

THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

People of the Cape—Bad Effects of their narrow Policy and Conduct—Revenue—Exports and Imports—Little Trade or Speculation—Government poor and needy—Observations respecting it—That of the English contrasted with it—Dutch lost all their Settlements in Asia but Batavia—Expeditions planned against that, in 1798 and 1800—Precarious State of the Cape during a War with England—Hospitals for sick Sailors and Soldiers—The Cape healthy—Regulations respecting sick and diseased Persons—Revenue of the Dutch East-India Company—Their Taxes and Imposts—Trade and Commerce—Taxes on Cattle, Provisions Slaves, &c.—Amount of Receipts—Expenditure far greater than Revenue—The Pay of the Civil and Military of every Denomination—View of the Establishment of the British.

Dispositions
and conduct
of the Dutch
towards the
English.

AS I have observed in a former page there were no inns or public taverns kept by the Dutch, except low drinking houses, which only the lowest order of themselves, or the soldiers and sailors frequented. Whilst England was at peace with Holland, the Cape was visited by a number of our countrymen at different periods, on their passage to and from India, who lived in the houses of the inhabitants, and, as I have observed, became inmates and as it were a part of their families. Yet notwithstanding this very close intercourse, the men have been always exceedingly averse to associating with the English; and have uniformly preferred the company of other foreigners before ours; though

from interested motives they chose rather the English to reside with them. I cannot assign any reasonable motive for this disposition, except it proceeded from a national aversion and from envy towards the British nation. The inhabitants at the Cape, although the chief part of their income arises from their intercourse with foreigners of all nations, and particularly with ours, yet they never applied themselves to learn the language of other countries. This is the more to be wondered at, as they are well-known to be indefatigable in every thing which concerns trade. Since the English took possession of the Cape several of their young women picked up our language very fast, and latterly began to converse with our countrymen pretty fluently; and when amongst themselves spoke it to each other, as they began to find their own too harsh, and not so accordant to female softness as ours.

As the Cape has for such a great number of years been the half-way house on a voyage to India, and the passengers living at their tables and in their domestic circles, a strange mixture of characters and dispositions must often be associated together. A person of quick conception and some genius, may often have an opportunity of observing the strangest medley of characters, and of remarking the various effects of wealth, climate, rank, and other accidental circumstances. There is room for the pencil of a Hogarth to delineate the various characters and dispositions which are to be met with at the well-filled table of a Dutchman at the Cape of Good Hope. Both passengers and hosts have

Remarks on
the mixture
of people of
all nations
meeting here.

every opportunity of obtaining a knowledge of the marked characteristics and traits of each other. The Dutch who are well acquainted with the English, hesitate not to acknowledge them to be liberal and truly honourable in their dealings, paying in a princely manner for their entertainment, and far from giving them cause to repent their introducing them into their houses, and amongst their families. They have ever had a greater reliance on our honourable and proper behaviour than that of their present friends and allies the French, whose gallantries and intrigues with married women have often been attempted to be put in practice whilst under the roofs of their Dutch hosts. I have frequently heard several respectable Dutch gentlemen, execrate the officers of the Luxemburg, and other French regiments, which composed part of their garrisons some years back, and I am sure they will regret their ever again being introduced at the Cape.

Conduct of
the British.
towards
them.

Since the English came it is well known to every nation, and acknowledged by those of the Dutch themselves, who have liberality and candour to own it, that we have done them and their colony every justice. I do not speak from partiality towards my own countrymen when I aver this: I only state the most positive and certain facts, which many of their most respectable and well-informed colonists frankly confessed. Our government never imposed new taxes on them, they rather diminished than increased their burthens, and lightened the loads of oppression they laboured under before we arrived. Every Dutchman of every description,

both high and low, gained by our residence amongst them. The demand and value of all their productions greatly increased on our arrival. Their prices were never curtailed or disputed, but punctually paid. Arrears of rent and taxes, to a very considerable amount, due by many individuals to their government, had been remitted to them by the British government on pleading distress or inability, while their own rulers would on no account abate one dollar due from any of them. Even debts of a long standing, particularly those of a contestible nature, were by us totally given up. The British granted them the enjoyment of their laws and religion in their fullest extent. They enjoyed under us a greater share of true liberty than even they did under their own government. Their property was secured to them, and the British faith pledged to them for its preservation, with all the accompanying privileges. It increased while we held possession of the Cape, to more than double its value. Every Dutchman possessed of a house in Cape Town, got three times the rent for it he ever did before; if he sold or disposed of it to any of our countrymen, the price he received for it was in a still higher proportion.

Justice done to every description of people at the Cape.

Advantages extended towards the people of the Cape by our government.

Allowed all their privileges.

The paper-money which was issued by the Dutch government some years previous to the capture of the Cape, to relieve the pressing exigencies of the state, had been greatly depreciated, on account of the inability of government to recal it, or to give any adequate security to the holders. The idea of its not being received by us in our dealings

with them, still further increased this depreciation after the capture; and the Dutch began to hoard up whatever gold or silver came into their possession, with the utmost avidity.

Generous
conduct of
General
Craig on tak-
ing the Cape.

The distress consequent on this situation of affairs was obviated in a truly liberal and generous manner, by General Craig, who ordered that the paper-money should pass in the colony, and amongst the British, in the same manner, and bearing the same value as formerly; and, to relieve the embarrassment occasioned by the want of coin, a very considerable quantity of silver dollars was sent from England and the East-Indies to the Cape, and put into circulation. By this means new spirit was given to their trade, which had been almost completely put to a stand from a want of specie.

The Dutch by their eagerness to obtain hard money for their merchandise, and in all their transactions, were the first to depreciate the credit of their own government. Twelve paper rix-dollars have been known to be given for one guinea; a sum equal to two pounds eight shillings of their money, and equivalent to about one pound sixteen of ours. This indeed is not to be wondered at, when we consider that the paper-money would only pass at the Cape, and that the Dutch knew it would not be taken by the ships of different nations trading here, in exchange for goods. Those advantages I have already related, as well as many others, tending to promote the interests of the Dutch colonists were bestowed on them by their conquerors.

The Dutch farmers and planters in the interior and remote parts of the colony felt the advantages of our government, and grew rich under it, by the high prices they got for their cattle and the different produces of their farms; which were sent to Cape Town for the consumption and use of the British navy and army. A sheep which before our arrival was sold to their own countrymen for one rix-dollar, was now disposed of for two and a half or three; and horses, oxen, and grain in proportion. I have been lately informed by some of our officers, who were amongst the last who evacuated the Cape, that the very day the Dutch troops arrived from Holland, they lowered the price of every thing to the same rate it usually was before we captured the place.

