper and add it not only to all preserved *atgar* or *aschar*, whether of cauliflower, gherkins, small beans and the like, but also preserve their green pods by leaving them to soak for a while in vinegar; these are eaten with roast meat and with dried and fried fish. If they can entice a stranger who is unfamiliar with these pepper pods to taste them, and the latter, believing that he will burn his mouth with them, has to take the pods out of his mouth quickly, it will give them extraordinary pleasure and they will laugh heartily at it. They themselves, however, can eat a dozen such pods without turning a hair. These green pods preserve the *aschar* from turning mouldy. Sugar-cane and Turkish wheat or maize is not commonly sown; only a few young people grow some plants here and there as a hobby.

The following exotic and foreign trees imported from the Indies or Europe are found here: the camphor tree grows well

and is used for hedges in the parterres of the gardens. Whether it is the real camphor tree or is only called so because its leaf smells of camphor, I cannot say for certain. I presume the latter to be the case, for it does not exude or sweat out any camphor. *Catjeburing* or rather *Katschebyring*<sup>220</sup> is a small tree similar to the German orange trees. It bears many flowers which resemble the yellow narcissus and have the same scent, but as soon as they wither or are merely crushed in one's hand, their smell is oily and unpleasant.

Myrtle trees of the large kind grow fairly tall, and provide fine inclosures for the separate parterres of the garden.

Date Palms are also to be found here and there but never with fruit on them, although both sexes of the tree are planted close together.

It has often been noted that oak trees flourish best.

A few fir trees, or (as they are known in some places) pines, have also been brought there for the purpose of winning and propagating the seeds; some have been planted in the great garden of the Company in the City. They grow tall enough, but bear no seed.

Rosemary grows to such a height that it can be planted in the garden around the flower beds as a protection against wind.

The elder-tree is also found here but not used very much.

A few olive trees were sent out by the Company, but have become extinct since people did not know how to transplant them and press the oil out of the olives.

Neither cinnamon trees nor any other aromatic trees have ever been planted here, although Kolbe describes them on page 263. It is also known that the East India Company did not permit them to be planted elsewhere for political reasons.

*Sabina* or *savin*-trees<sup>221</sup> are present in small quantities only, and nobody cares whether they thrive or perish.

Tamorisks or tamarind trees have, notwithstanding Kolbe, either never existed here or they have soon died out.

I think it unnecessary to say anything about or describe the indigenous wild non-fruitbearing African trees. They are as yet

<sup>220</sup> ? *Katjepiering*: the gardenia.

<sup>221</sup> the juniper, an ever-green bush shrub of some medicinal value.

too unknown and of little importance for they yield only poor firewood. Only when the newly discovered big forests are opened up and explored will it be worth while giving new names to new trees, and to describe and make them known. This much I can say for certain, as one whose business it was to provide deliveries of different kinds of wood, that very few trees are found whose bark may serve in any way as material for tanners and shoemakers for tanning leather; that is why they have to pay five Rix-dollars for even a small cartload of bark or rather bast. They merely half-tan the sole-leather because they let it lie no longer than eight to ten weeks in the tan-pits, and thus while both sides of the leather are tanned externally, a raw strip is left in the centre. When the soles made of such leather become wet they stretch wider than the shoes. Kolbe remarks that the bark of the dwarf-tree, which is in reality only dwarf-pine, is used for that purpose. I can, however, truthfully assert that this bark is as little suitable for it as the dry bark of our large resinous firs or pines.

That there are to be found at the Cape innumerable shrubs, plants and flowers of a medicinal nature, and other curious kinds which propagate themselves mostly in the valleys between the mountains, Drs. Sparrman and Thunberg as well as the English horticulturist Masson, may best bear witness. Even Governor Tulbagh not only enriched the zoo and the museum of His Highness the Prince of Orange, but also sent many rare plants and shrubs to Europe. Among other things, a flower sent by Governor Tulbagh and named *Brunsvigia*, in honour of the Duke of Brunswick, has been described by the well-known Herr von Justi<sup>222</sup> in one of his pamphlets. He also had an engraving made of it. This flower, which when in full bloom at the Cape is far more beautiful than in the illustration shown in Germany, is called *Konings Kandelaer* by the inhabitants at the Cape; that is to say, the "King's candlestick" or the "Royal candlestick".<sup>223</sup> This flower is scentless, shaped like a ball, containing over a hun-

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<sup>222</sup> Johann von Justi (1702-1771), at one time professor of Natural History at Göttingen, then a high official in the service of Frederick II of Prussia. Wrote several books mainly on Political Economy and Finance.

<sup>223</sup> *Brunsvigia gigantea*: the Candelabra flower or *Zuuroog Bloem*: for description see Marloth, IV. p. 123-4.

dred small white and red cups resembling the sockets of wall chandeliers. When in full flower it is often hung from the ceilings or beams of rooms to serve as an ornament; it lasts a long time without losing its leaves. On the veld the South-East wind in due course snaps it from its stem and it is carried by the wind at great speed, on account of its circular shape, often for more than a mile, until it is stopped by a shrub.

Of the recently discovered wax-tree the Cape Clergyman Bode<sup>224</sup> has sent a twig with its ripe wax-berries to the Clergyman, A. Buurt, of Amsterdam;<sup>225</sup> for an illustration of this we are indebted to Professor Allamand of Leiden and Dr. Klockner of Amsterdam. Professor Sparrman records that he found many such wax-trees in the North-East region of the Cape, in Houtniquas Land and in many other places. It is supposed to attain the height of a small cherry tree and have the shape of a myrtle. By botanists it is called *Myrica-cerifera*.<sup>226</sup>

To please florists, I ought now to give some description of African flower-gardens and state how many kinds of carnations there are, each under its own name; how many kinds of many-coloured tulips and Monstrosen, auriculæ, jonquils, tuberoses and similar sweet-scented flowers that there are to be found at the Cape. But the colonists are in this respect the very antipodes of the flower fanciers of Haarlem. They do like to pick and smell pretty flowers; but to plant, cultivate, cut shoots and propagate them, is not their business. One single good vine is more valuable in their opinion than a hundred shoots of carnations, even if they were called Augustus, Caesar, Cleopatra, Aurora aurata or any other name.

It cannot be denied that the many wild shrubs, soft and hard herbs growing at the Cape, emit an uncommonly sharp odour, especially on calm evenings or when no wind is blowing,

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<sup>224</sup> Johannes Frederik Bode, came out to the Cape in 1758 as second minister to the Cape Town congregation. Showed spirit by refusing a transfer to Waveren in 1760 because he regarded that as a form of demotion. Upheld by the Directors he remained in office at Cape Town until his death in 1784.

<sup>225</sup> To whom Allamand and Klockner acknowledge their indebtedness for making a copy of the journal of Hop's expedition.

<sup>226</sup> According to Marloth, I. p. 133, the most common species of South African wax-berry is the *Myrica cordifolia*.

but I cannot say that this is particularly pleasing. I, at any rate, did not find it too pleasant when walking or riding on the veld at such times. The mingled smell of so many strongly scented plants, is far too pungent and has too great an effect on the head and olfactory nerves, to be called agreeable. There are indeed sweet-smelling herbs among them, but the sharper-smelling ones stifle them and a mixture ensues in which one cannot distinguish one from the other. I am no botanist and can neither name nor describe these herbs, nor show what their medicinal value is. I do know, however, that Kolbe's catalogue of herbs is a mere copy. At the same time I wish to say something about two sweet-scented flowers that prefer a turfy soil and are found very pleasant by all. One is called by the Hottentot name of *Krukimekranki*.<sup>227</sup> It has four white narrow leaves about one and a quarter inches long, which have still narrower crimson coloured long strips in the centre; it lies flat on the ground with its stemless leaves expanded. The root, if dug out, is similar to a small French turnip, but white and transparent so that its many small seeds can be clearly seen. It also contains a pleasant honey-flavoured juice which is greatly liked and sought after by children. After sunset this flower exhales a scent very like that of a tuberosc. Another kind of flowerlet, growing in profusion on short stems in turfy soil, is called *Avondbloem*.<sup>228</sup> since its smell is not noticed till after sunset. These flowers differ noticeably from the similarly named flowers of Europe and are more like our pansies. No sweeter scent can be imagined, nor does one become tired of it, but one always wants to inhale it more and more deeply. When a party strikes them of an evening on a walk, all like to stop and sit down to enjoy this scent which excels by far that of the violet and jasmine. A certain kind of wild flower is called *veldschoen*.<sup>229</sup> It has two semi-circular leaves of the shape of a hand that lie perfectly flat on the ground with their straight sides close together. Between these there grows a stem twelve inches long, bearing a flower at the top very similar to that of a pomegranate tree. This is a very quaint plant but is not much appreciated as it has no scent.

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<sup>227</sup> *Kukumakranka* (*Gethyllis ciliaris*.)

<sup>228</sup> *Aandbloem* (*Hesperantha falcata*.)

<sup>229</sup> *Veldschoen* or *Maartbloem* (*Haemanthus Coccineus*.)

## APPENDIX.

In this chapter I have also described the common and well-known garden plants, among them the anet or dill. I could really have omitted all these names without loss to the esteemed reader. To compensate for the lost time and trouble, I wish to make known a discovery, which may be very useful and welcome to many a reader. Only during the past summer and quite accidentally I discovered that the anet just mentioned is an excellent remedy for the foul-smelling insect, the bed-bug. Judging by the smell of the anet, it occurred to me that this herb might be a real antidote to the said pest. There was nothing to lose by an experiment, and since I had a short while previously lived in a house infested by these horrible insects, I rubbed my bedstead and that of my wife with a handful of green anet and also placed a good handful of this herb under the feather mattress of each bed. Behold! During the very next night we had no trouble from this vermin, and since then they have completely vanished from the room, so that we only rarely found a solitary one on the walls. I hope everyone who finds it necessary to try this experiment will have the same good results as I did. As I made the first test with it during the past summer with success, I cannot say whether it will remain a lasting preventive, or whether one would have to repeat the procedure every year. But this would not matter, for the herb may be obtained plentifully and when once sown in a certain spot, re-sows itself to such an extent that it cannot be extirpated again unless one pulls it out root and all before it runs to seed. Though the anet is well-known in the whole of Germany, it may be known by different names in different places, and people may therefore not know what kind of herb it is, so I say it is that which one uses in preserving green gherkins, and is called "*Anethum*" in Latin.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN.

### Of Animal Husbandry.

Viticulture and horticulture provided me with enough material in the previous chapter to be somewhat discursive, but I hope the worthy reader will not be entirely dissatisfied with it. In contrast, I fear this chapter may be somewhat meagre. African animal husbandry does not differ much from that of Europe, and I should have preferred omitting a description of it altogether, did I not fear that the esteemed reader would think he was missing a good deal if I said nothing about cattle rearing in a country stocked with domestic animals. I shall therefore touch upon the most remarkable features of these, but as briefly as possible: for besides, those who are not farmers would not enjoy a discourse on cattle, horses, sheep and pigs. For these are the subjects about which we are now to speak.

To begin with, the horned cattle are rather small, and not quite equal to the oxen and cows of Germany. Some writers have stated that the African oxen have a small hump resembling that of a camel, but this is incorrect. Only what is called the *schoft* between the neck and the back proper, or the last vertebra between the neck and the back is a little stronger and higher than that of German oxen. With this *schoft* the Afrikaners believe the animal puts forth its greatest strength against the yoke, when inspanned: but this too is obviously incorrect, for when the poor animal lies down under the yoke in the rainy weather the *schoft* is quickly injured, and not without much pain as one can imagine. When an ox is three years old it is inspanned and taught to pull. The poor animal learns in a hard school. Firstly, a young ox that has never been tied up before is caught in the following manner. A slave approaches the animal stealthily from behind and throws over its horns, and if possible also over its head and around its neck, a looped cord which is tied to a long stick. Then, since the rope is long enough, another slave catches the opposite



end and the ox is led to where it is to be inspanned next to an old mate under a yoke. Usually this is done when manure is being carted to the fields, so that the apprentice may tire more quickly on account of the heavy load and may be managed more easily. Since the young animal is entirely ignorant of the yoke and not trained to walk and pull in a straight line with its team, it is continually whipped with the eight to ten yard long lash. Truly, it is piteous to see how the long lash at each blow removes hair, causes weals to rise and blood to flow; but in this way the animal becomes so exhausted and worn-out that after three or four days it patiently lets itself be caught and inspanned, although shivering and shaking. Then the rigid training is over. The newly broken in oxen are harnessed in pairs to the middle of the wagon and the plough, the oldest and strongest to the shaft, and those that respond best to their names, right in front.

Every ox is given a name, and one hears the continual shout of the driver e.g. "*Stuurman hot! Bootsman haar!*" or vice versa, and one is astonished to see the stupid animals immediately turning right or left at the call. This shouting only takes place when no slave walks in front to lead the oxen; for, as soon as a main road is reached, the leader of the oxen would seat himself on the wagon, so as not to tire and be able to watch over the oxen when they are grazing the next day. A pair of middle oxen do not fetch more than eight Rix-dollars apiece. A pair of good hind or front oxen, however, sell for as high as ten to twelve rixdollars apiece. Whether they belong to the colonists or Hottentots, the oxen never have a roof over them nor are they put in a stall, in summer or winter, but have to live in the open, in a space enclosed with a clay wall. The only treat they get from time to time is a few bundles of straw thrown on the dung which has become wet from the winter rains. It is believed that oxen never sleep at night, but only rest their limbs lying down. As to this, all I can say is that as often as I have visited such a kraal in which oxen are enclosed during the night, they have always been wide awake, chewing the cud or otherwise moving about. Further than this my nature study has not progressed. Beyond what the cattle may find on the veld in the dry or fertile season, they receive no fodder. Though some of them do at times eat barley straw, they never eat wheat straw and many of them have no inclination for the former either.

One must not imagine that the African oxen move as slowly as those of Europe. As long as they are led by a slave or Hottentot when harnessed to a plough or wagon, they certainly do not go very fast, but as soon as they have been brought to the right track and the guide goes to sit on the wagon, they trot at a stretch as far as they have to go, or are unmercifully driven to it with the long whip. In this way the hindmost pair next to the swinging shaft suffer a great deal and it would be no surprise if the yoke fixed to the shaft were to break the necks of both oxen. I cannot recollect whether an ox intended for slaughtering was ever fattened in advance. The animal to be slaughtered is taken from the herd, led a short distance from the house, and shot through the head. This is the surest way of killing it, since the muzzle of the rifle is held to its forehead and the shot fired at the right spot, and I have once witnessed myself how the bullet was recovered from the heart of the ox. Immediately after the shot, the nape of the neck is cut with an axe, close to the head, the neck ripped open and the blood drawn off. Everything the butcher considers as tripe is thrown to the dogs, but the pluck is cooked for the slaves. A special delicacy is made from the feet on account of the grease in them which is called "Spiecke" in Germany. If, however, an animal which has had "Lam-Siekte" has on that account to be slaughtered, this delicacy is also given to the slaves. Since no family is big enough to consume a freshly slaughtered ox in a short time most of the meat is salted, whether in summer or in winter, and then part of it is smoked and part dried in the air only; in the latter case I have already mentioned that the meat shows a strange mixed colouring when it is boiled.

Although a slaughtered animal is never weighed, it would be something out of the ordinary if it yielded more than six hundred pounds of meat on the hook. The farmers have a better use for hides than to sell them to the tanners or shoemakers, who do not readily pay more than one rixdollar a piece. From the hide on the back and front legs, around the hock and the knee, they generally cut veldshoes for themselves and their children. Other pieces serve the same purpose for the slaves. From the remainder they cut thongs which they rub generously with fat to make them more supple. They also keep some in stock to mend a broken shaft,

cart-rack or other wooden part. The shoemakers therefore always get a very small supply, but there is never any scarcity on account of the large number of cattle that are slaughtered.

For their extraordinarily long whips the farmers need an entire cowhide. When this has lain in water long enough for the hair to be rubbed off, it is dried again and vigorously and repeatedly rubbed with melted fat until it becomes pliant enough. Then a single thong is cut out in the shape of a spiral. This thong is about three fingers broad at the top, and half as broad at the lower end. At the narrower end which is to form the point of the lash, a still smaller thong of about one ell long and a quarter inch wide is left, then the thong originally cut is split throughout into four equal strips and the lash plaited from these. The thong at the end of the whip is called the *Achterschlag*, and to this a still smaller thong, about one and a half ells long, generally prepared from roebuck-skin is attached. This is called the *voorschlag*. These two thongs make the whip so much longer and its lashes more piercing, and one can make it crack very hard.

The cows usually throw one calf or (which rarely happens) two every year. They generally calve in the rainy season and it seems to have become second nature for them to take the bull in the dry season, lest a calf should be born at a time when the cow has hardly enough grazing on the veld for itself, and the calf would perish in consequence. For since in this country there is no stall-feeding, the cows get no fodder at any time, and both cows and calves would die during the dry summer owing to the poor pasture. The nature of African cattle is somewhat like that of the tame buffaloes of Batavia. Their meat is inferior to European beef, and their none too plentiful fat is tallowish or suety. The cows have two very ugly faults. Some of them refuse to be milked, unless their heads have been closely tied and both hind legs tied together. Otherwise they toss their horns and kick with their hind legs, so that one cannot approach and milk them without danger and without spilling the milk. But speaking generally, no cow gives any milk unless the calf has previously sucked at the nipple or dug. No calf sucks for longer than eight or ten weeks, but is then weaned or weans itself and eats grass; that is, unless it is tied up and compelled to keep on sucking. For just as long as the

calf sucks, the milk lasts; and when the calf no longer wants to or is allowed to drink, the cow gives no more milk and dries up. Thus it is no wonder that when M. de la Caille was staying a few days on a farm in the Groene Kloof where there were more than two hundred head of cattle, the milk for coffee had to be fetched from half an hour's distance, for there were no more sucking calves on the farm and the milking season was past. Since no cows, without exception, give any milk when the calves have been weaned, a student of nature may reflect whether it is possible for an animal to retain its milk and not let it flow. I doubt it. Veal is not appreciated at the Cape, the calves being spared for rearing; very seldom is one slaughtered. As the proverb goes: 'if a farmer slaughters a calf, either the farmer or the calf is sick.' For that reason there is no trouble with milking during the milking season; for if a calf sucks for only a little at the dugs of the udder, enough milk is obtained and some is left for the calf. But when a young calf has had an accident and died, it is no use attempting to milk.

Kolbe, indeed, writes that one should then throw the hide of the dead calf over a living one and allow the cow to smell it. I have seen no instance of this nor do I recollect ever having heard of it, and can therefore neither affirm nor deny it, but can hardly believe that a farmer would take the trouble to skin a dead calf. I do know for certain that the Hottentots use a different method of obtaining milk for a longer period from a cow whose calf has been killed by a lion, tiger or hyena. Not as Kolbe incorrectly narrates, that the Hottentots blow with their mouth into the place from which the calf has come. Kolbe must have had very little knowledge of anatomy, or he would have known that air blown into this cavity would not penetrate very far or have any effect. On the contrary, the Hottentots take a hollow bamboo or other tube of the desired length, bind the hind legs of the cow together, insert the tube into the rectum and blow air into the cow in such a way that it becomes distended, bends itself and presses milk out almost of its own accord. This does not seem to me an unnatural method; it is much the same as the blowing in of tobacco smoke, a method adopted by the cavalry when a horse finds it impossible to pass dung. Generally it comes to the same thing, whether one blows air into the body of a cow through a tube or in a freshly

removed ox or pig bladder. Meanwhile, this air-enema is not given either by the colonists or their slaves. In a doubtful matter of this kind I do not wish to set this up as an hypothesis; but according to my little knowledge of science, I believe that the African cows do not consciously, wittingly, voluntarily or obstinately keep back their milk if their calves are not with them. For I have never heard of a woman who, if one presses her breasts gently, can yet keep back her milk. It seems to me much more credible that tubes and openings through which the milk passes are constructed in such a way, that they cannot be opened merely by stroking and milking with the fingers, but have to be opened beforehand by the sucking of the calf. It would be worth while making the test, in a case of this kind, to let a female slave take a cow's teat in her mouth and suck at it before stroking it with her fingers. I firmly believe that after this the cow would allow itself to be milked, and that the milk would flow.

It is equally incorrect to say that only female slaves do the milking. If there are too many cows in milk at the same time on a cattle farm, so that the female slaves cannot cope with the milking, those slaves aid them who know how to perform the work and have at some time brought such expert knowledge with them from their fatherland that they can milk better than many a slave woman. With this exception it is always the work of the female slaves, but even the daughters of the colonists take pleasure in doing it. One often hears of the younger ones quarrelling with the older sisters when the latter refuse to allow them to do the milking. Of course in the City, where there are hardly any cows, the young ladies do not concern themselves with milking; neither do they go barefoot or like to soil their shoes. On the estates nearest the City likewise few cows are kept, for the property can be put to better use than grazing; but here too the milking is done only by slave women. These nearby farms belong mostly to townspeople and even when the owners live on them, their daughters consider themselves equal to the city girls and avoid the cow sheds. Actually one may say that from Cape Town as far as the Little Berg River to the West<sup>230</sup> and the Twenty-Four Rivers,

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<sup>230</sup> The directional indication is confusing; the Little Berg R. is to the N.E. of Cape Town, but westwards of the Twenty Four Rivers.

to the North-east, cattle rearing is not a specific industry. Few farmers in these parts keep cows for breeding purposes. Most farmers of this vicinity who go in for cattle breeding possess separate farms for a few hundred cattle beyond these rivers, on which they keep a knecht and some slaves and Hottentots to look after the business. Those farmers who are really rich in cattle, and who count their cattle by hundreds and their sheep by thousands, live far in the interior of the country on their own cattle farms; they do little grain farming and hardly any wine farming. On the estates between the City and these two rivers, cows cannot conveniently be kept (at least no longer than during the rainy season) because they easily catch lame-sickness or urinary diseases from the weeds growing there.

Those who like to have fresh butter and milk at this season have to fetch from their cattle farms three or four cows newly in milk and their calves, and send them back after a few months. There is a certain amount of truth in what the Abbé de la Caille has to say about butter-making: that the women pour the fresh milk into a large butter-vat and leave it standing for a few days until the vat is half-full and then make butter without further ado; but the Abbé should also have obtained better information about household conditions, for he would then have found reasons for not accusing the inhabitants of being too lazy to make butter after the European fashion. Firstly, cooling facilities are lacking there, especially cellars where milk can be stored and allowed to stand for a longer time before skimming. Secondly, the necessary vats are not so easily and plentifully obtainable as in Europe. One cannot go to the cooper or potter to buy buckets or milk pails. Neither of these artisans, excepting those in the service of the Company, are to be found there. Thirdly and chiefly: the inhabitants are more concerned about the quality of the butter-milk than the quantity of butter. Butter-milk is rightly considered very wholesome in this country, and its use is not only allowed but even prescribed for invalids. Further: distant cattle farmers have no wine and their meal consists mostly of cooked and roasted meat. Butter-milk is their drink and is undoubtedly healthier to take in the way described than if the milk stood for a long time, became sour and was then skimmed.

Horse-breeding is not practised or considered so important at the Cape as in Europe. The first horses were imported from Persia as mentioned in Volume I. The strain is therefore Persian, but this has deteriorated a good deal through climate, feeding, grazing and stabling in the open air and may now only be considered as a bastard type. Whether a mare is in foal or not is the least of the farmer's worries for he has enough horses. If the mare foals, well, that makes one more. Nobody takes much notice of it. If it is a male colt, the farmer gelds it himself after two years, and a failure is rare. If however, the colt has a fine colour, is well-shaped and is generally speaking well-made, the farmer leaves it ungelded and castrates the old stallion instead. Every farmer has at least two, sometimes three or four riding-horses. One for himself, one for his wife and daughters, and one or more for the sons. But these have to look for food in the veld like all the other horses that are used for threshing and harrowing, and are not stall-fed, unless the farmer or one of his family wishes to undertake a journey. In such case the saddle-horse would receive in the previous evening and morning, a little chaff and barley. Nevertheless all saddle-horses are stabled and tied up overnight; all the other horses have to remain in the open air the whole year round and are knee-haltered like the saddle-horses before being driven to pasture: that is, one end of a rope is fastened round their neck and the other end to the left foreleg so high from the ground that the horse can move on three feet only, or has to bend its head low enough to be able to use all four legs. This is done to prevent a horse from straying too far from its companions, or at least so that it may easily be reached and driven back.

Few farmers keep carriage horses, for the slaves are not very handy with this kind of vehicle and it would be too irksome for them to drive a coach. Those who do use carriage horses treat them in the same way as saddle-horses, that these have to seek their food on the veld like the other horses and are given a little barley and chaff when they are to be harnessed. It would undoubtedly be more profitable or beneficial if the barley were first softened and soaked, but that would be too much trouble for my lord the farmer. The horse-carriages are built in the

same way as the ordinary mail coaches in Germany. Such a coach with four trained horses and their harness usually costs a thousand Cape gulden or 143½ ducats. Horses that are used for threshing and harrowing, fetch hardly eight or ten rixdollars apiece; at public sales one may sometimes buy two or three horses for this amount; for, as every farmer rears as many as he needs, the demand is not great, unless (a thing that often happens) horse-sickness breaks out on some farm and carries them off. No farmer may, however, shoot an old useless horse or cause it to be killed in any other way; an old prohibition to that effect introduced when the colony was founded has not yet been recalled and therefore still remains in force. If African horses are broken in by an intelligent horseman, they easily learn a comfortable ambling pace. I myself have ridden horses which could keep up this pace for six or seven hours and would not trot or gallop a single yard. They can also be easily taught to stand still in front of a house and not to move from there when one dismounts by merely laying the bridle on the saddle. Nevertheless, all or almost all African horses have their own special whims or faults. An incomparably comfortable pacer that I rode several times could not bear a person to hold on to the bridle when mounting. One had just to hold on to its neck and let it go as soon as one set foot in the left stirrup, otherwise it would rear and fall over backwards. Another would not suffer cloak nor saddle-bag, no, not even an empty wallet behind its saddle; even the smallest article behind the saddle, though it did not touch the horse's rump, caused it to rage and snort until the rear and front ropes and the girth broke in pieces. Another could not be held for ten paces on a wagon track or a road, but kept on turning to the side however much one might belabour it. Others again will not allow a person to remount after dismounting. Many snort when being saddled or refuse to be saddled. Some are hard-mouthed, others soft-mouthed and are quickly chafed by a bit, even if it is only a snaffle. I knew of an exceptionally well-proportioned light brown stallion, with dark brown apple spots, that would not let anyone mount it, even though a curb-bit and a nose-band was put in his mouth, and a noose with a rope attached and also a short buckled martingale were fastened to it. The best and most experienced



riders were thrown. Even after it was gelded, it was of no avail, nor would it let another stallion come near the mares, but bit and injured them badly. Many of them use their fore-feet very smartly and lift them when trotting as high as the stirrup, but they are very lazy with their hind feet or keep them very close together; and yet they move very safely without stumbling. In many other ways each horse has its peculiar failing. They are just as unable to learn to traverse the short gallop, or other artistic paces as a German university student's or townsman's nag; nor are they any bigger than these. In colour they vary from light to dark brown. I have seen only one perfectly white horse, and no black one. Since the horses graze the whole day while knee-haltered they get accustomed to keeping their heads low or stretched out straight. Nor has the neck any swanlike curve. Since the Africaners believe that a long thick mane makes the horse look like a lion, they allow this to grow wild and untidy on either side. Their best point is that one need not shoe them, for they have a hard durable hoof, not too high nor too flat; the tail is of no particular beauty. I did not meet any African-born farmer who could tell the age of a horse by its teeth; and they gazed in astonishment when I told them their horse's age.

When African horses are older than seven years, the spots on their teeth by which their age may be determined are more obvious than in the European horses. This, I believe, is due to their being given little grain and therefore they do not lose the brown marks as soon as their teeth become worn. A curious fact about this breed of horses is that occasionally really beautifully built foals are born, although neither the stallion nor the mare could be called handsome. If such a well-built foal were stabled immediately it would bear its head high and one could train it to be a good saddle-horse; but as soon as it is deserted by its mother or not suckled any longer, it is knee-haltered and accustoms itself to keep its head lowered or stretched out like the horses belonging to the Polish Jews. These farmers do not keep horses for galloping or racing; they do not generally ride them to excess unless they are intoxicated. But there is an exception to this as well, for although the best horses which have been trained to amble do not cost more than fifty or at most sixty rixdollars, many a farmer would not sell his saddle-horse

for twice as much. I mean such men as live far inland, where there is plenty of game, who are fond of hunting, being generally called elephant-hunters for this reason. When these men want to kill a wild animal, whether for food or otherwise, they would jump from their horse, kneel on one leg and aim the heavy rifle across a small wedge or over the ramrod. Now if they have a horse that does not shy at the shot, but stands motionless to allow them to swing themselves into the saddle immediately in case of a miss, and if the horse is so fast that it can outpace and escape to a steep hill from a wounded buffalo, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, lion or elephant, which animals, unless mortally wounded, charge madly at their enemies — they would not sell such a horse at any price, nor are they to be blamed, for their life in such case depends on a reliable horse. Occasionally, too, they have to chase and overtake a wounded animal: kudu, gemsbok, bontebok or other gazelle; elands are usually tired out and then shot in the head.

Of sheep it has been mentioned in Volume I that the aboriginal inhabitants, the Hottentots, were already richly provided with these at the time the Dutch took possession of the Cape. But since these sheep did not have good wool, or rather had only goat's hair instead of wool, and since it was feared that if too many were taken over from the Hottentots and many slaughtered, sheep-farming would not progress very far, a better kind of sheep was imported from Persia. Whether their intention was to improve the wool and also to start woollen manufactures later, I do not know, but doubt it, since so far they have made no attempt to do so. Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel, however, who was undoubtedly a farsighted farmer, went further and, although the English do not officially allow any of their breeding-sheep, mares or stallions to be exported, this Governor found the means of obtaining them from England. Neither on his farm in Hottentots Holland nor on any of his other pasture grounds did he allow any Hottentot sheep. But when he discovered that Persian ewes which had not yet degenerated and still grew pure wool were to be had, he obtained these from the colonists, partly by fair and partly by foul means, and had them covered by English rams. In this way he collected a flock of 20,000 wool-bearing sheep within

a few years.<sup>231</sup> This I learned from the printed "*Contra deductio*" which the citizens of the Cape handed over to the Chamber of Seventeen, *pendente lite* in reply to the Governor's "*Deductio*". It was found to be true when the cattle were sold after the Governor's departure. This Governor also had his sheep shorn yearly, as is customary in Europe, sent the wool to the East India Company in Holland, and obtained a good price for it. But since this Governor's recall to Holland, the English and Persian sheep and their lambs crossed with those of the Hottentots; nobody took the trouble to shear them, and all the sheep degenerated so that they can only be considered bastards of the original breed. The Hottentot sheep have long, thin tails like foxes; the Persian sheep very fat, heavy tails, but shorter than those of the English sheep. At present these have also degenerated. The sheep-tails are indeed wide and flat at the top, almost triangular in appearance, but have a thin, lean point at the bottom. Some of the sheep have horns, others not. Pure wool is no longer obtainable but mixed with many goatlike hairs, and consequently not appreciated and not shorn off or manufactured. Yet a hat-maker once managed to separate the good wool from the wild hair and manufacture quite serviceable hats from it. Probably the coarse hairy quality of the wool is due to the fact that the sheep are never shorn, but the wool falls out every year of its own accord, and therefore turns coarser, thicker and more hairy from year to year. But if sheep-shearing were introduced and an attempt made to utilize the wool, it might possibly improve and become finer or at least free from the wild hairs.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Theal and Fouché accept 18,000 as the figure; Van der Stel admitted 'some thousands' and the minimum estimate is 8000. But that they were all *wool-bearing* cannot be true. Only a small portion could have belonged to that category as van der Stel bought large numbers of Afrikaner sheep from farmers and Hottentots.

<sup>232</sup> After the early failures, efforts to introduce woolled sheep were renewed at the close of the 18th century. Col. Gordon imported some Spanish Merinos and the brothers Van Reenen were praised by Lichtenstein for their flocks of cross-bred sheep. De Mist devoted much attention to improving the breed of sheep, but progress was slow. Prof. Thom in *Die Geskiedenis van die Skaapboerdery in Suid-Afrika*, p. 63, quotes figures that show that there were in 1804 only 7,900 woolled sheep out of a total of more than 1½ million. The position was no better a quarter of a century later for in the period 1826 to 1830 the average annual value of wool exports was about £1300, or .05% of the total exports. (Theal, *History of S. Africa since 1795*, II. p. 43.)

It is untrue that the largest sheep's tails weigh from sixteen to twenty pounds. The heaviest and fattest weigh four, five or six pounds, rarely more. The tails might possibly grow bigger and heavier if the wethers were kept until three years old as in Germany. But this does not happen at the Cape; they are slaughtered between their first and second years. At this age their mutton tastes best and as a tremendous amount of mutton is consumed here, delivered to Dutch ships and sold to foreign ships, the wethers are not allowed to grow older. If this were not the case the farmers who live from a hundred to a hundred and twenty miles from the City would not be able to sell their sheep. Now, however, the meat contractors employ several butchers, who travel round the country to buy the wethers, the most distant farmers meeting them on the way or delivering the sheep at an appointed place. At one year's sale, the next year's order is placed, and the place and time at which the sheep are to be delivered specified. Naturally selling stock in this way is difficult for both the buyers and the sellers, hence those distant farmers never get as much for their flocks as the nearer ones who sell to the private butchers. Those wethers that are driven a long way to the Groene Kloof become very thin and have to be fattened again, especially if they have to be driven through the barren cold Bokkeveld or the sandy stretches of the Karroo.

I have just said that some farmers live from one hundred to a hundred and twenty miles from the City. Probably no one lives farther away, and then only towards the North-east, between the Camdebo and Caffraria. Hence when the English botanist Masson writes in the *"Philosophical Transactions"* that the cattle disease which causes the hoof or horn of the oxen to drop from their feet, caused a great deal of loss and difficult journeys to the farmers living from five hundred to six hundred miles inland, one has to remember that he, as an Englishman, reckoned in English miles, of which there are three to the German mile.<sup>233</sup> Further, that he probably measured the length of his journey by the customary Dutch hours, which are only equal to (German) half miles.

