

CONDITION  
OF THE  
NATIVE TRIBES,  
&c., &c.

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CHAPTER I.

Introduction.—The Portuguese and Dutch visit the Cape.—State of the Natives—their Character.—Object of this Work.

THE history of a people, ignorant of letters, and possessing no monuments of art, commences at the period when they are first visited by travellers or adventurers from more civilized communities, whose accounts have in most instances been coloured by their prejudices or their interests. An unknown language, manners and customs and a state of society the reverse of his own, of which he has perhaps never before read of an example, distract the first observer; and in every direction present insuperable obstacles to his inquiries, whilst his credulity is increased by the singularity of the facts which come under his observation. Meagre narratives, defective, or filled up with conjectures, seemingly adopted merely to surprise or amuse, are thus the chief materials out of which the first chapters of the history of most nations are composed. And if these were only unprofitable they might be passed over in silence; but as the character thus fixed

upon barbarous tribes has too often been pleaded as a justification of the most oppressive and cruel treatment of them by the powerful strangers who came to settle in their country, it becomes the duty of succeeding writers to search into the origin and grounds of such representations with the utmost care and impartiality. We have examples where it has been held a sufficient reason for depriving a people of their lands and grazing grounds, that they had no houses or cultivated lands; and when thus reduced to want, they are speedily denounced and hunted down as robbers, or rather as beasts of prey. The connexion between the new and old inhabitants in such circumstances becomes nothing more than a reciprocity of injuries, and the growing colony presents on its borders an unbroken line of crimes and blood. Such is the picture of almost every new settlement in an uncivilized country; and the result has almost uniformly been either the extirpation of the original inhabitants, or their degradation to the condition of slaves or bondmen.

To the melancholy list of instances by which this view is supported, I am about to add that of the Aborigines of Southern Africa;—a people that in the course of less than a century were violently dispossessed of every portion of their territory, deprived of every means of improving their condition as individuals, and, under various pretexts, fixed by law in a state of hopeless bondage in the land of their forefathers. To give a faithful sketch of their past sufferings, and of their present condition, is my chief object. I shall, in every instance, lay my authority before the reader. Should the facts which I have to disclose give pain to individuals, I have only to say, that the correctness of my

statements is the only reply which the dignity of Truth permits me to offer. I dare not shrink either from the labour or the responsibility of bringing before the world, for its impartial decision, a series of wrongs and outrages inflicted on the innocent and defenceless. To have seen them, imposes upon me, as a sacred duty, the task of holding them up to the public eye ; and, to use the words of Milton, " When God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal."

When the Portuguese first visited the Cape of Good Hope, they found the inhabitants rich in cattle, living in a happy and comfortable manner, and possessed of sufficient spirit to repel aggression and to resent unjust treatment. From the slight intercourse held with them, chiefly for the purpose of procuring water and refreshments for their ships, they were led to entertain very favourable notions of the character of these natives. It was said, that they were remarkable for the excellence of their morals, that they kept the law of nations better than most civilized people, and that they were valiant in arms. Of this latter quality, they gave a memorable proof in the year 1510, when Francisco Almeida, first viceroy of the Portuguese in India, was defeated and killed in an obstinate engagement with the Hottentots, near the Salt River, in the neighbourhood of the place where Cape Town now stands.

When the Dutch took possession of the Cape, in 1652, the natives appear to have been much more numerous than they now are, and to have possessed large herds of cattle. And although some of the early writers who had visited the Cape previous to the

colonization of the Dutch, seem to have given exaggerated accounts of the number and wealth of this people, yet from documents to which I have had access, it is evident that the numbers and wealth of the Hottentots were very soon much diminished by their contiguity to their European neighbours. So rapid indeed was this diminution, occasioned by the trade carried on between them and the new settlers, that it arrested the attention of the government; and it appears from the minutes of an investigation before the governor, Van der Stell, in the commencement of the eighteenth century, that a single Hottentot village had been robbed of cattle by the colonists to the amount of two thousand head. It appears, also, from the returns made by the officers commanding the parties sent against the Bushmen, so late as the year 1770, that their villages frequently contained from one hundred to two hundred men; and these villages were, at that time, in the possession of cattle.

All the records of the colony, during the first fifty years of the Dutch occupation, which I have seen, agree in praising the virtues of the Hottentots; and such was the admiration extorted by these virtues from the colonists, that all the Hottentot tribes were distinguished by the appellation of "The good men." It is related, on the authority of Bogaert, that, during the whole of that period, the natives had never in one instance been detected in committing an act of theft on the property of the colonists. The first that took place happened in the year 1700, and the party who suffered by it had so high an opinion of the honesty of the Hottentots, that the blame was laid upon the slaves, and the real thief was not so much as suspected.

The article stolen was a waistcoat with silver buttons, and could not easily be concealed among savages. Accordingly, a short time after the affair had taken place, the waistcoat was found in the possession of a Hottentot, belonging to a kraal at a small distance from Cape Town. The discovery was no sooner made than the offender was seized by his countrymen, who brought him to town, and delivered him over to the magistrates. And so great a disgrace did they consider this act to their nation, that they demanded that he should be punished, as the only means of wiping off the stain his crime had fixed upon them; and not satisfied with his getting a severe flogging, they banished him from their village, as unworthy to live among them.