Great benefits the farmers of the interior derived from the English.

When an Englishman considers what I have here advanced, he will no doubt be surprised at the aversion, and indeed hatred, which the Dutch seem to have entertained towards us.

The people of Cape Town had far less reason to entertain those sentiments towards us, than any other conquered people whatever; yet certain circumstances concurred to produce in them a particular dislike to our countrymen. It is well known that a total dissimilarity of manners exists between the Dutch and English; and where this is the case a long intercourse is necessary to produce any reciprocal attachment. What is however a still more powerful circumstance, the people of Holland look with a jaundiced eye upon every nation their rival in wealth and com-

Still they entertained unfavourable sentiments towards us.

In some measure accounted for.

merce. In the late war with Holland we shut up their ports, and almost annihilated their trade; and it is that which particularly leads them to behold us with such marked dislike. Yet though their trade was lost, and their consequence as a mercantile nation destroyed in the United States of Holland, it did not affect the inhabitants of the Cape. The advantages that the people here derived from our being amongst them were infinitely greater than the scanty and partial dealings they could have had with the few ships from Holland, which touched at their ports. Besides, the English Government did not prevent them from undertaking mercantile speculations, or from trafficking and bartering with us; but rather assisted and encouraged them. They felt none of the disadvantages which hung over the mother country by her connexion with France. Not one instance of oppression was committed by the English during the time they remained in possession of the colony.

If any thing can be said in extenuation of the illiberal conduct of the colonists towards the English, it is by allowing that there is a reluctance which a conquered people naturally feel towards those who have subjected them; and that the former cannot avoid looking upon themselves as degraded, and consequently hating those who have caused their degradation. Yet what would their situation have been at the Cape if the British forces had not arrived at the time they did; a period truly critical, and teeming with tragical events. The sanguinary principles of Marat

and Robespierre, were by that time not only sown, but growing to maturity amongst them. Jacobinism was ready to involve the colony in destruction, and the cloud was on the eve of bursting when we appeared.

The Cape Town was on the point of having all the horrors of civil war carried on in the midst of it. Those republican principles had infected numbers, and the slaves were to be made actors in the scene by the promise of freedom. A strong party of the most violent jacobins, and furious republicans had been formed, and every moderate man or any one who expressed a dislike of those violent measures which actuated the French, or seemed attached to the party of the Prince of Orange, was denounced. The tumult was on the eve of breaking out both in the town and country, and the government was utterly unable to resist its baneful effects, on the contrary it was in many instances insulted with impunity; and its members themselves proscribed who were not already linked with the democrats. The soldiers were in a state of insubordination and licentiousness, the consequence of those principles of liberty and equality which had spread here, as well as at the Isle of France and Bourbon. A total emancipation of the slaves was to have taken place, and they let loose against their masters; such a scene would have been dreadful, and all the virtuous inhabitants already trembled for their safety. But when these Jacobins were on the point of throwing off the old form of government, and assimilating the new one to that of France, the English arrived to the secret joy of the most respect-

Dangers to
the colony
from French
principles.

Civil war
averted by
our arrival.

able inhabitants, who in them beheld their deliverance at hand and their property secured. Some gentlemen informed me whilst at the Cape, that they did not expect to receive any mercy from their own countrymen, but were truly confident the English would act generously by them. Those gentlemen who had nothing to fear or to apprehend beyond what is allowed by the rules of war between civilized nations, quietly remained with their effects in the town, whilst many of the others fled into the country amongst the haughty and turbulent boors, there to regret the miscarriage of their base designs, to vent their spleen and chagrin in greater safety, and hatch new plots against us. As soon as it was known that our troops had disembarked at Simon's Town, the discontented for the present laid by the designs they had formed, and began to prepare for their defence. Accordingly they assembled from all parts within several miles of Cape Town, and marched to Musenberg, where, as I have already related, they saw with shame and mortification the British troops their conquerors, though far inferior in point of numbers.

The Dutch have often expressed their chagrin at this, and made many pointed observations ultimately reflecting on themselves. The troops which composed the force under General Craig, when he attacked the strong post of Musenberg, were new raised battalions, many of them young boys but lately accustomed to discipline and military habits. Not a fourth part of either officers or men had seen any service before they came to the Cape, but they amply made

up for the want of experience by the quickness with which they attained discipline, by that brave and gallant spirit which is the boast and characteristic of our countrymen, by a strict and steady conduct, and by vieing with each other in a willing and ready obedience to their officers.

On the arrival of the 19th, 33d, and 80th regiments at Cape Town, sometime after its capture, the Dutch beheld their entrance with admiration at their excellent appearance, as these regiments were composed of remarkably fine men in the highest state of discipline. Their Dutch pride was the more severely mortified and lowered at the idea of being conquered by new raised regiments. If, said they, we had been defeated by those regiments composed of old and veteran soldiers, we should feel it less ; but to allow ourselves to be overthrown by a handful of raw young men and boys, not half our number ! Many held down their heads abashed and walked off the parade, when they first came to see the troops who had conquered them. Many of those Dutchmen, far from expressing their gratitude at being rescued from the evils that were suspended over their heads by their rebellious and unprincipled countrymen, joined afterwards in execrating the English government, and the British subjects who came amongst them. Some of those were so turbulent and so troublesome, that they were obliged to be sent out of the colony, and General Craig, as well as the Governors who succeeded him, was often under the necessity of sending a military force up the country to reduce to order the rebellious boors, who though not abso-

The Dutch did not express any gratitude at their fortunate escape.

lutely breaking out into open war, were exceedingly averse to our government, and inimical to its peace and security, and much trouble was occasioned at different periods before they could be brought to proper obedience. Latterly they only vented themselves in spleen and impotent invectives, taking every opportunity to testify their hatred of us by words.

Such then, as I have in those latter pages delineated, are the general outlines of the characters, the dispositions, the manners, and habits of life of the people who compose the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. I have, as far as my observation went, endeavoured to leave no remarkable feature of their characters undisplayed.

Hope of their becoming more liberal in their sentiments towards the English nation.