I can give no further particulars of the Cape sheep since I have already stated in Volume I that the colonists do not milk

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<sup>233</sup> Not 3 but 4·7.

them, nor do they leave the rams with the flocks, and therefore obtain only one lamb yearly from an ewe; the Hottentots, in contrast, have the advantage of two lambings. Nevertheless African sheep-raising is so considerable and productive that a flock of one thousand sheep is a mere bagatelle. The frequently mentioned gentlemen, Thunberg and Masson, stayed with a cattle farmer called Klaas Losper in the Bokkeveld, who possessed three thousand head of cattle and twelve thousand sheep.

I come now to the last type of cattle: the pig. Although I have already stated that there are two kinds of pigs here, the ordinary European type and a Chinese type which have claws like dogs, the latter are not actually bred here; though their meat is very dainty, their bacon is very flabby, and spreads out or drips down when being smoked. Thus when some of them are brought to the Cape or, as has often happened, swim ashore from a shipwrecked vessel (for they can swim very well, even through the strongest surf) they are immediately slaughtered or put on other ships.

Of the European type of pig, every farmer raises only enough for his own needs: and since the sows have litters of five, six and more piglets two or three times a year as in Europe, many of them are slaughtered before they are half-grown, cut up, then cooked for a short time, preserved in vinegar and eaten cold. Except near the City, no pigs are fattened for selling. There is no great demand for them and, since they cannot be transported by wagon but perish on the way, it would hardly be worth while to drive even a single pig to the market. But to drive whole herds to the City for sale would be of no use, for no one except owners of eating-houses lays in a stock of pork. Smoked hams and pigs' heads, however, when brought to town, are soon sold although they do not compare in quality with those of Europe because they are usually smoked in mild weather. Those who wish to preserve them properly cut out the marrow-bones before smoking and put some salt inside. The European colonists also make very good black pudding, but no liver sausages. They mince the pluck, boil some meat from the soft part of the pig's belly and add a goodly portion thereof to the blood and minced pluck. When these sausages have been boiled a little and then cooled, they are smoked. Prepared in this way

they are not to be despised, but as they are smoked in mild weather they do not keep so long as those that are smoked in winter during frost and snow. The colonial born African farmers do not yet know how to slaughter pigs properly to get the best use of them: between ourselves, they are generally speaking not yet really good householders who might give themselves a little treat now and then in an economical way. The Hottentots do not keep pigs and therefore cannot eat pork. Those, however, who work for the colonists are just as fond of it as of hippopotamus meat which is one of their favourite foods.

Nobody will mind if I tell nothing about fowls for this would only interest a good housewife. But a good housewife would not be so inquisitive, nor take the time to read a description of a country over two thousand miles distant from her poultry yard. Therefore I merely state that the African poultry, such as geese, turkeys, ducks, pigeons and fowls, are of the same kind and as diverse as in Europe; and that the geese, ducks and turkeys, if they are not hatched by their own kind, but by fowls, lay fertile eggs like the European kind, but they themselves do not become broody.

## CHAPTER TWELVE.

### Of Hunting; of Edible Game and Other Wild Animals.

I have already had an opportunity in the Sixteenth Chapter of Volume I and elsewhere, of mentioning that game is very scarce in Cape Town and environment, and therefore not easily obtainable. The reason for this is plain. Three free workers on the Governor's establishment are permanently kept in the country as huntsmen who have to deliver weekly a specified amount of whatever kind of game they can obtain for the kitchen and therefore shoot everything that turns up, even if they should have to eat the surplus themselves or present or sell it to the country people on whom they call to get accommodation. Hunting is generally prohibited, especially in parts of the districts of Stellenbosch, Drakenstein, Zwartland, Roode Zand and the Cape district; but a wild animal that runs through a farmer's corn-field may be killed, and should an animal be slain by a heavy hailstorm, as sometimes happens, then surely the farmer could not leave it to rot. Eagles and hawks, the jackal or the fox, hyenas, honey-badgers and other carnivorous beasts of prey also kill many of them, so that it is no wonder that game has been destroyed and thinned out a good deal in the districts mentioned. Most of the farm-houses lie in these districts and where there are many people continually in the fields the game moves away. On the further side of the Berg River and Twenty-four Rivers the land is more open and the farmsteads do not lie so close together. There is less cultivation of the soil and, apart from the shepherds, not many people are to be seen in the veld. Although there are more hunters, indeed I should say as many hunters as farmers, the hunting area is larger and the more one penetrates into the interior, where different species of antelopes exist in herds, if not of thousands, yet certainly of fifty, sixty and more, the better hunting is to be had; and there, hunting is also more convenient and profitable.

It is true that beyond the said rivers, one meets with more game than on this side, but it consists only of Cape deer, roe-buck

and a few other antelopes of this kind, a few birds and some hares. But from the Oliphants Rivier northward as far as the Groen Rivier, westwards as far as the sea, and eastwards as far as the Bokkeveld, that is from  $30^{\circ}31'$  to  $31^{\circ}30'$  in the country of the Amacqua, one comes across somewhat larger game, such as deer, kudus, big antelopes, and even a few elephants on the West coast.

The first hippopotami found by the expedition described in Chapter Eight, were in the Groote Rivier, which is also called the Groot Berg Rivier or "Charie" or "Eyn". At  $28^{\circ}10'$  South latitude in the country of the Little Namacquas, this expedition found the first camelopard or *Geriffa* (Giraffe), an animal not yet very well-known in Europe. In the country of the Great Namacquas at  $26^{\circ}24'$  South latitude, they struck the first true game land. On the plains they saw large herds of wild animals: rhinoceri, giraffes, buffaloes, wild white horses, asses or zebras, quaggas, kudus, gemsboks, deer and aurochs. Still many more herds were seen in the Great Namacqualand at  $28^{\circ}$  to  $25^{\circ}$ .<sup>234</sup> This however, applies only to the Western, North-western and some Northern regions. In the Eastern and North-eastern part of the Cape, Sparrman found many (and except for giraffes) much bigger herds of game and beasts of prey near Zitzikamma, Houtniquasland and on this side of the Sneeuwbergen; he also hunted them and shot a few, as was mentioned in Chapter Six of this Volume. This may be read in greater detail in Sparrman's Voyages. As for lions, rhinoceri, and tigers, few of these were found.

Not being a zoologist and knowing little of the natural history of animals, it must not be expected of me to give a detailed description of the wild animals at the Cape. Africa has the advantage above all other parts of the earth of producing a great variety of animal species. Von Buffon<sup>235</sup> and other men far better learned and qualified than myself, have shown a wonderful

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<sup>234</sup>  $28^{\circ}25'$  according to the text which must be a misprint. It was shown, however, that the latitude readings were inaccurate.

<sup>235</sup> George Louis Comte de Buffon (1707-1788) is famous for his monumental *Natural History* which began to appear in 1749 and was finally completed in 44 volumes in 1804. Possessing an attractive style with lucidity of expression he tended to popularise science, though much of his information was obtained at second hand.



skill in this matter and have laid a foundation for other naturalists to go on building infinitely and providing enough material for new discoveries in the animal kingdom for centuries or perhaps even to the end of time, especially among the unlimited species of birds. I have promised nothing more than to give a description of the Cape, and I can give no account of what (fauna) live in the wildernesses or emigrate from one place or country to another. Those wanting such knowledge should read the scientists recommended above. At the same time, since not everyone can buy all the books he feels inclined to read and many have not the skill to study such matters, I wish to tell the esteemed reader something about those animals of Africa which will in general satisfy his curiosity. But first we must learn something about the African mode of hunting.

Elephant hunters and all who wish to hunt buffaloes, rhinoceri, hippopotami and the like, go out in companies so that they can assist one another in case of need. They never go on foot, but ride on horse-back and either put their big elephant gun in front of them on the horse, or let a Hottentot carry it alongside, to prevent their hands from getting tired — for the gun is big and heavy — which would make them unsteady when taking aim. When such hunters go out merely to shoot game for food, they use a gun with cartridges that go eight to the Dutch pound. But if they intend shooting elephants or any other of the big animals, they use a larger gun, requiring a bullet which weighs four or at least three ounces. The load of very fine powder weighs half as much as the shot; but if they expect that in some spot they will not get a very close shot, a somewhat heavier charge of powder is used. With the larger guns they can hit one of the bigger animals at a distance of four hundred to five hundred paces, but when on a dangerous hunt of this description, they never shoot from such a long distance, since the bullet loses too much piercing power on the way and does not penetrate deep enough. But when shooting for sport for a bottle of wine, they bring down a hen's egg put on a pole at this distance, and as at such a time they are quite steady and can take their time they seldom lose the bottle of wine. Their favourite shot when hunting is at one hundred and fifty paces, and their marksmanship is so good that it would

be an accident if they should miss their object or a mark no bigger than a gulden. Their bullets consist of one-third tin and two-thirds lead. If more tin is used the bullet becomes too hard and is deflected on striking a bone: but if made entirely of lead, it would be flattened and fail to pierce.

On an elephant or similar hunt the hunter must above all be able to rely on his horse; for when he wants to aim at such an animal, he dismounts, rests his heavy gun on a small crotch brought with him or, if the ramrod is strong enough, rests his left hand on it, kneels on his right leg, and supporting the barrel on his left hand takes aim and fires. At the same time he must be sure that his horse would not be frightened by the shot and bolt; or if he cannot yet rely on it thoroughly, and has to put the bridle over his arm, that the horse does not shy while he is taking aim. When the shot has been fired and the animal has been hit but not brought down, it becomes enraged and charges its enemy who would certainly be killed, if one of his comrades did not help him with a second shot at the animal, unless he could swing himself into the saddle and race away before he was overtaken. If things go wrong, an animal may sometimes receive three or four shots before it falls; in such case all who have shot at it have to mount their horses and retire as far as the one who has fired the last shot is pursued, or until the wounded animal falls. On a buffalo hunt it is most dangerous when there are several buffaloes in a group. For when a buffalo is hit, whether he is killed or merely wounded, and the others see blood, the entire herd will attack the hunter and charge him at least until he can retreat to a hill. For when it is hard going up a hill, they halt. Thus when there are several buffaloes it is best not to fire into the herd, but if one fires and does bring one down, to retire immediately to a hill and wait until the others have left the fallen animal which can then be fetched and carried off. There is less danger from a wounded rhinoceros; for he is quite alone and cannot look sideways or far in front of him, and unless one stands in the line of its scent, it is easy to escape. One may easily get away from hippopotami on horseback for they are too clumsy. They are generally stalked at night when they wade out of the river. Then,

unless they are wounded so severely that they fall immediately, they are more frightened at the flash of the powder than the report of the gun and withdraw into the water.

Now I shall tell what facts I know for certain about African animals; more than I know myself, nobody can or will expect from me.<sup>236</sup>

Of APES there are none in the entire Cape except those known as *Baviane*; at least, others have not yet been discovered. I did hear from the mouth of Lieutenant (later Captain) Allemann that in 1734 along with the Governor de la Fontaine he had visited a large forest, a two days' journey beyond Mossel Bay, where he saw not only much ebony, but also apes and parrots. But Sparrman saw only black long-tailed monkeys but no apes, and the parrots were of a kind called *Ioris*.<sup>237</sup>

AUROCHS: These resemble tame oxen, but are larger and ash-grey in colour. They have a small head, short horns, long crisp hair, both on their breast and between the horns, and a long beard like a goat. Since they can run very fast, they are called "Baas" by the Hottentots,<sup>238</sup> that is "Master" or "Sir". The word "Baas" is no real Hottentot word, but adopted by the slaves from the "Lingua franca".

BAROONS: The largest species of all those belonging to the ape family and in all other respects like them. They live in the mountain crags and never descend except when they want to eat their fill in the orchards or vineyards, where they do much

<sup>236</sup> Mentzel follows an alphabetical order of arrangement; this is lost in the translation.

<sup>237</sup> Lichtenstein (I. p. 241) describes this bird under the name of touraco (*cuculis persa*.)

<sup>238</sup> This passage is taken almost verbatim from Brink's Journal under date, 22 November, 1761, *i.e.* when the expedition had reached the furthest North of the journey. As neither the European auroch nor the American bison has been found in South Africa, there is a strong presumption that the travellers meant by "auroch" the wild ox or wildebeest. The description applies most closely to the blue or bastard wildebeest (brindled gnu). Confirmatory evidence is obtained from Harris, *Game and Wild Animals of South Africa*, Plate 4, who mentions that this animal was called "baas" by the Namaqua Hottentots. We may therefore conclude that this reference in Brink's journal is the earliest one to the blue wildebeest, for according to Sclater, *Fauna of South Africa*, I, 154-5, the species was discovered near Kuruman in Bechuanaland by Truter and Somerville in 1801.

damage and destroy more than they consume unless they are driven off by human beings or dogs. But it is a fairy tale that they arrange themselves in a line in close formation and pass the fruit from hand to hand to hide them in the mountains. On and in the vicinity of Table Mountain they formerly were very plentiful, but have been scared off by the frequent cannon fire from the ships, and especially from the Castle. At present they may occasionally be heard but seldom seen. In order to hunt them one should dress up as a woman for they do not seem very frightened of women. But when they see men approaching, they immediately cry *a-hu!* and retreat to the mountains and rocks where they cannot easily be reached.

Of BUCK, both tame and wild, there are many and of the latter there are several species that really belong to the antelope family. Kolbe has named some but described them badly, and in this respect too one can have little confidence in him. I want to say something about them.

(a) *Tame Buck* (goats) are exactly like those of Europe, except that they are not as big, especially as the Polish goats. Nevertheless they have greater strength than one would expect even from a large goat. To illustrate this I want to tell a little anecdote. The independent fiscal M. v.d. Henghel had a son aged five or six, for whom he had made a small coach suspended by leather straps and fitted with doors and glass windows, in all its parts like a state coach in miniature, and certainly not very light. The driver was a slave boy of sixteen to eighteen years, clothed in blue livery. Instead of horses, two coal-black goats with garnished harness and bridles of red leather were harnessed like horses, with the exception that no bit was put in their mouths. When the young gentleman went to school or returned from it, he sat in this coach with the driver on the box; and although the fiscal's house was situated on high ground, towards which the road from the shore-side of the City wound somewhat steeply and uphill, the goats drew the coach up at a fast trot. The oddest part of this outfit was this: that the goats, to prevent a collision between their horns, carried their heads one to the right and the other to the left. In this way it looked exactly as though two small well-trained coach-horses were harnessed to the carriage.

(b) *The Blaauwbok*, as large as a European deer, but it has the shape of a goat. Its short hair is of a fine blue colour which, however, turns paler when the animal is killed. Its horns are short, spirally shaped and tapering to a point.<sup>239</sup>

(c) *The Spotted or Bontebok* is covered with white, red and brown spots. The horns are about twelve inches long, hairy in the middle and curving slightly outwards at the top. Its red beard is fairly long. This species may easily be tamed and its flesh is good.<sup>240</sup>

(d) *The Grysbok* is not bigger than the domestic goat: its hair is short and dark-red mixed with grey. The doe has no horns; those of the buck are dark-brown, spiralled and about six inches long.

(e) *The Wildebok*, described by Kolbe on the second copper-plate under an unknown name, which I cannot decipher on account of illegible writing, is like the European deer in size and shape.<sup>241</sup> It has two smooth curved pointed horns three feet long, which Kolbe has erroneously drawn straight. A white stripe runs the entire length of its back, which is crossed by another one round its neck, and two similar ones running round its body, resembling three white bands placed round the animal's neck and body. The hair between the stripes is grey and spotted. The beard is grey and long. Undoubtedly von Buffon is correct in saying that this animal closely resembles the Kudu (Koodoo).

(f) *The Duiker* or diving buck derives its name from the fact that when it suspects danger, it bends down and hides itself in the shrubs or bushes, from time to time raising its head to look around and immediately dropping it again. It is similar in colour to the domestic goat but is much bigger.

(g) *Gemsbok* is called by Kolbe a kind of antelope of the Chamois type, but there is no resemblance and it is also much smaller. The horns are about six inches long, but not nearly as arched as those of the European chamois; in addition, they

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<sup>239</sup> Probably *Hippotragus Leucopheus*, now extinct. For description see Sclater, I. p. 216.

<sup>240</sup> Now almost extinct in South Africa.

<sup>241</sup> Kolbe does not call this animal *wildebok*, but *ein fremder bok* — a strange or nameless goat, — somewhat larger than a stag. p. 142-3.

are curved more sideways — those of the chamois being bent straight back. Perhaps Kolbe meant to describe the animal called "Nanguer" by von Buffon.<sup>242</sup>

(h) *The Small Steenbok* is also called "Klipspringer". It is not much larger than a hare, but has long and very slender legs and is well-proportioned throughout. The horns are black, smooth and pointed, the paws small and dainty. The former are used by tailors instead of bodkins for piercing holes for laces, and the latter serve as tobacco-stoppers. Its flesh is unusually tender and delicious, indeed it is the best of all venison in Africa.

Under the general name of ANTELOPE (or gazelle), a number of other gemsboks are included which are very well-shaped, fleet of foot, with large expressive eyes like those of the roebuck. They can, however, be distinguished from the roebuck by the nature of their horns which are hollow inside and smooth outside; they are also permanent, not being cast. The roebuck's horns, on the contrary, look more like wood or bone, have a worm-eaten appearance inside and are annually cast; new ones grow yearly in their place.

Some antelopes have longer, others shorter horns; in some these are wholly or partly annulated, in others wrinkled.

One species of antelope has a white stripe of about ten to twelve inches long on the hind part of its back near its tail. This stripe appears much broader when the antelope is running, for the motion of the animal causes the skin to tauten, thus revealing a large white patch. The zoological garden of H.R.H. the Prince of Orange contains one of these animals. What its origin is and what it is called I do not know, but it is a little larger than the ordinary antelope or buck.<sup>243</sup>

THE BUFFALO closely resembles a bull or ox and is believed to have been brought originally from Africa to several European countries and tamed. In Batavia many are eaten but their flesh

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<sup>242</sup> the 'Gemsbok' here described cannot be identified with the one bearing that name today in South Africa. Burchell, *Travels*, II, 23, says that the name has been misapplied by the Boers, but is proper to the chamois of the Alps.

<sup>243</sup> Probably a springbok which was among the animals sent to the Zoo of the Prince of Orange and to which this peculiarity most nearly applies.

cannot compare with beef. Buffaloes do not mate with domestic cows nor do the ordinary bulls mate with buffalo-cows. The period of gestation for a buffalo-cow is a year, for an ordinary cow only nine months. Neither kind of cow adopts the calves of the other, or lets them suck. Buffalo-cows give much more milk, and consequently more cheese and butter than other cows and these taste much better in the warmer countries than the milk products of ordinary cows. The wild buffaloes of the Cape, of which I am speaking in particular, are dark-red in colour and are much larger than tame buffaloes. Unless provoked they attack no one, but if they are wounded and do not fall immediately, they become fierce, maddened and very dangerous. They are scared of fire and do not approach it, nor can they bear a red colour. Sparrman portrayed them very naturally, but Kolbe very imperfectly. According to the former's description, the Zitzikamma, Houtniquasland and the whole East coast of the Cape abound with them. Their horns are more useful to the horn-turners than ox-horns, and their very thick hides could become in time an important article of trade, if they were caught in large numbers.

"COEDOES" ("KUDUS") are called "Condoma" by von Buffon. Kolbe describes this animal very incorrectly under the genus "Wildebok". In Dutch museums one finds horns of these animals, which, if measured in a straight line, are four and a half feet in length and if measured along the curves, still longer. The horns are hollow, twisted and look like a long-drawn screw of one and a half turns. In the Zoological garden of H.R.H. the Prince of Orange, a live one is to be seen whose appearance corresponds to the above description of a wildebok; but it is called a wild horned-ass by Lobo.<sup>244</sup>

DASSIES, from which Dassen Island derives its name, belong to the marmot family; salted and smoked they make a tasty and wholesome dish at the Cape. Most of the writers of travels who do not thoroughly understand Dutch, and have heard the name of this animal but have not seen it, try to identify it with the badger on account of its name being similar to that of the German "*Dachs*". This is wrong; no true badger is found in the whole

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<sup>244</sup> Lobo (d. 1678), a Portuguese Jesuit who conducted Mission work in Abyssinia. The habitat of the Kudu extends to Abyssinia.

of the Cape, nor does the so-called Stink-dassie in any way resemble a badger.

ELANDS are mostly found in the regions far to the North-east of Cape Town, namely from the Boesmans River in Kwamma-dagga and Agterbruinjies Hoogte, towards the North-easterly Sneeubergen and the Indian Ocean on the East. According to Kolbe's description of this animal, it cannot be identified with either the European or the American eland. Its legs are thin and long. Its body is bigger than that of a deer. Its horns, a foot long, are annulated below and smooth and pointed above. Its neck is thin and graceful; its hair ash-coloured, smooth and soft; the upper jaw larger and longer than the lower one; its chest broad, the tail being short like those of the European deer. Its flesh is tasty, and especially prized by those who salt and dry it for eating with beef or mutton in place of bread. According to Kolbe, its hide is not made into collars like chamois-leather, but used for sole-leather by the tanners; but this statement is unfounded. We have already shown above that the tanners and shoemakers, for lack of suitable tanning material, cannot even tan the ordinary ox-hide properly, though this is very thin in the African oxen, let alone eland-hide. Kolbe estimates the weight of this animal at four hundred pounds, but M. de la Caille writes with better reason that it weighs from eight hundred to nine hundred pounds, since it is larger than a Friesland horse.

Nothing is more ridiculous and stupid than Kolbe's description on pages 145 and 146 of the manner in which these animals are caught. He asserts that they are caught by nooses which are fixed in such a way to a bent pole that if the animal tries to walk in its usual narrow path in the orchards and treads on a prepared trap, the poles jerk upwards on account of their elasticity and the animal is caught in the noose. To make this trick more comprehensible to his readers, he has reproduced a drawing of it in his third copper engraving. Surely that is palpably a double untruth. For to begin with one finds these animals only in the most distant spots, where there are no houses or gardens. Further, if one were to find such a tree (which is impossible) which could lift a weight of eight hundred to nine hundred pounds on account of its elasticity, how could it be bent by



human hands in such a way that its point touches the ground? It would undoubtedly sooner break than be bent in this way. Yet the Abbé has been induced by Kolbe's account and perhaps also by wrong reports heard in Africa, to state on page 194 of the German Oldenburg edition, article 16, the following: "The account given by Kolbe, or in extracts and translations of his work, of how the elands are caught, is a very correct one." But the Abbé soon contradicts himself and states the opposite<sup>245</sup> on page 225: "What the author says here (p. 145) about the method of catching elands is the more absurd in that such an animal weighs from eight hundred to nine hundred pounds, and there is hardly a strong enough tree in the colony; the trees that grow in this country are very brittle and spongy or porous. This method is indeed applied when hunting, but not for elands, but to catch a kind of chamois of medium size, which weigh twenty to twenty-five pounds, and are called steenbucks".<sup>246</sup>

**ELEPHANTS:** This, the largest of all animals on earth, is so well-known, and has so often been seen alive, that it would be superfluous to give another description of it. I shall therefore touch merely on the most remarkable facts about it, and on points which have not yet been properly explained. It is a fact that neither in the male nor the female of the species, are the genital organs situated in the same position as those of other quadrupeds. The vagina of the female is under its belly and closes backward and not forward. The male organ points more to the front and is somewhat small in proportion to the body. Nobody has ever surprised them at their mating. Therefore it is at present doubtful whether they do it lying down or standing. People have even believed up to now that elephants are so shy in the performance of the act that they hide not only from human beings but also from their own kind. According to Sparrman's account, however, two farmers who live very far from the City watched for two hours how a female elephant tried to excite a male and this actually in the presence of several female and two male elephants: by which fact their presumed shyness has been fully

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<sup>245</sup> This criticism is well-founded.

<sup>246</sup> 'These steenbucks weigh hardly ten to twelve pounds', corrects the author.

disproved. The report of one of these eye-witnesses and observers in this connection is that the female lowered her head to the earth, drew up her hind feet towards her forefeet, thus exposing the whole belly which was stretched towards the male. Since, however, both the male elephants present desired to mate with the female and prevented each other from moving up to her, nothing came of it, so that after two hours both observers became annoyed, would not wait any longer and went off.

Here and there something has already been said about elephant hunting in Africa, and, in the introduction to Volume I, it has been shown that the Abbé de la Caille had been very badly informed in the matter. In many places, especially in Asia, a male elephant is, as is known, lured by a female into palisades whose entrance is very wide, but whose exit is very narrow and small. He is then prevented from leaving by barring the narrower end with trees and is caught in this way, taken to a still narrower prison and tamed by hunger and whipping. If they are not needed as domesticated animals but only their tusks are wanted, they are also trapped in covered pits, killed inside these and the ivory chopped off. At the Cape of Good Hope, however, as has already been stated, they are shot by the colonists at point-blank range. On the Hottentot method of hunting elephants, if they find one alone or can separate one from its herd, the esteemed reader will find a report in the last chapter of this Volume; a method which may seem hardly credible to the ignorant, but actually is less dangerous than when one tries to kill an elephant with powder and lead.

**WILD ASSES:** The members of the exploring expedition described in Chapter 8, stated that they had seen some at the Gamma River, but it is doubtful whether they did not mean by this the striped Cape ass or Zebra. That there are wild asses in some parts of Africa is certain. In the forests and wildernesses of Lybia and Media there are supposed to be many that roam together in herds and whose flesh is eaten when they are killed. They are grey in colour and can run very fast.

**ANTEATERS:** called "Aardvarken" by the Hollanders, have a kind of bristle on their body like other swine, but this is very thin and dark-red. Their back is bare of bristles and in size they

are hardly as big as a young pig of four or five months. They have no teeth, but a long pointed tongue which they can stretch to a great length. They feed on ants. Since there are numerous ant-heaps in the country, not constructed like those in Germany of many tiny forest sticks, but of clay and loam, the ant-eater digs a hole in one with its claws, lies in front of it and thrusts both its head and its long extended tongue inside, so that the ants climb on to its tongue but are prevented from getting off again by a sticky mucus, and are swallowed by the ant-eater. I can give no better description of these remarkable ant-heaps than in the words of the Abbé de la Caille who, in the Altenburg German edition, describes them as follows on page 197: "Ant-heaps are uncommonly plentiful at the Cape, especially in Zwartland; (*also in all other districts*).<sup>247</sup> One cannot take ten steps without finding one (*where the ground is uncultivated for they are not found on the cornfields*). There are some very large ones. I saw some of over two feet high and with a circumference of about four feet. Their shape is almost spherical, very often like an oblong hemispheroid. Even if they are built on very loose sand or quick-sand they are yet so hard (*being made of clay and loam*), that one cannot break them without much force, and a loaded wagon may pass over them without crushing them. No exit from them is visible. At the end of October and at the beginning of November the ants add a fresh layer to the old heap, sometimes on top, sometimes to one of the sides: for this purpose they make a few holes and cover them with a new layer in the form of closed passages or galleries: a long time passes before this layer which is an inch thick becomes as hard as the rest. When I broke open some of these ant-heaps in October, I found an astonishing multitude of ants inside which were still white, others were black, and some larger ones had very long white wings. The land-pigs (*earth swine or Aardvarkens*) make a hole of about eight inches in diameter and six inches deep in one side of these heaps; when they have depopulated an ant-heap in this way, it is generally deserted and remains empty; but occasionally the ants repair it and again live in it."

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<sup>247</sup> the passages in Italics are Mentzel's running comments.

I cannot refrain from giving the esteemed reader unpre-suming inducement for reflection by revealing to him my own thoughts. First let us think about the astonishing industry of the little insect. Its building materials are clay and loam, which are heavy and become still heavier because they have to be used when moist. In the rainy season this material would be too wet and in summer too dry and hard, so the ant chooses its time for building in October and November of every year, when most of the moisture has dried up and the material can be handled best. Who would be capable of calculating how many million loads a colony of ants has to carry for making such a heap? Of those heaps that are built on hard clayey soil I shall say nothing: but one also finds innumerable ant-heaps on very loose sand; but here there is no clay and no loam. The ants therefore have to fetch their building materials from a great distance and on top of it *over light quick-sand!* What endless trouble and hard work this little creature has to take upon itself! Perhaps the old winged ants carry the clay for this purpose, like bees their wax! This may be so, though it has never been proved, and the labour still remains the same. The ants build covered passages in these heaps resembling galleries; but no stores of grain or anything similar, as is the case in Germany, have been found in their dwellings. Nor does one find a trace of an entrance to their buildings. How do they live? Of course, nobody has yet taken the trouble to discover whether they have subterranean passages and storage vaults under these heaps. Are these ants entirely useless creatures? Can they offer nothing of value to man or beast? Without repeating that the ant-eaters feed on them, they are also greatly prized by birds. For medicinal use, they furnish an excellent *sal volatile oliosum*. People, especially those who live in such sandy and earthy places where no clay and loam are available, have also this benefit from these ant-heaps that when they want to build they can break them up and use them instead of clay and loam, which would otherwise have to be fetched from a distance of many miles. Wherever a farmer wants to make bricks, he also uses these ant-heaps. For this purpose no better material could be desired; for it is cleansed of all impurities and so cleared of the smallest stones, as though it had been washed or put through a sieve.

The ant-eaters, from which we have digressed in this little diversion, burrow in the earth like foxes, but are sometimes driven out of their holes by the bites of "Ystervarkens" or porcupines and have to surrender their homes to them. The meat of the ant-eaters when smoked is very tasty, but also very lean.

GIRAFFES are also called camelopards, since they resemble camels in the length of their necks, and panthers in the spots on their bodies. Among the quadrupeds the giraffe is one of the most graceful, and also the tallest if we take into account the height of its head. We had mentioned in Chapter 8 that when a female giraffe had been shot, its young one was caught too, but died soon afterwards. Governor Tulbagh sent its hide to Professor Allamand who had it stuffed and placed in the natural history museum of the Academy of Leiden. The giraffe has a neck like that of a cow, but a head like that of a horse. The height of the said female was found to be seventeen feet to the top of its head, but the length of its body was not quite six feet. This lack of proportion and queer gait makes the animal seem very clumsy for certain kinds of movement. It is white along the neck but tinted with light-brown diamond-shaped specks in front, which are darker brown on its hind quarters. It has two horns on its forehead standing out straight from the skull and nearly a foot long; they are not hollow and are covered with hide on which blackish hairs grow. On the centre of its nasal cartilage it has a little knob which looks like a rudimentary third horn. This animal also has a fine mane on its neck and on the greater part of its back. The male giraffe that was shot by Johannes Badenhorst of the above expedition on October the 17th, 1761 had the following measurements:

Length of Head	.. .. .	1 foot 8 inches.
Height to shoulders	.. .. .	10 feet.
From shoulder to head	.. .. .	7 feet.

Thus it was 17 feet tall like the female.

Length from shoulder to the loins	.. .. .	5 feet 6 inches.
From the loins to the tail	.. .. .	1 foot 6 inches.
Height of hindfeet up to the loins	.. .. .	8 feet 5 inches.

This animal is therefore unusually short of body, in comparison with its height, in this respect resembling the ostrich.

GERBO: the great Gerbo or big jumping mouse is far from common at the Cape.<sup>248</sup> Yet Mr. Holst brought one with him, caught in the mountains far distant from the City. In the Zoological garden belonging to the Emperor there is a live one, of which a picture in copper engraving is found in the second part of the *Short Description of the Cape*. Its entire body is only 1 foot 2 inches long, but the tail is three-quarters of an inch longer than its whole body. The hind legs up to the loins measure eight and three-quarter inches, the forelegs only three inches; thus it has continually to go on its hind feet with its body straight up in the air, but is able to make leaps of twenty to thirty feet. When it feeds, it sits down and stretches its hind feet straight out. It uses its forefeet as hands to bring food to its mouth; it also uses them to burrow very quickly into the ground. When it sleeps, it sits down with its hind feet extended in front, its head bent almost to the earth between these, and with both forefeet presses its three inch long ears over its eyes, and so seems to support and protect its head in its hands. It sleeps by day and is usually awake at night. It has great strength in its tail, and when it is seized by the tail, lashes furiously with it.

GNOU, called "*Xgnou*" by the Hottentots.<sup>249</sup> For an account of this animal we are indebted to Captain Gordon. It is almost the size of an ass, and according to the measurements taken of the first animal of this species known in Europe which is in the Zoological garden of H.R.H. the Prince of Orange, its height is 3½ feet and its length measured from between the ears to the tail, 4½ feet. Its colour is like that of the deer, cream with white tips producing a hoary effect. Its head is thick and resembles that of an ox. In front it is covered with long black hair up to its eyes. Its beard on the lower lip is also long but quite white. The eyes are black and large, around which the eyelids with their white hair form a star in whose centre the eyes lie. Above the forehead it has two black curved horns whose length, measured along the curve, is nineteen inches. The roots of the horns touch

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<sup>248</sup> the gerbille; called *aardmannetjie* by the Boers state Allamand and Klockner. The specimen here described must have been a veritable giant.

<sup>249</sup> The author adds that the X represents a smack or click of the tongue as will be explained more clearly below. The gnu described here is the black wildebeest.

and are almost seventeen inches in circumference and six inches high. Its mane of stiff hair,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, stretches from the upper part of the neck to the shoulder; more than half of the lower hair is white, the rest black. The back which is like that of a young foal, is smooth and the rump has two prominent fleshy growths which give it an appearance of breadth. The legs are slender like those of deer or roe. It is probable that it chews the cud, for it has eight incisors in the lower jaw but none in the upper. Occasionally it turns up the earth with its horns like the rhinoceros, kneels down to do it and remains for a fairly long time in this position. The tail is like that of a horse, with long white hairs; also it gallops like a horse occasionally, at the same time kicking up its heels. It makes two sounds or cries. The one is like the bellowing of an ox, with a long-drawn "gnou", the other like the call of a vulture, only louder. Its hair is in part very long, in part very short, strangely intermingled. Doctor Klockner has given the best description of this animal in his "*Short Description of the Cape*", page 182 et seq., where it may be read in detail. Professor Sparrman, too, gives an accurate description of it in the German translation of his travels.

Of HARES there are three kinds. Two of these closely resemble those of Europe, except that one kind is a little bigger, the other a little smaller. One seldom sees any in the districts nearest the City, nor are they plentiful further inland; more of them, even of the big ones, are devoured by vultures, jackals and other beasts of prey, than are eaten by human beings. The small mountain hares which are not nearly so big and have red tails like squirrels are sometimes to be found near the City, but rarely.