The injuries inflicted upon the Hottentots by the colonists must have had a deteriorating influence on their character, in the course of one hundred and fifty years, during which time they had been driven from the most fertile tracts of country, and deprived of that independence to which they were passionately attached; yet so much of the character ascribed to them by the early writers remained visible even at the time when Mr. Barrow travelled among them, that we hesitate not to receive, as accurate, descriptions that might otherwise have been thought too flattering. "A Hottentot," says this intelligent writer, "is capable of strong attachments; with a readiness to acknowledge, he possesses the mind to feel the force of a benevolent action. I never found that any little act of kindness or attention was thrown away upon a Hottentot; but, on the contrary, I have frequently had occasion to remark the joy that sparkled on his countenance whenever an

opportunity occurred to enable him to discharge his debt of gratitude. I give full credit to all that M. Le Vaillant has said with regard to the fidelity and attachment he experienced from this race of men, of whom the natural character and disposition seem to approach nearer to those of the Hindûs than of any other nation." That the following tribute paid to the honour of the Hottentot character by the same traveller was well merited, I have been fully satisfied by my own observation and experience during my residence in South Africa; and I never knew an individual who was acquainted with the manners of this people, who did not acknowledge its justice. "A Hottentot, among the many good qualities he possesses; has one which he is master of in an eminent degree,—I mean a rigid adherence to truth. When accused of a crime of which he has been guilty, with native simplicity, he always states the fact as it happened; (but, at the same time, he has always a justification at hand for what he has done. From lying and stealing, the predominant and inseparable vices of the condition of slavery, the Hottentot may be considered as exempt. In the whole course of my travels, and in the midst of the numerous attendants of this nation with which I was constantly surrounded, I can with safety declare that I never was robbed or deceived by any of them."

Like other tribes in an uncivilized state, the Hottentots lived together in their kraals, or villages, like members of the same family, having their cattle and chief property as a sort of common stock, to which all had an equal right. When an individual killed an ox or a sheep, the slaughtered animal afforded a common

feast; and the person to whom it belonged had as little food in his house on the next day, or the day following, as any of his neighbours. The same practice, it may be observed, obtains still among the Caffers, the Bushmen, and the Namaquas. If a dozen of people leave a kraal to hunt game, and one only is successful, the fortunate individual shares his provision with his less successful companions of the chase.

I never have been able to discover from my intercourse with the natives, or from any other source, that this nation had ever attained any distinct notion of a Supreme Being, or that an idea of a future state of existence had at any period prevailed among them. Africaner\*, the most intelligent savage I have ever met with, declared that, previous to his acquaintance with the Missionaries, he had no idea of a Spirit, Creator, or Supreme Ruler. In his intercourse with the colonists, he had heard, as he observed to me, "that they had a God; but he never saw him in the winds, in the thunder, in the lightning, in the heavens, nor in any of his works; and so contracted were his views on this subject, that, by the God of the white people, he only understood something under that name which they might carry about with them in their pockets." Being asked if it never occurred to him to inquire how the world was made, or who formed the sun and the stars and the clouds, his reply was, "I was always so engrossed with my cattle and my wars, that I never lifted my thoughts so high; or if, at any time, a question arose in my mind on these subjects, the difficulty of solving it was so great

\* Some account of this extraordinary person will be given in the sequel.

that it no sooner presented itself than it was dismissed." But the conclusive argument on this point is the fact, that neither they nor the Bushmen had any word in their language to express the Deity. The only name which the Hottentots have for him (and this is by no means general) is Thuike, or Utika, an appellation of which the derivation and meaning are very uncertain\*.

But whatever their opinions may have been on this subject, they were not entirely without moral restraints. Before they were corrupted by their intercourse with Europeans, adultery and fornication were considered among them as crimes.

But as the independence of the Hottentot tribes of Southern Africa is now matter of history only, for a view of their habits and social manners in that state, we must look to the pages of Sparrman, Vaillant, and other travellers. The manner in which Vaillant relates his personal adventures has thrown an air of fiction over the general details of his work; but his delineations of Hottentot character and Hottentot manners are universally allowed, by those acquainted with the period of which he writes, to be accurate and just. As a writer of travels, Sparrman occupies a higher place than Vaillant; and though, like other travellers, he may have been imposed upon, with respect to the information furnished him by others, his veracity may be relied on in every instance where he relates what came under his own observation. Vaillant cavils at

\* The Missionary Brownlee, who is a respectable authority, states, that the Caffers have some idea of a Supreme Being, whom they call *Uhlanga*; but that until the Missionaries went among them, they had no conception of a state of future rewards or punishments.



some of his statements, but alleges nothing to impeach his veracity; and both agree in the outlines they have given of the character and condition of the Hottentots.

The following picture of two Hottentot tribes, remaining in a state of independence, was drawn by Sparrman in the year 1775; and as coming from the pen of a man of probity and good sense, who was one of the last of our African travellers who had the advantage of witnessing what he has here described, it cannot fail to be perused with interest:—

“A small society of Gunjemans Hottentots, whose ancestors, at the time that the Dutch invaded this part of the continent, inhabited the tract of country about Table Mountain and Constantia, now live on friendly terms with the farmer above mentioned. By what I could understand, this little society had long been without the exercise of any personal authority among them, without beggars, and without any penal laws and statutes, as well as without crimes and misdemeanors; having been united and governed only by their own natural love of justice, and mildness of disposition, together with several common Hottentot usages and customs.

“My Hottentots from Swellendam seemed to hold in high estimation the virtue, freedom, and happy state of these people; so much indeed, that they were resolved to partake of the blessings enjoyed by this happy race for the remainder of their lives, as soon as they should have finished the journey with us at the Cape. For this purpose they solicited me to buy at this place, for each of them, a heifer with calf, which, according to our agreement, they had a right to demand for their reward. As Hottentots, this way of

thinking and turn of mind did not by any means discredit them. I therefore advanced for them glass beads, brass tinder-boxes, knives, and steels for flints, to the value of nine or ten rix-dollars; in consideration of which, two of the best heifers in their judgment among the whole herd of cattle belonging to the kraal were looked out for them.

“The most considerable part of this herd belonged to a widow, who was reckoned to be worth sixty milch cows, and was (at least in this point) the most respectable female Hottentot I was ever acquainted with. She was childless, and was to be succeeded in her estate by her cousin; she seemed to be past the middle age, and, in her younger days, to have been a beauty in her kind.”