A longer acquaintance however with the English as a nation as well as individually, and their experience of the lenient and mild government exercised by us, together with the ill consequences which French principles and alliances have introduced into the republic of Holland, and which now many begin to see in a proper light, may greatly tend to do away their former prejudices against our country. This may also be not a little assisted by the long residence of British officers in so many of their houses, whose universal gentlemanly and honourable conduct they could not help acknowledging and admiring. Add to this, that many marriages had taken place between the British officers whilst quartered here and the Dutch ladies. Their daughters being married to Englishmen forms another link which should bind them, if not to our interest as a nation at any rate to look

with more regard on our countrymen as individuals. I have the pleasure of being acquainted with many of the Dutch ladies married to British officers, and I must say they are truly amiable and accomplished, every way worthy of their husbands' choice, and if not possessed of a great share of wealth have every virtue and qualification requisite to render the marriage state happy.

I shall now beg leave shortly to advert to their civil and military government, their revenue, and public economy; and also point out some of their laws to shew the spirit by which the government was actuated. The Governor, sent out from Holland to the Cape of Good Hope, was under the controul and authority of that of Batavia, which last ranked the first of all their possessions on that side of the globe. Amboyna, on account of the value of its spices, and the great revenue it brought them, was considered the second; the Cape of Good Hope ranked only as the fourth or fifth. The Governors of Batavia had often the power of sending a Governor to the Cape, and it had frequently happened that the proud and powerful Governors of Batavia displaced those of the Cape, and sent others in their room. The civil government at Cape Town, of which the Governor is the supreme head, is composed of a president and twelve of the oldest burghers, who try all criminal causes and give their verdict, leaving the passing of the sentence to the Governor, from whom there is no appeal. In civil law suits, where property to any amount is in dispute, appeals have been often made to

The civil
and military
government.

Governor
and council.

Fiscal or Deputy Governor.

His great powers.

the High Chamber at Batavia; but this step has seldom gained a second hearing of the cause, and in all probability the party has reason to repent his temerity. The fiscal is mostly president of this court of justice; he is entrusted with great powers, and is little inferior to the Governor. The fiscal unites in his own person the three distinct branches of government, the legislative, the judicial, and the executive. So great was his authority in regard to the management of the revenue, that he could impose and levy taxes both for the use of government and for his own; and in the absence of a Governor the fiscal took upon himself the supreme authority. The power of the fiscal had always been unlimited, and was too often found uncontrollable by the Governors. They could dispense with laws, create new crimes, and compound for those of all denominations; and in general might be said to dispose of the lives and fortunes of the people. There was indeed a controuling power paramount to his high authority, but few dared appeal to that tribunal.

These unlimited powers were of course done away on the English taking possession of the Cape. The power of life and death, and the decision and execution of any sentence, were taken from the fiscal, and placed where they ought to be, and he was reduced to act in that particular station, for which his office was originally intended, namely, that of taking cognizance of all petty offences and lesser civil causes, and deciding on them; of being a member only of the court of justice, and not a

dictator. He now superintended the police, and the internal government of the town with its economy. Under him was placed a head constable, with a body of police officers taken from among the inhabitants, for the purpose of keeping good order and tranquillity amongst the colonists of the town, of quelling riots and tumults which might happen amongst drunken or disorderly persons and the slaves, for bringing them to justice, and administering punishments for all crimes not of a very heinous nature, and which did not affect the life of the transgressor. For some time after the British took possession of Cape Town it was placed under martial law; the decision of life and death was then in the hands of the Commander in Chief, and all criminals were executed by the sanction of the General under the eye of the Provost Martial, who superintended all executions. When Lord Macartney came out as Governor, the civil law again took its course, and adjudged sentences of death which, if approved of by our Governor, were put in execution by the proper civil officers. A Provost Martial was still retained but he only interfered in military crimes. During the time the government was under martial law the court of justice did not sit, but the fiscal executed those secondary duties of his office, and the constable and police were under the direction of the Provost Martial.

The Dutch were always exceedingly careful and active in preserving the tranquillity of the town, in preventing drunken sailors from rioting, and the slaves from assembling in any numbers, or causing any tumults that might endanger the

The police of
the town ac-
tive.

safety of the colony. They also paid great attention to the cleanliness of the town, causing all nuisances in the streets to be removed. Whilst I was at the Cape great inconveniences were felt by many of the inhabitants, but particularly by the British, who had families and houses of their own, from the want of proper attention and regulations with respect to the markets and prices of provisions and other articles of consumption. This did not so much affect the Dutch as our own people, the former having most of those resources within themselves; while the British were obliged to purchase every thing in the market, and the prices charged to them were exorbitantly high. A few partial regulations were now and then made by our government, but not such as to produce any great effect.

Laws and regulations.

Some years ago all the housekeepers were obliged to give an account to the Fiscal every evening, of the number of people entertained under their roof, on pain of a very heavy penalty. This law was made almost from the first settling here, and the spirit of it arose from an idea of discouraging the introduction of strangers; but latterly, since the Cape has been made so much the half-way house to India, though this law was not repealed, it was not put in force. The government saw that by the admission of strangers as temporary guests and visitors, a great deal of hard money was necessarily left in the settlement; and was a principal means of enriching many of the inhabitants. They required every person going into the interior to have a passport, for which he paid a trifling sum. In this was

set down the number of slaves he carried with him, and on his return he was obliged to wait on the Fiscal to present himself, and account for the people he had taken with him.

No Hottentot whatever was allowed to keep horses, nor could any of the farmers or planters of the interior sell to them under penalty of being severely fined. However this law was often evaded, like many others of the same kind. No Christian was allowed to buy or sell with the Hottentots without a licence from government, for which he paid handsomely. The officers and people belonging to the government wished to have this traffic entirely to themselves, and from this source they derived great profit. A piece of cloth, some tobacco, old iron, or toys of no intrinsic value, purchased large numbers of cattle. A factor employed by government went into the interior once or twice a year, to carry on this trade with the Hottentots; and some thousand head of cattle were annually brought to Cape Town, for government to dispose of them as they thought fit. The Dutch appointed chiefs; or, as they stiled them, captains, over different hordes; for collecting cattle for them, and hunting deer and game. Wild beasts of various kinds were also brought to them, by those Hottentot captains; and ostrich feathers, elephants' teeth, skins, oil, and such like commodities. They were likewise employed in bringing back deserters and runaway slaves, for whose recovery a good portion of tobacco, spirits, and iron was paid.

Restrictions on the Hottentots; and no traffic allowed them, but with government.

Military establishments not sufficient for the defence of the Cape.

Bad construction of their towns and posts.