STAGS have a great deal in common with those of Europe, but also differ a great deal from them; for their horns have no branches, are about one foot long, smooth, round, and spiral, and are never shed. Von Buffon described one species by the name "Guib", but this name is unknown in Africa. Their flesh is not as tasty as of the European variety, yet they are shot freely, partly as food for the slaves, partly because they cause much damage to the crops. Their hide, if prepared like chamois-leather, is strong and durable, but I have not noticed whether these stags are subject to stag-worm which gnaws through the hide.

Dogs: By this name I imply only wild dogs, for it is not worth while saying a great deal about the tame ones since there is only the common kind, whose value consists in their watchfulness. One does not find any hunting dogs, but I believe they would be useful if they were trained and brought up by intelligent hunters. Wild dogs are a great menace to sheep; they form strong packs of thirty to forty and when they attack a flock of sheep, they tear many of them to pieces without devouring them, but leave them lying about intending apparently to carry them off during the night. They are, however, fetched by their owners, skinned and salted. If the shepherd is on his guard and has the courage to tackle the dogs, shouting loudly the while, he may sometimes drive them off with his stick, for there is no danger of being attacked by them. They do not harm a human being and, after once attacking a flock, do not return soon. They never stay long in one place, but always roam about in the most distant wilds, and attack all game they find without distinction, whether they be lions, tigers, leopards or hyenas, for they overcome everything by their numbers. Father Ant. Zuchell of Gradisca, in his description of his mission to the Congo,<sup>250</sup> calls them by the local name *Mebbien*. Among the curious stories told of them is that they share the game they catch with human beings.

JACKAL is the name given by the inhabitants of Africa to the fox which does not differ from the European kind except that it does not have as good a skin. But the latter is not needed there, since no furs are worn; a furrier who had to earn his living by his profession only would starve. The word *jakhals* is really a term of abuse and means a liar or person given to lying.

RABBITS were imported to the Cape from Europe and Dassen Island was stocked with them, but the oil-refiners who were formerly sent there every year, have thinned them out considerably. On the mainland I did not see a single one, the birds of prey having probably exterminated them.

LION: this fierce carnivorous animal is sufficiently familiar to us in our German fatherland, and may be seen alive in several places, being usually called the king of beasts. At night one is

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<sup>250</sup> Published at Venice in 1711.



frightened by its roaring but by day it is not nearly so dangerous as ignorant people imagine. Those who have to travel at night, in districts where lions are to be found, light small fires in three or four places around them and keep these going all night. Should a lion or any other beast of prey approach too near them they should throw a burning faggot at it and have no further fear; for all wild animals are afraid of fire, and dread coming too near it. By day, however, the lion (at least the African lion) is a timid beast, which is frightened and retreats not only at a shot from a gun but even the crack of a whip. At the Cape of Good Hope lions have been exterminated, scared or driven off, for a distance of fifty, sixty and more miles. In places where it frequents the rivers in the daytime, more to slake its thirst than to satisfy hunger, travellers usually crack their long ox whips a couple of times, or fire a shot before arriving at the river, so as to awaken and drive off any lions that may be sleeping there. Oxen, horses and all game show great fear, trembling and shivering, when they scent a lion at night; but during the day, even if they sight one close by, are not very scared at it. It seems to have become second nature with them as though they ought to know that the lion never undertakes daylight raids. He mostly stalks his prey at night; when he thinks he has judged the distance correctly, he leaps with one bound upon it and knocks it down. Should this leap fail and he does not reach his prey by it, he lets it go and slinks away quietly as though ashamed. If hunger compels him to attack an ox, horse or sheep or other animal during the day, it has often happened that he has been driven off by the shouts of women and children or even with sticks. He is shyest of womenfolk. If he sees a person approaching him from a distance, he moves off, but if he is unexpectedly surprised, he defends himself and leaps on the person, knocks him down with his heavy paws, yet does not wantonly kill him, but leaves him again. If his bound is unsuccessful, he loses heart and moves slowly away. A remarkable thing is that when a lion has seized an ox by the rump, he lifts it up and carries it off with neck and head erect, but a sheep he merely drags along. As we have already heard, the Cape Government has set a reward of 50 florins on the shooting of a lion, if shot point-blank and not by means of a trap-gun. Since however, no lions are

found less than 50 to 60 miles from the City, the colonists living in the interior do not even take the trouble to make a journey of seventy, eighty and more miles to deliver a skin for 50 florins, especially since they have always to produce sworn attestations that they did not kill the animal by means of a trap-gun.

**MOLES:** I am not talking of the small European variety. The larger African species is found deeper in the interior. It prefers to dig into sandy rather than into firm soil, and causes much inconvenience to riders and travellers, since both men and animals unexpectedly tread on their passages and fall. This animal is called *landmoll*<sup>250a</sup> by the inhabitants of Africa in contrast with the *blesmoll* which lives in firm ground and is only the size of the European type. But the former grows as big as a rabbit and according to Masson's account, feeds on the roots of *ixias*, *gladioli*, *antholyceae* and *irises*. This animal has a thick head and its snout resembles a good deal that of the East Indian rat, and though the eyes are small, they are larger than those of European moles: the hair is auburn and yellowish at the points. Its tail is covered with long yellowish white hair and may therefore not be compared with the German hamster, especially as it has no cheek pouches for carrying grain, like the former.

**PASAN** is an animal little known in Europe. It is remarkable on account of its special markings and the divers turns of its hair. I cannot prevail on myself to give a description of it, as I know absolutely nothing about it personally. I therefore refer the esteemed reader to the second part of Allamand and Klockner's *Short Description of the Cape* where on page 185 *et seq.* detailed information may be obtained.<sup>251</sup>

**PANTHERS:** It is not yet clear whether at the Cape leopards or tigers are meant by this term, so I refer the reader to the heading "Tiger" below. For my part, I can definitely affirm that I never heard the word panther or leopard at the Cape.

<sup>250a</sup> or rather *Zandmol*.

<sup>251</sup> From description and figure by Allamand and Klockner the *pasan* corresponds to the South African gemsbok (*Oryx gazella*).

**WILD HORSES:** That a species of wild horse exists in Africa, Leo Africanus<sup>252</sup> has long ago assured us, and this has been confirmed by Marmol.<sup>253</sup> The expedition described in Chapter 8 also saw white wild horses at the Gamma River. Kolbe also writes about them, stating that the inhabitants do not take the trouble to tame them, since they have plenty of other horses; but this writer is not very trustworthy. To catch a wild horse alive would in my opinion exact great skill and they can never be tamed until they are stabled. This I can state positively that none are found within a hundred miles of Cape Town.<sup>254</sup> Father Lobo also asserts that the unicorn is found in Africa. He describes it as a very beautiful horse, but very timid, speedy and with a long horn on its forehead. As this Jesuit's reputation is not such that one can take his bare word for it, one should look up Sparrman's description on page 453, where some facts are given which seem to me to shed more light on the subject.

**QUACHA OR QUAGGA:** This animal is really no zebra or wild Cape ass, but belongs to this species, with only a small difference in the stripes and colouring. What distinguishes above all the quacha from the zebra, is the fact that it has no stripes round its legs, that it is not so wild and uncontrollable and may be easily tamed. Some colonists have taken the trouble of taming some of these animals and harnessing them to wagons alongside their horses.<sup>255</sup>

**THE HONEY-BADGER:** It is greyish-blue, as long as a hare, taut, short-legged, with a smooth dog- or catlike tail; it tends to

<sup>252</sup> Leo Africanus (d. 1550), a native of Moorish Spain; his name was Latinised when he became for a while a convert to Christianity. From his writings Europe became acquainted with the culture of North Africa.

<sup>253</sup> The reference is to *L'Afrique de Marmol* (Paris, 1667) a French translation of a work originally published in Spanish at the end of the 16th century.

<sup>254</sup> The entry in Brink's Journal (for Nov. 22, 1761) reads: '*witte wilde Paarden, Ezels of Quachas*'. It is clear that the travellers were unable to distinguish between these. The 'wild horse' may have been a quagga which was white over the legs and rump. On the other hand Selater states that the ordinary zebra was called 'wildepaard' by the colonists.

<sup>255</sup> The quagga became extinct in the second half of the 19th century. Allamand and Klockner have an illustration of a quagga under title '*Le Zebre Femelle*'.

hide under stone heaps and does not dislike fowls and other poultry, but preferably feeds on them.

**RHINOCEROS:** the largest animal after the elephant and the hippopotamus. From the extreme tip of its muzzle to the root of its tail it is at least twelve feet long, and attains a height of more than six feet. In appearance its body is rather thickset and is made still more misshapen by the surrounding hide which is very thick, hard, inelastic, rough and hairless. The animal's gait would be impeded had not nature provided it with several pads and soft creases, which lie deep, especially behind the shoulder-blade and in front of the back loins. Flexible folds in the hide run round the neck and on either side of the rump towards the belly. Still another runs straight from the softer parts of the belly to the tail and likewise at the lower ends of the legs. All these folds are about three to four inches deep, and give and expand like the leather of a bellows through which it is deflated and inflated. These deep folds give the animal the appearance of being covered and hung with shields, which has given rise to some queer reproductions of it and fabulous tales about it: among them the following may specially be mentioned; that when a rhinoceros sees an elephant he attacks it by crawling under its belly, rips it open with the horn on its nose and kills it in this way. But if one reflects that neither of these animals is carnivorous, and has therefore no cause for jealousy, that the rhinoceros is far too big to sneak between the elephant's legs and crawl under its belly, one sees at once how foolish such fairy-tales are. In the year 1515, a live rhinoceros was brought from India to Lisbon for the King of Portugal, who presented it to the then ruling Emperor Maximilian. The famous painter, Albrecht Dürer, made a reproduction of it, either after a false and wrong description of it, or out of his own imagination, which, contrary to all sound reason, made it appear to be not only hung with shields, but profusely studded with knobs and nails and covered with fish-scales. Professor Sparrman has given a far more natural portrait in the German edition of the description of his travels. Kolbe, who pretends to have seen the animal in Africa, to have eaten of its flesh and smoked a pipe of its dung, was credulous enough to believe the myth about the elephant and to have Dürer's

drawing copied; this can be seen on plate 4 on page 158, but not without disgust, abhorrence and derision, for such false reproductions and untrue descriptions of unknown objects do greater harm than good to scholarship. Boccanelli's *Relationes ex Parnasso* are known to every scholar;<sup>256</sup> Gratianus compares it with a dish very highly spiced with salt and pepper. Had Boccanelli read Kolbe's *Caput Bonae Spei* he would surely have had it burnt on Parnassus; and Gratianus would have called it an insipid dish without salt and pepper. I have been assured by Boileau that he criticised Kolbe's work very severely, and he certainly did it no injustice. It is still more surprising that he — or the publisher of the *Illustrated History of Foreign Land-animals*<sup>257</sup> reproduces this very drawing of Dürer on the second leaf for the month of February 1747, and adds the myth of the elephant to it. As a bit of information, I would still have let this pass, if the rhinoceros-calf shown on this page had been drawn true to life. For in the year 1746 a Dutch skipper called Martje Dan (unless I am mistaken) brought a ten year old rhinoceros calf (the subject of the said copper-plate) with him and exhibited it in Berlin, Breslau, Glogau and many other places for payment. At the same time he offered for sale two copper-engravings of the animal in different sizes. The publishers would have done well to have had their plate engraved like either of these, for they could have had no better example.

They err who think that Dürer's drawing represents an older, full-grown male rhinoceros. It is the chimera of an idle freak-monger, and no such monstrous creature has been seen either in Africa or in the kingdom of the great Mogul, whence the reproduced calf originated. The difference between the two types consists mainly in that most African rhinoceri have two horns, one big, one small, but the Asiatic ones have generally only one. I say *mostly*, for in Africa one also finds some which have only one horn on the nose — and in Asia some which have two. Whether this is a difference of age, nature of the country or of sex, I

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<sup>256</sup> The reference is to Boccalini (not Boccanelli) who died in 1613. His *Relationes* was a satire on the actions and writings of eminent contemporaries. First published in Italian in 1612, it was translated in many languages and passed through several editions.

<sup>257</sup> This work is not listed in the British Museum Catalogue.

cannot say, but in the whole world I have never seen one with a horn and a saddle on its back as appears from the portrait mentioned.

This animal, though it was seen alive by many people in Germany in the year stated, is nevertheless probably known to very few people to-day: therefore it will not be inappropriate to give a somewhat more detailed description of it. Its entire body, especially the soft part of the belly, is covered with small hairless knobs. It is dark-brown in colour. Compared with its size, the head is longer than that of the elephant, but the eyes are much smaller and are so placed that it can mostly look only straight ahead, and little sideways. The upper lip can be stretched half a foot and ends in a pointed fleshy protuberance, which it uses as a kind of hand and imperfect trunk for taking up its food and putting it into its mouth. On its nose, embedded in the hide, it has a horn which is large or small according to the animal's age, but has not been known to exceed twenty-four to twenty-six inches in length. It is seldom more than six to seven inches thick at its base, somewhat olive-coloured at the lower end, but black at the upper; the point which has a sharp curve is weak and thin compared with the central part. Some of them also have a second but much smaller horn a few inches behind the first, which is shorter and smaller. The animal is supposed to be able to bend the large one back, while it is digging for roots with the smaller one, this however, has not yet been proved beyond doubt, and Sparrman who knew nothing of this supposition, did not investigate it. The African species mostly have two horns when full-grown, though at present it is uncertain whether they are an offshoot of the single-horned ones, but this seems the more credible. It is generally believed that the horns are affected by poison. Kolbe accepts this view and relates a lot of inconsistent nonsense of which he pretends to have been an eye-witness. This, however, is entirely untrue as I have already proved in Volume I of this book.<sup>258</sup> The animal has a much better sense of smell than of sight and gets the scent of a thing much more quickly than it can

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<sup>258</sup> Lichtenstein (V.R.S. 10, p. 106) says that he was unable to shake the popular belief that liquid poison became harmless when poured into a rhinoceros horn.

see it; for which reason one can easily escape its rage, by moving a little sideways and away from its wind. During the breeding season or when angered, it thrusts its great horn into the earth and rips it up like a ploughshare; when it is moving forward in this manner, no root, stone or whatever other obstacle may be in its way, can withstand it. Formerly its flesh was held to be inedible, but now we know from experience that it is good and wholesome. Sparrman who cut one open and examined the entrails, declares that he found no gall in it and this is the more credible since, if caught young, they easily become tame and companionable. The blood of these animals is carefully preserved by game hunters, and is supposed to be very useful as a remedy for different ailments, especially in cases of sprains and ruptures.

The inhabitants of Africa cut driving-whips or so-called *Schambocke* from its hide, and with these they are accustomed also to chastise the slaves. It is, however, prohibited by law to whip a Christian with it, since it inflicts agonising pain and cuts unbelievably deep into the flesh, drawing blood. I saw a female slave who had received a lash with such a *Schambock* over her shoulder. The point had made a cut in her breast as deep as a finger's thickness, leaving a scar which had the appearance of a human finger lying on her breast.

SEA-COW, HIPPOPOTAMUS, NILE OR RIVER HORSE: This is an amphibian and the largest of the quadrupeds after the elephant. It is never seen in the sea, but lives in the rivers by day. There it digs deep holes, coming up to the surface from time to time to breathe. At night these animals come ashore to graze and sleep; they also calve on land but soon take their young with them into the water carrying them to the surface on their backs to breathe. Occasionally, and when they do not find sufficient food on the river bank, they wander far inland to obtain adequate nourishment. Since the rivers in which they prefer to live are usually surrounded by thornbushes and other shrubs, they make their own passages through which they pass regularly, and this provides the best opportunity to stalk them and either to shoot them or catch them in concealed pits, in the making of which the Hottentots are great adepts. Their meat which resembles pork, is tasty and wholesome. Anyone affected with gonorrhœa, is supposed to be cured very soon

by eating of this meat or drinking some of the fat boiled out of it. Sparrman found the meat of a young hippopotamus calf very tender and dainty. In the natural history museum of H.R.H. the Prince of Orange, there is a stuffed animal of this species of medium size. Its length measured from head to back is 13 feet, but the body is  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet in girth. A female and a young calf have been stuffed by Dr. Klockner; a drawing of these, done from life, is to be found in Part Two of the *Short Description of the Cape* by Professor Allamand.

THE WILD AFRICAN BOAR<sup>259</sup> is one of the animals most dangerous to man when it is wounded, chased or otherwise infuriated. It is very fast, and charges a man quite unexpectedly and with incredible speed. Hottentots confess that they would rather tackle a lion than a wild boar. These animals generally roam in herds and when they have their young with them and danger threatens, they take the young ones in their jaws, and carry them along in their flight.

These boars resemble European swine, except that the head is unusually large, and that they carry bristles seven to eight inches long on their shoulders; the bristles are compact but thinner towards the rump and the tail and much shorter on the body. Their flanks and belly are perfectly white. Four formidable tusks are lodged in the jaw, two on either side. Those in the upper jaw are over six inches long, those in the lower a little shorter and thinner, so placed that when the jaws are closed, the lower and upper ones fit perfectly together. These are powerful weapons against attacks by tiger-hyenas and other rapacious animals. The snout is broad and flat in front, as hard as horn, and is used to rake up the earth and dig out roots. The eyes are situated on its forehead so that it can look only forward and very little sideways. Two fleshy growths below the eyes give the animal a distinctive appearance, as though it had four ears. Its colour is black-brown, its neck very short, the back therefore closely joined to the head: its tail is very thin, bare and not very flexible. A boar like this type, kept in the zoological garden of H.R.H. the Prince of Orange, was measured and the length of its body from

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<sup>259</sup> The wart-hog.



the end of the snout to its tail found to be ..	4 feet 10 inches.
Head to ears ` .. .. .	1 foot 5 „
Breadth between the two tusks on either side .. .. .	4 inches.
Height of forepart .. .. .	2 feet 2½ „
Length of forefeet .. .. .	11½ inches.

In the year 1778, the dried head of a wild boar was brought to Holland whose tusks, measured in a straight line, were almost nine inches long, and measured on the curve about nineteen inches. The circumference was 5½ inches. There seemed to be four molar teeth in each jaw, but after closer examination they were found to be in one piece, like those of an elephant.

THE PORCUPINE, (Dutch "Eizer-Varken") is now very well known and has often been exhibited for payment both in Germany and other countries to curious lovers of nature. Its flesh is edible; the mottled quills, some 10 to 12 inches long, are used as brush-holders by painters, but they are soft, flexible and contain internal marrow like that which one finds in the upper part of goose-feathers or quill-pens. It uses these quills as a protection against dogs and other foes, rolling itself up like a hedgehog, and concealing itself in them. A fairy tale not worth credence is that it can shoot off its quills like arrows and wound or even kill its enemies with them. The quills grow as firmly in its skin as the quills in the wings of a goose and, when the animal is shot or killed in any other way, these are plucked out one by one but with greater violence than goose-quills because they adhere so firmly. The animal has the knack of spreading its quills out and makes a noise like a rattle used for frightening birds, if one comes near it. But though I observed such an animal very closely in its wire cage at Amsterdam in the *Huis ten blaauwen Jan*, I could not discover how it produced such a din. If a porcupine wants to hide in the hole of an ant-eater, the latter has to give way, for it has no teeth and is no match for the former on account of its many quills.

(STEENBOK OR KLIPSPRINGER has already been described above under Buck).

STINKDAS is mentioned by all writers on the Cape, but has not been properly drawn or described by any of them. M. de la Caille describes an animal resembling it which had been caught by dogs and dragged behind a wagon, but it must definitely have been a different animal and no stinkdas. Kolbe gives details and tells us miracles about it in his usual way; namely that it squirts out its evil-smelling urine towards its pursuers and thereby drives them back; but how it can be possible for a male animal to squirt its urine backwards is a thing beyond both his and my knowledge of nature. In reality, he has never seen one. It may be expected of me to describe it in lively colours, but I have never seen one either, although I could easily have done so had I taken the trouble to look for it at a place where dogs had several times caught one. The following however may serve as proof of what I have said. The stinkdas is really called "stinkbilsen" at the Cape, the animal having a natural repulsive musk-odour of which dogs are very fond; this very odour betrays it. As soon as it approaches a farm too closely at night (for it is never seen in the daytime) whether in or off the wind, the dogs scent it and run after it without barking. Very rarely does it escape the dogs; they bite it to death without more ado, then they roll or trundle about on it in order to saturate their skin with the odour. This odour with which the dogs are only moderately impregnated, is not very offensive to males, but much more irritating, repulsive and detrimental to women; so that when dogs that have bitten the animal during the night and are permeated with its odour enter the house in the morning for their food, according to their habit, all the womenfolk immediately hold their noses and order the slaves, children or whoever is at hand to drive them out. This is the reason why I have contradicted both the Abbé and Kolbe; for the rest, I know nothing of the animal. A rather funny story comes to my mind in this connection and I want to tell it here. I arrived one afternoon at a certain farm whose owner had a fairly big tom cat. We dined in the entrance hall, according to their custom. The entrance doors consisted of an upper and a lower door. During the meal a female slave entered through the front door and a couple of large house dogs slinked in at her side. The slave unwittingly closed the lower door again; but her mistress, who had perceived the dogs, turned slightly in

her chair and said to the cat, which lay near the fire on a bench: "*Katte, jagt de honde heruyt*". On hearing this the cat jumped from the bench, boxed the ears of both dogs right and left and forced them to jump over the lower door and beat a retreat. I was present myself and saw it with my own eyes and can testify to it. As soon as the dogs had gone, the cat again curled itself up calmly in its place.

**THE SPRINGBOK:** A species of gazelle which Sparrman describes very well and of which he has given a most accurate portrait. It is therefore not necessary to say much about it here, except that it derives its name from its frequent jumps, for if they are hunted, they always take to flight with jumps of fifteen to twenty feet long and when they are together, as usual in herds, they jump continually one over the other. In this way, they waste more time than they gain, for their jump is very slow and takes up more time than is needed for running the same distance. The cold and warm Bokkeveld derives its name from the fact that formerly they were abundant there. Since this part became colonised, their numbers have considerably decreased. "At the same time", writes F. Masson, "it still happens once every seven or eight years that many herds of 100,000 strong, come this way from the interior of Africa, scatter all over the country, and leave no blade of grass or shrub uneaten." But this is an obvious mistake of the translator and should really read: "many herds of a hundred or a thousand strong".<sup>260</sup>

**TZAIRAN:** If any species of chamois exists at the Cape, this animal, with its black horns, curved in circular form, bears the nearest resemblance to it. But it has the size and shape of a deer, and its horns are annulated up to three-quarters of their length. The upper ends are very sharp and as smooth as if they had been polished. They are a good two feet long if measured on the curve.

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<sup>260</sup> The exact wording as given the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society, Vol. 66. (1776) p. 310 is: "It generally happens, however, once in seven or eight years, that flocks of many hundred thousands come out of the interior parts of Africa, spreading over the whole country, and not leaving a blade of grass or a shrub".

Far from being an 'obvious mistake' the statement was true. Herds of springbok estimated at several hundred thousand were seen occasionally up to the end of the nineteenth century. (Selater, I. p. 213).

The colour of its hair is light grey tinged with brown, the belly being white. The strangest fact about the animal is that the hair on its body does not grow in one direction, but partly forward, partly sideways and partly towards the tail. In front of its eyes towards the nose there is a faint white stripe which is dark-grey on its forehead. In comparison with its body, the ears are very long and pointed. On the lower half of its neck which is thinner than that of a deer the hair grows downwards, on the other half upwards. On its back it has a similar crown from which the hair grows partly towards the neck and partly towards the tail. Its tail is a little longer than that of a goat and ends in a tuft of hair. The forelegs are somewhat shorter than the hindlegs, as is the case without exception with all buck; in other respects its feet are like those of a deer. Its length measured from its nose to its tail is about six feet. Other measurements are in proportion to its length.<sup>261</sup>

TIGERS: Whether there are at the Cape genuine tigers or only tiger-cats, leopards, or panthers, is a point greatly debated in Europe, and I am incapable of deciding it.<sup>262</sup> In the year 1732, I saw at the Ranger's lodge in Dresden a speckled tiger, and a striped leopard (at least that is what they called it). It was, as far as I remember, a little smaller than the tiger, of a light-brown colour, and somewhat striped from its back to its belly. I never saw or heard of such an animal at the Cape. The Dresden tiger purred like a cat and often gnashed its teeth; those at the Cape are also supposed to do this. They also have round spots like those on the one I saw at Dresden. The grenadiers of the Cape garrison wear on their caps instead of a metal plate a shield of mottled tiger-skin cut from the skins which the colonists hand in and for which they get a reward of 10 Rixdollars.

Whether the Cape tigers are of the same size or smaller and therefore only tiger-cats, I cannot say. Kolbe (on page 156) describes very clearly the difference between a tiger and a leopard.

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<sup>261</sup> From the figure in Allamand and Klockner there seems little doubt that this antelope belongs to the *Hippotraginae* family — the horns are unmistakable. But the absence of mane, the colouring and slender shape of the body suggests the extinct blaauwbok (*Hippotragus leucophaeus*) rather than the better known roan (*Hippotragus equinus*).

<sup>262</sup> The 'tiger' of the colonists is invariably the leopard.

but I do not rely on his testimony. Only this is certain that tigers are to be found more frequently nearer Cape Town than lions which have long ago withdrawn far into the interior of the country. The tiger prowls at night, merely stalking its prey by day and springing on it as soon as it sees an opportunity; but just like the lion, it makes one bound only and if this is a failure, leaves its prey alone. If it gets a chance of raiding a sheep kraal at night, it wreaks great destruction inside. For it is not satisfied with one sheep, but strikes down many and drinks their blood to repletion to start with; it then carries one off to consume the flesh. This damage one could still overlook, but at such an occurrence, all the sheep in the kraal jump over each other, crowd and suffocate one another and, unless one arrives in time and makes room by tearing down the clay wall round the kraal, one might lose more than a hundred at one time, according to the size of the flock. Hence all the farmers, those afar as well as those living near the City, build fairly high walls round their sheep kraals. Those farmers who live far inland among the Hottentots have less to fear from lions, tigers and tiger-wolves at night than in the daytime: for the Hottentots, who build their huts round the houses of the colonists and their kraals, keep several fires burning throughout the night, and the wild animals fear these and do not approach them. We have already mentioned that the Company formerly paid 10 Rixdollars without exception for a dead tiger; but at present, since it is too difficult for the killers to obtain an affidavit that the animal was not killed by a gun-trap, and since tigers are no longer to be found near the City, it is not worth while for the inhabitants to undertake a long journey to deliver a tiger-skin for the sake of 10 Rixdollars. I know of no instance where a tiger stalked an ox or horse by day and attacked it. But when these animals scent a tiger at night, they usually take to their heels, and a rider has then to take great care that his horse does not throw him and bolt.

A tiger once attempted to jump into a cattle kraal belonging to a farmer known to me, but as the oxen immediately scented it and probably also saw the tiger's head and its flashing eyes, they all jumped up, gathered together and placed their heads with the horns facing forward, and the tiger withdrew. A slave who had noticed that the oxen were restless, had opened a window in the slave-house and saw this happening.

**TIGER-WOLF:** This is the name given to hyenas by the inhabitants of the Cape.<sup>263</sup> It is a mischievous animal which is not seen in the daytime, but all the more at night and is still to be found in the vicinity of Cape Town and in all the districts. Of all wild animals, Kolbe has (on page 172) described the tiger-wolf best. He really did see it and I quote Kolbe's own words:<sup>264</sup> "It is fairly large and in this surpasses a sheep-dog,<sup>265</sup> has a broad head like an English bulldog or blood hound, and a wide jaw with sharp teeth. Both nose and ears are large and the ears long. The hair is shaggy like that of a sheep-dog<sup>266</sup> and mottled like a tiger.<sup>267</sup> On the cloven toes of its big broad feet are strong claws or nails, which it can retract or stretch out like a cat so that it may go unrecognised by its tracks when out prowling.<sup>268</sup> The legs are fairly thick and the tail very short, somewhat like that of a deer or a hippopotamus; but is just as hairy as the rest of its body. This animal is very rapacious, greedy, and when really hungry, dangerous to man as well". It feeds not only on the flesh of its prey, but also on carrion; yea, if it scents the odour of human corpses, it will even disinter and eat these if they are not buried deep enough. The bodies of dead Hottentots are often disturbed by them, since these are generally buried in very shallow graves. It is nothing unusual for these animals to come to the roadstead (jetty) near the City and devour the discarded entrails of slaughtered sheep. But, neither in this case nor at any time do they attack people, if only they have enough to eat.

**ZEBRA OR CAPE WILD STRIPED ASS:** The last animal which I intend to describe is undoubtedly the handsomest of all animals in Africa. When it is alive, one cannot turn one's eyes away from it;

<sup>263</sup> 'Tigerwolf' or simply 'wolf' is the vernacular name for the spotted hyena (*Hyaena crocuta*).

<sup>264</sup> The author's running commentary is for convenience deleted from the text and appended below. (notes 265-268).

<sup>265</sup> 'He means a Cape dog which is bigger than the European sheep dog'.

<sup>266</sup> 'i.e. European, for there are no shaggy dogs in Africa'.

<sup>267</sup> 'The colour of its body is black-brown, with spots of light brown or yellow'.

<sup>268</sup> 'Yet its spoor is well-known, there being little difference between it and that of a tiger'.

but as soon as it is dead, the glossy shine of its hair becomes dull and lustreless. Because of its long ears, its mouth, the low-placed eyes (which are however, very bright) and the tail, which has a tuft of long hair only towards its point, this animal is classed among the asses. But the shape of its body, which is generally well filled, fleshy and plump, the grace of its well-proportioned legs, the lightness of its feet, its sprightliness and its boldness, all this gives it the air of a well-trained horse which, though on the small side is larger than an ass. From its shoulders over its entire back, rump and tail, there runs a black stripe narrowing at the tail to the width of the little finger. From this stripe innumerable others run on either side, now white, then black alternating with dark brown stripes at equal spaces, so distinctly outlined and regular that, seen from a distance, the animal looks exactly as if it were girded with belts, alternately black and white and all following the contours of its body. At the same time these girdles have a few small intermediate spots at the thickest part of its body which gradually fill up the empty places left by the long stripes. In the male the stripes are more yellow than white in shade with black in between but always glossy, bright, I might say even sparkling with life; the beauty of its colouring is generally enhanced by the shimmer reflected from its strong thick hair. Kolbe's copper-engraving of this animal (plate 3, page 144) is the best of all his illustrations. Its mane stands four or five inches high on its neck, but quite short on its back as far as it reaches. The hair of the mane is of the same colour as the stripes which it crosses. Its head is the most beautiful part of the animal. On this the stripes run narrowing lengthwise to its mouth.

The internal structure of the Zebra (which I have never seen) is said to be hardly distinguishable from that of a horse or an ass. It is only a pity that the animal is untameable, and cannot be ridden or harnessed. I saw three of them alive in the Company's stables, but one became so violent when led on a certain occasion from the stable to the enclosure that the rope snapped; the zebra escaped but was killed when it jumped into the draw-well situated there. The other two were not so unruly; they belonged to the Governor Jan de la Fontaine, and he took them with him to Holland in February, 1738, but they died on the way, poisoning being suspected. I saw a mounted skin of one of

these at the *Blaauwe Jan* in Amsterdam, but its beauty was also dead. This happens to all of them, whether they die or are shot, as one can see from those which the German furriers sometimes hang in front of their warehouses, passing them off as sea-horses. Zebras can never be caught except in the breeding season, when they sometimes join tame asses along with whom they allow themselves to be driven into the kraals where the asses are penned up for the night. Since one can sometimes catch a male and more rarely a female in this way, it does seem as though this species should be classed with the asses rather than the horses.

Lord Clive once brought a female zebra from the Cape to England. After a while he had an ass put with it in the Zoological Garden, but the Zebra would not allow the ass to approach her. Lord Clive then decided to have the ass painted in the same colours as the zebra. In this way the female was deceived and allowed the painted ass to mate with her, the resulting foal being exactly like its mother. In the year 1740 the King of Candia in Ceylon wanted a pair of zebras and made a request of the Governor of the Cape, Hendrik Swellengrebel, to that effect. Notices were immediately issued offering a reward of 200 ducats for each zebra caught and delivered. Whether the King's wish could be fulfilled I cannot say.

With the illimitable kingdom of the birds I cannot concern myself, partly because I do not understand it, partly too because I have not promised to describe the three kingdoms of nature. I do, however, want to describe an amusing little incident which happened to me personally connected with the vulgar eagles of Africa, called "Strontvogels" there. I had noticed that five such eagles were accustomed every evening to settle for the night on a very tall oak-tree in the garden of a farm occupied by slaves only. A good friend of mine, a nearby farmer, once mentioned that he would like to have a wing of such an eagle to use for sweeping up the ears of wheat that were left over during the cleaning of a threshing-floor: accordingly, towards dusk of the next day I took my gun, loaded it with slug for lack of strong buckshot, and as soon as I found that the eagles had hidden their heads in their wings and were asleep, I stole softly beneath the tree and shot one. I soon noticed that it was still alive, but



believed I had given it a severe enough wound: therefore binding its legs together, I hung it on the gun over my shoulder and carried it with me in this way. It was fairly heavy and was so big that its head touched the ground, so that it curved its neck to prevent its head from knocking against the earth and stones. Had it not been after sunset and the bird too stunned, it could have bitten me badly in the calf. Thus I happily brought the eagle to my friend, who showed great pleasure at it. In the meantime he unbound its legs, and as it was still alive, left it for the night on a rafter in a room, intending to slaughter it the next morning. On the following morning, however, a daughter of my friend absent-mindedly opened the window shutter of this room which, like other rooms in the house, did not have glass panes, and the eagle immediately flew out at the window, to the great disappointment of my host who looked helplessly on. Neither this bird nor any of its four companions came to roost again on this tall oak-tree; apparently the eagle had been more stunned than wounded by the slug and its strong feathers had not been pierced by it.

The ostrich, flamingo, spoonbill, known there as the pelican, the penguin and some others, would be worth describing, but they have already been adequately described by other more competent men and copying is not my business.

I have never had anything to do with snakes, scorpions, lizards, spiders and such vermin, still less studied their natural history. This I can say in good faith, that there are no American rattlesnakes in the whole of the Cape. The largest snake I saw there was sulphur-coloured and about four and a half to five feet long. I came unexpectedly upon it in a small bush; it reared up the forepart of its body towards me, opened its jaws and hissed at me. I could easily have thrown a goose-egg into it, so wide did it open its mouth. Although I had a loaded gun with me and might have killed it, I wanted the bullet for a crane which I was stalking; had also had a bit of a fright and was trembling so that I did not trust myself as I would have been done for if I had missed.