“To the divine pleasure of doing good to their fellow-creatures, I look upon the Hottentots to be by no means insensible, as I have seen them display the greatest hospitality to each other, when in the course of their business, or merely for pleasure, they have visited one another from a great distance. Besides, it is probable that, in the other well-governed Hottentot kraals, any more than in this, no member of society is abandoned to any considerable degree of indigence and misery. But in consequence of the further migrations of the colonists hither, and of the quantity of glass beads and other commodities, which I at this time brought to market here, and for which I found a good sale among the fair sex, I think I can plainly foresee a speedy and not inconsiderable revolution in the turn of mind and manners of this society.”

Of a kraal on the Little Sunday River, he gives the following account:—

“They appeared to me not so swarthy as my own Hottentots, and I suppose that they originate only from a set of people who, having acquired some cattle by servitude among the Caffers, had formed themselves into this society. The iris of their eyes was of a very dark brown hue, and almost, if not quite, as dark as the pupil. They had a great quantity of cattle, and seemed to live very happily in their way. As soon as ever they had taken their cattle up from pasture they milked them; an occupation they intermixed with singing and dancing.

“We seldom see such happiness and contentment as seems to be indicated by this festive custom, in a handful of people totally uncultivated, and subsisting in their original savage state, in the midst of a perfect desert. Mr. Immelman\* accompanied me, in order to behold with his own eyes the real archetype of that state of pastoral felicity, which the poets are continually occupied in painting and describing. We announced ourselves here, likewise, as being the children of the Company, and were received by them with a friendly simplicity and homely freedom, which, however, by no means lessened them in our thoughts as men. They presented us with milk, and danced at our request, at the same time giving us to understand, that our fame, as being a singular people with plaited hair, and at the same time simplers and viper-catchers, had reached them long before our arrival.

“We were spectators of their country-dances, in which there was very little of agility or art. While their feet were employed in a kind of stamping and

\* Sparrman's fellow-traveller, and a native of the Cape,

moderately slow movement, every one of them at intervals made several small gentle motions with a little stick, which they held in their hands. The simplicity which prevailed in their dances was equally conspicuous in their singing.

“It must be confessed, that this concert was not well adapted to satisfy a nice ear; however, it inspired a certain degree of joy and cheerfulness, and was by no means disagreeable.”

“Approaching near to nature and under her immediate protection,” says Vaillant, in giving a similar description of one of the dances of this people, “the savages have no need of our noisy and most harmonious orchestras to excite them in their festivals to the liveliest demonstrations of pleasure and joy. The confined and monotonous modulation of their music is sufficient; and I believe that, even without it, they would caper equally well.

“In his course of Geographical Lectures, one of our modern authors who has made it a rule to study men, at the same time that he describes places, observes, with great sagacity, that, in a polished state, dancing and singing are two arts; but that, in the bosom of the forests, they are almost natural signs of concord, friendship, tenderness, and pleasure. We learn, under masters,” adds this writer, “to command our voice, and to move our limbs in cadence; the savage has no other instructor but his own passions, his own heart, and nature. What he feels, we pretend to feel; the savage, therefore, who dances and sings is always happy.”

The same writer, describing the occupations of these simple people, and the seasons they choose for their

favourite amusements, remarks, that they never assemble to amuse themselves in this manner, excepting in the night, their daily occupations leaving them no other time.

“A particular duty,” he observes, “belongs to each, which must be discharged:—some must continually watch over the flocks, scattered throughout the fields, not only to prevent them from straying, but to protect them from the attack of ravenous animals, which are continually lying in wait for them; others must keep them clean, and milk them twice a day; some must weave mats, and collect dry wood for their evening fires; and others must provide subsistence, and search for roots. These last occupations belong principally to the women; whilst the men, on their part, go a hunting, inspect the snares which have been laid in different places, and form arrows and all the other instruments which they have occasion for.

“Though these instruments, and all those works that come from their hands, are in general coarse and clumsy, they require a good deal of time and pains, because they are destitute of a number of tools necessary for abridging their labour; their ingenuity is much less admirable than their patience.”

These extracts might have been conveniently abridged, but I have preferred giving them in their original form, because, in the words of the writers themselves, who described what they saw, they are calculated to make a more vivid, distinct, and faithful impression, than in any other form that could have been adopted; and the descriptions thus afforded are the more entitled to credit, as they are in perfect unison with all the other authentic accounts given of the

original state of the Hottentots. The calumnies invented against them come from a different source, and originated in causes to be afterwards explained.

Thus it appears, from the concurrent testimony of the best authors, and from facts to be gleaned even at the present day, that the Aborigines of Southern Africa were, when first visited by Europeans, in a state of independence, possessing in abundance the means of subsistence, not destitute of comforts, and living together in great harmony; that their dispositions were mild and inoffensive, their morals comparatively pure, and their conduct towards strangers, as well as towards each other, conciliating and exemplary. It has however been urged, as a common apology in defence of the practice of enslaving the natives of Africa, that they are much happier on the plantations, and in the service of our colonists, than they were when they lived according to the customs of their fathers. How far this opinion has any foundation in truth will be perceived by comparing the preceding statements with the following details, which, though scanty, and sometimes abrupt, and apparently unconnected, owing to the nature of the subject and the difficulty of procuring original documents or authentic information from the common sources of history, will, it is hoped, prove sufficient to give the reader a correct view of the policy and conduct pursued towards this people by the Dutch and English governments, and to produce a disposition in the public mind to do justice to what remains of this oppressed and degraded race.

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## CHAPTER II.

**Names of the various Hottentot Tribes.—Striking peculiarity.—First Settlement of the Dutch.—Treatment of the Natives.—Kupt's Journal—Remarks.**

THE Hottentots within the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the Bushmen or Bosjesmen, as they are styled by our African travellers, the Corannas, a pastoral tribe inhabiting the banks of the Great Orange River, and the Namaquas, occupying that part of the western coast of Africa marked in our maps with the name of Namaqualand, speak the same language (allowing for varieties of dialects and accents), have nearly the same physical peculiarities, and are branches of the same original stock. One peculiarity of their language is so singular, that it has not failed to attract the attention of all travellers. Most of their words are pronounced with a smack or clucking sound, produced by the quick retraction of the tongue from the teeth of the upper jaw, or from the palate against which it has been pressed. Words of more than one syllable are accompanied or divided, and rendered special and emphatic in their application by two clucks; and these accents, if we may so term them, are formed in three different ways, as the word or the subject requires, by striking the point of the tongue more or less backward against the palate. This characteristic of the Hottentot language, from its frequent recurrence, gives the speaker a grotesque and hurried appearance to a stranger, one

of the clucks being exactly that used to express impatience ; while it makes the attainment of the language appear extremely difficult : but as in the case of every innocent peculiarity in the manners of a strange people, our aversion is worn away by familiarity, and many of the Boors speak it with as much fluency as the Hottentots themselves.