With respect to their military establishment, the situation in which the colony had been left for some years past, had been very poor indeed. Dear bought experience has shewn them how insufficient it was to resist an enemy. To their cost it has been proved to them, that it could be attacked with success by a number even inferior to its own garrison. Notwithstanding the natural strength of its shores and the surrounding country, yet the manner in which those were fortified with the position and construction of their towns rendered them untenable and easily conquered. Their garrison was by far too weak to occupy and defend the chain of posts they had along the southern peninsula, with any reasonable prospect of success. Their country militia, the farmers, were too much scattered to render effectual service, and the towns' people were far from discovering prowess against an opposing enemy. They did not indeed appear to be acquainted with that energy and patriotic spirit, of which mankind ought to be susceptible when endeavouring to defend their independence, their property, and their government.

The Dutch colonists of the Cape of Good Hope are neither a warlike nor a hardy race; and are ill-calculated for active service, or where the endurance of hardship is required.

Revenue, exports, and imports.

Having said thus much of the military establishments of the Cape, I shall now advert to its revenue, its exports and imports; the taxes which contributed to maintain the colony, the receipts they brought into the treasury, and the

expenditure necessary for keeping up its different establishments. I shall commence at a period some time before it had been captured by us, as many alterations and changes necessarily took place by their being under a new government. It may seem difficult to account for the poor state of this colony, which altogether comprizes an immense tract of territory, without being subject to predatory warfare, to inroads and incursions from the aboriginal inhabitants, or insurrections among the people inhabiting it. I cannot lay any stress on the few trifling and partial hostilities and animosities which existed between the Caffrees and the few hordes of independant Hottentots and the boors, as little general damage arose from this cause. The mischief usually amounted only to a few hundred head of cattle being now and then plundered from the boors in the very remote parts; and the various contests may be compared more to those of a banditti, or wandering set of thieves, than to one nation at war with another. When these happened the Dutch were sure of gaining from the unfortunate natives three fold what they lost.

Hitherto no commercial speculation of any extent had been attempted by the Dutch; scarcely any thing above what was necessary for home consumption. The receipts of the government, and their East-India Company, were by no means equal to the expenditure. The heavy expences and bad management of individuals belonging to the government, added considerably to the poverty and grievances of the Cape. They were often out near one hundred and fifty

Little trade
or specula-
tion at the
Cape.
Government
poor and
needy.

thousand dollars annually, over and above all the sums derived from its own resources. It was in these circumstances a matter of doubt whether it was worth this expence to the mother country, for the advantages it presented in provisioning her ships with water, meat, wine, fuel; and in recovering and refreshing the crews. This is in fact almost the whole benefit the Hollanders derived from the Cape. A few observations will tend to shew how different the case would be, were England to have it in her hands.

Observations respecting the different consequences of the Cape being in the hands of the Dutch and English.

The trade of Holland since the first commencement of the war with England, has been greatly crushed, and but little left her. This must ever be the case as long as we retain so superior a naval force, and which now considering the temper of the times, and the dispositions of foreign states, we must do either in peace or war. The Hollanders have, by their war with us and by their coalition with our designing foe, lost their trade, their foreign settlements and resources; which even their boasting friends and allies, the French, could not save or secure to the republic of Holland. In those circumstances the possession of the Cape must be an incumbrance, a dead weight upon their hands, which they can now ill bear. No trade with Asia to employ their ships, and cause this settlement to be of advantage to them, in affording protection and relief to their vessels. What they derive from Batavia is now but small. This settlement was near falling into our hands last war; an armament was twice fitted out against it, and the success of it little doubted—it was only saved to them by particular

Expeditions meditated against Batavia.

circumstances. The first armament was withheld in consequence of our war against Tippoo Saib. The second equipment, destined in 1800 against Batavia, was placed under the direction of Colonel Champagne, of the 80th regiment, an officer of distinguished ability; whose long and meritorious services singled him out as a proper person to be entrusted with this important command. The Marquis of Wellesley appointed Colonel Campagne to be Governor of Batavia, in the event of its being captured, from the confidence and knowledge he had of his experience and ability, which the Colonel shewed in his just, excellent, and wise conduct and administration whilst Governor and Commander of the island of Ceylon, and the troops there, during the absence of the Honourable Frederick North.

Had the Dutch lost Batavia, they would have been deprived of all their settlements in the Asiatic world; Admiral Rainier having taken possession, for his Britannic Majesty, of the Mollucca or Spice Islands, which brought the States of Holland so much wealth by their valuable productions. The Cape of Good Hope would have sunk in its consequence to them, the Colony itself would have been impoverished and fallen to decay, and in all probability would soon have been under the necessity of putting itself under the protection of Great Britain. Whilst they continue at war with us, few of their ships can venture into those seas without being picked up by our cruizers; the supplies from Holland to their settlements here must be scanty and precarious. Nothing of any consequence can be imported to

or exported from it. The maintenance of an establishment here will add to the burthens of the United States, which are already too much for them to bear, being loaded with requisitions upon requisitions by their new allies.

The Dutch
Company
imposed on.

The Dutch East-India Company were often imposed on considerably in many branches of the establishments, expenditures, and receipts of the Cape; and many of its most serious and weighty advantages were overlooked. If the government there had employed active, patriotic, and intelligent men, who would have acted honestly and justly in their different departments, several of its expenditures might have been diminished, and its receipts increased. Its staple productions, and resources might easily have been increased and rendered much more beneficial to the interests of their government and themselves, and placed in a far more flourishing state than that in which we found it in the year 1795.

Hospital for
sick seamen
and soldiers.

The establishment of their hospital cost the Company little or nothing, though it was upon a very extensive scale. The range of buildings which composed it was spacious and well laid out. It was erected between the castle and the town, opposite their grand parade. This building was converted into barracks for three regiments by the English government, who removed the hospital very properly some way from the town, close to the shore of Table Bay. The Cape, while we were there, was so healthy that very few indeed of our soldiers and sailors were ever at any one time in it. During Lord Macartney's government

he found the garrison so very healthy that there was no occasion for so large an establishment of medical staff as was sent out from England, and he sent a whole troop of them back again as quite unnecessary, and an useless expense to the colony.

Whenever any sick men belonging to the Dutch ships were sent ashore to their hospital, the captains of them were obliged to advance at least fourteen or twenty days pay with each person, and also a certain small sum was given by every one of their vessels which touched here in order to supply a fund for the payment of the medical department, and other expenses incurred for its support. They never allowed those who were under infectious or epidemic diseases to be brought ashore, particularly those ill of the small-pox. A great deal of attention was paid to the cleanliness of the hospital and the care of the sick; and the hospital was put under the charge of directors who reported every week its state to the government.