Of the very poisonous cobra I saw none over three feet long. Its back is greenish-brown and covered with longish scales. I

left at the Cape a cutlass whose scabbard I had covered with the skin of a cobra which I had luckily killed with a dung-fork. This snake I found in a horse-stable under the manger, curled up in a circle from the centre of which it lifted its head and hissed at me. I seized a dung-fork and speared it: fortunately I hit it right behind the head with a prong of the fork, otherwise things might have gone very badly with me as was afterwards made clear to me. Of other snakes, none is more repulsive, dangerous and venomous than the speckled one found dead and described by Kolbe on page 215, without giving it a name. I saw one alive, larger and thicker than the one he describes. It had pink, white and brown spots that aroused a strong feeling of disgust. It is seen only when it is very warm during a South-easter.

Of course there are more of them in a great variety, especially a small snake of about fifteen inches long, one finger thick and black-brown in colour, whose poison is not fatal, but yet dangerous, because it has a habit of hiding among the leaves of garden and other plants, and stings or rather bites those who bring their hands too close to it: for snakes do not sting at all, but bite and at the same time spray poison into the wound; this poison is contained in small white cysts on either side of their mouth. Can a snake after having once sprayed its poison, gather some more and again become deadly? That is still a point at issue. There are also tree-snakes, but I never saw one: of the snake-stone used by some colonists as an antidote against snake-bite I have already written in Volume One.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

### Of the Climate of the Cape of Good Hope and the usual Illnesses prevailing there.

Of all the possessions of the East India Company in Asia and Africa south of the Equator, the Cape of Good Hope is the most salubrious settlement for Europeans. The whole of Southern Africa, as far as it is colonised by the Dutch, is supposed to stretch from  $33^{\circ}51'$  to about  $28^{\circ}$  south latitude;<sup>269</sup> the climate, except in the high mountain ranges, is very temperate. The air is pure and is cleared constantly by winds, which also moderate the intense heat. Without doubt, Cape Town would be the unhealthiest spot in the whole Cape, did not the South-east wind mostly prevail there and drive away the mists rising from the sea: for the City lies enclosed in a semi-circle between Devil's Peak, Table Mountain and Lion's Rump, and as it also faces due North the sun's rays are focussed, or as it were concentrated, on this valley. This would cause unbearable heat, such as is experienced on the hottest days of summer on occasions when the South-easter does not blow. The mists which rise then from the roadstead or bay facing it, and which are gradually pressed down by the sun into this semi-circle surrounded by the mountains, as well as those which the sun draws from the mountains, would make this place most unhealthy. But an all-wise Providence has ordered the South-east wind from the beginning of Creation, to scatter and drive away and purify these harmful mists and to turn the place into one of the healthiest resorts in the entire Southern hemisphere. When ships arrive on their return voyage

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<sup>269</sup> That is approximately from Cape Town to the Orange River on the West. For the North-Eastern frontier Mentzel had only Sparrman's map to go by which placed the Sneeuwbergen (incorrectly) at about the 28th parallel of South latitude. The actual boundaries of the Colony at the time this book was being written were, according to the map in Theal, III. p. 277, on the N.W. the Buffalo R. and on the N.E. Plettenberg's Beacon, in either case about 2 degrees further South. The extreme Southern tip of the colony, Cape Agulhas, is at latitude  $34^{\circ} 50'$ .

from the East Indies, or from Europe, one sees among the invalids brought to the hospital people who resemble a corpse more than a living person; and even those who are still supposed to be well have an appearance worse than that of nuns who have been imprisoned in their cells for fifty years. The latter, however, after eight to fourteen days become so perfectly well that they recover their former complexion and one can hardly believe them to be the same persons. Most invalids who have to be carried from the shore to hospital by four slaves on light beds, return to their ships within three or four weeks, strong and healthy and one can hardly notice that they had been ill. The pure air and fresh meat and vegetables have often contributed more to their recovery than the doctor with all his medicines. As soon as the patients are able merely to get out in the fresh air, move about and go for walks one notices, with the greatest surprise, how their health improves from day to day and how their pallor disappears.

In this respect the African-born colonists resemble the young farmer lads of Pomerania, being hale, healthy, strong and with a fresh colour. The womenfolk, without exception, have a lively complexion and bloom like roses. Those Europeans who stay at the Cape, as soon as they become accustomed to the air, the climate, the food and local conditions, and have overcome the first assaults of a few minor illnesses, especially the Persian sickness, thrive uncommonly well afterwards, so that it very seldom happens that a soldier or a sailor has to be taken to hospital on account of illness: if it does happen it is usually his own fault. For the Cape mutton and vegetables are very tasty, and the new arrivals who still have their stomachs full of the crude ship's fare have such an uncontrollable appetite for these, that they know no bounds but as long as they have anything left to turn into money, they do not eat but gorge so immoderately and overload their stomachs to such an extent that they must necessarily become ill. Now, as soon as they have thus over-eaten themselves that they cannot swallow the coarse ration bread any longer, and eat their food without bread, it is an unfailing sign that they will have to take to their beds in a few days, and sometimes even have to bite the dust for that reason. In all the districts of the Cape one finds quite old people of seventy to eighty years, who are in perfect health and hardly seem fifty years old. I have even seen several

men between the ages of seventy and eighty carrying their own small children in their arms or dandling them on their knees.<sup>270</sup> Epidemics are unknown there and even if some patient in hospital has an infectious disease, there is no instance of its having spread beyond the hospital walls. Still, according to Sparrman's account, he witnessed the outbreak of an epidemic disease there about the year 1775, when after unaccustomed heat, the weather changed in a moment to quite unusual cold.

Therefore when, for the sake of completeness, I have to say something about the illnesses usually found there, it will not be necessary for me to entertain the esteemed reader with an unpleasant lecture on disgusting diseases. On the contrary, this Chapter will be the shortest of all, and many a valetudinarian will wish to live in such a land, where water and air are truly elements that make the greatest contribution to the retention of lasting health.

The first of the most common diseases prevalent there, and which above all attacks Europeans shortly after their arrival, is the so-called *Persie* or Persian sickness. It is a kind of dysentery, not indeed fatal but very weakening and exhausting; but it may become dangerous enough, unless timely precautions are taken. Newly-arrived Europeans, who have drunk little or no wine in their fatherland, develop a special fondness for the immature sweet Cape wine which they can often obtain to excess, and even free of charge. This may probably be a first cause of illness, aggravated by the abrupt change of climate, water and food. A very good antidote is supposed to be a red dry astringent wine taken with toast and grated nutmeg. Another remedy is the bitter yellow flesh of the pomegranate in which the sweet juicy seeds are embedded; but on account of its harsh, bitter taste that sets one's teeth on edge, people can very seldom accustom themselves to use it.

Besides these, the fine Muscovite rhubarb is the best and surest remedy. I had been at the Cape for more than five years

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<sup>270</sup> Barrow, on the other hand, says 'instances of longevity are very rare, few exceeding the period of sixty years' (II. p. 14). This he attributes to eating to excess 'of animal food swimming in fat' and to a sedentary mode of life. Mentzel is here a safer guide than Barrow.

before I suffered a severe attack of this sickness which made me very ill in a few days' time and caused me to lose a great deal of blood. The wife of lieutenant (later Captain) Allemann, sent me a bottle of genuine Pontac, which she herself had received as a gift from an English captain. This I took with toast and nutmeg in the manner described above, and after twenty-four hours I was rid of the sickness.

All kinds of illnesses which are accompanied by slow fever are called *Coorts* by the Dutch doctors. Such illnesses are very common at the Cape, but are not very severe; for in all cases of slight indisposition, the learned doctors, after feeling the patient's pulse, pronounce: „*De Coorts is open*”, or “there is some fever”. The cold quotidian, tertian and quartan fever is, however, quite unknown here.

Very seldom does one hear of burning, spotted and putrid fever, except in hospitals, and no one has ever heard of epilepsy. Small-pox in epidemic form breaks out only every forty or fifty years according to statements of the Hottentots and recent experience. As far as we know such epidemics raged only in 1713 and in 1755, causing great mortality, especially in the first-named year, both among those of European descent and among slaves and Hottentots. The pox, caught by most children in their tender years, is no real pox but chicken-pox, and the patients are not kept in bed but walk about.

Gout is contracted by many a too ardent lover of Cape wine, East Indian arrack, and Dutch distilled brandy; otherwise it is not a common disease. Those too, who have lifted too many glasses of an evening, feel a pressure or cramp in their calves at night and complain more of headaches the next morning than other people who keep a sensible diet: for most Cape wine, especially the mixed wine, has the fault of having too great an effect on the brain. The inhabitants of the country districts are more often afflicted with pain in the joints or rheumatism than with gout. This is quite different from gout (*chiragra*) or the *malo ischidiaco* and may probably be caused by eating much of the less digestible foods, especially salted dried and smoked meat of big game: deer, eland and the like: since, of course, those who live far inland

and among the mountains, have no reason to complain of an abundance of wine. Such patients then make use with good results of the baths of Hottentots Holland, mentioned in Chapter Three.

At the Cape one must beware of night and moist air more than in all other places, and one must never sleep in front of open windows, still less too lightly covered during the hottest days of summer. Some newly-arrived sailors and soldiers, still unacquainted with the nature of the country, sometimes wish to give themselves a treat in very warm weather, and because in this season they are plagued a great deal by bugs and fleas in their barracks, they lie down outside and sleep in the open air. If they cover their head and face on such occasions no harm is done; but if they leave their heads bare and the moon shines on them, they get a head and face twice as large as usual. I stated in Volume I that some soldiers and sailors undertake to do their comrades' washing, to earn some money, and for this purpose go to a brook below Table Mountain, where more than a hundred male and female slaves are always busy with their masters' laundry. Now, those new arrivals, who are inexperienced, usually take off their shirts at this work and wash these at the same time, and in this way stand in the sun, stripped to the waist, and are in their opinion very comfortable. But in the evening when they return home, and during the following days and nights, one sees that they are really miserably ill. If such a person were to receive a hundred lashes on his back, it would in his opinion cause less pain than he has brought on himself by this exposure. These people become quite stiff, cannot move or turn, and complain more of their pains than the most gouty person; after six or eight days the entire skin peels off their backs.

In the month of February everyone has to guard against colds, catarrh and fluxions of the chest; for this reason one must avoid the open night-air and guard against all draughts as far as possible.

In spite of the fact that the womenfolk generally have fairly bad teeth, one does not hear them complain of toothache as often as in Europe. Their bad teeth are probably due to their habit of using too much sugar candy which they put in their mouth when

drinking tea or coffee and which they keep there until it is entirely consumed. That they do not complain a great deal of toothache is probably due to the air which is always warmer than in Europe, and does not strike the teeth so coldly. Of diseases of the eye, from which Kolbe suffered, and which by way of excuse he tried to pretend were common, I never heard a word. The sole case was that of the worthy Director of the Secretariat, afterwards Governor Tulbagh, who was rather often inconvenienced thereby: but this exemplarily living gentleman certainly did not get an attack from over-indulgence in wine, of which the Abbé de la Caille accuses Kolbe.

Now I cannot, of course, say that this is a summary of all diseases prevalent there and that no others are found; for people's bodies are subject to so many fortuitous illnesses for which the doctors themselves sometimes have no name, nor can they discover their origin. But those already mentioned are the commonest, and the slight disorders which mostly arise from an upset stomach or a cold or a careless neglect of oneself, cannot be called usual or general: and since these ailments are mostly self-caused, they are quickly cured by medicines and home remedies. Especially sore throats, dropping of the uvula, and sometimes festering of the tonsils, are mostly caused by sitting carelessly in a cool draught.

Venereal diseases, especially *Gonorrhœa benigna* and *maligna* very often affect sailors, soldiers and slaves, who are in all cases infected by the dissolute female slaves. Some allege that these harlots, without being infected themselves, have a trick of infecting those who have not paid them well enough, or those with whom they cohabit but from whom they do not receive enough pleasure, or of whom they have got tired. But I cannot vouch for the truth of this. I have heard from several who have been infected with this disease, that they cured themselves merely by eating a piece of meat or fat of a hippopotamus, and by drinking the melted fat. But if they have to seek a cure from the hospital doctor, it costs them two ducats, which they have to pay in advance; on the other hand, if the patient, when using the medicines leads a continent life and avoids Bacchus and Venus for the time being, he soon gets rid of it. Of female diseases the



womenfolk would naturally not speak to men and especially not to unmarried ones: yet their invariably fresh and rosy complexions prove clearly enough that they do not suffer much inconvenience from their menstruation. I cannot recollect having seen a single one with a pallid face, still less a yellow one, which is usually regarded as a sure sign of obstruction or entire stoppage. As is well-known the African womenfolk drink a great deal of tea and since the kettle is at hand practically the whole day, they always keep near it a small tin or porcelain teapot, the size of a teacup; into this they strain a little saffron in boiled water and pour a few drops of it in a dish of tea. This they drink themselves and offer to ladies or gentlemen present. Possibly this infusion helps to regulate their bodily functions. One thing I have also noticed, that instead of tea they sometimes drink *cardo benedictum* which they call *Kormandyk*, presumably when they are experiencing some indisposition.

On the other hand, regarding Kolbe's assertion that *fluor albus* is common among the womenfolk at the Cape, this may be true of the dissolute female slaves, but that it should be common among the white women seems to me mysterious and doubtful because he writes that he obtained his information from the barbers. There are no barber-surgeons there except the junior surgeons in the hospital; the civilian ones are only beard-shavers and do not practise surgery. The junior surgeons of the hospital are always very young men, most of whom have hardly finished their training in Europe and join the East Indian ships as soldiers because they cannot obtain employment. Both in Africa and the East Indies such young men are only employed as assistants to the doctors and surgeons in the hospitals, to give the patients their medicines, smear the plasters, undo the bandages and put them on again, and do similar jobs. Now I ask any sensible person, who has talked with womenfolk, whether a single respectable woman is likely to confide in such an inexperienced young bachelor and entrust their secrets to him? *Fluor albus* is indeed acknowledged by doctors as an illness which arises from a stoppage of the menstrual flow and may therefore affect respectable women too. At times though, it is also supposed to be venereal and corresponds in the female sex to what is called "gonorrhœa" in men. Thus

Kolbe had no need to display his ignorance, and thereby to make the whole fair sex there, if not suspect, then at least ashamed.

I have stated several times that not only the womenfolk at the Cape but also the men drink a great deal of tea. This may contribute somewhat to the proper purification of the female sex. But many a man may ask of what use is all the tea-drinking to men? Therefore I take the liberty of writing something about tea on this occasion which I hope will prove not entirely uninteresting to at least some of my readers.

As is known, tea grows only in China and Japan, for the kind discovered in America a few years ago compares very unfavourably with that. However, at the Cape of Good Hope none is grown, but that does not prevent an incredibly large quantity from being consumed yearly in that country. The Europeans as well as the Africans drink it at all hours of the day and sometimes even fairly late at night. One may enter a house in the City any time after 9 o'clock in the morning and find the tea-kettle on the table, and be served with a cup of tea. In the districts where vines are not grown, it serves as a refreshment for the farmers, and a tonic for the slaves. For this reason many colonists give their slaves a little tea of the ordinary kind, if not daily then quite often; and hardly a housewife will send her slave with the laundry to the washing-place without giving him or her some tea and candy. This is very sensible of them, for if the slaves stood in the hot sun all day and became heated from the washing and were then to drink water, they would soon become ill, for they were accustomed to drink tea in their homeland. At harvest time, too, every prudent farmer gives his slaves a little tea after their midday meal; without it they would suffer from thirst in the afternoon heat on the field.

It is common knowledge that this drink is taken excessively in Holland and all sea-ports. An old Dutch doctor, Bontekoe, writes that one can never drink too much tea. The famous doctor Unzer of Altona on the other hand, seems to have a real aversion to tea, and tries to discourage everyone from taking it. Marperger also seems to have been no friend of tea, and tries rather to disparage it in his Journal for merchants *sub rubrica Thee*; to give his contention an appearance of truth, he writes that the

Chinese know the use and value of our sage plants far better than we ourselves do, and are quite eager to exchange two pounds of tea for one pound of sage-leaves, and this should be clear proof that tea is not of great value. If this proof is valid, I should like to reverse it, and ask whether, if a Chinese travelled three thousand miles from China to Europe and brought tea with him, would we not gladly give him six pounds of sage for a pound of tea? For what is plentiful in one country is not highly valued there, but what has to be brought very far from distant places costs so much more.

I had a discussion with a clever doctor in Amsterdam about the frequent use of tea, the result of which I cannot withhold from the esteemed reader: "In Holland and in all seaside towns (said this doctor), much tea is and ought to be drunk. For we eat a good deal of salt-water fish, oysters and mussels, also salted, dried smoked fish and many kinds of pickled fish, likewise much salted and smoked meat, ham and tongue; therefore mostly such foods as only too easily clog the stomach, putrefy and leave residues which cannot be cleared or drained off except by much drinking. Our beers are generally too heavy; the Moll (a sort of light beer) of Nymwegen is too cooling, and here in Amsterdam the fresh beer is thick and unwholesome while old beer, which is brewed in March and November, is harsh and difficult to digest. What, then, are we to drink? Good drinking-water we do not have and besides who can continually swill water? Were we to drink as much wine as is necessary for the purpose, it would be going from bad to worse. The common man does drink a great deal of brandy and believes he is strengthening his stomach by this means, but he is wrong, and would not be able to stand it long if no tea were to be had at all. Under these circumstances then, no drink is more suitable than tea for us in Holland and for all inhabitants of sea-ports and, besides, many kinds of epidemic putrid fever would spread in our country, whose "*causa efficiens*" or "*materia peccans*" is removed by tea."<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Lichtenstein, himself a physician, was of opinion that the hysteria to which women are liable may be due to excessive tea drinking. (V.R.S. 10, p. 131).

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN.

### **Of the Hottentots, as the Original Inhabitants and Real Owners of the entire Cape of Good Hope: in so far as they live outside of Capetown on the West Coast, to the North-West and to the North.**

Hottentots are counted among the uncivilised races by all writers of travels who have visited the Cape of Good Hope and have written something about it. These authors are right in so far as the Hottentots build no cities, live in the most distant parts, between the mountains, in valleys, in wildernesses, along the rivers, in the bushes and forests, migrate from one place to another, acknowledge no authority, accept no laws except those they have chosen for themselves and have observed by long custom. But in comparison with other wild African nations, such as Kaffirs, Angolese, Terletans and those who live round Guinea, Sierra de Leone, and other places on the West Coast of Africa, who live in constant war with their neighbours and sell not only their prisoners but their own subjects, yea even their children as slaves to the Europeans, then the Hottentots are far more moral, humane, just, honest and faithful, and in their inordinate way of living, they are guided, as it were, by a rule which they do not violate. Of course, I except those wild Hottentots who are called *Bosmannen* or Bushmen: for these are very much inclined to rob, steal and murder, know of no fixed principle, live scattered about in ravines and rocks, band themselves together only when they wish to attack the tame Hottentots and are a complete contrast to the latter. When, however, these Bushmen are compared with the American savages, who ill-treat their captured enemies in the most pitiful way in cold blood, torture them and kill them in the most painful manner they can think of, and afterwards devour them — then, even the Bushmen may to some extent be called civilised. These Bushmen live between the highest mountains, in the loneliest most arid regions, in the direst poverty, often suffering the sharpest hunger for days on end and are sometimes compelled

to fill their bellies with the most execrable food, so that they look like skeletons encased in leather. Having no cattle and often lacking even edible roots and other wild fruits, they are forced to steal and in desperation have to risk their lives to fill their stomachs. They therefore do not easily let an opportunity pass to stalk, attack and overwhelm the tame Hottentots, to drive off and steal some of their cattle. Indeed, in a dry season when all roots and plants are dried up, when hunger becomes too unbearable they even venture to attack the shepherds of cattle-farmers living far inland, isolated and scattered, and to rob them of some cattle. This, however, happens rather seldom, and only when they can find no other way of satisfying their wolfish hunger. The European fire-arm terrifies them too much: and even when a fairly large number of their race is together, they are still afraid of one European or Afrikaner who is armed with a gun; and none is so patriotically minded as to endanger his own life for others. Consequently, if only the shepherds of remote farmers do not fall asleep and do not allow themselves to be taken by surprise, but as soon as they glimpse these thieves from afar, hurry to their masters and call them; and if they gain enough time to hasten thither with their men and guns, the Bushmen usually take to flight and abandon the cattle save a few which they kill and carry off with them.

On account of this plundering and stealing the wild Bush-Hottentots are so hated by the tame nations that one might say that an inborn antipathy exists between these two nations: and the contention of the Abbé de la Caille that the tame Hottentots working for the colonists, sometimes conspire with the Bushmen and help them to steal is positively untrue. The tame Hottentot is far too honest, too timid and faithful for that; the antipathy or rooted hatred between both tribes is much too strong and quite natural with the Hottentots; for who would like to be robbed or plundered and possibly murdered by an open enemy? Therefore, unless taken unawares at night (as generally happens), they defend themselves desperately and sell their lives and cattle dear enough with the aid of their poisoned assegais and arrows: and if they spy the wild ones at a distance, and still have enough time to reach some kraal to call their comrades to their aid, the wild ones

on perceiving this, withdraw in time, otherwise they are received and rewarded in such fashion that they do not soon gather courage again for a second attack. In relating these things, I do not deny that the tame Hottentots have sometimes been the attacking party, and after discovering the hiding places of the wild ones, have attacked as one man and massacred as many as possible. It has happened several times that the Bushmen, in spite of their terror of the European firearms, attacked the outlying colonists, set their homes on fire, and drove them off with their cattle or even murdered one or more. Tales from foreign countries have to be taken *cum grano salis* but there are exceptions. That the tribes and families of the tame Hottentots wage internecine war and that one kraal or community will attack another and murder, destroy and exterminate it on account of a strayed head of cattle or because of a quarrel among the shepherds, is only a Kolbian myth that does not correspond to the real facts. The Hottentot villages lie so far apart that their cattle cannot come together and get mixed up; to attack and expel their neighbours would not occur to a single Hottentot; for although they have no written nor customary law, still one sees them strictly adhering to the maxim *quod tibi non vis fieri*, etc.

Hitherto everything we have known about the Hottentots has been derived from Kolbe's *Caput bonae Spei*, and everyone who has written about them has copied from him; but since that author is not so trustworthy that one can rely on him, it cannot but be pleasant to hear something definite about them which is based on true facts.

The Bushmen too are supposed to have had some cattle formerly and to have lived on them, but when they dared to make raids on the newly-arrived colonists in the time of Governor Bax, the said Governor sent a strong Commando of soldiers and farmers against them. At that time they were not yet scattered across the mountains but lived close together in families in the neighbourhood of Riebeeck Kasteel like the tame Hottentots of to-day. Still ignorant of the power of the European's firearms, they did not take to flight so quickly as they are accustomed to do nowadays. Nor did they or could they warn their neighbours

against their new enemies, hence they were soon discovered by the above Commando, their cattle seized and themselves killed or scattered. A large number of cattle was rounded up at the time and taken as booty from the Bushmen. Since then, they have never recovered their strength and have now become so accustomed to an indigent and precarious existence, and to lazy days, that even when they drive small herds of cattle to their hiding places, they are far too indolent to tend and graze them, keep them together and raise them properly for propagation and future need. Instead, they slaughter and kill them off to the last one. They would rather leave them to perish or to be torn to pieces and eaten by wild animals than take the slightest trouble in looking after them. But enough of this tribe; and since I really intend to give reliable information about the civilised or tame Hottentots, I shall only make one further remark about the Bushmen.

They live scattered in all the mountains to the East and North of the Cape, have no fixed abode or kraals, not even living together in small families of close relationship, but wander about from one place to another, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups, hide in ravines and among the rocks, and live in the greatest idleness and laziness as long as they have any means of subsistence; they never attempt an attack until they find nothing more to eat, when exhausted from hunger they are compelled to look for booty. By nature they are apparently not savage nor cruel, but the persecution of the Europeans who shoot them like dogs, and the bitter hunger when they have nothing to eat, make them audacious and desperate, so that they risk their lives and become bloodthirsty. They can, however, be tamed if they are gently persuaded to become servants, and are then well treated. Especially those taken in hand when young may easily be trained and used. Many work of their own accord for the colonists, especially if they have on a former occasion become acquainted with them and made aware that they would be better off with the colonists than in the wilds, where they would have to face nothing but hunger and want. Nevertheless it seems to me very doubtful that the colonists enslave those they can catch, as Sparrman relates; for apart from being against the orders of the East India Company, this would serve no purpose since they would at all times have opportunities for escaping.

The peculiar characteristics of the Hottentots are these: improvident and unconcerned whether it goes well or ill with them; idle and lazy; timid and shy or stupid; slow and indecisive when in doubt; filthy in their habits and swinish at their meals; ignorant and not eager to learn anything; they are simple, dull, and do not take the least trouble to understand anything more than what they have seen with their own eyes in their kraals from childhood; in addition they are greedy, and have a natural inclination for strong drink and tobacco. Besides this nothing disturbs them, and they are so indifferent to everything else, that they prefer to lie on their stomachs and sleep, rather than listen and reply to sensible argument. They fear death very much, this being the reason why they defend themselves more desperately than courageously; when attacked by Bushmen or wild animals, they sell their lives dearly. Towards Europeans they are very submissive and rather bear anything than be involved in action against them. It is this very disposition that makes them faithful and in their actions upright and honest; for since they are not covetous, but are satisfied with what they possess, the thought of theft or treachery does not enter their minds. They would be incapable of planning a trick, a deception and a malicious act which requires the least deliberation; this is the reason why they comply quickly with what seems good to them and agrees with their way of thinking, and flatly refuse and reject anything else. They reflect on nothing because that requires thinking; and their greatest pleasure is to avoid thinking. A decision once made, though without reflection, is immutable for they never reconsider whether they might have done better to choose the opposite course.

Although not inimical to the opposite sex, they hold it in light esteem and one cannot say they are wanton or sensual; nor have they cause to be. Their private parts are constantly on view, sometimes totally exposed, sometimes a little concealed by a garment of skin. Their charms are not captivating, and even if the women ornament and paint themselves in their way, the Hottentot remains indifferent to them unless he has other natural desires. Their laziness reaches such a pitch that if their women, who are responsible for all domestic duties, cannot find enough



roots, herbs and fruit, they prefer to dispel their hunger by sleeping and smoking rather than taking the trouble to collect a little themselves. Of their simplicity and stupidity I would give only a few typical examples: Thus the Hottentots are unable to form any conception or notion of the East India Company, but to this very day believe it to be an old man called "Jan Compagnie", and that all those who arrive from Europe in Dutch ships are his children. For this reason they show a reverence for all Europeans, especially if these find it necessary to declare themselves sons of "Jan Compagnie", and avoid doing them any harm. Indeed, it is quite untrue to say that Europeans are badly treated by the tame Hottentots (though it would be true if applied to Bushmen). Though a solitary kraal or family did refuse to give some cattle to the expedition described by us in Chapter Eight, their refusal cannot be considered as a hostile act for they could do as they pleased. Secondly, all Hottentots without exception believe and declare freely that baboons are human beings like themselves, but have refused to learn to speak because they were too lazy to work. Thirdly, if one held a mirror in front of a Hottentot, who has never seen one, he would behave exactly like monkeys do who, when they see their image, believe they will find it behind the mirror: now they look into the mirror, immediately afterwards behind it; and if one handed them a small mirror fixed to cardboard or paper, they would at once tear off the back and scratch off the paper and mercury to discover their image which they had seen in it. Hottentots do the same with the first mirror given to them as a gift or by way of barter. Their ignorance of the value of their cattle and elephant tusks in relation to tobacco, brandy or other trifles, is too well-known to be mentioned as proof of their simplicity and stupidity. But one cannot ascribe to them any intelligence, deliberation or subtlety, because they sometimes confuse (*malkop-maken*) elephants with their karosses and so kill them; or catch a hippopotamus in a covered pit, for that may well be a mechanical act which they had seen their parents and grandparents perform and had learnt from them. They are incapable of improving on anything and all things which they make for themselves, are so impractical and clumsy that nothing cruder can be imagined. Their ivory bracelets, however, are made very elaborately, but it is not

yet positively known whether they make these themselves or obtain them from other tribes. The only thing to be wondered at is that Sparrman, as we shall soon hear, obtained from a Hottentot a water-tight wicker-basket containing milk.

We wish, however, at this time to discuss another question which is more difficult to investigate, to answer and to decide, than everything else that has hitherto been related about the Hottentots, and which has been very unreliably dealt with and left in great doubt. It is this: "What is the origin of the Hottentots? From what nation are they descended? And how did they get to the most Southerly point of Africa?" Here, certainly, we are quite nonplussed. Up to now only a great deal of silly nonsense has been the outcome of these questions, and perhaps I may still add some myself. One thing is indubitably certain that both the tame and the wild Hottentots are descended together with all other human beings from common ancestors. Granting this, it is incredible and impossible to suppose that this nation could have come to the Southermost point of Africa from Asia where without any doubt man first lived after the Deluge. The terrible deserts, the vast mountain chains and the big rivers, which lie between these two continents, almost exclude the possibility of believing in an emigration to such a remote place. Even if one supposed that the migration took place only gradually, through many centuries, from one place to another and one tribe to another, yet the differences between the Asiatic and African tribes are too evident, and the deserts lying between them too extensive, to make one believe this; it is easier to imagine that these people must have perished of thirst and hunger in the tropical deserts. It is undoubtedly certain that they did have an ancestor; yet one would suppose that they would have retained by tradition or through their morals and customs some faint resemblance to the nation from which they were descended. But it is futile to attempt to trace their descent. That the Hottentots do not form part of the Kaffir nation has been competently proved by the learned Ludolf<sup>272</sup> in his *Commentario ad Histor. Aetiop.* and he has shown that the word *Cafar* was derived from the Chaldean language in which *Cafar* means an infidel. This being the reason too, why the Jewish rabbis call those who deny

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<sup>272</sup> Ludolf, a 17th century authority on Abyssinia and the Amharic language. His best known work is the *Historia Aethiopica*.

God or abandon their religion *Cofar*. The Arabs have actually given this name to the entire Eastern part of Africa, since it is inhabited by people ignorant of the true God, and call them *Cofers* or *Caffers*. (*Ibid. loc. c.*) That which M. Jacob Sadeur<sup>273</sup> relates in his treatise *Nouveaux Voyage de la terre australe* of the mating of a Kaffir with a tame tigress, is not only too foolish but it is also very doubtful whether Sadeur referred to the Kaffirs of the Cape. But when a few scholars theorise about or even try to determine from which nations the Hottentots are descended, such as the Carthaginian tribes of Africa, or the troglodytes, or even the Jews; surely the few customs they have in common with these prove nothing; for these may have come about accidentally. Kolbe takes great pains to prove that the Hottentots have much in common with the Jews; but this theory does not hold. I shall give his reasons and my opinion in parallel columns:

1. Since they (the Hottentots never make sacrifices in Hottentots) often honour of a God; but for a different purpose, that is they make offerings. slaughter cattle to cure a patient with the fresh fat. The meat, entrails and hide are eaten by the entire village as a common food, but none offered to the Gods by fire.
2. Since they calculate All Indian tribes reckon the seasons their days and especially according to the changes of the moon. The Hottentots however their festivals by the moon. The Hottentots however have no festivals calculated and fixed according to changes of the moon; indeed, they have no festivals at all. Their dancing at or about full moon is no festive act which they have to perform, but merely a merry-making which they have in common with many tribes and which they omit if the weather is unpleasant or rainy.

<sup>273</sup> The earliest reference in the British Museum Catalogue to Jacques Sadeur's *Voyages* is a copy under the title *La Terre Australe Connue* (Geneva, 1676). First English translation in 1693.

3. Since they are not allowed to cohabit with their wives at certain times. At such times the men of no nation touch their wives.
4. Since, if caught in non-observance of this custom, they have to sacrifice again. Not *sacrifice*, but present the kraal with a head of cattle as at weddings or the birth of a child, especially a son. It seems to me a custom similar to that prevailing in many places, when the husband has to give yellow soup on the morning after his wife has gone to church, following her confinement. In the warm-baths this custom is also followed; if the husband visits his wife when she is staying there as a visitor, he also has to provide yellow soup, chocolate or some other treat.
5. Since, just as the Jews often eat unleavened bread and unsalted food, they may never eat salt, unless they are among the Christians. *O! Sancta Simplicitas!* Hottentots have no bread and are accustomed to lack of salt from their childhood, since most Hottentots live in regions where salt is unobtainable. But when they visit the colonists, leavened bread and food spiced with salt taste excellent to them, and they may also eat it. Is it then an abstinence ordered by a law when I have to do without something I do not possess?
6. Since they have to undergo a definite kind of circumcision. The excision of a testicle and the circumcision of the foreskin are radically different; and all the Hottentot tribes have at least nowadays done away with the practice of cutting out a testicle or the initiation into manhood. Only the Great Namacquas still retain it.<sup>274</sup>

<sup>274</sup> Wikar confirms this view, but points out that this rite was

7. Since they eat nothing that has died of suffocation. By suffocation the Jews mean anything that has died a natural death, retaining its blood. If an animal belonging to a Hottentot dies, it is consumed.
8. Since they eat no scaleless fish. This (if true, but unknown to me) must originate from a natural aversion.
9. Since they never allow their wives to attend their meetings dealing with public affairs. Since, of all uncivilised nations, they think least of their wives; and I do not remember having read in a single book of travels, that women of other nations are permitted in such assemblies.
10. Since they may divorce their wives. This should read "may separate from them" or no longer cohabit with them. This is done by all uncivilised nations; they take wives and leave them again if they believe they have a reason. They are not married under oath and since the woman's father reserves the right to take back his daughter (according to Kolbe's own account) the man may also separate from her.

To me at least, the reasons brought forward appear far-fetched. We Germans too have a good deal in common with the Jews: we respect the Sabbath, we keep the Ten Commandments, we still retain much of what Moses prescribed in Marriage and Policematters<sup>275</sup>; in a word, we still have the Jewish Old Testament,

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practised only by some of the Hottentot tribes north of the Orange, and by the 'Blips' (Birinas), though not universally. There were, of course, other ceremonies associated with initiation. (V.R.S. 15. p. 81, 93.)

<sup>275</sup> There is no exact English equivalent for *Polizei-sachen* which has in German a much wider meaning than in English and includes general executive and administrative measures affecting the State.