With most of these tribes the Dutch, on their forming a settlement at the Cape, came early into contact. This settlement took place in the year 1652: the site chosen was on the southern edge of Table Bay, and the party consisted of one hundred males. This number was speedily recruited by fresh arrivals from Europe, and the population has continued up to the present time to double itself within the space of about every twenty years. Their weakness at first contributed, perhaps, to confirm their peaceable deportment towards the natives. The Dutch East India Company, under whose protection and control they were placed, seem not then to have regarded the conquest or appropriation of the country as an object worthy of their attention. It was considered merely as an appendage to Batavia, and a convenient station for watering and refreshing the fleets engaged in their eastern commerce. Accordingly, for a considerable number of years, the intercourse between the old and new occupants was conducted in the most amicable spirit, the Dutch paying honestly for the supplies of sheep and cattle furnished by the Hottentots, with copper beads, tobacco, and brandy, the current coin in all countries among an uncivilized people. It appears, however, from the private journal of Van Riebeck, the founder of the colony, that even in those early days, from the mud walls of the little fortress by



which his dominions were circumscribed, he could not help gazing with a curious eye on the herds of bullocks ranging over the pastures, and hinting a regret that such fine animals should remain in the possession of heathens\*.

As the colonists increased in number, and began to feel their security and strength, and the difficulty of supplying their wants by barter and fair purchase, their encroachments daily augmented, until they were no longer endurable. Posts were formed in advance of the fort, and productive patches of land began to be considered as the property of the settlers. The Hottentots gradually and insensibly ebbed away with their flocks and herds from the vicinity of Table Bay and the Cape Peninsula, and the strangers steadily advanced, fixing their durable houses of stone where the fragile and temporary hut of the native herdsman had sprung up, and disappeared, as caprice or the change of seasons dictated. In some instances it is pretended that tracts of land were regularly purchased from the native chiefs or captains of their respective hordes, who, being in no manner straitened for territory, ceded for a trifling consideration their most valuable possessions. How such bargains were concluded at the period of which we speak, and whether the natives understood that by such transactions they renounced the right of pasturage and occasional occupation, we have no means of ascertaining; but it is most probable that their notions went no farther than to con-

\* See Van Riebeck's Journal, published in the "Zuid-Afrikaansch Tydschrift." Cape Town, 1824-1825.

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cede the joint and friendly use of the springs and herbage common amongst themselves.

No limit being fixed to the extension of the colony by these means, the number of farmers, or boors as they were called, rapidly increased; and as they removed farther and farther from the seat of government, their trade with the natives began occasionally to be interrupted by disputes and quarrels. Driven back towards the north and north-east, among dry and barren tracts, the Hottentots, seeing their herds and flocks diminishing and now scarcely sufficient for their own wants, avoided the barterers or merchants who came to traffic with them either on their own account or as agents of the Dutch government, and withdrew, on their approach, to the least accessible places. To increase this feeling of jealousy and apprehension, some outrages committed by the colonists greatly contributed; and before the end of the century it appears that some inoffensive kraals or villages had been surprised and plundered by rovers from the settlement.

The aspect of affairs was now entirely altered. The colonists, firmly established in the south-western portions of the country, began to regard the receding Hottentots as intruders and enemies; and though actual hostilities had not commenced between them and the Company, it was obvious that the very existence of the natives was about to be considered as subservient to the interests of the boors. To illustrate the state of the country at the commencement of the eighteenth century, only fifty years after Van Riebeck had fixed his party of one hundred men on the verge of the continent, I shall give a few extracts from the journal of Johannes Sterreberg Kupt, Landdrost, who was sent

into the interior to procure some young oxen for the Company in the year 1705. The journal was kept for the information of government, and is of the nature of a report. It is entitled "Journal of the Landdrost Joh. Sterreberg Kupt, on his journey to the Gonnemaas, Grigriquaas, Namaqua Hottentots." I give it at length, literally translated from the original manuscript, as it presents a curious and faithful picture of the country at that period. It thus commences:—

"On Friday the 16th October, 1705, we left the Cape\*. I went to Stellenbosch to order the performance of some business to the vice-president of the board of Heemraden, and from thence on the

"18th, to Drakenstein to transact some business, and arrived on the

"19th, at the post of the Company at Sonquaas Drift, which was the place where I had fixed to meet Baas Hartogh, who had taken another course with the waggons; and travelled on the

"20th, from Sonquaas Drift farther on, to take our course, according to instructions, towards the circumjacent Hottentots, in order to barter with them for a number of young oxen for the Honourable Company

"In the afternoon it was reported to us that the Gonnemaas Hottentots (who were the nearest) did not like to traffic with us, and for that reason had travelled over the mountain into the land of Waaveren, out of our road; but that a captain called Boatsman was living with his kraal beyond the Twenty-four-rivers; towards which we accordingly directed our course, and arrived there at sunset.

"As soon as we had pitched our tent, we saluted

\* Cape Town is termed "THE CAPE" by the Colonists.

this chief with a dram and a good *tabutjè*, in the name of the Honourable Company ; and gave him to understand that we came to barter for some working cattle, in a friendly manner, for the Honourable Company, who were in great want thereof ; and to assure him of the friendship of the Honourable Company : that his Honour the Governor, being informed that he was a good fellow, and rich in cattle, had ordered us to go to him, and that it was expected he would assist us. We then gave him a second dram ; but it availed us nothing. He made reply that we must go first to the other Gonnemaas, and from what should occur there, he would see what he had to do.