The India Company reserved a certain portion of lands, and houses around Cape Town for themselves. The gardens known by the name of the Company's Gardens belonged solely to them. None could buy and sell without a licence, and a certain tax payed for this privilege. The farmers were obliged to sell to the Company at fixed prices, wheat, barley, beans, pease, meat, oxen, wine. For rice, arrack, calicoes, cotton, cloth, handkerchiefs, and other Indian commodities imported, they paid partly in bread, cattle, wine, and other produce of the Cape, but as little in

Revenue of
the Com-
pany.

hard money as possible. However this traffic was neither

Taxes. lucrative nor extensive. Government had five per cent. upon
On shipping. every thing brought into or sent out of the colony. All ships
 were obliged to pay anchorage money at the rate of so
 much per ton. They exacted this, and a certain duty be-
 sides, from every foreign ship as well as their own, and this
 brought them in a good portion of their revenue. In all
 transfer of property so much per cent. was paid to govern-
Slaves. ment. If one man sold his interest in a house or piece of
 ground, he was obliged to pay for every slave purchased
 ten dollars; and a capitation tax was laid on every slave
 nearly similar to that on servants in England. The farm-
 ing and tax on wine amounted to fifty thousand dollars
Provisions. and upwards. Meat, cattle, tobacco, sugar, coffee, and
 other articles of life, brought about half that sum. Con-
 tributions and taxes on houses and lands at the Cape,
Houses and inhabitants. amounted to about four thousand. The average tax on
 houses of a certain rate belonging to the burghers of Cape
 Town, was about eight rix-dollars. They were obliged also
 to pay for the privilege of entertaining passengers and tem-
 porary residents. Residents who were not burghers, eman-
 cipated slaves, servants of the Company, free people of
 colour, and blacks who were not slaves, who had not houses
 of their own, or who rented small tenements and rooms,
 were taxed moderately; but their employers, or burghers
 from whom they rented their habitations, were the ostensi-
 ble persons on whom the payment was enforced. They,
 as well as the burghers and other inhabitants, were obliged

to bear arms whenever called on. A tenth on income, whether derived from lands, houses, goods, or ready money, was paid as a tax to government for the support of the colony. The different districts of the interior were taxed according to the number of its Christian inhabitants and their ability. Proportion of the interior.

Constantia was obliged to furnish a certain proportion of its wine. Rond-a-bosch, Rothboem, Swartzland, Stellenbosch, the drosdy of Swellindam, the villages of Paarl, Drankensteen, False Bay, and Simon's Town, all paid a certain yearly sum to government, or some of their produce in kind. The amount of what I have stated brought in from one hundred and fifty to a hundred and eighty thousand rix-dollars annually. The ostensible expenditures, the maintenance and pay of the troops, and the numerous servants of the Company, exceeded this sum; that alone of the Governor and his clerks being from twenty-five to thirty thousand dollars a year. The Deputy Governor when there was one had ten thousand; the Master Intendant fifteen thousand; the Chief Intendant of the Town and Council, who was generally the Fiscal, for himself and his writers, near twenty thousand; the Deputy Fiscal and Second in Council eight thousand; the Government officers of all denominations, thirty thousand; the repairing fortifications and public works ten thousand; the charges of the smiths, carpenters, ropemakers, and sailors round the bays, for repairing vessels, amounted to a considerable sum. The garrison generally consisted of seventeen hundred men, which with about two hundred people mostly soldiers, employed in the Go-

Income.

Amount of receipts about 150,000 dollars.

The expenditure much greater.

Various charges of the civil and military establishment.

vernment and Company's work, cutting wood, burning lime, and attending on works and batteries, with a few of the militia and officers attached to the black troops and staff departments, came to near two hundred thousand dollars yearly. The pay of the Dutch officers and troops was very low indeed, and a great portion of it was paid in meat and provisions furnished by government contractors, who had cattle and other necessaries of life brought to them from the interior for a moderate sum. The landrosts and land bailiffs of the different districts, and other inferior officers of the country parts, a clergyman or two, and three government physicians; all those different establishments the government here thought it necessary to keep up and maintain.

The above sketch of the receipts of the colony and its expenditure, which I endeavoured to obtain as accurately and as correctly as I could whilst on the spot, shews that the Cape was a great weight upon the mother country, which was forced to send supplies both from Holland and Batavia of money, and various other articles.

Notwithstanding little or no emolument or revenue was derived by the English from the produces of the Cape being sent to other countries in the way of trade, its maintenance and establishments did not cost us nearly so much. Many of those offices to which such large salaries were annexed were done away as unnecessary and useless. The civil establishment during our government was far inferior in numbers to what it had been formerly. The garrison

View of the
establish-
ments in the
time of the
British.

we had here generally consisted of about six regiments of foot and one of dragoons, which of course added greatly to the public expense. The Governors, who were sent out from England, I am confident have been universally allowed to have put the colony to as little expense as possible, and to have required only what was barely necessary. In the distribution of its expenses, and filling up of employments and public offices, the English behaved with great generosity towards the Dutch. Those who were found active, useful, and who discharged their duty faithfully, were retained and employed. Those officers and civilians, who were made prisoners on the taking of the Cape, and who did not chuse to go to Europe, were allowed to remain here as prisoners of war on their parole, and suffered to retain the same privileges and advantages they possessed under their own government. They were allowed as prisoners the same pay as they had on account of their different ranks and services from the Dutch. Several of them grew rich and lived comfortably by boarding and lodging the English at their houses. One instance of British generosity I must mention here in the case of a respectable Dutch burgher, whose house accidentally took fire and was burned to the ground. The British government, and officers of the garrison, liberally subscribed and built up another far better, and more spacious than that which he had lost. It was at this gentleman's house that I lodged most part of each period I was at the Cape, and he has often expressed his

Many of the Dutch held situations under our Government.

sense of the bounty of the English; nor could he help saying his own countrymen would not have acted so liberally towards him as we did.

CHAPTER XVII.

Recapitulation of the Advantages to be derived by Great-Britain from the Possession of the Cape of Good Hope—Conclusion.

IN the preceding narrative of my observations at the Cape of Good Hope, I have endeavoured to avoid stating any fact which was not derived either from my own immediate knowledge, or from such information as I considered to be indisputably authentic. Many errors may still undoubtedly be discovered, and my political reasonings found erroneous by those who are more capable of deciding on the subject. Since writing the above pages, however, events have taken place which justify my opinion that the Dutch government is, in its present state, utterly incapable, not only of improving, but even of preserving internal tranquillity in any of its colonies, although threatened with no enemy from without. The rebellious boors of the interior parts of the colony of the Cape, as soon as they felt themselves relieved from their apprehensions of British troops, lost no time in renewing their insolent opposition to government, and their usual barbarities towards the unfortunate Hottentots and Caffrees. In consequence the whole colony has been thrown into the utmost confusion, and the inhabitants placed in a continual state of danger and alarm. The Caf-

frees at length, exasperated by continual injuries, have joined with the oppressed Hottentots, and have produced such devastation in the interior parts of the colony, that the inhabitants of Cape Town begin to fear their usual supplies of cattle will be totally cut off.