Moses and the Prophets; but what intelligent person would on that account imagine that we are descended from the Jews? The Jewish nation has been scattered all over the world and has since then been divided into countless sections, but not one of these is known to have discarded or forgotten the law of Moses. Even supposing there are descendants of Jews, who live in far distant lands without Rabbis and without any written code, and thus had forgotten the Mosaic law in the course of time, yet they would never forget the holiness of the Sabbath, circumcision and the aversion to shedding blood. Besides, the Mosaic ceremonial law is so deep-rooted in all Jews in many respects that it would not be improper to say that it has become second nature to them. In addition one should only consider this, that the Mosaic law enjoins nothing more strictly than cleanliness, so that the Jews dare not touch anything which in the smallest way is unclean in their eyes, according to this law; or if needs must, they wash themselves again, purify themselves or even have to remain unclean for a definite period; thus there is no greater contrast between day and night than between the cleanliness of the Jews of the Old Testament and the filthiness of the Hottentots, who live in constant squalor like a dung-beetle in the dung, and try to produce the greatest beauty by besmearing themselves, first with cow dung and afterwards with fat, soot and red earth. They not only touch but handle everything that is intrinsically unclean and eat animals that have perished of disease, even such as have already begun to putrefy. I do not even want to take the trouble to analyse Kolbe's comparison of the Hottentots with troglodytes; for this has naturally been patched together exactly like in Swift's *Tale of a Tub* the three sons patched up the word "shoulder-strap" from their father's testament. His own words may be read on page 352.

There is as little in their national customs as in their religious rites that might be compared with those of other peoples. For the Hottentots are in all respects quite distinctive; from this one could imagine that they had separated from the rest of mankind immediately after the Babylonish confusion of languages: for otherwise the surest method of discovering their origin would be to compare their language with those of other nations and examine whether any roots from an original language could be

found in theirs. Even this means is not available. Dapper<sup>276</sup> in *Africa* (p. 625) writes thus and quite aptly about it: "The Hottentot language is annoying to European ears, impossible to learn and a great impediment to the Hollander in the furthering of trade and in the exploration of the country. For they clack with their mouth at each word, as though somebody snapped his fingers; in such a way that their mouth goes almost like a rattle or cracker while they click very loud with their tongue and nearly every word is a crack". Georg Andr. Hollsteiner<sup>277</sup> and Mercklin compare the Hottentot language to the cackling of a Calcutta or Indian fowl, but very inappropriately. The Royal Danish missionaries, Johann Georg Böving<sup>278</sup> and Provost Bartholomeus Ziegenbalg,<sup>279</sup> do write more favourably of this language, though if they imagine it to be easy to learn they might find it difficult to speak. Those African-born people who have not mixed with the Hottentots and been brought up in their midst from childhood learn to understand their language, but not to speak it, for practice from childhood and a glib tongue is needed to repeat the clicks frequently, sometimes twice in one word; as I shall demonstrate in greater detail later in this Chapter.

Whenever I saw the Hottentots in their homeland in their kraals and in villages, and on other occasions, I meditated on their way of living. Strange ideas about them entered my mind, and although these are not founded on anything tangible, I venture to

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<sup>276</sup> Dapper's *Naukeurige Beschrijvinge der Afrikaensche Gewesten* was published at Amsterdam in 1668. Prof. Schapera who translated and edited the portion of his work relating to the Hottentots (V.R.S. 14) states that though he does not appear to have left Holland he used to advantage the information received from others. 'His work was comprehensive and painstaking and became deservedly famous'.

<sup>277</sup> There is no reference to Hollsteiner either in the Mendelssohn or in the British Museum Catalogue.

<sup>278</sup> Johann Georg Böving stayed at the Cape from 20 April to 11 May, 1708 on his voyage to the Danish Mission at Tranquebar in India. In his *Curieuse Beschreibung und Nachricht von den Hottentotten*, published in 1712, about eight pages are devoted to a description of the Hottentots. According to Theal, they contain no information of special value.

<sup>279</sup> Bartholomeus Ziegenbalg visited the Cape in 1706. A letter describing this visit is contained in *An Account of the Success of two Danish Missionaries lately sent . . . for the Conversion of the Heathen in Malabar* (London, 1718).

add another to all the inconsistent opinions that have been concocted about their origin. These theories though not very probable are yet possible and I can neither risk nor lose anything by publishing them, as did those who did not verify their assumptions in any way or only tried to bolster them up. The well-known Von Justi writes in one of his pamphlets about children: "that, when in their play they represented a wedding or party, either among themselves or with their dolls, they regarded their play quite seriously and imagined doing the actual thing. Further, if one saw the little children of the poorest classes, especially on the farms, running about playing and soiling themselves with mud and dung, one noticed that they were so intent upon what they were doing, as if there was no other way of doing it; yes, even in the presence of grown-up onlookers they are not ashamed to mix their own excrement with sand and to knead this into a paste with their small hands, pretending that these were tarts and pancakes." I do not wish to concern myself any further with such childish deeds nor to mention disgusting things. Plenty of little children behave in this way.

Hottentots are people whose whole way of living is proof that they have had no education — and really and truly they have not had any. They have grown up, as it were, in a state of Nature.<sup>280</sup> They do not think about anything except what they have learned without direction or instruction, either by looking at what their equals were doing, or about what occurred to them to do without any reason and purpose. Accustomed like other children from their earliest years to crawl about in dung, sand and filth, they retain this habit; smear their whole body with cow-dung, let it dry in the sun, rub it off again, and then smear their body with fat, which sometimes smells still worse than dung. Imagination, custom, prejudice and even superstition, have misled them to regard that as beautiful which more sensible people, yea! even other uncivilised nations, despise. Besides their body, they smear so much fat on their short woolly hair that it sticks together as if tarred. A favourite personage with the lower class in Ger-

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<sup>280</sup> Mentzel uses an archaic German idiom for which there is no English equivalent. *Sie sind, wie man zu sprechen pflegt, in ihrem eigenen Sode aufgewachsen*: the sense of which is to grow up on one's own, in an out-of-the-way place.



many, a clown or carnival buffoon, puts on a disguise and paints his face half black and is applauded with laughter by the common man and the children. The Hottentots and especially their womenfolk do exactly the same: they adorn themselves with black soot from pots which they rub into their face with their hands. They do this not to cause amusement but to furbish and decorate themselves and be admired and praised by the others. Naughty children find pleasure in cruelly torturing to death small animals, birds, frogs, mice and such like, without considering that these little creatures feel and suffer just as much pain as they themselves would feel and suffer if they were treated in that way; but this should not be allowed by their parents. The Hottentots do the very same to big animals. When they slaughter an ox or a sheep, they bind it by its four feet to four poles driven into the earth, cut open the living animal's stomach, take out one part of the intestines after the other and scoop out the blood with their hands; the animal is tortured to death in this pitiful way very slowly for half an hour. Notwithstanding this hangmanlike procedure, Kolbe can still write that they understand the business of slaughtering very well! Not to bore the esteemed reader any longer with such wretched stories, I shall say no more about it, but unfold to him my own ideas about the origin of the Hottentots, only as a conjectural probability, which may however include some possible explanation.

Could it not have been possible (I submit) that many hundreds, perhaps even some thousands of years ago, some adults of both sexes, came to the furthest point of Africa then still uninhabited, either through shipwreck or in some other way, and reared children there? It is known that not only the Carthaginians but also the Phoenicians, those of Tyre and Sidon and some other nations, even Solomon himself and King Hiram had ships that sailed the seas as far back as two or three thousand years ago. It is true that these ships hugged the coasts of the mainland and the islands. But how easily could it have happened, (as actually did happen), that such a ship was driven into the open sea by a storm, and then it would be a matter of good fortune if it found the right direction again. Hence it would not be impossible for a ship thus driven off its course, after being tossed about on the

sea for a long time and after almost everyone on board had died, to have been forced ashore on the coast of Southern Africa and that a few survivors had reached land.<sup>281</sup>

Accepting this possibility, which contains nothing improbable, it would be equally possible to imagine that these rescued persons begot some children and died after the children had learned to speak *but not quite perfectly*. Now it must not be assumed that in such case the children would have perished of hunger. Without shielding behind the omnipotence and providence of God (as I could truthfully do), who if it pleased Him, could have saved a few of these children like Ishmael in the wilderness and made them into a great nation, I remember having read in our newspapers that children of about ten to twelve years old had been found in dense and thick forests where they had either been put as newborn children or, had come there, God knows how, before they were able to speak properly and who had fed on roots and herbs, acorns and other wild fruits. This happened twice in my own lifetime, the last occasion in Hungary about thirty years ago. These children had kept alive in spite of exposure and their tender age, and when found, they had to be gradually trained to eat meat and other cooked foods to which they were not accustomed, and had to be taught to speak as well. Since they could not yet speak before they came to live in these forests, they could not think either: for human thoughts consist of words, which we speak to ourselves. Consequently, as these children could not think they were unable to form conceptions and ideas and remember them. Then, after they had learnt to speak and express themselves, they could not remember, still less relate, anything that had happened to them in their wild state.

All this leads me to the conclusion that, even at our Cape, it could have been possible that orphaned children could have grown up like the children mentioned above without any education, who mated when they grew up, raised children, and became in course of time a large nation, which separated into several families and had to enlarge their abode continually and spread out.

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<sup>281</sup> *Author's Note:* A dim tradition among the Hottentots that their first ancestors arrived through a window, may perhaps be explained that they came ashore through an aperture or hole on the ship's side.

A little while ago I purposely stressed the words *cannot yet speak perfectly* for the reason that it is then easier to assume that the speech of such children, on account of its imperfections, could the more easily change and deviate from the mother tongue, whereby it became indistinct and lost all resemblance to other national languages. I shall attempt to explain this somewhat.

Very young children, who cannot yet speak properly, are usually unable to pronounce all letters, especially the initial letters of words. For example some have difficulty with F when it is the first letter of a word and instead of saying "Finke" say "Sinke". Others have trouble with the S and say "Memmel" instead of "Semmel". Others stammer over certain letters until they grow older and their tongue becomes more glib. In the case of the Hottentots this defect of speech may have been predominant especially in the case of the letter X, and since they have not been taught, or have never heard the letter pronounced quite distinctly by others, they have retained their childish pronunciation, and have substituted a click of the tongue, which cracks, snaps or smacks, as will later be proved and more examples given. To this must be added the fact that such children, on growing up, have to name things and articles unknown to them, invent such names themselves and in this way must needs deviate still further from their mother tongue.

In view of all this it is, in my opinion, possible that the Hottentots are descended from some children who came by accident to this part of the earth, grew up untaught and unguided, and in the course of several thousand years increased to many tribes, retaining all the while a childish and uncleanly mode of life. If one were to confront this opinion of mine with another question: how had the Hottentots obtained their cattle, oxen, cows and sheep; this too is easy to answer: for many hundreds and thousands of years, before men had discovered the art of salting and pickling meat, more livestock were taken with the ships than to-day; and if God to attain his wise ends, had saved some people, cattle and sheep might also have come to the Cape of Good Hope. These may at first have run wild, but after a long time were tamed again and kept in herds.

Savage and horrible as the Hottentot nation was depicted when first known, especially by the Portuguese, this picture corresponds little to their present way of life and their disposition. It is quite true that the Hottentot is lazy, idle, improvident and so forth, as his character was described at the beginning of this Chapter. But when it is said of the Germans that they are fond of drink, the question arises: Are all Germans therefore drunkards? and, thank God! To this class only very few belong. In the same way there are exceptions to the rule among the Hottentots. Poverty and indigence, the Hottentot is accustomed to bear; it has no effect on him; but if he lacks all means of sustenance, he becomes troublesome; but once he controls himself, or he lets himself be persuaded to work, he becomes active and tries to get on and avoid loss. Since he is naturally faithful and honest, he takes great care of anything entrusted to him to avoid any suspicion of deceit and theft on his part, and allows no one to pilfer, immediately informing his master if that happens in spite of his opposition. Only in the case of brandy, tobacco, wine, must, "dop-beer" or dagga does he make an exception to the rule if he gets a chance because he has a passionate longing for such things.

Almost all facts known about Hottentots have up to the present been taken from Kolbe; and Kolbe who in his time lived as long at the Cape as I did afterwards, namely eight years, describes this people to us as wearing long moustaches and whiskers like half-shaven Jews. It is impossible that he should never have seen Hottentots during his eight years' stay, but to judge from this description of his, he cannot have seen any, for there are rarely any traces on their faces of the woolly hair of their heads, and as far as one can see their naked bodies and those of their women down to their pudenda, not a single hair can be noticed. The same Kolbe who devoted the Third Part of his folio or the Second Book of it entirely to the Hottentots has told us so many lies (I mean has given us so much information) on 235 folio-pages (pp. 347-582), that one could dispense with all other books and reports — if what he wrote were true. But I have no intention of criticising and refuting him. I am attempting to describe this people truthfully and clearly: but I must admit in advance that I am unable to give a systematic history

of them: the kind reader must be satisfied with stray thoughts as they occur to me, and as they apply to this people in their mode of life, their public behaviour and their conduct in the places where they live; in their settled customs; in short, in all their particular and general circumstances. In that case I can vouch for the reliability of my account. Even if an occasional contradiction should occur in the course of the narrative, I would still be telling the truth, for everything is not done in the same way in all their communities. One tribe has adopted different customs and traditions from another, and those living on the West of Africa are very different from those living in the East.

When a pregnant woman feels the time of her confinement approaching, her husband has to leave the hut and she is never left alone for a moment by the women called to her assistance. They are more fortunate in labour than the women of many other nations, and give birth more easily and quickly. As soon as the new-born infant has arrived and the umbilical cord has been tied by means of a piece of gut, the child is smeared all over with fresh cow-dung and, if possible, laid in the sun on a piece of sheep-skin, else in a corner of the hut near the fire or in the shade until the dung is thoroughly dry when it generally drops off of its own accord; the infant then being dry and entirely cleansed of impurities. Newly-born infants are not black nor brown, but rather of a reddish colour. If they are brought up from infancy by Europeans or Africans who do not allow them to be smeared with fat, soot and the like according to their parents' fashion, their colour when they grow up is neither black nor brown but yellow-brown, like the children of the common people in Europe, who have to tend geese, pigs etc. from childhood and lie in the the sun the whole day throughout the summer. Generally speaking, Hottentot children are born with a nose-bridge that is flat from forehead to cartilage but the cartilage is also pressed down as far as possible by the women present at the birth, because they fancy that a long prominent nose is indecent. When the cow-dung has fallen off completely, the child is thoroughly rubbed or rather washed with the juice squeezed from the Hottentot fig.<sup>282</sup> This is a shrub that grows close to the earth with runners

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<sup>282</sup> *mesebrianthemum edule*.

resembling cucumbers, which bear no leaves but triangular finger-long growths that are very juicy but have neither smell nor taste. The fruit is shaped like the head of an ordinary clay pipe but somewhat larger and with a small crown like a medlar; it is attached to a short stem and turns yellow when it ripens. It has nothing in common with ordinary figs, except that it contains a sweetish juice filled with small seeds but fewer in number than in ordinary figs. There are three or four kinds of these wild figs which differ slightly from one another.

When the child has been thoroughly moistened with this juice, it is again exposed to the sun in the open air, or placed in the shade or laid near the fire, until it is quite dry; thereafter it is immediately and repeatedly rubbed with sheep's fat or with fat and butter, and bestrewn with buchu; this clings to the body like bark and in their opinion is very beneficial to the child's health. At least it is true that this rind protects the child against any external attacks of the air. Buchu is a herb, which the botanists call *Spiroca africana odorato, foliis pilosis* and has a not unpleasant smell. The Hottentots gather it in summer after it has ceased blooming and is fading; they then dry it completely and rub it to a fine powder in their hands.

In a difficult confinement a woman is given a drink of milk and tobacco, or dagga if no tobacco is at hand, to expedite the birth. It is possible that the tobacco acts as a narcotic to still the pains, but I do not know whether it hastens labour-pains. Should a child be still-born, which very rarely happens, the parents show great sorrow, especially if it is a male, and it is immediately buried. But if the child is born alive it is treated in the above manner, and the parents also give some cattle to provide a feast for the entire kraal. All the inhabitants partake of it. Men, women and children are invited; but the men do not eat in company of the others, and the woman in child-bed receives only the fat for rubbing herself and her child. If the child is a first-born and especially a son, the parents do not spare their cattle, but give freely to treat their fellow denizens of the kraal richly. They do not seem to be pleased with twins, especially if they consist of two girls or a boy and girl. In such cases they would formerly have killed the girl. This custom seems to be extinct

among those Hottentots who live in touch with Christian inhabitants, but apparently it is still sometimes observed by those living farthest away, especially the Great Namaquas. One thing is certain, that if the mother of a new-born child dies, they try to dispose of the child, but usually tie it up in a skin and hang it to a tree or place it somewhere where it may easily be found by Christian inhabitants, since these do not let it perish, but bring it up. I have myself seen such foundlings which have been brought up by female slaves. According to the laws of the East India Company, such children have to stay and serve with those who have adopted them, until they are fully twenty-five years old. At the end of this period they are free, and since they are unaccustomed to the life of their parents, they generally prefer to remain with their foster-parents and then receive a small wage in money or cattle in addition to food and clothing. Sometimes, however, if they have not been very well-treated, or if their present guardians no longer wish to keep them, they go in search of a different place of service and move from one master to the other, for they are in great demand everywhere, since they are more faithful than slaves and less expensive. Only a single case is known to me where such a girl having discovered her birth-place, returned to it and discarded her clothes in favour of a kaross and apron made of hide. When she presented herself in this guise to her former employer, she was not taken on again, for her unbesmeared body which had remained fairly light under her clothes presented a very unusual appearance in a dirty kaross.

Since Hottentots are dreadfully afraid of witchcraft, they secretly bury in a distant spot the soiled skin on which the pregnant woman had lain, the same procedure being observed with all the cleansing materials used at a birth. The navel-string of a child is bound up with a sheep's sinew. The navel itself is pressed down and bound with a sheepskin riem, to prevent it from bulging.

When the woman giving birth has completed the period in which her husband may not visit her, she rubs her whole body with fresh cow-dung and cleans herself with it. For cow-dung is the only means by which she can rid her body of all impurities.

It removes entirely the fat from the old smearing, the itch of dust, buchu and soot, so that a perfectly clean body results. They repeat the treatment with this remedy as often as they want to smear themselves again. When the cow-dung has dried and been rubbed off, she smears herself from head to heels with sheep-fat and strews buchu generously over it. She then usually adorns her face with so-called beauty-spots which, however, are not of black taffeta, but simply some soot, taken with the fingers from a black cooking pot and rubbed especially round the nose, the buchu being the more generously strewn on the forehead. Thus adorned, she awaits her husband in their hut, he having also made his toilet previously in the prescribed way. After many flattering words and frequent inquiries as to her health he embraces her again, afterwards smoking so much tobacco or dagga until over-powered, he falls asleep.

Either the mother or, if she is still unwell, the father names a new-born child. It is customary to name them after animals, e.g. *Gamman*, Lion; *Koa*, Elephant; *Za*, roebuck; *Kaessau*, Tiger, and so forth. Kolbe believes that this naming of children after animals presumes their descent from troglodytes, but our German ancestors did likewise, and the names *Wolf* and *Wolfgang* are a reminder of the practice.

The mother whose duty it is to bring up the children, binds the child to her back in a sheepskin like a bag so that only its head emerges above her shoulders. Burdened in this way she trudges about every day until the child begins to crawl and in time learns to stand up and walk. When the child has to be suckled, its mother puts one of her exceedingly long breasts over her shoulder into its mouth and the child seizes the nipple and sucks it dry. In the meantime the mother smokes tobacco or dagga or a mixture of the two, taking up a position against the wind, thus allowing the smoke to blow into the baby's face to accustom it to the smoke. The children soon get used to the smoke and like it. At first they close their eyes, but when the smoke has somewhat dispersed, open them again, shake their heads and laugh. When six months old, the children are usually weaned and then are often given the old filthy pipe to play with. This, as children do, they put in their mouth and thus get used



to the taste and smell of tobacco. As soon as the children can walk they never leave their mother, but all of them accompany her when she goes to look for herbs, roots, water, wild fruits and the like. The sons do not mix with adults until they are fairly grown-up and are at least eighteen years of age. They are then supposed to have outgrown their childhood and are initiated into manhood.

This is accompanied by some ceremonies and a feast, the youth being well rubbed in with fat and soot, and sprinkled with buchu by the oldest inhabitant of the kraal. The youth, thus liberally smeared with fat, is not slow to scratch deep ruts in the ointment with his hands and nails across the length and breadth of his body so that they can be well filled with the essence to follow. The old man then approaches the youth and urinates all over him, from top to bottom as long as there is a drop left in his bladder, and the youth busily rubs this costly balsam in as thoroughly as possible to get full use out of it. Some writers see in this ceremony a religious act, but it is nothing of the kind, being only a ceremony invented to provide something out of the common and festive, to attract a measure of attention. Similar festive acts are practised by all idolators and heathens which, in the absence of scientific knowledge, have been invented by their priests and Druids, to make a hocus-pocus for the common people, and which have neither a mystical nor mythological nor an allegorical meaning. Superstition, which is much worse than unbelief, demands something perceptible and dazzling. The Hottentots possess no skill, imagination or power of invention and have too few things they might pretend to be mysterious. That is why they have seized upon this most convenient means of providing something, at least at such a festivity, a means which they have at hand without any trouble or expense. They use the same ceremony, called the "*Pisplechtigheid*" (Urinal Ceremony) by the Hollanders, when two persons wish to cohabit or get married.

At the age of eighteen, writes Kolbe and many other authors using him as their source, the males are practically castrated, their left testicles being excised. It cannot be denied that this happened formerly, and according to the report made

to the Governor by T. Roos and Marais, members of the previously quoted expedition, it is still practised by the most distant tribes of Namacquas, who call themselves Keinamacquas, Enicquas, Karangoyers, Comenicquas and Cabonas. But this custom is now unknown among the Hottentots who live in the area inhabited by the Hollanders. The manner of the operation as explained to me by old experienced persons, is the same as described by Kolbe save that it is no longer customary, and only used to be done for the sole purpose of enabling the youths to run faster; the left testicle being supposed to hinder one in this respect: but that they had been dissuaded by the Hollanders from continuing this practice.

When I asked Hottentots and half-breeds with whom I could converse quite fluently in Dutch why they besmeared themselves they answered with one accord: it is done for no other reason than to make their body and limbs supple and slim and keep them so. Whether it has this effect I wish neither to affirm nor deny. This at least is certain, that Hottentots, especially the males generally do have very slender limbs, move with agility, run fast, and if asked to do so, can bend and twist themselves as they please. A healthy Hottentot with enough flesh on him, really has limbs that must be called beautiful. His muscles are not only fleshy and firm in relation to the body, but one may clearly see their strength; and if the Hottentot has somewhat adapted and accustomed himself to labour, lifting and carrying is such a light task for him that one cannot notice whether he is exerting himself or straining his muscles more than ordinarily. To lift a bag of wheat from the ground to its shoulders and load it on a waggon or offload it seems to be quite an easy task for him, though it weighs 180 lbs. Amsterdam weight.

Although the excision of the left testicle is no longer customary with the most civilised Hottentots, even if it still is done among the very distant tribes, it cannot be compared with the circumcision practised by the Jews. Circumcision of the foreskin is still customary with some bastard Hottentots, who live round the Kurenou or Little Sundays River and have originated from inter-breeding between the Hottentots and

Kaffirs. They speak chiefly the Kaffir language, and are more like Hottentots than Kaffirs in stature and facial traits. With them, as with the Gonaquas and the Kaffirs, the practice of circumcision is indeed in vogue. Sparrman saw some cases himself which had been shown him in return for a trifling service. It seems far more likely, though, that they took over the custom from the Mohammedans than from the Jews, since they do not apply it until the boys are half-grown men and always wait until they can circumcise several at one time. This inference becomes the more probable and credible since those tribes living still farther inland on the opposite side of the Zomo river, the Tambucki and Mambucki, also practise circumcision, and it looks as if the custom has been brought from Asia to Africa and has spread from tribe to tribe.

It has been generally asserted until now that Hottentot women are provided by nature with a cover in front of their pudenda; this legend is still further exaggerated by Kolbe who on page 425 states that this covering sometimes stretches beyond the piece of sheepskin which they bind round their loins. Although he maintains that he saw it himself, it is a gross untruth to which the proverb about making a mountain out of a molehill may quite properly be applied. It never occurred to me out of curiosity to try and discover such a filthy secret, but several persons, who lowered themselves by associating with such women or girls, have assured me that they found it to be no larger than the piece of flesh which overhangs the beak of a turkey or a woodcock. Sparrman, with whom as doctor and scientist no one can find fault for examining this freak of nature more closely, testifies that he found nothing unusual about this sexual organ except that the clitoris was somewhat elongated and the nymphae at the urethra were somewhat larger and softer, for which he as a scientist gave very plausible reasons.

As far as I am concerned, not being a scientist, and also never having been inquisitive enough to investigate such natural phenomena, I can nevertheless state that I very often saw nude Hottentot girls of fourteen or fifteen years. These displayed their pudenda quite visibly when they squatted on their heels as is the custom of the Hottentots, this part expanding thereby to

such an extent that one could see the labia of the vagina. I cannot say that when such a view unavoidably presented itself to me that I noticed anything unusual, neither an elongated clitoris still less a complete covering. At a place which I often visited, the mistress of the house had taken into service a Hottentot woman of more than 30 years of age. To avoid having her go about half-naked, she gave her in the meanwhile a striped parti-coloured, unlined gown of East Indian linen to wear until the time when the other servants should be clothed.<sup>283</sup> The house was so situated that the afternoon sun fell directly on the front door. When we had our meal, according to the custom of the country, in the entrance hall (*voorhuis*), we often had to laugh aloud at sight of her, for when the Hottentot woman entered at the front door the sun shone on her back and illuminated through the thin linen gown the whole front part of her body, but when she went out at the door, her posteriors were visible so distinctly that one could see all the outlines. It is possible that I gave the matter no thought, but I can definitely say that I did not then notice the slightest protuberance on her.

In reports published up till now Hottentots have been described as rather small in stature. It is true, they are not tall, but they mostly attain a height of five feet more or less. M. de la Caille measured a twenty-five year old Hottentot, bareheaded and with bare feet, and found him to be 6 feet 7 inches and 10 lines tall. He must have been a giant among Hottentots; of all those I have seen I judged none to be taller than  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet. The womenfolk are on the average smaller and I hardly believe one would find any of them more than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet in height.

Facing the title-page of the German translation of Sparrman's *Voyage*, published about 1784 in Berlin, there is a copper plate of a Hottentot man and woman, engraved in *taille douce*, very true to nature in figure and costume though the woman is depicted slightly bigger than usual. In all other respects the engraving has been drawn and reproduced accurately.

The hair on the head of Hottentots is woolly and longer than that of the Moors, but as it is thickly smeared and rubbed

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<sup>283</sup> *i.e.* until they received their regular clothing ration.

with fat and powdered with buchu, it resembles an old thread-bare sheepskin on which the wool has stuck together in lumps as if milled in a formless manner. They are fond of wearing in their hair brass buttons, small pieces of yellow metal, and shells, like those little cowry-shells which are sometimes fixed to the bridles of horses. Some tribes also wear earrings of snail-shells or sea-shells. All women wear necklaces of small sea shells, glass beads, or pierced bronze pellets in imitation of beads, the latter being rather more fashionable and only suited for the rich. They carry their tobacco pouches round their neck. These are usually without a seam, being made from the scrotum of a ram. They are softened by immersion in cow-dung, then dried and well rubbed with fat. Their karosses, straps, and all their skin and leather articles are made in the same way and, as may be imagined, have no delicious odour. The kaross, a covering of two sheepskins sewn together with sheep-sinews or Pesen, is hung down their back from the shoulders by a rope. They close it in front only in rainy or cold weather, so as to wrap themselves in it as in an envelope. They are intelligent enough to make the same kaross serve for both winter and summer clothing. For during the cold season they wear it with the woolly side turned in, and in warmer weather they reverse it or roll up the whole kaross and hang it over their shoulders. Around the lower part of their bodies, both sexes wear a two-fingered broad riem or girdle which is also ornamented with glass beads, sometimes interspersed with small cowry-shells. I have also seen some tribes using riems, inter-laced in regular patterns with flattened copper and tin wire which are in their way admirable examples of artistic work. I could not discover whether they had made these themselves or obtained them elsewhere. One cannot easily find out if they get something special in the latter way; and it seems to me that they do not want anything of their traffic and communication with other tribes to leak out.

To this girdle the men attach a pouch generally of jackal skin or African fox, to cover the male organ. The women also fasten their aprons made of sheepskin, to such girdles, but they always wear three such small aprons on top of one another of which the uppermost is larger than the other two: they do this

especially during the periods of menstruation, though this is very slight. When sitting or when squatting on their heels, they always take care to fold these beneath them to cover everything. A sense of decency, then, is implanted by nature, even among the most uncivilised nations. Most of the Hottentot women I saw, bound two aprons round them, one in front and one behind. On their arms the men wear rings of ivory or copper or leather, according to which they possess, or even all three kinds together. The women, on the contrary, wear their leather rings round their legs, being so laden with these from foot to knee, that they seem to have put on the leggings of a large pair of rustic boots. The girls, however, are not allowed to wear such rings until they are marriageable. Hottentot women are not very fertile. They bear four or five children, a sixth being something extraordinary.

Their marriage formalities are simple and short. When a bachelor has chosen a girl, he informs his father and nearest relations. If they have no objection, they not only give their consent, but accompany the suitor to the girl's father or, if she has no father, to her next-of-kin. The suitor offers the whole company tobacco and dagga; they puff and smoke lustily and make light conversation. Finally the father or another match-maker rises and asks the girl's hand for the suitor. The girl's father or guardian leaves the company, pretending to go and consult his wife about the matter, but immediately returns with a decision which is usually in accord with the youth's wishes. In case the decision is, contrary to expectation, unfavourable, there is no harm done. The suitor leaves with his sponsors and the whole matter is settled in peace and friendship for the suitor never returns again. If the father gives his consent, but the daughter is not satisfied and refuses to marry the suitor, she is compelled to lie on the ground beside the suitor for a night and defend herself against his caresses. If she succeeds in warding him off she is rid of him: but if she succumbs to his embraces, as usually happens, she is bound to marry the youth.

The marriage, once arranged, is soon concluded. The bridegroom brings to the bride's hut one, two or even three fat oxen from his own or his father's herd, according to the number of

people in the kraal. There all relatives on both sides gather, women as well as men; the animals are slaughtered, and when all the inhabitants of the kraal, big and small, have thoroughly greased themselves once more and powdered themselves with buchu, the men form a circle round the bridegroom and squat on their heels. The women gather in the same way around the bride and then comes the captain, or eldest of the kraal, who has been chosen for the purpose and is called *Suri*. He enters the circle of the men first and sprinkles the bridegroom, who is likewise squatting on his heels, with his urine which the bridegroom eagerly rubs into his skin with the fat and buchu. The *Suri* then enters the circle of the women and urinates upon the bride who also receives the essence very eagerly and rubs it in very carefully. Three times the *Suri* moves to and fro from one circle to the other in like fashion, mumbling at the same time a few words which nobody hears clearly, and understands still less. Kolbe, however, has learnt them from his interpreter and translated their meaning as follows: "That he wished him happiness, health and prosperity in his marriage; that he should also in the very next year be blessed with a son and show himself a man not unfit to rear children; and that this son may grow up and be able afterwards, when his father is old, to provide him with the necessary means of subsistence, and may he become a good hunter and a brave man." I do not guarantee this to be a correct translation of the pathetic speech, for I have not yet heard any Hottentot speak so sensibly. Concerning the wooing of a girl, we shall hear below of a different custom in vogue among other tribes.

In my account of the "different-making" (*andersmaken*) or the way in which youths become men, I could also have written down the touching speech to be found on page 100 of the *Brief Description of the Cape of Good Hope*<sup>284</sup> alleged to have been made by the oldest member of the kraal or by the person who performs the ceremony, on occasion of this *Pisplechtigheid*; but I give my word of honour that the old man merely mumbles a few unintelligible words. No Hottentot in the world is capable of composing and declaiming such a Ciceronian oration. The Hottentot's intellect

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<sup>284</sup> by Allamand and Klockner.

is not so sharp, nor has his language such a rich vocabulary, for composing such a speech. If a person requires proof of the poverty of their language, he has only to reflect how often the single word "different-making" (*andersmaken*) which they call *Camie*, is used by them to express a certain act. To make a man of a youth is called "Different-making". To marry a betrothed couple is styled "Different-making". To restore a sick person's health is also "Different-making". If one of them in their opinion is bewitched he must be "made different". If the sheep do not seem quite healthy to them and are consequently driven through smoke, that too is "different-making". In fact, anything which they think is not as well as it should be, and has to be changed, is called "different-making" etc. Now, if their language had a large enough vocabulary for such a long speech, they would have been able to express every different act by a definite term.<sup>285</sup>

When a Hottentot goes on a journey he takes with him an assegai or javelin, a walking-stick or *kierie* and a shorter stick, which they call a *Rackum*, both made of wild olive wood. A bow and arrow are only taken when he goes hunting. Besides these he carries a fox-tail, bound to a thick cane, which he uses for wiping off perspiration.

The assegai, a description of which I have already given in the First Volume of this work serves mainly to protect them against wild animals or against their enemies. Their bows are poor, being also made of wild olive wood and not very elastic; the strings are made of twisted gut. The arrows are of cane twined with some threads of gut. For lack of a pointed iron, which might serve for an arrow, they fix a sharp, pointed piece of bone to it, and this they poison. Their poison consists exclusively, without any addition or preparation, of the poison present in two small vesicles in either jaw of snakes and especially of the kind called *Cobra Capella*. When they have killed a snake, they insert the points of the arrows in these vesicles and turn the arrows about until the poison has thoroughly taken hold.

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<sup>285</sup> On *andersmaken* see footnote to Wikar's Journal (V.R.S. 15. p. 65).



The quiver in which they carry the arrows is either a narrow bag of tough raw leather or made of a light wood, whose pith can be removed like that of our elder-tree; it is generally strong enough to hold five arrows. The *kierie* is merely a walking stick, three to three and a half feet long, but the *Rackum* is one of their weapons, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet long,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter at one end, and one inch at the other. This they cast or rather sling very accurately and seldom miss their mark. I have seen Hottentots aim at one ox out of a whole herd, and hit one of its horns, with unerring accuracy.