“ During the time he drank once more, I went to the kraal to look over the cattle which had come home, and found them to be a fine herd, although he had sent away his best oxen on hearing of our coming.

“ I returned to the tent, and tried again to persuade him to barter, but could not succeed further that evening, except that he was willing to give us some sheep for provision for our journey. We were, therefore, forced to part that evening unsuccessful.

“ 21st. I sent one waggon back to the Cape, transferring the goods to my own waggon, by which I had an opportunity to report to the governor the delay with this stubborn Boatsman, who in the morning brought nothing but twelve sheep, notwithstanding that I had strongly intimated to him, that we were not sent to procure sheep, but oxen ; that we were not in want of victuals, for we had abundance of provisions as he could see in the three loaded waggons ; and that if he would not barter cattle, he might take back his sheep. On this they departed from the tent to the kraal, and returned a short time afterwards with three young oxen ;

which made me follow up the same way of acting, and say that he must be a fool to think I was come with so many waggons and people so far to traffic for three oxen ; that he might take them also back, and that I should break up and depart. At last I obtained nine fine young oxen, and nine sheep, for which we gave ten strings of copper beads, thirteen pounds of tobacco, glass beads, and brandy. These cattle we left with him till our return.

“ 23d. We continued our journey, and proceeded towards the corner of Picquet Berg, which was the road pointed out to us by Captain Hannibal, as leading to his kraal. At noon we reached a river similar to Deep River in Koebergen. Here we pitched our tent, which had got wet last night, to dry it. While resting, our men, Hottentots and cattle ate something ; and about two o'clock, we again packed up, and continued to travel along the said river till night-fall, when we halted at an old kraal on the north corner of Picquet Berg. We had travelled that day about eight leagues. Here we and Captain Hannibal were told by Bosjesmen, that, about four days ago, a waggon had passed on its way to his kraal, to traffic ; and of which waggon they showed us the trace. Upon this he wanted to leave us immediately to hasten to his kraal, as the acts of drunken Gerrit were fresh in his remembrance. However, I persuaded him to remain, by promising to use all expedition to overtake that waggon ; and that he should then be an eye-witness that it was here without the knowledge of the governor, as I would arrest that waggon and people, and send them to the Cape. By this he was persuaded, and remained with us, otherwise we might perhaps not have been able to find his kraal.

“ *24th.* Continued our journey along the same river, intending to travel a good way, (as it was a cloudy sky, and cool weather,) so as to overtake the waggon ; respecting which I here received information from some Bosjesmen, that it belonged to one of the Company's servants at Groene Kloof. This appeared strange to me, since the corporal of that post knew that I was gone into the country to traffic for the Hon. Company, because I had one of the men of that post with me ; and he must have been aware that, by sending his waggon, and supplying the Hottentots with tobacco and other things, he would frustrate the object of our journey.

“ *Sunday the 25th.* We got ready towards noon, and continued our journey, the weather being foggy. After we had travelled about one league, we perceived by fresh tracts that the abovementioned waggon had returned here and passed us in the night, having very likely received information of our arrival. We continued the whole of that day our route along the same river, and formed towards evening our camp on its banks, after having advanced about six leagues. The river at this place was nearly a thousand paces wide, full of sea-gulls, geese, ducks, and other flying and swimming animals. Amongst others we heard the sea-cow.

“ *26th.* Early in the morning, with foggy weather, and a strong wind, we directed our course to the right hand inland, through a difficult sand, where the oxen stopped every moment, fell into mole-holes, and stuck fast, and the waggon wheels cut a foot deep in the sand. This continued for three leagues, when we arrived at Hannibal's kraal. Here six captains had joined, and formed altogether twenty-three huts.

“ I asked how it was that they had so few cattle—as

the Honourable Company had never trafficked with them. On which they informed us that a certain free man, going by the name of drunken Gerrit, some years ago, accompanied by some other people, had come to their kraal, and without saying a word, had fired upon them from all sides, chased away the Hottentots, burnt their huts, and carried off all their cattle, without their knowing any reason for it, since they had never offended any of the Dutch. That in consequence of having lost all their cattle, they were obliged to go to the bordering Dutch to collect some, and to rob their own countrymen; and whenever they could get any, they drove them into the mountains, and feasted till all was consumed; then they went to fetch other cattle; and in this they had succeeded several times, and had still a few of the cattle left. From another quarter they are also plagued with robberies from a nation of Hottentots, living on the other side of Elephants' River, in inaccessible mountains, and whose country is called, in their language, 'Thynema,' and the captains of these robbers 'Throghama,' 'Tkousa, Doeodie, Tkerringrow.' By these they are constantly plagued, and but seldom able to revenge themselves. But their most sorrowful and exasperated complaints are about the wicked behaviour of this drunken Gerrit, who has been the cause of all the calamities and bloodshed that has since occurred in several encounters with the Dutch. They were obliged, they said, in order to save the small quantity of cattle left them, and to procure victuals for their wives and children, to fight daily with the elephants, and thus obtain subsistence with the greatest danger of their lives. They added that they set great value on the benevolence and friendship of the Honourable Company, which I com-

mended so highly to them, and wished much to embrace the same on all opportunities. And verily I have discovered in the manners and behaviour of these people, and by our intercourse with them, much more genuine good nature than in other Hottentots.

“ The same evening they left us. During the night it rained hard, with a strong wind from the north-west, in consequence of which we were hardly able to keep our fires burning, or the tent standing. We were the whole night in motion, because the cattle would not remain in the flat, but went off constantly to the bushes to find shelter against the rain and wind. The tent being old did not protect us from the rain.

“ *27th.* About eight o'clock in the morning the rain ceased. The captains came, six in number, and brought us six head of cattle, with their former protestations of their poverty. We obtained, however, after talking the whole day, on the

“ *28th,* fourteen head of cattle, for which we gave eighteen strings of copper beads, eighteen pounds of tobacco, glass beads, and brandy.