In such a state of things it can scarcely be doubted that if a British force were to appear at the Cape, little or no opposition would or indeed could be made to its taking possession of the colony. The garrison is too feeble of itself to maintain a contest, and no support can be expected from the inhabitants, while a great proportion would hail the arrival of their conquerors as their deliverance from the brink of destruction. But it is not from the facility of the conquests, nor from false views of aggrandisement by the extension of territory, that I would point out this colony as a possession which ought at the present moment to be wrested from our enemies. Even the prospect of distant advantages might be looked upon as insufficient to justify an extension of territory, which might eventually increase the burthens of the country, and would at any rate employ a part of those forces which are at present so much required for the defence of our territories at home and abroad.

The situation of the Cape of Good Hope, however, placed as it is directly in the middle between the two great divisions of the British empire, forces itself upon the attention of Great Britain, as a possession which would not only contribute to her prosperity, but which seems almost

essential to her safety. The Cape in the hands of the tributary republic of Holland, can only be considered as a French colony; and when we consider that Bonaparte looks upon our Indian territories as the great resource of our national power, we cannot suppose that he will long neglect to avail himself of the advantages which the local situation of the Cape presents for our annoyance. Here he may have an opportunity of gradually throwing in forces and stores, and of accumulating, almost unperceived, such a force as may prove truly dangerous to our possessions in the East. Without a port to retire to for refreshment or for shelter from the storms of those latitudes, it is impossible that our cruizers can here watch the motions of our enemy, or blockade his squadrons as we do in his European harbours. The forces which he might dispatch from this station against our East-India settlements, would be far more dangerous than the same, or a much greater number, sent out direct from Europe. As the climate of the Cape seems in a particular manner fitted not only for recruiting the health of the soldier, but also for preparing him to endure the heats of India, our enemy's troops would on their arrival be enabled to cope with our forces on equal terms, and even with the advantage of unbroken health and spirits on their side. We may rest assured that the enemy who could undertake the romantic scheme of penetrating by Egypt and the Red Sea to our eastern empire, will not overlook the easier and far more sure means, of effectuating his

purpose, which are presented to him by the Cape of Good Hope.

To collect such a force, however, at this station as might actually endanger our Indian dominions, may be the work of time; but our enemy has not to look forward to a distant period before he can turn the Cape to the purpose of annoying us. Those vessels, which convey the resources we derive from the East, must of necessity pass the seas which may be said to be commanded by the Cape. In the outward bound passage, indeed, our ships may take a wider range, but it is impossible for them to bear so far to the south, as to be entirely out of the reach of an enemy's squadron stationed off the Cape to cruize against our trade. When we consider the losses we sustained in the last war by the cruisers from the Mauritius, and the Isle de France, and when we look to the relative situation of these islands and the promontory of the Cape, we shall be convinced that with all these stations at once in their possession, our enemies may so completely command the tract of our East-India merchantmen, that an escape to Britain with their cargoes, will be nearly as difficult for them, as to escape from the Havannah to Europe is for the Register ships during a war between Spain and this country.

When these consequences of the Cape being in the hands of our enemies are duly considered, it will appear a matter absolutely required by political prudence, that we should lose no time in regaining this colony. During a war,

the safety of our East-India trade can no otherwise be secured; and equally, in peace and in war, the Cape may be made use of for such preparations as may afterwards be employed to wrest from us our most valuable possessions. If report may indeed be believed, the French have already begun to collect at this point a force, which must cause the more uneasiness, and probably damage, that this is the station, in all the world, where we can least watch its motions and counteract its operations.

These considerations, of security to a large portion of our dominions, are of themselves, independent of all others, certainly sufficient to justify our attempting to regain the Cape of Good Hope, even were the support of the settlement to entail upon us a considerable expence; but there are many other advantages which it might be made to yield to Great Britain. The internal wealth of the colony does not indeed hold out any temptation; and if its resources could be made to maintain the civil and military establishments necessary for its own defence, little more is to be expected from them, at least for several years. I have, however, in the course of this work taken occasion to point out many improvements of which various parts of the settlement are susceptible, and several articles of produce which, by proper attention to their cultivation, might in time come to be of importance to our commerce and revenue. The wines of the Cape might, by proper culture, be rendered in many instances, equal to those of Europe. The high winds, the want of water, and other natural causes, obstruct in some

degree the extension of the wine plantations; but these obstacles may be got over in a sufficient number of instances to render the wine produced a valuable article of commerce. To secure in this manner, within our own dominions, a supply of a commodity, which from its general use in this country may be accounted a necessary of life, must, in the present distracted situation of Europe, and the precarious circumstances of Portugal, be considered as an object which has a claim to the most serious attention of our government.

The cultivation of the sugar-cane is another article which might be carried to a very considerable extent at the Cape. If a supply of sugar and rum could thus be procured, without the continual risk which attends the climate of the West-Indies, we might at all times be enabled to undersell every other nation in these articles; the contingent loss of any of our West-India islands, or the destruction of the plantations, would be a matter of less detriment to the nation at large; nor would so much British capital be sunk, nor so many British lives yearly lost on a most uncertain species of speculation.

I have mentioned several other articles which might here be cultivated with much advantage, such as tobacco and olives, the latter of which grow here in almost any soil. But it is not to particular articles of produce that the speculations of the Cape planter require to be restricted; the productions of almost every climate might here be raised with advantage, if the art of man were industriously employed

to second the bounty of nature. If the method of collecting water and flooding the grounds were properly understood, and hedge-rows and woods reared at proper intervals to protect the fields, the internal riches of the Cape, might at no great distance of time, vie with that of any of our colonies.

The benefits which our East-India merchantmen, our South-Sea whalers, and our ships of all sorts, which come into those latitudes, would derive from our possession of the Cape of Good Hope, are as great as they are obvious. A place of refreshment and shelter for these vessels, is, in many cases, indispensable; yet, with the exception of St. Helena, we have not a single port to receive them in the vast stretch between Europe and the peninsula of India. The supplies of provisions and water afforded by St. Helena are extremely scanty; and it has besides this peculiar disadvantage, that it can only be visited by vessels in their homeward-bound passage, and that for six months in the year it must be beat up to in the face of contrary winds. For outward-bound vessels the Rio Janerio serves at present as a half-way station; but besides that it takes our vessels considerably out of their way, it is to be remembered that we have to depend for the continuance of this convenience on the friendship of the Portugueze, who may already be considered as the humble tributaries of France.