Although several writers repeat Kolbe's nonsense about the Hottentots being very proud of their weapons, often rubbing and polishing them, this is mere padding and exaggeration and meant to make everything appear so much grander. Their best weapons, the assegais, are in fact, as clumsily and awkwardly made as can be imagined. The points of most of them are of wood, somewhat hardened over a fire. Those Hottentots, who have assegais with iron points, have learnt from Europeans how to heat a piece of iron and to point it on both sides by hammering it with a smaller piece on a large stone. The ends are then ground on a rough sandstone to give them a finer point and sharper edge. The iron is fastened by a ring of ox-tail hide to the thicker end of the assegai shaft which is thin and flexible. The best iron assegai-points are made of the broken off handles of old iron basting or casting ladles, skimming spoons, etc. If the Hottentots can obtain this kind of handle or any other piece of iron forged in this way, they pay a high price for it and make a great fuss about it. Their ability in handling their assegais cannot be denied. They can hit their objective at a fair distance, and penetrate deep enough. As this spear is heavily weighted in front, but is very light at the other end, the depth of penetration will depend on the force with which it is thrown. With the *kieries* they parry the *rackums* of their enemies or the stones thrown at them, in the same way as our children stop a ball with a stick or broad piece of wood and at the same time hit it away. Their prowess in fighting consists in their agility in moving from one place to another, thus giving their adversaries no opportunity of directing their throws accurately, while they themselves during their jumps manage

to hit their enemy almost unerringly. With all this I would repeat once more that all tales of wars between Hottentots and their neighbours, except with the Bushmen, are mere fables.

The shape of the Hottentot can by no means be called ugly. The features are not at all savage; the body and limbs are comparatively well proportioned; and indeed, if the body has sufficient flesh on it, it may serve as a good model for a figure of a male nude. When the Hottentot is not sleepy or lazy, and undertakes some task for which he is fit, his actions are very vivacious; this can nowhere be better observed than at their dances. These consist mostly in standing in one spot and moving hands and feet to their music in a definite but regular rhythm. They always start the rhythm and the movement of their limbs in the same way as a 3,4 time measured in our own music; that is, so that they continue the sounds and the movement for a while to a 1,2,3 time. After a time the *Gongom* blower produces four beats and the dancer moves to a 1,2—3,4 time. Next the player increases the beats or notes and the dancer his rhythm to a 1,2,—3,—4,5 time. Rarely do they reach a faster rhythm and only the best dancers can jump to a 1,2,—3,4,5,—6 time. It must be well understood that in these newly-invented notes the dash between the figures denotes a small pause, but the closely grouped figures have to be pronounced in rather quick sequence. Such dances and music are best compared with the sound of our flails, when three, four, five or six threshers beat the time with their flails on the threshing-floor.

It is the current opinion that the heads of Hottentots are somewhat too big in proportion to the rest of their body. Although I paid no special attention to this, I cannot remember having been struck with any such disproportion. Their eyes are not disagreeable, but somewhat lack-lustre and are rather deep-set. The upper part of the bridge of the nose is flat by nature but lower down where the cartilage begins it is pressed down shortly after birth. The lips curl and are thickish, but not so thick as those of the Moors. When they are opened, two rows of teeth are visible, usually whiter than ivory and shiny like those of a dog. Apparently, then, the tobacco which they smoke incessantly, does not spoil their teeth. Their finger and toe nails,

since they do not cut them, are long and strong. Excepting such as have had an unfortunate accident during childhood, one finds no deformed, hunch-backed or lame persons among them. All of them are slender, robust, and active and it is no extraordinary feat for them to keep pace with African horses, which generally move at an easy pace. Their idleness may therefore be ascribed rather to bad habits than to inborn laziness. There is no proof for the assertion (made by some) that the limit of the Hottentot's life is forty years. Except when epidemics rage among them as in the years 1713 and 1755, they reach the same age as the Africans. There are men and women among them who have forgotten how old they really are, but from their appearance it is evident that they must be 60 years old and over. Since their method of counting does not go beyond ten, when they recommence and count up to ten a second time, calling the sum "ten-ten", their computation of time may easily be wrong. The report that they isolate their old age-worn parents and leave them to perish, is no longer true of those who live in proximity to the colonists. Sparrman, however, does mention a case which shows this to be still customary among some very distant tribes. Though I have never seen it with my own eyes, I have heard from trustworthy persons that they saw how young people lifted up and carried away their decrepit, helpless parents. At the moment of writing this I recall that I once heard the remark passed in a gathering, that the old Hottentot woman N.N. was still alive and had been seen recently on a farm. To my inquiry as to what old Hottentot woman was meant, I received the reply that there was a small indigent Hottentot family which roamed about the country and lived by begging at the farms. With them was a very old Hottentot woman who was carried pick-a-back by her grandson. What the Bushmen do with their age-worn parents, neither I nor anyone else can say, since no one has ventured to live among them for a time and investigate their ways of life.

The food of the Hottentots as regards liquids consists of sour milk or water, or a mixture of both. Milk is put in a bag of ox- or other hide with the hairy side turned inwards. As soon as the cows have been milked they pour the fresh milk on the old milk so that it turns sour too. Sometimes they also make butter

not for eating but to grease themselves with it. They make butter in the following way: they pour the milk into an oblong, narrow bag of animal-skin and two persons then grasp the bag at either end and swing it to and fro until the fat has coagulated and formed butter. Their daily meals, for the care and preparation of which the women have the sole responsibility, consist of roots, herbs and wild fruit, which are plentiful in the fertile regions, fields and bushes of Africa. Lack of these means of sustenance for human beings, even more than lack of grazing for the cattle, often forces them to leave their homes and settle in other places. Should an animal die, be it a beast or a sheep, it is cut up and eaten, but they never slaughter any, except for some festival or "different-making". When a member of their family falls ill, they generally cut off a sheep's tail, melt out the fat, anoint themselves or the sick person with it, and pick off the meat. To spare their cattle they frequently go hunting. If they are so fortunate as to stalk and kill an elephant, rhinoceros, buffalo, eland or other game, not only the whole family but the entire village have their fill, for nobody dares to go hunting alone, nor indeed can he do anything by himself, hence they go in a body. As long as a Hottentot has victuals, he will guzzle day and night. He will lie down to sleep and when he wakes up will visit the flesh-pot and then smoke tobacco or dagga, until he falls asleep again. Day and night are the same to him. He can eat, drink, sleep or smoke whenever he pleases. The women in the meantime have to take care that the men find something to eat whenever they feel inclined for it. In the vicinity of the rivers where hippopotami are found, the Hottentots cleverly lay traps for these animals and catch them in covered ditches. They find their meat very tasty. Since hippopotami are the largest four-footed animals next to elephants, they provide them with food for a considerable time. The meat which is not immediately consumed, is cut into long strips and dried in the sun. The odour given off by this meat after a few days is very pleasant and agreeable to them. Hottentots find elephant meat dried in this way and decaying most delicious: but the colonists and elephant hunters regard the smell as very unpleasant. No wonder this habit has become second nature to these nations, since they have been bred and accustomed to it from childhood.

To me, at least, this does not seem so contrary to nature, as when supposedly civilised persons do not shrink from eating stinking raw meat according to Sparrman's narrative, mentioned above. The story that Hottentots eat cast-off shoes must be taken *cum grano salis*. They would never care for shoes made of prepared leather or of leather tanned with lye. Only when he has no other means of subsistence will the starving Bushman resort to discarded veldshoes made of raw hide. Having soaked them in water, made them soft by pounding between two stones and then roasted them in glowing coals or ashes, he will eat them with a good appetite for which purpose his exceptionally fine set of teeth must be a useful crushing machine. However, what else does he do but what he has been accustomed to? For the hide of every ox is saved and dried to the last bit. When no more meat is left, the Hottentot will take the dry ox-hide, soak it in water and prepare it in the above way. The only difference is that the veldshoe has been worn a little. In an emergency it is not unusual for him to kill, roast and eat a snake; many consider it a delicacy. I knew a European who, whenever he saw a snake, when out riding, immediately dismounted, trod on the snake's head and cut it off with his knife. He then slit the reptile's belly and swallowed the fat which he pressed out with a horn spoon he always carried with him for this purpose. He alleged it was good for his health. It struck me as remarkable when I saw the Hottentots examining their karosses and biting with their teeth the "friends of their blood", which they found in them. In the African bushes and shrubs a small insect is to be found, called a "bush-louse". It is not larger than a bed-bug and very like it, except that its body is flat and thin. If this insect should stick to a passing man or beast, it becomes a blood-sucker. Human beings can get rid of it easily, but not animals, horses, cattle or sheep. It attaches itself to them preferably beneath the tail at the anus, eats deep into their flesh with its head and sucks such quantities of blood, that it attains the size of a hazel-nut in a few days' time, the legs remaining the same size as previously, so that the insect is unable to move and remains fixed only by the head. If several such bush-lice have attached themselves to one animal, its condition deteriorates rapidly. To pull them off is risky for the head then remains stuck in the

flesh and the small wound sometimes becomes dangerous for the animal, if it festers and spreads to the rectum. If one moistens some salt with water and smears it over the insect, it lets go and falls off. What a treat then for a Hottentot!

The houses of tame Hottentots look very fine on the copper engravings as described by Kolbe and other writers of travels. They look very different, however, when seen in the original. They consist of long, thin, pliable sticks, like bean-stalks, which are bent and bound together with riems of raw ox-hide. The sticks are generally of "Keurboom" wood which can be bent and treated like our willows. This tree is spongy, soft, pliant, and bears hairy pods with wild rancid seeds, the shape of our black vetches; the leaves, however, resemble those of our mountain ash. This hut is then entirely covered with sheepskins and mats, which are tied fast. If it is thickly and sufficiently covered the rain cannot penetrate but such water-tight roofing is seldom found. The door is merely an opening about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 feet high which serves as well for window and smoke-hole. In stormy weather this aperture is closed by means of sheepskins or mats, and another on the side sheltered from the wind is opened. The fire-place is in the centre of the hut, not raised above the floor which is the resting-place of the inmates, but sunken, actually only a small hole in the ground. The mats are not made of cane or reed, but of tough rushes and reedgrass, the like of which does not grow in Germany. Some Hottentots who possess better material for this purpose make much better and more durable mats which they sell to the colonists. The latter hang them over the hoops of a wagon and beneath the wagon-cover for greater protection against rain.

According to the report in the *Brief Description of the Cape of Good Hope*, the huts of the Hottentots are not round but oval-shaped: which is true for they resemble the clay baking-ovens which one finds in the villages of Germany. They are generally fourteen feet long and ten feet wide, and therefore have a circumference of thirty-five to forty feet; but this is not common, since one finds some which are scarcely twenty to twenty-five feet in circumference. Yet in the kraals they all stand in an apparently perfect circle. Those Hottentots who possess

both cattle and sheep, drive the sheep together into the central space at night, the cattle being left outside the huts, bound by one foot with a rope to a small peg driven in the ground. Some tribes of the Great Namacguas, which distinguish themselves from others by adopted names, but still live in good friendship with them through marriage and other connections, e.g. the Enicquas, Comeniquas, Cabonas, Karangoyers and others have houses made of cane and rushes, which are much larger than those of the other Hottentots, so that occasionally two or three families live together in them. The richest of them again, have not merely one, but two or three such huts, according to whether they have two or three wives, each of which has to build a hut for herself; for the wives of one man never live together.<sup>286</sup> One should therefore beware of generalising about anything pertaining to the Hottentots. We shall not have a general history of the Hottentots in a hundred years, and not before someone has taken the trouble to travel not only among their tribes but also among their families and to describe their habits and customs.

When Hottentots leave their former haunts and migrate to a different locality, they take their huts apart and put them on a pack-ox together with all their effects. A stick is then thrust through the nose of this animal and if it refuses to follow is led by it. For this purpose a hole is pierced through the wall separating the two nostrils while the animal is still young, and kept open to prevent it from growing together. When the ox is about to be laden a stick about 18 inches long, with a little barbed hook at one end to keep it from falling out, is thrust through the hole. Since this hurts the animal it is forced to stand still and suffer whatever treatment to which it may be subjected. If the ox refuses to follow willingly, it is guided or led by this stick. If it moves without being guided it turns its head at each step to the side towards which the stick swings, from which one may infer that this nose-band must be painful to the animal.

Some people say that the Hottentots have some innate skill, and allege that they make some articles that are as good as those made by Europeans. What wretched skill! The mats mentioned

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<sup>286</sup> Allamand and Klockner, German edition, p. 210.

for which little skill is needed are made by the women who also make the cooking-pots. These pots are so unsuitable and unwieldy that they are more round than flat-bottomed and cannot stand upright, but have to be put in sand both when fire is made and on other occasions to prevent them from falling over. To make such a pot, the woman selects a piece of clay of suitable size and removes the small stones from it; she gives the clay a round shape and hollows it out with her hands. Then she holds a piece of wood against the inside of the pot and beats the outside with another piece of wood until it is equally thick all round. Next it is dried, first in the shade, and then in the sun, and if in this process it does not break or crack, it is filled with chips and plenty of twigs are packed round it. The wood is set on fire and the pot baked in this way. I believe I have mentioned that the Hottentots dress the skins for their karosses after a fashion. This is done by merely leaving them lying in cow-dung for a few days, then allowing them to dry, shaking off the dung, and rubbing the skins with fat. How one can agree with Kolbe that this tanning process shows that they are good furriers passes my comprehension.

When those Hottentots who have not been given flint and steel by the Europeans wish to make a fire, they take a very dry piece of wood in which a fairly deep hole has been burnt. In this hole, or scooped-out cavity they place some very inflammable tinder, insert a thin-whittled piece of wood into the hollow, and spin it very quickly between their open palms. As a result of this rapid twirling, the wood which has already been kindled frequently is heated, glows and sets the tinder on fire. It is like the process whereby a turner burns black rings in a piece of wood fixed in a lathe, by holding a thin piece of oak-wood against it. This tinder is also used by the colonists for igniting their tobacco. It is a low growing plant, like sage, with similar leaves. On the reverse of the leaves, the side facing the ground, there is a rough woolly substance. This herb, which is also called the Tinder- or Powder plant, is dried in the sun and then rubbed to a powder between both hands. After this powder has fallen or been blown away, a rough woolly substance remains on one's hands which looks like that found between the cloth and lining



of threadbare clothing. This is the tinder which, having once been lighted and extinguished, catches fire from the least spark.

The men make their assegais, arrows, bows, quivers, kieres and rackums with their own hands, but it is long and wearisome work. To give an iron tip to their assegais, they need not only a few days or weeks, but sometimes months to sharpen the iron and to give it the right shape, particularly if it is fairly large. Just like the savage Americans who need almost a lifetime to grind a stone into a sort of axe. The forging of iron they have learned to some extent from Europeans. They use two stones for this purpose, but can only work on small pieces, such as are suitable for assegais or arrows. Copper, however, the Namacqua Hottentots really do know how to smelt and mould. Of this the two participants in the geographical expedition undertaken in the years 1761 and 1762, Tielman Roos<sup>287</sup> and Peter Marais,<sup>288</sup> have given the following account dated 18th August 1762.<sup>289</sup>

“Yet they are very clever in smelting copper. On our return we saw evidence of this in the neighbourhood of the river Garie. For the Namacquas that live here made such an experi-

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<sup>287</sup> Tielman Roos, son of Johannes Roos who came to South Africa from Leipzig in 1711, was second in command to Hop on the expedition to Namaqualand. Thereafter he became a progressive farmer and one of the leaders of the burghers in their remonstrance against Company misrule in 1779. Proceeded to Holland to lodge complaints before the Chamber of Seventeen and died there in 1781.

<sup>288</sup> Pieter Marais, the interpreter of Hop's expedition, was the fourth son of Daniel Marais and Aletta Russouw. His baptismal date is 1726 and his early years were spent at the *Tygerfonteyn*, beyond the Little Palmiet R. in what was then the Swellendam district. After his marriage (1752) he settled in the district of Stellenbosch, holding the farm *Kunnenberg* in Zuider Paarl. He later became a Heemraad of Stellenbosch and a deacon of the Paarl-Drakenstein Congregation. He supported the Roos faction in the church dispute which arose there in 1773 and proceeded to Holland in 1775, along with Johannes Roos, elder brother of Tielman, to lay their case before the *Classis* at Amsterdam. He died in Holland in that year. (Dr. Mossop has kindly supplied me with the above biographical information.)

<sup>289</sup> This and some other passages quoted below are taken by Mentzel from the German translation of the Report contained in Allamand and Klockner (pp. 204-213.)

ment at our request; we saw them prepare a crucible of *klzi* (i.e. clay or loam). They then built a kind of fire-place of fresh cow-dung, 6 inches high and about a foot in circumference. On one side of this fire-place, they placed two chamois-horns both of which had a bellows of skin attached to one end, so arranged that by opening and closing, the air which was continually passing through the horns was blown out. By this means the glowing charcoal lying in the fire-place smelted the copper in a short time. They then poured the molten metal into fresh cow-dung in which there were small furrows of about one finger long. The small ingots, moulded in this way, are placed on a stone and, with the aid of a stone hammer, are shaped into rings, or whatever else is wanted."<sup>290</sup>

To me the most wonderful examples of their work are their ivory armlets. Their manufacture would present no difficulty to the European ivory-worker. He would saw off a piece of the hollow elephant tusk and then round, smooth and polish it. But since the Hottentots have no saws, files or any other tools fit for such work, it seems incredible that they should be able to make such rings from such tough material. It has, therefore, been conjectured that they have obtained them from some unknown tribes.

Other utensils made by the Hottentots are of no importance and can by no means be regarded as proof of their natural skill. Sparrman, on page 357, tells the following inconceivable story of a Bastard race of Hottentot and Kaffir origin, living in the upper part of the *t'Kurenoi* or Little Sunday River: "These bastard Hottentots likewise keep milk in leather bags, but never drink it unless curdled. For milking they use a basket of a peculiar kind, made of roots woven so fine and tight that not a drop of milk or water can pass through. These vessels would be as neat as they are light if the Hottentots kept them cleaner. But the milk, which had formed a sort of crust, gave the inside an appearance which at first caused us to believe that they had

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<sup>290</sup> *Author's Note*: "These rings cannot therefore have been soldered together at the ends, for the Hottentots certainly do not understand the art of soldering. I have seen such copper rings on their arms which they pretended to have obtained from very far away. Those rings were not soldered but entirely of one piece'.

been smeared with cow-dung, to make them the more watertight. Afterwards I tested some quite clean baskets (one of which I have brought back with me) and found that they did not leak even without any smearing. They hold from half a gallon to five or six quarts".<sup>291</sup> I doubt whether a European basket-maker, or other craftsman could produce such a watertight basket: for it is known even of Chinese baskets which are so fine that human hands could not possibly weave them finer, that they cannot hold any fluid matter.

Marriage between close blood-relations is regarded with abhorrence by all Hottentot tribes; consequently, being forbidden also between first cousins. Adultery is severely punished, by death if committed by women. The men have a chance of escaping punishment if they marry the girl rendered pregnant by them and entertain the kraal to a good feast. Should a widow wish to re-marry, she has to have a joint of one finger cut off, and I have seen women with two joints cut off. What this cutting off should have to do with a second marriage, is just as obscure as the meaning of the *Pisplechtigheid*, on occasion of the first marriage; unless it may be regarded as a ceremony invented by one of the old chieftains merely for the sake of introducing a ceremony.

If unmarried persons give their love free rein and enjoy themselves, it is taken in good part; but this must not lead to pregnancy, in which case both culprits are liable to a death penalty. Should they marry, however, and give the community or kraal a head of cattle for a feast, they would usually be pardoned. If the statement of a Hottentot living among the colonists is to be believed, every Hottentot girl is bound to prostitute herself to any Hottentot on payment of an agreed price to her relatives. On the other hand, according to the same informant, there is not a single case known of a girl having been delivered to a Christian or white man for payment (probably

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<sup>291</sup> Both Barrow and Lichtenstein confirm Sparrman's statement about the neatness and utility of the Kaffir baskets which, says Barrow, are made of a species of *Cyperus* reed that grows in the vleis of the Zuurveld (*Travels*, I. p. 121.)

because no white man desires to buy such a dirty beauty). The Hottentot referred to had never had anything to do with this kind of love-traffic himself since it would have cost him a cow for two or three nights. Should pregnancy follow such a transaction, it can hardly be supposed that it would be punishable by the laws. It is a complete myth that Hottentots take the lives of children procreated by European or African fathers. In the first place, it is almost impossible for a Christian, be he European or African, to have relations with a Hottentot girl inside a kraal, unless he is so devoid of shame and decency as to buy the girl for his pleasure from her parents. In the second place, those Hottentot women who are in the service of the colonists, are very fond of children procreated by Europeans or Africans, and are very proud of them.

Towards run-away slaves belonging to the colonists, the Hottentots feel a disgust which is not only inborn, but also founded on sound common sense. They know very well that a run-away slave can only preserve his life by robbing them of their cattle. Therefore, if they catch one of them, they hand him over to the nearest colonist, who then takes him away and surrenders him to the authorities. But should a fugitive slave succeed in reaching the Kaffirs, he would be protected against all danger, for they never give the slaves up, because they become their best fighters, more courageous than the Kaffirs themselves. They defend themselves desperately against the colonists, for fear of being caught and handed over to justice, preferring death to recapture. It is the aim of all such slaves, who band themselves together and plot to desert, to join up with the Kaffirs. I have myself heard an impaled slave bitterly reproach his four other comrades impaled like himself for having deceived him by promises to take him to Kaffirland, but having kept their word like *Tagolies* (their worst insult). Hottentot women, in the service of the colonists, do not dislike the slaves, and easily let themselves be persuaded to live with them. Children born of such a union are always free, although their father is a slave, but they have to stay for 25 years with their mother's employer, unless the mother immediately returns to her kraal with her newborn child.

Concerning the alleged religion of the Hottentots, or at least their innate idea of a Supreme Being, Kolbe or anyone else may deduce some semblance of it from their dances and other festivals, and relate what they please. I can, however, give a truthful assurance that they neither know nor want to know anything of God and religion. They do not listen willingly to any talk about such things, and owing to the poverty of their language in which there are hardly any suitable words for the purpose, it is impossible to give them the faintest idea of the nature of a divine being. Even supposing that a Hottentot was brought up among the colonists, and, in his way, spoke fairly good Dutch, yet religious expressions are unknown to him and unintelligible. Such terms do not exist in his mother tongue, and therefore he cannot translate and grasp them. It is like speaking German to a native of Germany, but using the Hottentot language for the main words of the conversation. Similarly in regard to the Hottentots, since one cannot use words intelligible to them, they say frankly that they do not understand a word of what is being said, and they are right in avoiding a discourse which would be irksome and annoying even to the most reasonable person, if he could not understand the words used. The well-known Opitz of Breslau,<sup>292</sup> who was a slave of the Kalmucks for twenty years, reports that when he spoke to his master and mistress about God as his Creator, Preserver and Saviour, they replied: "Their father and mother had created them; horses and camels were their preservers, and the sword was their Saviour." Hottentots have similar ideas.

Those expressions which Kolbe notes down in his Vocabulary, and which it is obvious that the Hottentots could not have known before the arrival of the Dutch, seem either to have been invented or taken over from the "lingua franca" of the slaves. To illustrate this, I want to quote just a few words, whose meaning they cannot possibly have understood, as they denote things they have never seen.

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<sup>292</sup> author of *Merkwürdige Nachrichten von seinem Leben und Zwanzigjährigen Gefangenschaft . . . unter den Kalmucken . . .* (Breslau und Leipzig, 1748.)

- Knabou*: a fire-lock (seems to signify the report of a musket).
- Tikquoa*: God; cannot possibly be of Hottentot derivation for otherwise they should also have known what was meant by it, in which case an innate idea of a Divine Being, be it as slight as it may, could not be denied.
- Kroy*: a wagon or push-cart, is derived from the Dutch word "Kruywagen" which denotes a wheel-barrow or push-cart.
- Hacqua*: a horse.
- Choa-a*: a cat.
- Koukuri*: iron.
- Blee*: wheat, corn or barley or merely grain.
- Schjou*: a handkerchief. *T'Kauoklou*: gunpowder.
- t'Koume*: rice. *Bree*: bread; *Kobba*: hat;
- Driefbi*: wine; and similar matters which had never been seen by the Hottentots before the arrival of the Europeans, and consequently could not have been named by them. One may conclude from the single word "*Bree*": bread, which is clearly derived from Dutch, that Kolbe's explanations are not trustworthy; for elsewhere he translates the words *Hottentottum Brockqua*, which they intermingle in their chants, "Give the Hottentot his piece of bread"; in connection with which he also relates a fairy tale which is very silly, and he does not compare the word *Brockqua* with *Bree* at all.

Although the Hottentots do not readily hear or speak of religion or the acknowledgment of a higher Being there are, on the other hand, those who have been brought up among the colonists and can understand the Dutch language, who are not so obdurate and stupid that it should not be possible to give them an idea that the whole Universe and the order of Nature are not merely accidental. When an animal is slaughtered, they marvel at the fact that the internal organs of one ox are like that of another, and of one sheep like that of another sheep. They like to listen when one talks to them of secrets of Nature which they see every day, but pass by unnoticed. But on such occasions one has to speak quite plainly or rather quite bluntly and openly

according to their power of conception. For instance, if one asks them how it is possible that from the testicles, *sit venia verbo*, of a bull, a calf can originate which has skin, bones, flesh, intestines, life and motion, they do reply that an ox produces another ox, even as one human being produces another. But if one goes further and tries to explain Nature to them according to the limitations of their intelligence, and then one proceeds from Nature to the Creator, they listen attentively, stare at one and smile. I presume that if by degrees one were to teach a Dutch-speaking Hottentot a little philosophy, it would be possible to give him at least a conception of the true God, if not to make him a Christian. The most tedious part of such a procedure would be first to give him the meaning of such words as cannot be dispensed with, but which are entirely unknown and unintelligible to him.

The conversion by George Schmidt of 37 persons alluded to in Chapter VI, proves this at least that the Hottentots can be and are willing to be taught and instructed. To what extent this really led to their conversion from heathendom to Christendom, I cannot say. This I did see and hear, that a Hottentot boy of 15 or 16 years old, could read fairly fluently in a Dutch New Testament. Since George Schmidt, as a High German, could neither write nor pronounce Dutch correctly, the boy also did not read correctly in Dutch, although he had grown up in the family of a colonist and spoke Dutch fairly well. Sparrman also relates that George Schmidt had influenced an old Hottentot woman so far that she went to a secluded spot every day and there prayed very fervently.

The dances which the Hottentots perform in clear moonlight, not only at full moon, but also before and after, provided the weather is fine, are probably anything but religious acts. They are described in various ways by diverse writers. I do not want to deny that they may have been performed in one way by one tribe or generation and in a different way by another. Those which I saw were performed in this way: In the centre stood four or more older men, who blew on ivory tubes in such a manner as one could blow on an iron key, and produced similar simple notes. Round them the other males stood in a circle,

and danced in a standing position, so that they seemed merely to move their hands and stamp on the ground with their feet. At the same time the women, forming an outer circle round the men, moved with slow steps, clapping their hands to the time of the music and shouting continually "Ho! Ho!" This dance lasted longer than two hours, and the note of the tubes was always simple and similar to that which can be produced by using a key.

Meanwhile, although one cannot possibly deduce any idea of Moon worship or veneration for the moon from the dance described above, it does seem as if the Hottentots attribute special qualities and powers to it and the faculty of causing something good or evil to happen. The afore-mentioned burghers, Roos and Marais, who accompanied the expedition in the year 1761/1762, cite a very remarkable passage in the report rendered by them to the Governor and the Council of Policy. Since the honesty of these men can be relied upon, I shall not fail to quote it here:

"Their religion<sup>293</sup> consists chiefly in praising and worshipping the new moon when it rises. Then the men sit together in a circle and blow on a hollow tube, or similar instruments. The women then start clapping their hands and dancing round the men. At the same time they keep on chanting that the previous moon had protected them and their cattle well, and they hoped that this one would do likewise. The first Cabonas we met praised the moon especially for having brought them a nation<sup>294</sup> from whom they had received such great benefits. Although this is the limit of their religious practices, we have noticed that they also have a kind of idea about a Supreme Being, whom they call *Chuyn*, that is: big or powerful. For if they want to give an impression of something beyond their comprehension, they say: 'It is the work of *Chuyn*'."

I leave it to the judgment of everyone to decide whether the matter just described is a religious act or a superstitious ceremony; for it has been firmly established that among all savage tribes, no less than among the Hottentots, where there is no acknowledgment of God and his worship, indeed not even idol-

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<sup>293</sup> 'That of the Great Namaequas and Enicquas', explains the author.

<sup>294</sup> *i.e.* the members of the Expedition.



worship, superstition and the fear of an unknown evil spirit nevertheless hold sway, and all kinds of witchcraft are believed in.<sup>295</sup> That the Hottentots worship a certain insect as a god is absolutely false. They merely consider it a sign or indication of a pending misfortune. In this respect one should not be so astonished at the Hottentots when in our enlightened days more intelligent people, and Christians at that, cherish and believe in countless superstitions, forebodings and punishments, which are sometimes more foolish than the fear of the Hottentot of an unfamiliar beetle. When a Hottentot sees the new moon for the first time, he takes careful note of the first person he meets. If something good happens to him during the next four weeks, the person who met him first is a good person. On the other hand, should something evil befall him, that person is evil. If the great astronomer Tycho Brahe, on going out for the first time in the morning, met an old woman, or a cat crossed his path, he turned back and remained in his house the whole morning. Who was the more foolish, the Hottentot or the astronomer?

The musical instruments of the Hottentots I have already mentioned above, but not yet described. They are: the *Gom-Gom:t'Gorra*, the *Raveking:t'Guthe* and the drum: *t'Koi't'Koi*. Actually the Hottentot names can be written *Xgorra*, *Xguthe* and *XKoiXKoi*, since the X most naturally and closely expresses the clap or click of the tongue.

The *Gom-Gom* is a long, slender slightly curved piece of wood, or rather a twig or wand shaped like a violin-bow. Instead of having a large number of horse-hairs attached to it, the *Gom-Gom* has only a single horse-hair fixed to both ends of the bow to which a quill, slit lengthwise, is fastened. This quill they take between their lips when they hold the bow with the horsehair to their mouth and draw in the air through it. To put it more clearly: when they hold the quill with the horse-hair between their lips, they do not exhale but inhale, and thus cause a slight

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<sup>295</sup> In denying the Hottentots a sense of religion, Mentzel uses religion in almost a monotheistic sense. He distinguishes time and again between religion and superstition e.g. when he compares Hottentot practices with that of the Druids or in his references to the 'Veneration of the Moon'. Such a distinction is hardly permissible in the case of primitive societies.

quivering or shaking of the horsehair, which then produces a weak note. They put the quill in their mouth only because they could not otherwise control the quivering movement on their lips, nor would the horsehair produce a sound, unless it were quite loose in the quill. With this instrument they can not produce more than two sounds, according to whether they breathe in strongly or less strongly: yet these differ only like *d* and *dis*, *g* and *gis*, *f* and *fis*, except that they allow a definite pause between such sounds.<sup>296</sup>

The *Raveking* or *Xguthe* did not originate with the Hottentots but is an imitation of an instrument which the slaves brought from Malabar. The Hottentots copied it from them and for this reason it is not widely found among them. It consists of the lower half of a calabash or wild pumpkin through the centre of which a stick, two fingers wide and one ell long, with one end pointed and whittled is thrust through and fastened to it. A small piece of sheepskin, from which all wool has been removed and which has previously been soaked in water, is stretched over the halved calabash and bound fast to it, so that when it dries, it is very tautly stretched and is resonant. To the thin end of the stick which passes through the calabash and protrudes on the other side, three gut strings of different strength are bound which, as on a violin, are drawn forward over a little bridge, and fixed and tightened by means of three small pegs, passing through three holes which have been bored through the broad end of the stick, resembling the fiddles of small children which turners sell and which are made by the woodworkers in the mountains. This instrument is not played with a fiddle-stick, but is fingered like a lute. Hottentots who have such instruments cannot play pieces, dances, or such music on them, but merely produce the three notes of the three gut strings, and only, as stated, with a three- four or five-time beat. One could call it a 3:4, 4:4 and 5:4 time.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> The *Gora* was a stringed-wind instrument, called *Gom-Gom* by Kolbe. For full description and history see Kirby. *Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa*, Ch. 8.

<sup>297</sup> This passage has been translated in full by Kirby, (*op. cit.*, pp. 249, 250) who is of opinion that this instrument was of Portuguese origin, but adds that this is not in conflict with Mentzel's view as the Malabar Coast had long been under Portuguese influence.

The drum: *Xkoi Xkoi* (one of the most difficult words in their language, since the click has to be repeated twice) consists simply of a broad, shallow pot made of clay, over which a piece of sheepskin, cleared of wool and previously soaked in water, is stretched and tied down. When this is thoroughly dry, it becomes rigid and taut like a drum skin. Only the women play on this instrument, pressing on it with their fingers and jerking them off whereby they produce a muffled sound, as is caused by pressing slightly on the skin of a drum and allowing it to rise again. In spite of the miserably-sounding musical instruments just described, one should not imagine that the Hottentots have no aptitude or ear for music. I found a Hottentot living with a farmer on the land who, without the least instruction, played several dance-tunes on a fiddle, to which one could dance fairly regularly. I have to do justice to Kolbe when on pages 528 and 529 he criticises very intelligently the story of Father P. Tachart who writes about the music of a foreign tribe on page 108 of his *Journey to Siam*. That story the father heard from Governor Simon van der Stel, whose greatest joy it was to invent an impromptu tale and palm it off on a stranger: such as of the mountain with an altitude of 40 days' journey, of which the said father tells, but which also existed only in the imagination of this Governor van der Stel.

Tobacco and dagga are the Hottentot's chief delight, and the fumes given off as well as the smoke from the fire burning in their huts, the element in which they live and thrive. That which cannot be bought from them for money which they do neither know, nor value, they give willingly for tobacco, dagga and brandy. A small stumpy pipe is a welcome gift for them and they are well aware that if they do not break it, it will last for many years. Those which they make for themselves from the small horns of antelopes or gazelles, or even from wood with wooden stems, are very unsuitable. Their tobacco-pouches, however, in which they also keep—if they have any—their contrivances for making fire, are made either of lambskin or the skin of small antelopes, or from the scrotum of a ram. For lack of tobacco or dagga they also smoke dry leaves; nay, they do not even despise for this purpose the dried dung of the rhinoceros which

burns very well. Rhinoceros dung, as also that of elephants and cattle, if properly dry, is used for making fire by hunters or other persons travelling in sandy districts, where no wood or other shrubs are to be found. Of these, elephant dung burns brightest and longest, since it is mixed with small pieces of wood from twigs they have eaten. As this kind of fuel is very common in parts of Africa and Asia, where little or no wood grows, I believe this at least: that God did not command the prophet Ezekiel according to his Chapter 4, Verses 12 to 15, to mix his bread with the excrement of men or cattle, but merely to bake it over a fire of dried cow-dung, thus explaining clearly a passage that has given offence to so many doubters.