“ Here we received accurate reports about the before-mentioned waggon ; that the same had been sent by the corporal of the Groene Kloof post, Daniel Tous, with the only men he had with him on the post, and a freeman, Christopher Lutje, to barter ; but that they had heard of our coming, and after one day's stay, had departed, having only purchased in haste twelve large elephants' teeth, which they took with them. We learned moreover, that during the last dry season the freemen Pieter Janz, Kees Orlam, Pattje, and Karosop-sy, had been here to traffic with the Hottentots.

“ On going with Hartogh some distance from the tent



to collect some bulbs and seeds, I perceived from a height, the sea; and as the distance did not seem great, we resolved to follow the river, which runs by the kraal, and is named by the Hottentots Thythouw, to see whether it did not join the large Quacoma, and discharge itself with it into the sea. After two hours ride we arrived at the shore, where we found a barren beach, and a tempestuous sea, with a terrible surf and dangerous rocks. We rode some way along the beach, and could just perceive the mouth of the great Quacoma river at a distance, but it was too far for us to go there. This Thythouw river does not discharge itself into the sea, but into a large salt pan, where it must lose itself under the sand-hills, for we found no mouth, and everywhere pretty high sand-hills. I never saw so many flamingoes as at this place, besides a great abundance and variety of ducks, of which we shot a large quantity, and arrived in the evening at our tent. It had been cloudy during the whole day, and became very cold in the evening.

“ 29th. The weather was misty and rainy; we therefore waited till noon, when we re-commenced our journey, and directed our course to the right, towards Elephants' River. After having advanced about two leagues, we stopped at a little rivulet called, by the Namaquaas, Thiethy, and by us Schildpaddenpoel, situate about half a league behind the Theima Koethma, or Wafeberg.

The whole of our way from the kraal to this place was over sandy hills, without grass, but full of thorns, and a certain bush from which distils a gum very much like the mastic in smell, taste, and colour. The Namaquaas call the gum Throop, and use it to fasten their

assagais, knives, &c., as we use resin; wherefore we took some of the plants and of the gum with us. In the afternoon it became fine weather. I sent along the rivulet to search for water-herbs for the horses, for in the whole of this country not a blade of grass was to be found. In the evening it became cloudy again.

“ 30th. The sky was now covered with heavy clouds, and it blew very strong from the north-west, towards which our course was directed. We had not advanced above half a league when we had a heavy rain, which continued the whole day.

“ This is a very disagreeable country. Throughout the whole way we found nothing but sand-hills, and valleys full of stones and mole-holes, where cattle and horses sink continually up to the knees; it is full of bushes, but destitute of grass. We rode for some time along a mountain. Here the waggons stuck against a sand-hill, and could not be pulled up till after two hours hard labour, with the assistance of all the people; and here we were drenched by a heavy rain, which I braved stoutly, as long as my cloak would bear it, but was at last compelled to creep like the others under the rocks. It cleared up a little, and we continued our march. Here a rhinoceros stood in our way, about one hundred paces from the road, and we were apprehensive that it would attack us, but on hearing the shouts of the Hottentots it went away. This was the only large game we had seen during the whole of our journey, whereas in former times large herds of elephants were found in this and the country we had passed through. The reason of this change is, that the circumjacent Hottentots, in the abovementioned manner sunk into the deepest poverty, have been compelled to have recourse to the hunting

of elephants, and thus to kill and drive away these animals. They still allow them no rest, for as soon as one is spied by their Sonquaas (soldiers) who wander daily in the fields to catch dasjés, jackals, and other animals, the whole kraal is advertised of it, all the young men assemble and assail those animals till, from fatigue, and wounds from assagais and arrows, they expire. If there is water in the neighbourhood where one falls, the whole kraal, with all that belongs to it, go there. Thus it happens that the kraals do not remain long in one place, and are difficult to be found. In the afternoon, having proceeded about four leagues, we pitched our tent in a valley at the foot of the Thokoe at Olofonteyn.

“ This mountain is called after a Captain Tho, who some years ago, in his way to his kraal, was devoured by a lion.

“ 31st. We broke up early, and continued our journey at sun-rise. We could perceive now that our horses and oxen began to get weak from the scarcity of pasturage, and constant travelling ; for we got over all the hills before very well, with eight oxen, and had now much trouble to pass the Thokoe Kloof, although it was none of the highest. We travelled, however, about four leagues over most miserable sandy or stony roads, until we came to the Elephants' River, which is called here, and higher up, Thárakkamâ, that is, the Bushy River. This river was swelled by the rains ; we therefore pitched our tent on this side. Here we took much delight in fishing, and our cattle in grazing, till the night bade us rest.

“ 1st November. Early in the morning we commenced cutting down the banks of the river, which were very steep, with spades and pickaxes, to make

them passable, which we finished about noon; and after the baggage had been carried over by the people, the oxen at last dragged the empty waggon through, so that the whole passed safely over; and as it was very hot we remained the rest of the day and the following night here; but on the

“2d, we were early alert to pack, yoke the oxen, and saddle; and continued our course along the other bank of the Elephants' River, till about noon, when we left it and turned to the right, through the most miserable country imaginable. It consists entirely of red sand, full of bosjes (bushes), and undermined by the moles. Had it been possible, I would have carried my horse, for the poor animals could not move their feet without falling up to the shoulders into mole-holes. In the mean time the sun shone like fire, and no where was water to be found. In short, I never had so unpleasant an afternoon.

“At last, after having advanced five leagues, we discovered a kind of kraal in a very pretty ravine, situate between high and steep rocks. In the rainy season it has a rivulet, which discharges itself into the Elephants' River; but at this season it is nothing but a barren dry ravine, with three or four water-pools.