The advantages of possessing the only naval station in the tract of our East-India trade, which by its harbours affords complete security at all seasons of the year, and to

THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

any number of ships, seem indeed too evident to require any argument; and yet these advantages have of late been so much over-looked by the nation, that some reasoning appears necessary to shew that they have not been over-rated. A station in those seas for refreshing the crews of our trading vessels is an object daily rising in importance; nor can we reckon our commerce there at all secure, while we depend for its facilities in any degree on the precarious friendship of States, who may be compelled to become our enemies. Other nations, the Americans in particular, have already begun to share our trade in the East-Indies, and our fisheries in the South-Seas. Every circumstance that tends to obstruct our commerce in that quarter, must in the same proportion increase that of our rivals; and in this manner a door may be opened to undermine one of the most valuable branches of our resources.

If, on the other hand, the Cape of Good Hope were in our possession, the facility of carrying on the East-India trade, and the South-Sea fishery, would greatly preponderate on our side; and our established commerce and regular adventures, supported by the vast capital of this country, might then set all competition at defiance. The trade of all the other nations, whose vessels frequent those seas, would in that event be completely in our power. In the time of war a few cruizers stationed here might entirely command the surrounding seas, nor would it be almost possible for the vessels of any nation trading to the East-Indies to escape them. The mere possession of the harbours of

the Cape, without almost any cruizers, would indeed be nearly sufficient to bring all our enemies into our power. No European nation, with the exception of the English, can venture upon stretching between Europe and India without stopping by the way to refresh. The inferior hardiness of their sailors, the ill-provided state of their vessels, and their inattention to cleanliness, renders it altogether impossible for them to support an uninterrupted voyage of five or six months.

For the purpose of defending our own foreign possessions, or keeping our enemies in check, no station can indeed be found comparable to the Cape of Good Hope. The facility and expedition with which troops can be sent from it to the East or West-Indies, to South America, or to any part of the coasts of Africa, must enable us to counteract, with the best possible effect, every attempt which might be prejudicial to our interests. Should the French again succeed in rendering themselves masters of Egypt, a squadron from the Cape of Good Hope, could, in the course of a few weeks, either blockade the entrance of the Red Sea, if any danger was apprehended to India from a French armament; or convey to Suez a body of troops to attack our enemies from that side, and co-operate with our forces penetrating from the Mediterranean. Were the native princes of India to make such head against us, as that our army there required speedy reinforcements, we could from the Cape convey troops thither in less than half the time in which they could be sent from Europe; and with the

additional advantage of their being already seasoned to the climate, and able immediately to act against the enemy. Were any sudden attempt to be made on our West-India Islands, a force from the Cape might in the same manner speedily arrive to their relief; and that mortality be in a great measure prevented which has rendered those colonies the graves of so many Europeans.

Besides the advantages of its central position and qualities of the climate of the Cape in season, soldiers for service in the warm latitudes, joined to the cheapness with which an army may be maintained here, are sufficient motives for marking it out as a most desirable military station. The number of brave men which the defence of our East and West-India dominions have cost us, and who have fallen victims, not to the sword of our enemies, but to the pestilential nature of the climate, cannot but produce the most melancholy reflections. The East-Indies are indeed much less fatal; yet when troops arrive there in the weakly state, which must always be consequent on a long voyage, those distempers, which in a healthier frame of body they might have undergone without any bad consequences, are often found too powerful for their constitutions. Even when these distempers do not prove immediately fatal, they are apt to leave the individual in such a state as to incapacitate him for any vigorous exertion, and render the remainder of his life a sort of lingering decay. The invigorating effects of the climate of the Cape have been proved in innumerable instances. Many of our officers who came thither from India

with constitutions so enfeebled, that their cure seemed beyond the reach of medicine, were in a very short time so restored at the Cape as to be able to return in perfect health to their regiments. To provide such a receptacle for those gallant men, who have sacrificed their own health to the service of their country, is surely an object of the first importance. Many who could bear to be conveyed from India to the Cape, for the benefit of a better climate, would sink under a voyage of double the length to Europe. The effects of the Cape in recruiting men after a sea voyage with astonishing rapidity are well known; and its property of seasoning troops for warmer climates has been proved in many instances. The troops which were dispatched from thence to assist in reducing the power of Tippoo Saib, were able, on landing in India, immediately to take the field, and to join in storming Seringapatam. The same regiments are at present partaking in our glorious successes in India, and acting with unabated vigour and energy.

The cheapness with which an army may be maintained at the Cape of Good Hope is also well deserving of serious consideration. The abundance of provisions of all sorts is such, that with proper management a body of troops might be subsisted here, at a third less expense than in any other part of his Majesty's dominions. The comforts which must arise to the soldiers themselves from this cause, and the effect it must have on reconciling them to foreign service ought to be considered. If this station should be found to afford government an opportunity of maintaining a force

in a most central and convenient position, and yet at a reduced expense, no one will dispute that this consideration alone is sufficient to render the possession of the colony an object of the most desirable nature.

I have now brought to a period ~~my~~ observations on the Cape of Good Hope. That errors may have crept in unperceived in the course of the work, I have no hesitation to acknowledge. I have however endeavoured, as far as I could, to describe with fidelity what I saw and heard; and to deduce such inferences from my observations, as they seemed naturally to lead to. If zeal for the interests of my country has made me over-rate either the advantages to be derived from the Cape of Good Hope, in the possession of this country, or the dangers to be apprehended from its being occupied by our enemies, I trust my failing in this respect will meet with the indulgence of the Public. I have served my country in different quarters of the globe, and wherever it was my fortune to be stationed, I ever found her intriguing and perfidious enemies, the French, industriously labouring to accomplish her overthrow. It is impossible, therefore, that I can behold, without the strongest emotions of regret, these enemies possessed of a station which affords them the means of undermining the pillars of our commercial grandeur.

For the inaccuracy of arrangement and the errors of composition, it would be necessary for me to offer many apo-

logies, were I not convinced that a candid Public will readily find an excuse for such imperfections in the works of an author who is obliged, even while he holds the pen, to attend to his military duties at this momentous crisis. The extreme liberality with which the most eminent critics of our own country, as well as those on the Continent, treated my first essay in composition, the Account of Ceylon, gives me room to hope that they will look with still more indulgence on a work, written under many disadvantages; not the offspring of an interval of peace, but undertaken and completed by one engaged in military duty, amidst the bustle of unprecedented preparations for war.