It must be said of the many Hottentot nations that they are subdivided into numerous tribes and these again into clans and families that have separated from each other, and have adopted different names. But one must not imagine these tribes to be large nations, peopling entire provinces. It is true that a number of kraals two or three days' journey apart, each containing 100, 150 or 200 souls, may soon occupy a large tract of land, but if a tree stand here, and a quarter of a mile farther there is a second, one cannot call the place a wood. The savage Bushmen who live scattered all over the mountains, especially in those on the East coast of the Cape, are probably the most numerous but not the most powerful. Since they live without a chief, unorganised, without even a permanent abode, destitute of everything, entirely independent and quite irresponsible like wild animals, here to-day and there to-morrow, they are found together only in small numbers. They are, indeed, the slyest, most rapacious and most to be feared on account of their savagery, but only by the tame Hottentots. If an opportunity occurs, or they are driven by hunger to steal cattle from the colonists, they do so furtively, with fear and trembling, and only when they believe there is no opposition to be feared. Otherwise, even if they see a company of merely ten or twelve Europeans or Africans, a hundred and more of them will assuredly take to flight, hide in the caves, in mountains and rocks, in fear of the elephant guns of the Africans, whose bullets reach very far. It is now more than fifty years since they had been very audacious. As may well be

imagined they can see very far into the plains from the high mountains. Hence when the postholder at the *Schuur*, Sergeant Kiweler, with a Commando of about forty Europeans not counting the bastard-Hottentots whom he used as drivers, was sent out to barter with the Namacquas, his party was seen from afar when it neared their mountain. The Bushmen swarmed from all sides, more than a thousand strong, big and small, women and children included, and threatened to attack the Commando. Thereupon the Sergeant in command sent a few bastard Hottentots to meet them, and to ask them what they wanted, warning them at the same time to keep at a distance and not to approach the Commando too closely. They demanded brandy, tobacco and dagga in an almost insolent manner, but remained at a distance and camped on the ground. The Commander actually sent them a number of bottles of brandy and a few rolls of tobacco intimating that they should divide these among themselves, consume it and go back. In the meantime, however, the Commando had taken up a defensive position between the four or five wagons they had with them and remained in readiness. Probably the bottles of brandy given them did not go very far with so many, so that they only became more insolent and demanded more in a truculent manner, at the same time approaching the Commando. Since the position had become serious, the Commander ordered grape shot to be fired from the field-cannon he had with him, and his men to fire their muskets in volleys of ten, thereby killing and wounding a considerable number of men and women. The war ended suddenly. The enemy fled, some of the women even abandoning their children in fright. Though this was a very weak Commando, some of the soldiers proved that if they were free to do as they pleased, they could be wanton and savage. Some of the most brutal ones seized the small children by the legs and crushed their heads against the stones. Others killed the wounded women and cut off their long breasts, afterwards making themselves tobacco pouches from these as tokens of their heroism.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> An examination of the documents in the archives on the most likely dates when these events are alleged to have occurred has brought no confirmatory evidence. The 'Kiweler' mentioned was probably

I have already described the boundaries of the other chief tribes of Hottentots, namely the Amacquas, Little and Great Namacquas, and at the same time remarked that the two first-named can by no means be called courageous. Of the Great Namacquas it has always been believed that there were fighting men among them, but their courage cannot have been great, for the first families met by the expedition described in Chapter VIII, in the vicinity of the Leeuwen Rivier, had been warned beforehand of their coming. Most of them, nevertheless, fled and hid themselves as soon as they caught sight of a few of the horsemen. Only a few old men and women were found in the kraal. When these were treated in a kindly manner and handed gifts of tobacco and dagga, the fugitives slowly returned to receive like gifts. One must not be deceived into believing that the epithet "Great" in "Great Namacquas" was bestowed on this nation on account of its numbers or bravery. The only difference between them and the "Little Namacquas" lies in the name, and it is very doubtful which of the two is the larger or more numerous tribe, for the Great Namacquas also live together in small families, which often consist of barely a hundred to a hundred and fifty people in one kraal, all told. They too live scattered and separated from each other like the Little Namacquas. The land of the Great Namacquas extends very far to the North and from West to East, and since many families of their

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Johann Philipp Giebeler of Nassau-Dillenburg who arrived in 1727 as a soldier. He was postholder at the *Schuur* from 1730 and sergeant in 1739. Became a burgher in 1742 and farmed thereafter near Stellenbosch. It seems fairly certain from the text that Mentzel is referring to an event which came within his own knowledge i.e. between the years 1733 and 1740. The Resolutions of the Council of Policy for the years 1738 and 1740 have brief references to trouble with 'Bushman-Hottentots', but the volume for 1739 contains two long detailed reports of expeditions against them. The first report dated June 2nd was submitted by the burgher Councillor Johannes Cruywagen; the other on October 31 by the landdrost of Stellenbosch, Pieter Lourentz, relating to the Commando led by Captain Theunis Botha (Cape Archives, *Resolutions of Council of Policy*, C. 31). Giebeler was certainly not with Botha's Commando as the names are given in the *Memorien en Rapporten* for 1739-41 (C. 294). That he was probably a member of Cruywagen's expedition earlier in the same year is supported by an inscription on the Heerenlogement cave which bears the name, I. P. GIEBELER 1739. [copied in V.R.S. 12. p. 185]. That report records that many Bushmen were slain in the fighting but is silent on the alleged atrocities. Mentzel may, however, have obtained details from fellow-soldiers.

tribe have separated from them and adopted different names, it would be rash to make any definite statement about their numerical strength. Their boundaries are supposed to extend, according to common belief, to the Ethiopian Sea on the West, to the land of St. Thomas on the North, to the Bricquas and Enicquas on the East, and to the land of the Little Namacquas on the South. Up to the present, however, these are quite unreliable conjectures, and are founded only on the reports of the Hottentots. Near the Kingdom of Monomotapa and the tropic of Capricorn, Africa has an astonishing breadth, so that to the North up to St. Thomas and eastwards to the Bricquas and Enicquas, many tribes may be living of whom we know nothing up to the present. The oft-mentioned expedition proceeded as far as about a hundred and twenty miles north of Cape Town and only five and three-quarter miles in a more westerly direction than that of the straight North longitude. Further North than this none of the Dutch colonists has ever come. We shall presently hear in how far this expedition supports my opinion in its report to the Governor and the Council of Policy.

The Namacquas are divided into several branches, by which their reputed large number is still further diminished, scattered and rendered less formidable. For instance:<sup>299</sup>

1. The Comenicquas,<sup>300</sup> who live on and around a large high mountain called the "Comma", about six to seven days' journey from the Groot River, which is called the "Charie" by the Namacquas. This district is very arid, and the tribe is compelled to draw water for man and beast from deeply sunken wells. The word "Comena" means "oil tree wood" so that the name "Comenicquas" seems to mean "Olive-tree nation", were it not for the fact that no olive-wood is found on that mountain.
2. The Tradiamacquas,<sup>301</sup> who are a very gentle and friendly tribe, also live in the vicinity of the "Comma" mountain. Their name

<sup>299</sup> I am indebted to Dr. E. E. Mossop for supplying me with the following notes (300-304, 306, 308) on the tribes named below.

<sup>300</sup> *Comenicquas*: The !*Gomen*. Remnants of this tribe still exist near Sesfontein in the Kaokoveld. The name derives from *Nama*: !*gomî* (masc.), !*goms* (fem.), the wild olive tree. The masculine suffix *qua* denotes people, men, folk.

<sup>301</sup> *Tradiamacquas*: *Tarati-amen-qua* (*Tradiamqua*) *N. Tarati* (women), *am* (close, near). The same root is found in the name Tradouw, a pass beyond Swellendam, from *Tara-daob*, Women's Pass or Kloof.

means "Female" or "Woman-Nation", but the reason for this name is unknown, unless they have been so called on account of their kind and gentle behaviour. Still, it is remarkable that Burghers T. Roos and P. Marais write the following about it in their report: "Yet we cannot say that they are gentler than the others, the attitude of the Namacquas in general having continually been very friendly towards us."

3. The Cabonas,<sup>302</sup> who are found in the neighbourhood of the Keima river, live four to five days' journey from the Tradiamacquas. These Cabonas gave the expedition news of yet another tribe, which lives to the West of them and are called Coenquas. The land of the Cabonas is rocky and stony throughout, which does not, however, prevent them from having a considerable number of cattle; among others, a kind of tame buck, which resembles those at the Cape except that it has small horns. Apart from many wild horses, no wild animals are found there.

4. The Korikambis,<sup>303</sup> who have derived their name (like most of the smaller Hottentot tribes) from one of their ancestors, are actually only a large family. They live around the Cam river, which also dries up in summer. Yet in this district many rhinoceri, wild horses and other wild animals are to be found.

5. The Keinamacquas,<sup>304</sup> who live around the Fish River are about a five or six days' journey from the Korikambis. This district is almost entirely barren and no water is to be found except in the wells and holes dug in the kraals. Since these holes hardly provide water for five or six oxen, the animals at that place are accustomed to go there at night of their own accord to quench their thirst, when water has again accumulated.

<sup>302</sup> *Cabonas*: The //Hawon, also called //Hawobe(n). The *Veldskoendraers* or Sandal wearers. Formerly of Daberas-Hasur north of the Karas mountains. (Com); this tribe now lives near Keetmanshoop.

<sup>303</sup> *Korikambis*: The !Uri-gamabe(n) or People of the white cattle. N. !Uri (white, also blank, without) gameb (bullock). The tribe is not identical with the Kharo-!oun. Karangoijsers of Roos and Marais Report.)

<sup>304</sup> *Keinamacquas*: The Great-Namaquas, Rool-nasie (Red Nation) of Hoachanas. Considering themselves owners of Great Namaqualand, they called themselves the *Kcī-//Khaun* = Great Defenders.



From this brief description of the five tribes unknown up to the present, and from their remoteness from one another, one may reasonably infer that between the Cape, as at present occupied by the Dutch, and the Kingdom of Monomotapa or the Tropic of Capricorn, there may still lie immense tracts of land with countless tribes inhabiting them. Very soon, indeed, we shall have some account but only a conjectural one, of the Kingdom of Biri.

The Commando or expedition sent out in the years 1761/62, to obtain information about and look for a people called Damroquas or Birinas that wore clothes and had long hair and beards, was more suitable for this purpose than all previous expeditions, for besides the fact that they went farthest North, they had an African-born colonist with them called Peter Marais, who could speak both Dutch and the Hottentot language fluently and as a result, could speak to these tribes himself without an interpreter and inquire about everything. This is the only way of investigating all the ways of life of the Hottentots. For if a Hollander has first to examine these people by means of an interpreter, who is generally a bastard Hottentot, the latter in the first instance has no thorough knowledge of the Dutch language, and then again lacks words to explain the exact meaning of the Dutch words to the Hottentots. For the Hottentot language not only has a poor vocabulary, but sometimes has no words at all whereby what has been said in the Dutch language could be explained to them. The same thing happens when the interpreter has to translate and explain the meaning of the Hottentot's reply. Everything has to be done in a long-winded way, I might say in parables with circumlocution, which obscure the real meaning or make it quite unintelligible. Several times I put questions and received an answer that was not to the point. It is far worse still in the case of a foreigner like the Abbé de la Caille, who had to have a Hollander at hand, who could speak French; he, in turn, had to explain this to a bastard Hottentot and then the bastard Hottentot had to tell the aboriginal Hottentot what the Frenchman wanted to know. All translations lose something in value, so that when a question has to be asked through three or four languages and the answer returned through as many, it cannot be otherwise

than that everything must be very imperfectly and on that account quite wrongly understood. To this must be added the following: that one often has to travel for several days through uninhabited places before one comes upon either another tribe or even another kraal whose inhabitants, on account of the distance from their neighbours or because of the difficult and dangerous journey, do not come in contact with others, and have no more than hearsay information about them. It follows that all reports, which cannot be investigated on the spot in the proper language of the nation must be very erroneous and untrustworthy.

Before we describe the different Hottentot tribes inhabiting the Eastern part of the Cape, we shall give some more information about those living in the North-Western Cape which the above expedition received by word of mouth from distant Hottentot tribes. To quote the report of T. Roos and P. Marais once more:

“Although we learned nothing further about the Damroquas, yet we ascertained from the Cabonas that to the North-East of them lived the Birinas tribe,<sup>305</sup> whose houses were built on stakes, were interwoven with reed and smeared both inside and outside with a mixture of clay and cow-dung; and that they did not rub their bodies with fat or grease, although their clothing was also made of skin, and that they spoke a language entirely different from that of the Namacquas. They related further that when much rain had fallen in their district, these Birinas used to come over to the Cabonas, bringing iron and copper, besides large and small beads, to barter ‘for cattle. They did not know, however, where they obtained their iron, copper and beads.”

“This tribe then, supposed to live a further ten days’ journey to the North-East, seems to be still entirely unknown. Since the Namacquas always add the syllables *Na* and *Qua* to the names of countries, but when they speak of the Birinas, call a single person a “Biri”, it may be inferred that the kingdom marked “Biri” on some maps is meant. We were further informed by the Keinamacquas who, according to the maps, live not far from

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<sup>305</sup> for Birinas see note 196 above.

the kingdom of Biri, that two different tribes were to be found to the North-West, one of which was called the Tamacquas,<sup>306</sup> who were not only very black in appearance, but had also ornamental scars on their faces. The other was called "Saumtamaap". There was no further difference between both of these and the Birinas, as far as their huts, clothing, weapons and their articles of commerce were concerned."

The Enicquas,<sup>307</sup> that lie to the East of the Comenicquas and Cabonas, belong to the Namacquas, and live in good friendship with them through marriage and other connections. The expedition found an Enicqua woman among another Namacqua tribe called the Karangoyers,<sup>308</sup> who had settled at the Groote rivier. According to her testimony, and that of other Namacquas, who had often visited the Enicquas, the latter had many cattle and goats of the usual breed. Nevertheless, some of the Namacqua tribes were hostile to the Enicquas, and refused to guide the Commando to them unless the Enicquas were to be attacked and robbed of their cattle.

The Great Namacquas also differ from the other Hottentot nations in their habits and customs. For their houses are made of cane or rushes, in which usually two or three families live together. The richest among them, however, who have two or three wives, own several huts, built by their wives. All of them, though, rub themselves with fat like the other Hottentots. "Men-making" or "different-making", which they call "*Camie*", though hardly customary among other Hottentots any longer, is still observed very strictly by them. Thus it happens, as I said at the beginning of this Chapter, that this "men-making" is still customary among the very far distant Hottentot nations.

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<sup>306</sup> The terms *Tamacquas* and *Damrocquas* as used by Roos and Marais indicate both the Bantu Herero (Cattle Damara) and the Bergdamara who were neither Nama nor Bantu. Damara is the dual of *Damab*, the male Herero. To this the Nama suffix *qua* was added.

<sup>307</sup> *Enicquas*: the People of the River, a collective name for several tribes that lived along the Orange River. For full discussion regarding them see V.R.S. 15. (pp. 225-228.)

<sup>308</sup> *Karongoiyers*: The *!Kara-Khoin*, *!Kara* out-distanced, left behind; *Khoin* men. 'This tribe', adds Dr. Mossop, 'is original to S.W.A. in the sense of not being *Orlam*s from S. of the Orange R.'

In regard to marriage, the most distant Namacquas and those who, though belonging to them have adopted different names, observe the following:

Firstly: when one of them desires a wife, he goes to the father of the girl he wants, taking with him a number of cattle which he offers in exchange for the daughter. If the father takes all of them, he loses the right of ever demanding his daughter back. If he returns one or two of the proffered oxen to the suitor, he retains the right of claiming his daughter, should she be badly treated by her husband. Naturally this applies only to the richer families; for the poorer ones dispense with such formalities, and if the girl refuses to take the suitor, she has to undergo the test already mentioned: either defend herself against the suitor's intentions for a night or marry him.

Further: If a man dies, leaving a wife and children, the eldest brother of the deceased must then take the woman as his own and rear the children with his own, unless the widow possesses sufficient means for supporting herself and her children. In this case, the brother of the deceased has the choice of taking the woman or not.<sup>309</sup> This is further evidence that the Hottentots cannot be descended from the Jews, for according to Mosaic law, the brother of the deceased need only take over the widow if the deceased has left no issue.

Among all Hottentot nations without exception, the women alone are obliged to rear their children and manage the household affairs as well. The men take turns to watch the cattle, and also go on hunting expeditions in company with other men, to provide their family with meat, and thus save their own cattle; but the women have to look for herbs and roots, gather wild fruits and milk the cows. On pretext that other work would unfit him for his chief concern — that of his weapons — the man lies in the sun or shade, (unless he is out hunting or watching the cattle in the fields), eats, drinks, smokes tobacco or dagga, sleeps, and when he wakes up, rises again to eat, drink, smoke and sleep again, without worrying in the least about the housekeeping or other matters.

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<sup>309</sup> The preceding four paragraphs are taken in paraphrased form from the report by Roos and Marais.

All Hottentots, when they do not lie on the ground, squat or perch themselves in such a way that their buttocks rest on their heels, which manner of sitting at meals, or when smoking or in company, they think more comfortable than on chairs or benches. Their fire-place is a hole in the centre of their hut, and since this has no other vent-hole than the door or entrance, the hut is so constantly filled with smoke that a European would suffocate in it; but they are so accustomed to the smoke that it has no effect on them. The women either cook their food in home-made pots, or roast it between two previously heated stones, around which they also build a blazing fire. Sometimes they grill a piece of meat on glowing coals, or put it into the glowing ashes. If it is not tender enough, they beat it between two stones to soften. This generally happens when they are preparing a piece of hide which shrinks on the fire and becomes tough. They never use salt with their food; they are not accustomed to it from their youth and very few tribes have salt on their lands.

That those who are in the service of the farmers become ill of salted food, or even die at an earlier age, is not true; my experience is to the contrary. When wandering or vagrant Hottentots come to a colonist, they find salted, pickled, dried and smoked meat as agreeable to them as unsalted. As often as a body of Hottentots consisting mostly of twenty to thirty persons, come on some mission to the Government, they are treated to twice the day's rations given to the sick at the hospital. A "balie"<sup>310</sup> filled with meat and sliced garden vegetables is put before the party which makes short work of it. The vessel is very soon cleared, and half a dozen ration loaves consumed at the same time.

Although the Hottentots do not keep pigs, they eat pork just like the colonists, be it fresh or smoked: and why should they not? For between pork and the meat of the hippopotamus of which they are very fond, there is no big difference. Fish without scales is repugnant to them. This is not because it is a forbidden dish to them, but because they have a natural aversion

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<sup>310</sup> a Balie, explains the author, is a leaguer vessel sawn in two; it holds 3 Berlin pails.

to it. Other fish they eat eagerly whether cooked, fried, dried or pickled by the Chinese (as one obtains them in Cape Town), especially if they can get rice with it cooked quite dry in the East Indian manner. From the situation of the districts and places where the majority of the Hottentots live, the esteemed reader will have noticed that of a hundred Hottentot families, hardly one lives in a place where fish is procurable. Even those Hottentots that live at the sea coast are not skilled fishermen. They are quick enough at catching with their hands small klipfish, which are left behind in the hollows of rocks at ebb-tide; for these cannot elude them, being enclosed as in a wooden tub filled with water. But for other fish they can only lie in wait for the flood tide to cast some ashore.

Except in rainy and cold weather, a Hottentot seldom covers his head; but when travelling, hunting or tending cattle, he puts on his round sheep-skin cap with the hairy side outwards. The women sometimes go bareheaded but not very often, usually wearing a bonnet of skin cut with a sharper peak than that of the men. In the fields while tending cattle, when hunting, and on journeys, they wear low veld-shoes of raw ox-hide, otherwise always go barefoot. There is no foundation for the statement made by some writers that they wore some kind of boot. Even the colonists whether of the town or country do not wear boots. Anything to the contrary is erroneous. All of them, without exception, even when on horse-back, wear ordinary shoes and stockings, or low veldshoes of raw ox-hide.<sup>311</sup> They wrap up their feet with rags to above their ankles and, when they want to be really grand, they wrap handkerchiefs round these rags, the finest East Indian coloured handkerchiefs being used for a gala occasion. Real boots made by shoemakers are worn at the Cape only by the most distinguished people and by officers when they go riding or travelling. Similarly no one, whether townsman or farmer, presumes to ride with pistols in his holsters, but gladly leaves this privilege to persons of higher quality. On the platteland however, where everyone has to be on his guard against wild animals, Bushmen and runaway slaves, everyone may have as many guns with him as he pleases.

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<sup>311</sup> This and the following sentences apparently refer to the colonists.

The language of the Hottentots is most difficult to describe and to explain even in a slight degree. If one merely writes that they give a clap of their tongue in many words and pop, smack or snap, no one could form an idea of it and imitate it, without oral instruction. If it has once been demonstrated, one can imitate it tolerably but very slowly and with great difficulty if these sounds occur twice in the same word. A European or even an African who has not lived and grown up among them from childhood, though he can learn to understand their language, can never learn to speak it fluently. We have already heard above the opinions of Dapper, Hollsteiner, Mercklin, Böving and Ziegenbalg about this language, but it seems to me that they missed the main point. Böving is quite correct in saying that the language has many linguals and gutturals. To these could be added: labials and dentals, but that is not sufficient to give an idea of the clacking of their tongue and the hissing between their teeth. The Abbé de la Caille, to whom as a Frenchman with his fluent mother tongue, this jabbering or clacking of the Hottentots must have sounded far more disagreeable than to a German or Hollander, whose language already has somewhat harsh elements in it, is of opinion that the Hottentots have two letters more in their language than other nations, and says: "One of these sound-letters or vowels is expressed by a clacking of the tongue and the other by a rushing thrust of air between the tongue and the gums." One could rather say that they have two letters fewer than other nations, for I never heard a *P* or an *X* in their words, but I am convinced that the greatest difficulty lies in just these two letters which can solve the problem. Here in Silesia I am acquainted with two women who became entirely deaf in childhood owing to small-pox. Both of these, who could previously talk normally, now ventriloquise mostly, without differentiating the real tones of their voice by means of the tongue, gums or teeth, because after becoming deaf, they could not hear other human voices, probably not even their own. That reminds me of the language of the Hottentots, presuming as conjectured above that their first ancestors had retained it as children after the death of their parents and without further teaching. Kolbe has indicated the clap of the tongue and the hissing or lispings, by means of signs above the syllables of the words, but instructed

no one how to interpret and pronounce the signs. He could just as well have placed musical notations above them, the one would have been as clear as the other.

Although I do not wish to assert this as irrefutable truth, yet it always appeared to me that the Hottentots wanted to express an *X* by the clacking of their tongue and a *P* by the lispings between their tongue and gums: for it seems to me that they wanted to pronounce the latter as a Greek *Phi* ( $\phi$ ) or *psi* ( $\psi$ ), since it has the closest similarity to these. The clack which is sometimes heard twice in pronouncing the same word, is nothing else than a clapping of the tongue caused by pressing the tongue against the gums and suddenly jerking it loose, so that it has to make a snapping sound. This snapping is only heard at the beginning of a word or a syllable. Taking the word *Xantippe* as an illustration and trying to pronounce it, the tongue should previously be pressed against the upper gums and instead of pronouncing the *X* the tongue should suddenly be let go, so that it clacks, at the same time pronouncing *antippe*. Thus one can imitate the Hottentot pronunciation in the closest possible way. He who has practised this for a while, can take the word *Xerxes*, and try to clack twice in succession, at the same time attempting to pronounce *-er* and *-es*. He would laugh at his efforts to perform this. The name *Xenophas* can be pronounced in Hottentot fashion by clacking the tongue at the first syllable and lispings at the third syllable or dragging out the *ph* like a Greek  $\phi$  or  $\psi$ . What makes the language most unintelligible is the habit of the Hottentots not to open their mouths properly when speaking and separate the words from one another, but to slur over the words like one just waking and speaking as in a dream. From this brief description which I cannot possibly put more clearly, one may see that the Hottentot language can by no means be so easily learnt as the deputy-superintendent Ziegenbalg imagines who also believes that grammatical rules can be formulated for it and that it can then be taught. This I can say in advance, that the Hottentot language, just like the lingua franca of the East Indian slaves, knows no difference of genders, but indicates everything, irrespective of whether it is masculine, feminine or neuter with the same article. In lingua franca *everything* is called



*Asiel* and if I have to explain this in German, it comes to *Ackel* man; *Ackel* woman; *Ackel* thing.<sup>312</sup> It is the same with the Hottentot language.

Hottentots are born shepherds, and this is virtually their only occupation. Hunting is a voluntary act, undertaken when they feel like it. When they wish to provide themselves and their families with venison they organise a hunt and everyone taking part gets his share of the spoils. The inhabitants of a kraal tend their cattle and sheep jointly by taking turns, but in such a way that some of them drive the cattle and others the sheep. In such case their special and most important duty is to discover whether some beast of prey was lurking in their pasture grounds; for the cattle keep close together and do not easily stray, and being more attached to the Hottentots than to other people, allow themselves willingly to be controlled and managed by them. On the open veld they have nothing to fear, at any rate during the day, especially from lions and tigers: for these do not dare to make a direct attack in daylight, and besides, are no longer as numerous as formerly. The lion is either too timid or too wary; the tiger only stalks its prey stealthily, and the hyena is never seen during the day. But even in the daytime, the tiger and the tiger-cat, the leopard and the panther are among the most dangerous foes in areas where there are dense forests and bush. For there they have an advantage because they may watch from concealment.

The Hottentots however avoid such dangerous spots and where possible, keep their cattle in the open fields. Indeed, there are few forests in the districts they inhabit, except in the Eastern Cape. As soon as a shepherd or any Hottentot becomes aware of a beast of prey, he informs the whole kraal. When the animal's lair has been discovered, the Hottentots from the kraal concerned assemble as well as their nearest neighbours whom they invite to join them in overcoming the enemy. Should they find the wild beast in a hole or cave frequented by lions, they provoke the animal until it emerges. When they have surrounded it, or

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<sup>312</sup> Mentzel makes the explanation unnecessarily complicated. What he means is that instead of denoting gender through articles as *der* mann, *die* frau, *das* ding, they would say *the* man, *the* woman, *the* thing. I have been unable to discover what *ackel* stands for.

taken up such a position in front of the hole that the animal has to pass between two rows of men, it is immediately attacked with poisoned assegais and arrows. Should it flee and elude its pursuers, it does not matter, for it is certain to die very soon of the poisoned wounds. Yet a hunt in which one or two men do not lose their lives is a fortunate one. Of wars against neighbouring tribes of their own kin, little is known, for they prefer to live together in peace and concord. If a quarrel should arise between two neighbouring communities, it would be due to missing cattle. But when they really came to blows about it, there were sometimes bloody fights with casualties on both sides caused by poisoned assegais and arrows. This must have occurred more often in former times than at present, for they are now more widely scattered and live too far from one another for their cattle to stray easily from one to the other: and besides, they are nowadays owing to the influence of the Europeans more timid, cowardly and less quarrelsome. At any rate one no longer hears of such feuds. Their greatest worry is to protect themselves against the attacks of the Bushmen and, when the latter venture to attack the herds and kraals, they aid one another faithfully; the worst part of it being that the families live too far apart and the kraals are too widely separated to be able to support one another quickly in case of need. For the Bushmen always attack only a kraal nearest the mountains; one might call it a "border-kraal". They do not venture far inland where entire tribes live in several separate kraals. Since one finds very few communities which number as many as two hundred souls, and since one sometimes has to journey for several days before meeting with a Hottentot family, it may be inferred that this vast land is not nearly as thickly populated and the number of the original Hottentot communities is not nearly as large as is stated by some writers. Still less can one imagine that the tribes could be persuaded to unite for attacking the Europeans.

As the Hottentots without exception are very fond of strong intoxicating drinks, especially of brandy, but cannot easily obtain it, they brew themselves a drink made of water, honey and a root which may possibly be the *Canna* or *Ginseng* root.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> *Panax ginseng*.

This mixture is placed in a hollowed calabash for fermentation and those who drink it become more stupefied than intoxicated by it. While in this state, they are unfit for and incapable of anything whatsoever. It is well that their supply of it is small and is soon consumed. Since they drug themselves by this drink and by much tobacco and dagga smoking, it is a real blessing for these tribes as well as for the colonists, that no amphiion or raw opium is to be had in this country; otherwise if they were under the influence of that narcotic, which many tribes in the Indies consume to make them fierce and frenzied, no person would have been sure of his life for one moment among the Hottentots.

The usual beverage of the Hottentot is water or milk or a mixture of both. It is strange, however, that on page 18 of Part Three of the "*Brief Description of the Cape*" the statement occurs that only the women are privileged to use the milk of hares, rabbits and sheep. Who has ever heard or believed that hares and rabbits, which abound in the wilds, can be milked?

When a Hottentot dies, the relatives and friends, that is practically the whole kraal, start shrieking and howling fearfully, and then begin to make immediate preparations for the burial. The body of the deceased is bent so that the head comes to rest between the legs; it is then wrapped and bound in a kaross. Then the eldest of the kraal with a few other persons look for a suitable burying-place, preferably an opening in a rock or some other hole, since that saves them the trouble of digging a grave. When after a few hours all preparations had been made for the funeral, all the men and women of the kraal gather before the entrance to the hut and the members of either sex squat on their heels each in his or her special circle. Then they set up a miserable howling, and repeat the word "*Bo, Bo*" (father) incessantly in a pitiful tone. In the meantime, the mats and covers of the hut are removed and the body carried out, not through the usual entrance, but through an opening made on the opposite side. Three or four bearers chosen from the next-of-kin lift the body and carry it away. All the men of the kraal follow the bearers in irregular order; behind them come the women, howling frightfully to the accompaniment of many

grotesque gestures of their body, hands and feet. The corpse is placed without further ceremony in the hole, cavity or grave which is filled with earth, large stones, shrubs and thorny bushes, to prevent it from being dug out and eaten by hyenas and other carrion-eating animals.

When anyone, whether old or young has died, the burial is not long delayed; the whole ceremony is over within four to six hours. In this respect they act like the Jews, who likewise remove the dead bodies from the house as soon as possible. Stillborn children especially or those dying soon after birth, are taken away and buried without delay, sometimes even before they are quite cold.

The return of the mourners is accompanied by the same wailing. Squatting in two circles, they continue their *Bo-bo* crying for another hour, calling the name of the deceased frequently, and adopting a very sorrowful attitude until, finally, two of the eldest relatives rise and end the wailing, one moving round the circle of men and the other that of the women, and sprinkle all of them with their urine: which is very respectfully received and rubbed in. After this they fetch some ashes from the hut of the deceased with which they dust both men and women who very carefully rub it into their fat-besmeared skins. Neither the dusting with ashes nor the sprinkling with urine, however, has any moral significance to remind the living of their mortality, as Koble pretends. No Hottentot, however old, can give any other reason for it, than that it is the custom. I would not deny the Hottentots some skill in mechanical exercises, when duly instructed; that they also possess some talent for learning a different language is apparent from those who learn the lingua franca from the slaves and Dutch from the Hollanders; but for moralising, they have truly as little aptitude as an ass for dancing. Kolbe was a learned and well-read man; no one can deny his erudition, but on his return from Africa circumstances forced him to become a literary hack. To prolong his work and thus earn more money, he became disgustingly long-winded in his letters, and to make more plausible stories which he had indeed heard, but had not examined for himself, he sometimes had to invent additions which he certainly

disbelieved himself. But putting this aside, I shall continue to describe the Hottentot burial customs.

When leaving, the next-of-kin will rub cow-dung on their arms and legs, repeating this for several days after the funeral in memory of the deceased. It may be taken for granted that they punctiliously observe all these ceremonies, through superstition and a fear of witchcraft, visitation by ghosts, and even of their own death. For these reasons, too, they do not inhabit the hut of the dead person any longer, but build themselves another. When everything pertaining to the funeral has been accomplished, the heir slaughters a sheep and the nearest relatives do likewise. The meat is shared by all the inhabitants of the kraal. A gut of the sheep slaughtered by the heir is cleaned, richly bestrewn with buchu, and fastened round his neck. This is his sign of mourning, and he is obliged to wear it until it breaks of its own accord and drops down as decayed matter. He does this very willingly, and looks after it as carefully as possible, imagining that otherwise the deceased would return and torment him. The other near relatives do likewise with the intestines of the sheep they had slaughtered, and given for the funeral feast. That it is a custom among the Hottentots to remove and abandon their age-worn and helpless parents and, as it were, to bury them alive, has already been refuted. But, in any case, this no longer happens at the present time. They have now become much more humane in their customs and disposition. Even Dapper tells us that there were people of eighty, ninety, a hundred, and even a hundred and twenty years old among them, of both sexes. Kolbe too relates that he knew more than one such old person. I, for my part, since I had never heard anything about this inhuman procedure, have never inquired about the age of the eldest persons. In my time there lived in the City a really old Hottentot, who called himself "Jantje de Konsten-Maker" (John the performer). His performances, however, consisted merely of dancing Hottentot fashion, accompanying himself with song, and at intervals turning himself over or, as it is called, somersaulting. At the same time, he drank brandy to excess and when intoxicated, was ill-treated generally by sailors. He was ultimately found dead in the street: probably from having taken an overdose of brandy the previous day.

With the majority of the Hottentot families, the inheritance goes to the eldest son, but not in all cases: for Sparrman relates that he found some who followed a different custom. If there are no sons, the next male relative is the heir. He who is the heir, takes the place of the deceased in all respects, and has also paternal authority over his brothers and sisters. Without his consent, none of them may marry or hire themselves out to the colonists and serve them. When he gives permission for this (which he does very readily so that he need no longer support them), he allows them a cow or a few sheep at the same time, but then his authority over them comes to an end. A girl, who marries, rarely gets a dowry of more than one or two cows and a few sheep from her father; and should she later die childless, the dowry must be returned to the family. If the deceased has left one or more wives, the heir must provide for them. Among the Great Namacquas the surviving widows usually become the guardians of the inheriting son<sup>314</sup> and he has to support his mother for life or until she re-marries. The daughters of the deceased do not inherit; yet the heir must support them until they marry and then give them their dowry. Should they have no chance of marrying, they may demand their dowry and hire themselves to the colonists, who would allow the cattle brought by them to graze among their own cattle and propagate to the profit of the owners.