“We came directly above the kraal before they knew it, and descended along a steep rock towards them. On the first view of us they appeared quite astonished. Some took to their heels to the other side, while a number of armed young men advanced towards us. One of these was so forward that he had already adjusted an arrow to his<sup>\*</sup> bow to direct it towards me, being the foremost; but upon the pointing of my gun, and the calling out of the Hottentots who had served

us as guides, he put up the arrow ; and the party came with much curiosity around us, asking continually of our Hottentots who we were, and for what reason we had come so far into the country. After having received answer, they were well contented.

“ Our waggons, which were obliged to take a circuitous route, arrived at last, and we pitched our tent a musket-shot from the kraal ; and after having arranged every thing, went to rest, but were soon disturbed : for about midnight the cattle and horses, which were standing between the waggons, began to start and run, and one of the drivers to shout, on which every one ran out of the tent with his gun. About thirty paces from the tent stood a lion, which on seeing us walked very deliberately about thirty paces farther, behind a small thorn-bush, carrying something with him, which I took to be a young ox. We fired more than sixty shots at that bush, and pierced it stoutly, without perceiving any movement. The south-east wind blew strong, the sky was clear, and the moon shone very bright, so that we could perceive every thing at that distance. After the cattle had been quieted again, and I had looked over every thing, I missed the sentry from before the tent, Jan Smit from Antwerp, belonging to the Groene Kloof. We called as loudly as possible, but in vain,—nobody answered ; from which I concluded that the lion had carried him off. Three or four men then advanced very cautiously to the bush, which stood right opposite the door of the tent to see if they could discover any thing of the man, but returned helter skelter, for the lion who was there still, rose up, and began to roar. They found there the musket of the sentry, which was cocked, and also his cap and shoes.

“ We fired again about an hundred shots at the bush; (which was sixty paces from the tent and only thirty paces from the waggons, and at which we were able to point as at a target,) without perceiving any thing of the lion, from which we concluded that he was killed or had run away. This induced the marksman, Jan Stamansz, to go and see if he was there still or not, taking with him a firebrand. But as soon as he approached the bush the lion roared terribly and leapt at him ; on which he threw the firebrand at him, and the other people having fired about ten shots, he retired directly to his former place behind that bush.

“ The firebrand which he had thrown at the lion had fallen in the midst of the bush, and, favoured by the strong south-east wind, it began to burn with a great flame, so that we could see very clearly into and through it. We continued our firing into it ; the night passed away, and the day began to break, which animated every one to aim at the lion, because he could not go from thence without exposing himself entirely, as the bush stood directly against a steep kloof. Seven men, posted on the farthest waggons, watched him, to take aim at him if he should come out.

“ At last, before it became quite light, he walked up the hill with the man in his mouth, when about forty shots were fired at him without hitting him, although some were very near. Every time this happened he turned round towards the tent, and came roaring towards us ; and I am of opinion, that if he had been hit, he would have rushed on the people and the tent.

“ When it became broad day light, we perceived, by the blood and a piece of the clothes of the man, that the lion had taken him away and carried him with him,

We also found, behind the bush, the place where the lion had been keeping the man, and it appeared impossible that no ball should have hit him, as we found in that place several balls beaten flat. We concluded that he was wounded, and not far from this. The people therefore requested permission to go in search of the man's corpse in order to bury it, supposing that, by our continual firing, the lion would not have had time to devour much of it. I gave permission to some, on condition that they should take a good party of armed Hottentots with them, and made them promise that they would not run into danger, but keep a good look out, and be circumspect. On this seven of them, assisted by forty-three armed Hottentots, followed the track, and found the lion about half a league farther on, lying behind a little bush. On the shout of the Hottentots, he sprang up and ran away, on which they all pursued him. At last the beast turned round, and rushed, roaring terribly, amongst the crowd. The people, fatigued and out of breath with their running, fired and missed him, on which he made directly towards them. The captain, or chief head of the kraal, here did a brave act in aid of two of the people whom the lion attacked. The gun of one of them missed fire, and the other missed his aim, on which the captain threw himself between the lion and the people so close, that the lion struck his claws into the caross (mantle) of the Hottentot. But he was too agile for him, doffed his caross, and stabbed him with an assagai. Instantly the other Hottentots hastened on, and adorned him with their assagais, so that he looked like a porcupine. Notwithstanding this he did not leave off roaring and leaping, and bit off some of the assagais, till the marksman Jan Stamansz fired a ball into his eye, which made

him turn over, and he was then shot dead by the other people. He was a tremendously large beast, and had but a short time before carried off a Hottentot from the kraal and devoured him.

“ I have been thus tedious, because I do not remember to have heard of such audacity in a beast ; and the bravery of the Hottentot is also remarkable.

“ The corpse of the man, as we found, had been griped by the lion with his left paw on the left side of the head ; and being taken by the shoulder in the lion's mouth, was thus carried away. Both the thighs and the left shoulder were devoured. We brought both the corpses to the tent, and buried the man in the place from which he had been carried off. The lion was also put under ground, to prevent the cattle being frightened by the scent of him.

“ During the whole of this day it was burning hot. The Hottentots warned us that two lionesses had been heard thereabout ; I therefore caused, in the afternoon, a kraal, or fence of thorns, to be made, and on three places sentries to be placed.

“ *4th.* We proceeded with the bartering, which had been delayed the day before ; and, after a great deal of talking and haggling, we succeeded in procuring thirty-three head of cattle for thirty-three pounds of tobacco, thirty-three strings of copper beads, thirty-three strings of glass beads, and thirty-three tobacco pipes ; and also fourteen sheep for seven pounds of tobacco. We also made a present to the captains and their followers of four strings of copper beads and two pounds of tobacco.

“ The heat of the sun was almost insupportable, and in the tent it was as hot as an oven.



“ In the evening we heard such roaring as if all the lions of Africa had been collected. I presume it proceeded from the two lionesses, who were in quest of the slain lion. We expected a visit from them during the night, and took care to prepare for it by the raising of our thorn kraal, the placing of spring-guns in the paths through which they had to come, the lighting of large fires around us, and the mounting of double watches. However they did not molest us.

“ As there were no more kraals hereabout, and nothing for us to do, I resolved to return and to go in search of the kraals of the Gonnemaas.