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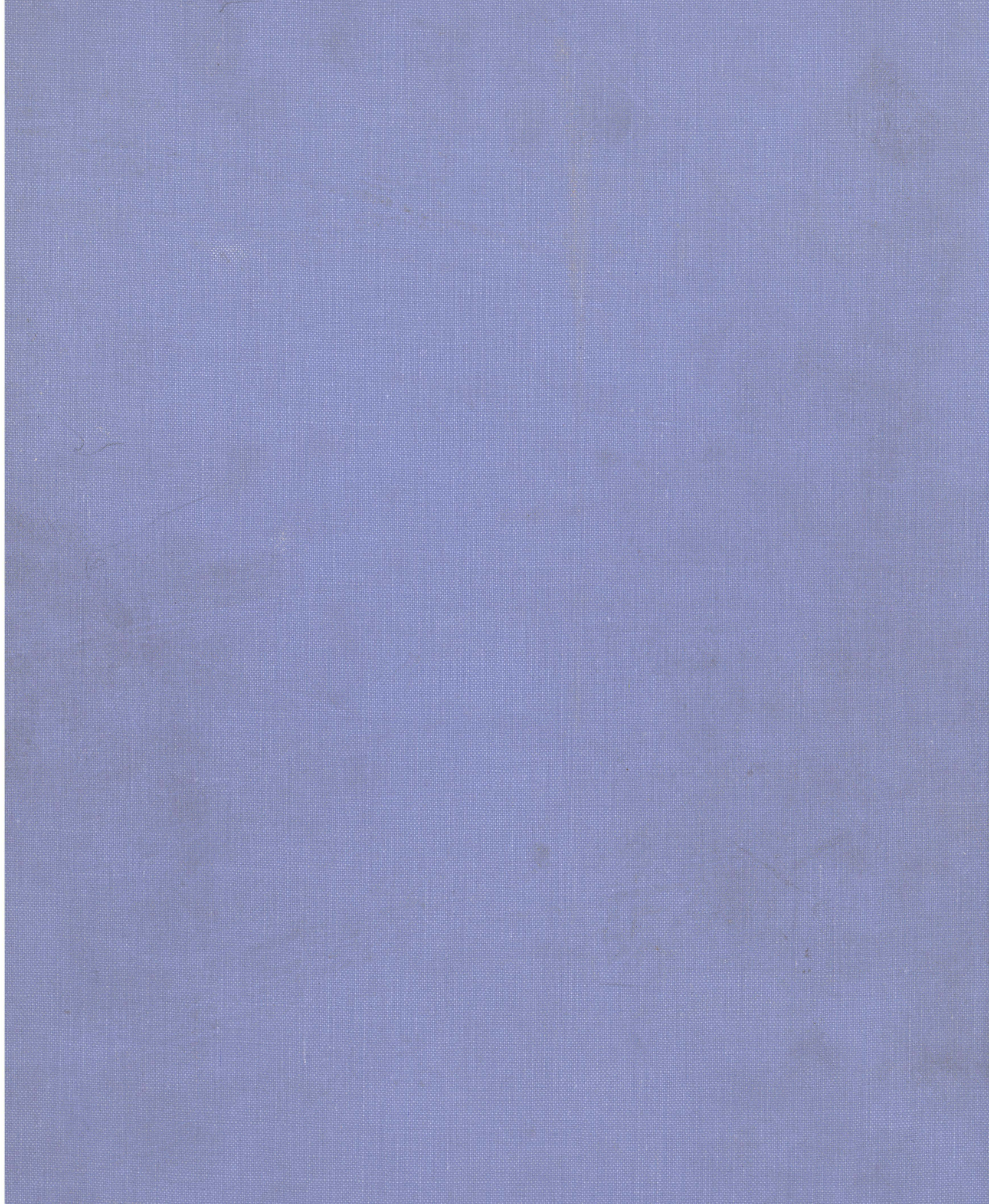
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1. Considering, as we decidedly do, the Philosophical Transactions of our Royal Society as an honour to our native land, and being solicitous to support the claims of our countrymen to many noble discoveries, which foreigners strive to wrest from them, we are pleased to hear of a new Abridgement by men of such established talents in their respective departments. We conceive the work before us to be even of national importance, and if the whole be carried through with the spirit, taste, and judgment which are exhibited in this first volume, it will be a *national honour*. It will tend to convince many foreigners who have not opportunities of perusing the original Transactions, how much every science and every art owes to British improvement. It will be a means of preventing any impudent pretenders from robbing our illustrious forefathers of the fame which is so justly their due. It will disseminate more widely the principles of real and useful knowledge; and it will shew more clearly how different objects of human enquiry reciprocally illustrate and support each other. A fair estimate of this work may be formed from what has appeared, and judging from this, we have no hesitation in recommending so useful and valuable a performance to general patronage and support.—BRITISH CRITIC, Nov. 1803.

2. It is with no small degree of satisfaction that we now announce the completion of this volume, which, as a favourite publication with ourselves, we have unceasingly watched with an anxious and jealous eye. The notes and biographic notices are sufficiently full and satisfactory; in these additional parts the writers seem to have adopted a happy mean between diffuse narrative, and a meagre collection of titles and dates. We cannot conclude without wishing this undertaking the success it deserves.—CRITICAL REVIEW, Feb. 1804.

3. Of all the philosophic associations of modern Europe, none has greater claims upon the gratitude of mankind than the Royal Society of London. The utility of the Transactions is obviously proportioned to their importance: they are indispensable to every person who aims at general knowledge: a library would be defective without them; a book of science would be imperfect unless the author had consulted them. Unfortunately, as they amount to above 100 quarto volumes, they are too expensive to be generally purchased; besides, the early volumes, indispensable to those who wish to trace the progress of knowledge, are now so scarce as hardly to be procured for money. Many of the dissertations too are more diffuse than is necessary, and some are rendered nugatory by subsequent improvement. Hence the obvious advantages of an Abridgement, which if properly executed, would be preferable to the original work itself. We have carefully compared the first Volume of the Abridgement with the original, and have the satisfaction to say, that we found it remarkably accurate. The perspicuous and unaffected style of the Abridgers is peculiarly adapted to a work of science.—LITERARY JOURNAL, March 1, 1804.



AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
CAPE
OF
GOOD
HOPE

R. PERCIVAL