A great deal has been related without cause or reason about the administration of justice among the Hottentots. That they punish an adulteress by death is quite true: but these are rarely caught in the act, and it would be very easy for the suspected person to escape to the colonists. Should this happen there would be little likelihood of their being delivered up, or even claimed. The seduction of a young girl may be expiated by marriage and a community feast. Quarrels arise among them only when they have

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<sup>314</sup> The text reading '*Bei denen grossen Namacquas pflegen die hinterlassenen Wittwen Vormünderinnen des erbenden Sohnes zu seyn*' leaves little doubt as to its meaning and, even assuming that it only applied to a minor, the statement is in conflict with the general usage that the nearest male relative was the guardian of the minor children. There is little reliable evidence on the customary rules of inheritance among the Hottentots and Schapera points out that 'not a single concrete example of inheritance has been recorded', *Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, p. 325.

become drunk with their honey-water, but such quarrels are soon settled by the intervention of the women. Theft is regarded with great disfavour by the Hottentots, and I have no doubt that if they found a thief among them, he would be punished by death. But theft is not likely, for either the cattle are the common property of the whole kraal, or each has his own: therefore the whole kraal would know all the cattle, so where could one hide a stolen beast? One would have to kill and consume it in public. Of household utensils the one possesses as many as the other, and each knows his own. It is impossible to hide anything stolen in a kraal. Kolbe also includes high treason among the punishable crimes; but this is too silly to be taken seriously. For how can an inhabitant of one kraal desert to another kraal belonging to the same tribe and become a traitor? The illustration given by Kolbe is merely a story for the sake of story-telling.

Hospitality among Hottentots is founded on a law of nature. When travellers arrive at a kraal, whether it be one of their own tribe or of a different tribe, they are as much at home as with their own family. They share in what provisions there are, and remain as long as they please or their circumstances permit. Sometimes they also visit their friends among other tribes, and Sparrman was accompanied by over a hundred persons who wished to visit their friends among the Great Namacquas, but had not dared to do so for fear of Bushmen. Occasionally, some come from the most remote tribes to barter cattle in exchange for copper, beads and other trifles which they bring with them, having presumably obtained them from other more distant tribes. These are sometimes delayed in making their return journey, through drought in the dry season, or by swollen rivers. While so delayed they are provided as an act of friendship with all the necessary means of subsistence; no formalities either of welcoming or leave-taking are observed on such occasions.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Professor I. Schapera makes the following comments upon this chapter on the Hottentots.

"Much of Mentzel's account of the Hottentots is taken from published sources (e.g. Roos and Marais and Sparrman), and even in the earlier sections, where he writes of the Hottentots with whom he himself came into contact at the Cape, he uses other authorities as well. His reference to Kolbe (p. 262) as the source of "everything we have known hitherto about the Hottentots" is not correct (cf. V.R.S. 14 for earlier

accounts); and Mentzel himself states (cf. V.R.S. 4. p. 19) that Kolbe used material collected by Grevenbroeck. In general Mentzel's criticisms of Kolbe are well-founded, but some of his own statements are fantastic or inaccurate, e.g. his theory about the origin of the Hottentots; his contention that the Hottentot language has no genders (p. 320); his denial that the Hottentots have religion (p. 301), and his reference to the sources of some Hottentot words (p. 302). His account generally is useful, but does not add much that is new, although Kirby states that Mentzel's description of the "raveking" (p. 306) is the earliest "and contains many interesting details". His observation on Hottentot character and temperament are interesting, however, and he deserves credit for his clear distinction between the Hottentots and the Bushmen. On balance, I do not think that he can be put in the first rank of our early authorities on the Hottentots, and his description, although lengthy, does not cover many aspects of their culture."



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

### Of the Hottentot Tribes who Inhabit the East of the Cape of Good Hope up to the most remote North-Eastern districts, and who have hitherto been quite unknown.

The first Hottentot tribe indicated by Kolbe on his map to the East of the Cape of Good Hope, is called the "Hessaquas"<sup>316</sup> by him. Now to-day the narrow valley in this region, in which two farms are situated, is called Hessaquae, but no Hottentots are known to live there. Sparrman did obtain, through the mediation of the Landdrost of Swellendam,<sup>317</sup> two Hottentot drivers from a nearby kraal, but did not visit the kraal itself, and therefore does not state to what tribe it belonged. It was only at Slang Rivier, on the far side of Grootvaders Bosch, that he saw for the first time a few Hottentot ox-riders, without knowing to which tribe they belonged. A copper engraving facing the title page of the German edition, portrays them very accurately. Since the Hottentots themselves do not own horses and are even forbidden by the Government to possess them, one of them, a great lover of hunting, once trained his riding-ox so well, that he was able to overtake and tire out an eland, in the vicinity of the Tiger Valley. For if these animals are chased but a small distance, they soon tire, come to a stand still, and may then be shot through the head or killed with assegais. Sparrman visited a Hottentot kraal in the mountain range to the East, but does not name the place or tribe. He was received there in a very friendly manner, an irrefutable proof of the gentle nature of a tribe which had probably never seen a European in their native land! In an exceptionally large hut, not

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<sup>316</sup> *Hessquas*: First mentioned in 1660 as a Hottentot tribe 'rich in cattle'. Name probably means 'people of the woods' (V.R.S. 14. Note p. 39). According to Mossop (V.R.S. 12. p. 201) they grazed their herds from the River Zonder End as far as Riversdale. Their name is retained in Hessequas Kloof.

<sup>317</sup> Joachim Frederick Mentz, Landdrost of Swellendam — Dec. 1766 to Feb. 1776. Sparrman was at Swellendam in Sept. 1775.

far from the above kraal, Sparrman met their captain, called "Rundganger"<sup>318</sup> a big-bodied man who had become prodigiously fat because of his wealth, much eating, indolence, and through having nothing to worry about. This captain confessed openly that the Hottentot tribes of to-day are so weak and insignificant that they have to put up with having to move with their cattle as soon as a white colonist covets their pasture.

Beyond Duyvenhoeks Rivier,<sup>319</sup> Kaffer Kuyl and the Gouritz River, in Houtniquas Land and up to Mossel Bay one does come across some Hottentot kraals; but these can nowise be called tribes, for they consist merely of isolated families containing fifty to a hundred persons. They are quite independent, even lacking chiefs, elders or captains. The most advanced in years among them perform their ceremonies at weddings and funerals. They are poor in cattle, live mostly on roots and herbs and are easily persuaded to serve the colonists to earn their living. Thus Sparrman came across a farm, *Sandbank*, on the Doorn Rivier, where a few Hottentot women had been given permission to build their huts, and a young Hottentot was in the service of the farmer. Sparrman mentions that on this occasion he saw sheep there which were so fat that their owners always chose the leanest ones for slaughter, since they could not eat the others on account of their fatness, their tails usually weighing from eight to twelve pounds. I myself saw a sheep-tail of this kind weighing seven and a quarter pounds, but never a larger or heavier one.

From Mossel Bay to the Gamtoos River, only Bushmen are found who manage to exist in small numbers, either in the crevices of rocks or in miserable hovels. They live on game, roots and herbs, but occasionally also help themselves to an animal belonging to one of the colonists who are very scattered and isolated in those regions. They seldom take more than one at a time, for they never keep a live animal with them overnight.

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<sup>318</sup> *Rundganger* is the name given in the English translation of Sparrman (Vol. I, p. 240). This Mentzel took over. The chief was probably known by the Dutch name of Rondloper (Vagabond).

<sup>319</sup> Sparrman writes *Duyvenhoeks Rivier* which Mentzel translates as *Tauben-Eck*. The correct name was *Duyvenhocks* (Dovecote R.) as Dr. Mossop points out (V.R.S. 12, p. 215).

In Sparrman's time a Hottentot chief ruled over a kraal at the Gamtoos River containing barely fifty persons.<sup>320</sup> The chief was a little old man called Kies which is not a Hottentot word and is probably the abbreviation of the Dutch name Cornelius, for when the Hottentots ask the Government for a staff for their chief (the emblem of his authority) he is given a Dutch name as well, just as the Chief Rundganger (Rondloper). This Captain Kies, although he possessed more cattle than his subjects, was otherwise no better off than they, for he lived in a wretched hut, practically in the open air. On the arrival of the Sparrman expedition, Captain Kies, like Captain Rondloper, always carried his baton in his hand as the only token of his supremacy, which although hereditary, implies no privilege. Now, when an ill-informed person turns such isolated village communities into proper tribes, as Kolbe did, one might believe that the whole land of Africa swarms with nothing but Hottentots who are more terrible than the Scythians and Saracens: but, to the East of the Cape in particular, there live only poor families, though there is no doubt that the people of the small kraal just mentioned called themselves "Kiesquas" or "Kiesnaquas", after their chief. Further to the North-East, the Kaffirs or some descendants of Kaffirs and bastard Hottentots are wont to wander about with their cattle in groups of about a hundred persons, and cross over from the Camdebo country at times of great drought. These Kaffirs are accustomed to talk and prattle a great deal to their cattle before they drive them out in the morning and in again in the evening, in the manner the Arabs talk to their horses.

Along the Van Stadens River there is a small nation of Hottentots which calls itself the "Honaquas", consisting merely of two villages. They seem to be descended from a mixture of Kaffirs and Hottentots: for their language, their manly appearance, and their dark-brown colour, show much in common with both races. Their pelts or karosses are very soft tanned cowhides. Both sexes adorn themselves with bronze armlets and anklets, and small bronze plates of different shape and size, which they fasten to their ears and in their hair. Among the beads, which they call

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<sup>320</sup> Marked on Sparrman's map 'Capit. Kies Craal', just below the junction of the Gamtoos and Konga Rivers.

by the general name of *Sintela* they much prefer the small red ones, and give them a special name *Lenkitenka*. In this they share the taste of the Kaffirs. I myself once saw such a lady, who had dressed up her head with its crop of black woolly hair rather elaborately with such beads, earrings and small plates of brazier's buttons. On her forehead she had fastened a half-moon or rather a crescent moon very neatly cut out of plate-brass, with the horns pointing upwards. In this headdress she looked the image of Diana as shown in pictures. The men of the Honaquas also wear large ivory rings on their arms. The women cover themselves with aprons very like the Hottentot women. But the men go about much more naked, and cover only the glans penis with a small cap of skin, fastened with a narrow riem or sinew to a string of beads which they wear round their body. To the same girdle the men attach the tails of lions, buffaloes, or other animals which they themselves have killed, as emblems of their victories. The most extraordinary fact about the Honaquas is that they circumcise the foreskin like the Jews. This operation is performed on youths of different ages, when a fairly large number of them is available.

On the upper course of the Van Stadens River there live several families, who call themselves "Damaquas"<sup>321</sup> and who seem to be related more closely to the Kaffirs than to the Gonaquas.<sup>322</sup>

At the ford of the Sundays river, there is a tribe of Bushmen who call themselves the "Good" Bushmen in their own language, and who are indeed much more civilised and ready to oblige than

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<sup>321</sup> The Damaquas are mentioned in Schryver's Journal (1689) as 'a numerous people rich in cattle, living on the sea coast'. (V.R.S. 12. p. 233). By 1775 this tribe had ceased to exist as a separate entity, states Marais (*Cape Coloured People*, p. 110.)

<sup>322</sup> It is not clear from the text whether Mentzel uses Honaqua and Gonaqua as interchangeable terms. According to Schapera, the Gonaquas had been in the middle of the eighteenth century the most powerful group of Hottentots in the east, extending from the Sundays R. to the Gt. Fish R. (*op. cit.*, p. 47). When Barrow met them in 1797 they had been reduced to a miserable remnant of about a dozen people (*Travels*, I. p. 182.) In his opinion they had been caught between the hammer and the anvil — between the advancing Boers from the west and the Kaffirs from the east — and exterminated, but Marais holds that they had blended with the Xosas by a peaceful process.

the savage ones. They live in great want, and when the colonists go hunting they are eager to accompany them in order to gather and eat such meat as the colonists discard and leave behind. This was the tribe to whom Sparrman recommended to eat gum arabic in case they had no other food to satisfy their hunger. But they already knew of this expedient.<sup>323</sup>

On the upper part of the Xkurenoi or Little Sunday River, there also live bastard Hottentots, who have originated from inter-marriage with the Kaffirs. They differ from the Gonaquas, however, in that their speech is more that of the Kaffirs than of the Hottentots; they also have thicker lips, are fleshier and darker.<sup>324</sup> In addition, they have more cattle and seem to lead a happier and more settled sort of life. They give a cheerful and more contented impression and live in a region where nature is still primitive and untouched. Even when dancing the women keep their small children on their backs, and these are so used to it that they start crying if the dance ends too soon. Apart from their dances which they perform almost every day, it has become customary at the great festivals for the young people to pair off and give themselves up to sensual pleasures. They also practise circumcision. In other respects they are so ignorant and simple that one of them asked Sparrman whether the wagon he saw in front of him had grown in that way.

Further on to the North-east and towards Agterbruyntjes Hoogte, there live more wild Bushmen who cause great loss to the colonists, even compelling them to leave house and home. From their ambushes they sometimes take the shepherds unawares, kill them with their poisoned arrows, and drive off the entire herd. When they notice that they are being pursued, they flee to the mountains and crags and roll down large stones on those who are careless enough to follow them there. One of the colonists, who

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<sup>323</sup> *Author's Note.* 'a certain famous doctor whose name I cannot recall at the moment, recommends gum arabic boiled in milk as a remedy for diseases of the chest.'

<sup>324</sup> Marais states that in 1776 Pieter Cloete found a number of Kaffir-Hottentot bastards living between the Bushman's and Sunday rivers, under a chief named Ruyter (*Maynier, and the first Boer Republic*, p. 6.) On Sparrman's map a *Koning Ruyters Craal* is marked near the mouth of the Groote Visch-rivier.

had been compelled to abandon his home with his family, his servants and herds of cattle, informed Sparrman that the Bushmen were daily becoming bolder and more defiant and also seemed to be increasing in number, though people had started exterminating them in earnest. The reason for this may be that they band themselves together in large numbers to prevent further penetration by the Europeans. Nevertheless, these roaming robbers are sometimes paid in their own coin by the colonists. On one occasion some farmers shot a hippopotamus, cut off the best portions and abandoned the rest. The Bushmen then came out from their hiding-places with their wives and children to consume the remains of the dead hippopotamus. But the farmers, who had meanwhile concealed themselves, unexpectedly reappeared and slew all including the pregnant women and the little children, sparing only those whom they wanted to enslave. Is it of any use, however, to make slaves of such robbers? In mountainous country they have the best opportunity of escaping and regaining their freedom. Afterwards they may take revenge in the most grievous way and do more harm than before. "*Eyer in de Pann*", the Dutch saying goes "*soo koomen geene quade keyken uyt*" meaning that if eggs are broken in a pan, no mischievous little chickens are hatched from them; or to give the gist of it: the dead can no longer bite. For this reason when the settlers of Africa discover these marauders in the open, they mount their horses, take their dogs with them, and hunt them like wolves and other beasts of prey. In the open, a few settlers on horseback are always certain of overcoming a large number of Bushmen: for with their big muskets they hit them accurately at more than two hundred yards; and since these savage people are accustomed to keep close to one another, the bullets sometimes pierce three, four or more at the same time.

In the Sneeuwberg region where the most savage Bushmen dwell a settler has even been appointed field-corporal by the Government to act as a commanding officer in case of need, and to call up the farmers of the vicinity to search for and drive away the "savages". On such occasions, more horrors are perpetrated than the Government at the Cape is aware of, or wishes to know or seems to know. The plentiful supply in Africa of tobacco-

pouches made of the breasts of Hottentot<sup>325</sup> women, are the best evidence of this.<sup>326</sup>

The chief reason for all this is because the Eastern and North-Eastern parts of the Cape are not yet fully settled and populated. One often travels for several days, without coming across a single Hottentot kraal, to say nothing of a farm; thus the one cannot come to the aid of the other as quickly as is necessary. In the centre of this country where the farms are mostly a half-mile or one mile distant from one another, one never hears of such raids.

The Hottentots who formerly lived behind Bruyntjesberg were very peaceful. They also served the settlers readily and brought back unasked to their proper place, sheep which had strayed from their herds. But owing to much hardship suffered at the hands of the savages, they have migrated from there to hide in the valleys between the mountains, and are now living there like the Bushmen, although on account of their small number, they are not so enterprising and formidable. Their colouring is somewhat yellower, and they have therefore been called "Chinese Hottentots".<sup>327</sup> Another large part of this yellow tribe has divided itself into clans and has formed a kind of civil community. They have expanded within an area more than eleven days' journey in extent, which lies northwards from the Fish river to a river called "Zomo" where they farm partly with cattle. In this Zomo river a large number of green stones are supposed to be found, a few of which were brought by some settlers and sold to traders at the Cape; but it is not yet known what value they have.

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<sup>325</sup> For Hottentot read Bushman.

<sup>326</sup> The redoubtable Commandant Adriaan van Jaarsveld was himself one of the field corporals at Sneeuwberg in 1775. Van Jaarsveld, too, admits using the hippopotamus ruse hoping to draw the Bushmen to the 'carrion'. The trick worked, and he reports laconically 'overthrew the robbers, shot 122'. As to the alleged atrocities it is impossible here as in the case of Gibelier (p. 310) to find confirmation in the official files. Isolated charges of wanton killing of Bushman women and children were sometimes made against individual members of expeditions. These were investigated and held to be punishable if proved. See Moodie: *The Record* (part III, p. 41-45.)

<sup>327</sup> Chinese or *Snese* Hottentots according to Sparman.

Across the Zomo lies the land of a different tribe, called Tambucki<sup>328</sup> by the Chinese Hottentots and said to be like them in appearance and colour, but more warlike and powerful. Bordering on the latter tribe, there is according to the same account, a still more warlike, powerful and courageous tribe, which they call the "Mambucki". Of the Tambucki I have already related above, on the evidence of the Chinese Hottentots, that they smelt copper mixed with silver and manufacture articles from this. Of the Mambucki nothing in particular can as yet be related.

The country of the real Kaffirs lies to the east of the Fish River close to the coast of the Indian Ocean. It would be wrong to reckon this nation among the Hottentots: for it is a free, quite independent, but also a savage and rapacious nation which on several occasions has been very dangerous and has done great damage to the Dutch colonists and commandos merely because they covet the iron of their wagons. Occasionally, they too have been taught a fairly severe lesson, and since then they fear the Dutch and immediately retreat if they are resisted. Even if they come in large numbers and show signs of attacking a farm in force, yet if the farmer shows himself determined and fires a few shots at them through his windows they soon turn tail and retreat.

On his return journey from the Sneeuwbergen and Agterbruyntjes Hoogte, in the vicinity of the upper course of Zwartkops River, Sparrman found a society or family of Gunjeman Hottentots, whose ancestors had inhabited the parts round Table

<sup>328</sup> This form of the name for the Tembus (spelt Tambookies by Cory) is probably based on Beutler's *Journal* who described as 'Tamboegis' a people he met in 1752 on the '*rivier Y die het land van de Caffers van dat der Tamboegis schijd*'. (Theal, *Dokumenten over Zuid Afrika*, II. 48). The river was the Kei, regarded as the boundary between the Xosas and the Tembus. The present version of the name was used as far back as 1686 by the survivors of the wreck of the *Stavennisse* on the coast of Natal, who came across a tribe called the 'Temboes'. Soga (in the *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 467) mentions that these survivors also referred to another tribe, the 'Matimbas' that were probably a section of the same tribe. Were these the 'Mambuckis'? According to W. G. Bennie, the Tembus have occupied the greater part of the territory they now hold for at least 250 years, stretching from Nonesi's Nek near Queenstown, to the mouth of the mThatha river. (*Bantu Tribes of South Africa*, p. 38.)



Mountain and Constantia at the time when the Dutch took possession of the Cape.<sup>329</sup> They were on good neighbourly terms with a farmer living there, called "Gert Schipper" (Gerhard Schiffer). The behaviour of this family should demonstrate convincingly that the original inhabitants of the country must have lived according to the most ordinary laws of nature in the greatest simplicity and pure innocence. For this remnant of the tribe has neither overlords nor regents nor persons in authority, nor are there hungry beggars found among them. They have no laws or penalties, nor are crimes ever committed among them. They are held together merely by natural justice, by a peaceful mode of life, and by a few customs and habits common to the Hottentots; in this way they are guided to virtue, liberty and happiness. The greatest owner of cattle in this tribe was a widow whose wealth consisted of about sixty milch-cows; she was in this respect the most distinguished Hottentot woman. Having no children her brothers and sisters were her heirs. But except for a costly ornament of shells and a better bonnet, her dress was no better than that of the others. Her only valuables for which others of her sex might envy her were a few glass beads and two strings of bronze pearls kept in a leather pouch made for this purpose. She was however not specially honoured on account of all this by the others. The other women smoked in her presence, and even Sparrman's Hottentots did likewise.

From the description of this Gunjemann tribe one may gather not only how far the Dutch settlement in Africa has expanded but also how it has placed the original inhabitants in such a position that the latter have to give way wherever it pleased the former to settle. This clearly shows that most writers have depicted the Hottentot tribes as far more numerous, more savage, warlike and unruly than they actually are. Therefore, bearing all the foregoing circumstances in mind, I maintain that the Hottentot could easily be trained to till the soil, and go in for grain-raising and other kinds of agriculture if only profitable trade and business would ensue; but at the beginning at any rate, it

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<sup>329</sup> An explanatory note to Wikar's *Journal* reads: 'A Goenjeman Hottentot of the tribe of Gounema or Goenjeman, a Cochoqua chief who died in 1686'. (V.R.S. 15. p. 22n.)

would involve the East India Company in great expense. The Company, however, is composed of traders, and traders do not invest capital at an uncertain interest: or to speak more clearly, the East India Company will not venture upon a project unless it obviously promises to prove profitable in future. This (profit) cannot be expected from the Hottentots, for they possess nothing but cattle and occasionally a few elephant tusks. Cattle the Company can obtain from them sufficient for all its needs: for this purpose the isolated pasture-grounds around their kraals are well suited: for at present they live mostly in those parts where a colonist cannot establish a large cattle-farm. Elephant tusks are merely incidental articles of commerce for the Hottentots. They seldom catch and kill these animals, though sometimes they come across a couple of tusks which the hunters who had shot the elephants were unable to find. Grain-raising by the Hottentots would bring the Company no profit, since they live too far from the City, so that it is probably best to let them spend their life after their own fashion and by degrees push them further inland. This may, perhaps within a few centuries, provide an opportunity of getting better acquainted with the inhabitants of Mozambique, and those living in the kingdom of Monomotapa and other nations beyond the tropic of Capricorn. Possibly in this way more profitable lines of sea-borne commerce may be discovered than the trade with the naked Hottentots. Before concluding this work, I wish to describe the kind of elephant hunt the Hottentots undertake on occasion when a stray or rogue elephant is found by them.

When the Hottentots observe a lone elephant with good tusks in their vicinity, they collect a large crowd of their people, and when they consider themselves strong enough to surround the elephant, they spare no pains and trouble to make him *malkop*. To make *malkop* is not a Hottentot word but one borrowed from Dutch meaning to make mad, foolish and queer. Unless the elephant evades the snare before it is surrounded, the animal is as good as lost, for then it definitely can not escape them. This is the procedure: The Hottentots, each armed with an asségai, unfasten their karosses and put them over their shoulders or arms. They then form a wide circle around the elephant and approach it with slow steps. In this way the circle shrinks gradually and is

tightened by the men. When they come closer to the animal, it tries to turn aside, since it has not in any way been angered; whether it be to escape from such a crowd or to knock a few of them down and trample on them out of spite. But to whichever side the elephant moves, the Hottentots immediately close their ranks and hasten to approach it on that side. As soon as the animal comes close enough for some of the Hottentots to reach it, ten or twelve of those nearest throw their karosses over its head. The elephant, unaccustomed to such coverings on its head and blinded by them, remains standing on one spot and, since its eyes are covered and even its trunk entangled in the karosses, has its work cut out in attempting to shake them off and free itself; but this avails it nothing. For while it is shaking off the first karosses, twice as many Hottentots come forward, to throw their karosses over its head. As more and more Hottentots approach and the first ones recover their karosses and keep bombarding it with them incessantly, it becomes confused and undecided where to turn. Then one of the most courageous Hottentots leaps up behind the elephant, seizes its short tail with his left hand and clinging to it thrusts his poisoned assegai with his right hand repeatedly into its body through the rectum as far as it can go. The elephant, which must necessarily suffer great pain from such a wound in its intestines is made quite frantic. But since it does not know which way to turn on account of the many karosses that are continually thrown over its head and cover its face, it keeps turning in a narrow circle, probably to catch the one hanging to its tail. But as this person cannot hold on to the elephant's tail for long with one hand, he leaves his assegai sticking in the elephant's anus and runs off. Should another Hottentot grasp the animal's tail and twist the assegai already driven in by the first still deeper in its intestines, the animal would be felled all the sooner and the hunt the more quickly finished; if not, it does not matter; for the elephant, blinded by the karosses, can do nothing than keep on turning in a circle, and the Hottentots who come closest to it, meanwhile thrust their poisoned assegais into its body in such large numbers and so mercilessly that it soon collapses and bleeds to death. On a hunt of this nature it is essential that the first karosses should strike the elephant's head accurately and cover its eyes; the rest is easy. It is far from

dangerous to continue throwing more of these on it and in the meantime, while it is frightened by these to deal it the deadly wounds. Although elephants and other game hunted by the Hottentots are killed with poisoned arrows or assegais, the Hottentots eat their flesh, being fully aware that the poison is deadly only when it comes into immediate contact with the blood.

A remarkable fact about elephants is that when they have plucked or broken off their food with their trunk, they shake it several times before putting it in their mouth, thus throwing off anything clinging to it. The only reason that has been put forward for this is that they may fear ants; since should an ant get into the elephant's trunk and bite it internally where it is very sensitive, the animal would die of it. Whether this is true I do not know; *relata refero*.

. . . . .

Herewith I now end the second and last Volume of the complete and trustworthy "*Description of the Cape of Good Hope*". I hope to have fulfilled my promises faithfully, and to have given the esteemed reader a full impression of the country, of which so much has been told, so much written and so many unreliable things, some of them strange, some unpleasant, have been related up to the present. I have followed the truth consistently and it would grieve me if I had made any statement, even unwittingly, that would be contrary to the truth. Some things may have changed, and where I have stumbled or made a false step, it would concern a mere trifle, to which little or no importance could be attached.

With this work I also finish my literary career, and do not intend publishing any more. My age reminds me of another journey, which although it is but one step beyond the grave, yet is more important than all travels to the East or the West Indies, moving not around the world, but out of it. I bid farewell in due form to all the esteemed readers of my humble essays, commend them to the protection of the Almighty, and impart to them the following last thoughts of mine, expressed in verse.

[The original stanzas are:]

Der Anfang meines Lebens  
 War kind'scher Unverstand.  
 Der Fortgang ward vergebens  
 Und unnütz angewandt;  
 Das Mittel war nur Quälen.  
 Das Ende Creutz und Noth  
 Die Rechnung kan nicht fehlen.  
 Das Facit ist der Tod.

Ich leg' die Feder nieder,  
 Sie war mein Egg' und Pflug;  
 Nie nehme ich sie wieder,  
 Dann Herr! es ist genug.  
 Mit ihr mich durchgewühlet  
 Bin ich nach Schweiß un  
 Fleiss  
 Wie jetst mein Körper fühlet  
 Ein abgelebter Greis.

Welch fürchterlich Gewitter  
 Droht mir mit Sterbensnoth!  
 Was macht mein Ende bitter?  
 Nur Krankheit — nicht der  
 Tod.

Nein! der ist mir erbaulich,  
 So oft er um mich schwebt  
 Sagt er mir ganz vertraulich:  
 Das mein Erlöser lebt.

Noch leb' ich in der Stille  
 Entfernt von eitler Welt  
 Und Sterben ist mein Wille  
 So bald es Gott gefällt  
 Ich kann nicht eher kommen  
 Bis mich mein Schöpfer ruft  
 Und von mir hat genommen  
 Des letzten Athems Duft.

My life began  
 In childish innocence.  
 The future held no plan  
 And vainly did commence;  
 Middle age was naught but pain  
 Its sequel was not peace.  
 The reckoning denied in vain  
 The final stage decease.

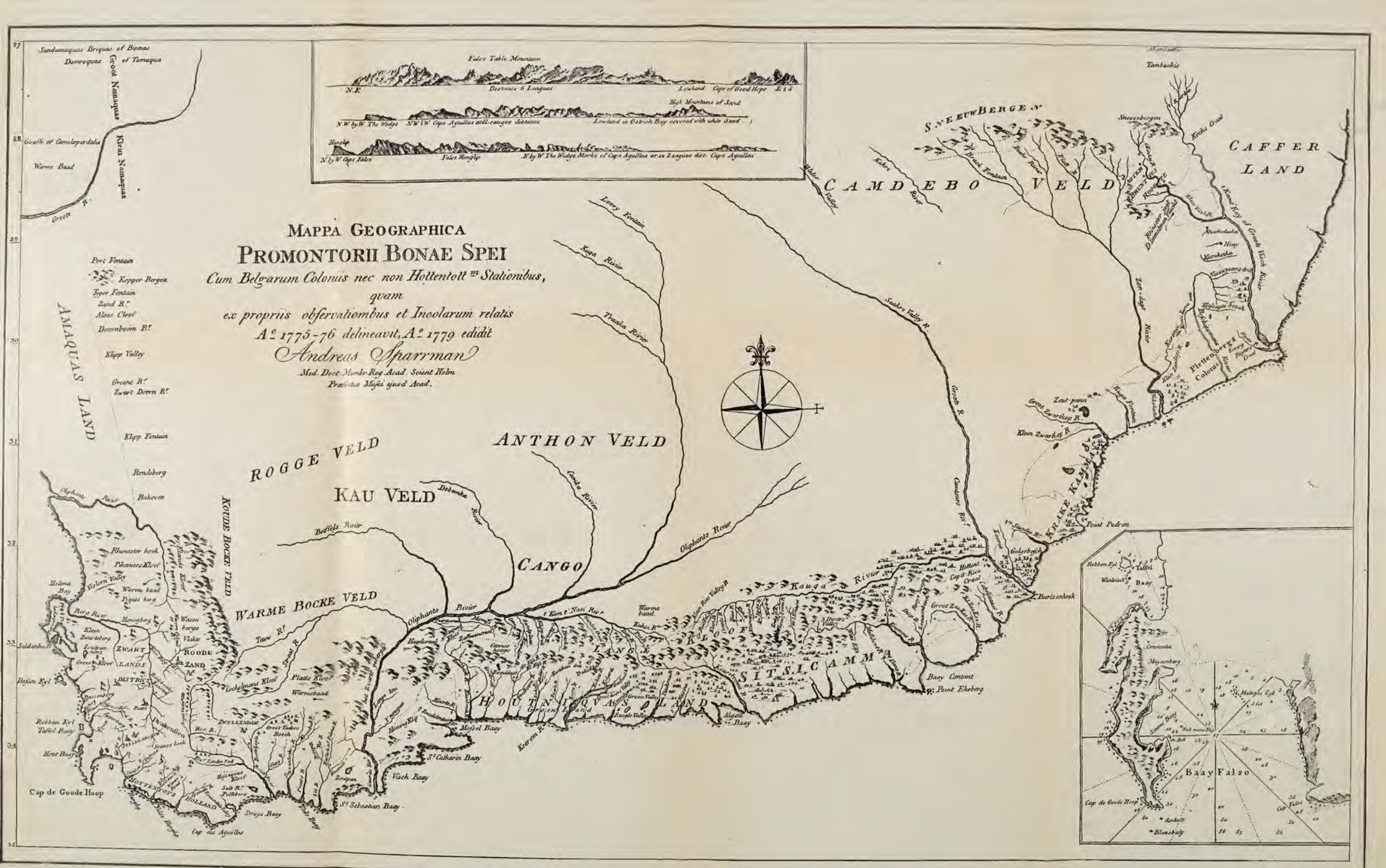
Rest now my pen,  
 To me my harrow and my  
 plough.  
 Nevermore lift I thee as then  
 For Lord! It is enow.  
 Thou did'st my labours aid,  
 Through sweat and toil.  
 Now my body down is laid,  
 Worn out by all this moil.

What fearful blight  
 Threatens me with pangs of  
 death!  
 Why am I in such bitter plight?  
 'Tis illness — not my death.  
 No! This doth me edify,  
 The rustle hearing that it gives,  
 A sign on which I can rely,  
 That my Redeemer lives.

Now live I far from strife,  
 Secluded from the idle world.  
 My fervent wish to close my  
 life,  
 When God wants it furled.  
 I cannot sooner it forsake  
 Than my Creator calls;  
 And deems my life to take  
 As the last curtain falls.

Mit acht und siebzig Jahren	At eight and seventy years,
Hoff' ich, läst mich mein Gott	My God I hope cuts off the
In sanften Frieden fahren;	thread
Denn wer vor seinen Tod	In gentle peace, entirely rid of
In Furcht und Zweifel schwebet	fears.
Stirbt wie ein Misanthrop.	For he who wanders round in
Ich als ein Christ gelebet	doubt and dread
Sterb' nun als Philosoph.	Before departing for his heaven-
	ly tryst,
	Dies a shunner of his fellow-man,
	But my life was based on Christ,
	And I leave at peace with all my
	clan.

END OF THE SECOND AND LAST VOLUME.



**MAPPA GEOGRAPHICA**  
**PROMONTORII BONAE SPEI**  
*Cum Belgarum Colonis nec non Hottentott<sup>m</sup> Statiombus,*  
*quam*  
*ex propriis observationibus et Incolarum relatis*  
*A<sup>o</sup> 1775-76 delineavit, A<sup>o</sup> 1779 edidit*  
*Andreas Sparrman*  
*Med. Doct. Memb. Reg. Acad. Scient. Holm.*  
*Prædicator Mæjæ quæd. Acad.*

Reproduction of Map from *A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope*, by Andreus Sparrman (London, 1785).





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