“ I was much vexed to have found, during a journey of twelve days along such a tedious and troublesome road, no more than two kraals, and which, although mustering ten Captains, were so badly provided with cattle. From this I have learned with sorrow how, by the lately-opened free traffic and the misbehaviour of these vagabonds, the whole country has been ruined: for when one kraal was robbed by the Dutch, the sufferers were driven to rob others, and these again their neighbours. With the plunder they retired into the mountains, and feasted till it was consumed, when they went again in search of other booty. And thus, from a people living in peace and happiness, divided into kraals under chiefs, and subsisting quietly by the breeding of cattle, they are become almost all of them hunters, *Bosjesmen*, and robbers, and are dispersed every where among the barren and rugged mountains.”

“ 20th. I went with some people early to the kraal of Boatsman, to fetch the cattle we had purchased, and to try whether I could not persuade him to provide us with some more. But all my talking was in

vain, and I was obliged to return with only the nine oxen (notwithstanding that he had a fine herd) to the waggons.

“21st. We proceeded to the Breede River, where we found on this side three kraals, under the following Captains—

1st, Koekezoon, Hoere-Hama, and Thousa.

2nd, Prins, Houtebun, Scipio, and Reuter's father.

3rd, Kuyper, Jan, Harramae, Thorrobacae, and Tamboor's father.

We stopped at the kraal of Koekezoon, and sent some people with tobacco to the other Captains,—on which they came to us. We made them acquainted with the cause of our coming, and presented them with some brandy, tobacco, &c. after which they left us with the promise to barter with us the following day a good deal.

“22nd. They brought us altogether not more than twenty-six head of cattle, which I told them was a great deal too few for three such large kraals. We heard again the tune, that they (the vagabonds from the settlement) had robbed them of their cattle and made poor devils of them; but I demonstrated to them that they did not act with good faith, and had sent away their oxen, keeping only some cows with them, (for they were well aware that I would not barter for cows)—as was clearly shown at Scipio's kraal, where we found more than two hundred cows, and not more than ten young oxen. At last, after a whole day's talking, I got thirty-eight head, for which we paid thirty-eight pounds of tobacco, thirty-eight strings of copper beads, &c. and for eight sheep for provision; four pounds of tobacco. The captains received as a present five pounds of tobacco and six strings of beads.”

After visiting a number of other kraals with similar success, the writer concludes his Journal on the eighth of December, having, in this expedition, which occupied him fifty-two days actively employed, obtained only one hundred and seventy-nine oxen. The unwillingness of the Hottentots to barter their cattle for the drugs and baubles pressed upon them by the Dutch, evinced in every instance mentioned in this Journal, seems to have been overcome chiefly by that "*genuine good nature*" which the writer candidly ascribes to them, and which, as will presently appear, had been severely tried in their intercourse with his countrymen. It appears they were ready to give him sheep for subsistence on his journey, and they only held back their cattle, because on them their families depended for support. Their expressions of friendship and respect for the Company seem to have been perfectly sincere and disinterested, nor did a single example of violence or theft occur during the whole journey. The generous bravery of the individual who threw himself between the strangers and the lion is not surpassed either in history or fable; while the plundered tribes, compelled to fight daily with the elephants and other savage beasts, in order to procure subsistence for their wives and children, present as touching a picture as can be drawn of a brave and suffering people. A few such journalists as Kupt might have saved the Hottentots from the obloquy and ruin which awaited their race; but travellers of a different description had already found their way through their hitherto peaceful country, and laid the foundation of a system of oppression and extermination.

## CHAPTER III.

Views of the Dutch East-India Company respecting the Cape.—Inquiry into the transactions of a party of Boors.—Encroachments of the Colonists.—Plan of extermination sanctioned by the Government.—First Commandoes.—Singular instance of devotedness in two Bushmen.—Opperman's Commando.—Government orders.—Van der Walt.—Unwillingness of the Boors to go on Commandoes.—Bushmen shot by private persons.—Proposal to sell the Bushmen for slaves.—Effects of oppression.—Moravians.—General Dundas.

It was not the interest or the intention of the Dutch East-India Company to come to a rupture with the natives of the Cape, or to reduce them to poverty. Their object, of obtaining supplies at a cheap rate, was more readily attained by encouraging them in their pastoral occupations, and protecting them against extortion or plunder. The rapid growth of the colony, however, soon placed this beyond their power; and the successive governors, either from weakness or a want of correct information, were led, first to wink at the aggressions of the colonists, and finally to aid them in their enterprises.

So early as the year 1702, the Governor, Van der Stell, instituted an inquiry\* into the conduct of a party of barterers who had penetrated to the eastward as far as the country of the Caffers. The party con-

\* A copy of the evidence, of which only an abridgment is given here, is in possession of the Author.

sisted of forty-five men well armed, and provided with four waggons and thirty-two draught oxen. They passed the kloof of Hottentots' Holland on the 20th of March of the year above mentioned, and proceeding through the country of the Sousequaas, Hessequaas, Gouris, and Attaquaas, they came to the Gamptous, where they found no kraals except hordes of Bushmen, of whom they always took one or two with them bound, to show them the road till they came to the Coehesons or kraal of Captain Snel. They also found on their way five Sonqua Hottentots, whom they likewise took with them bound. On their way they had purchased, first at the kraal of Captain Koopman or the Sousequa tribe, ten head of cattle and forty sheep, and at the above-mentioned Gamptous, one calf and three sheep, for which they gave some tobacco.

Accompanied by Captain Snel as a guide and interpreter as they pretended, they advanced four days from his kraal, when they were met by the Caffers armed with assagais and shields, who, having got intelligence of the approach of the Dutch, had come out in this manner to "massacre" them, as they were afterwards informed. From whom they obtained this subsequent information they neglect to say; but they were surprised and attacked early in the morning as they were busy getting ready their pack-oxen; on which they all ran to their guns and fired among the assailants to intimidate them. On this the Caffers retired for about half an hour, when they came back and attacked them again, but after a smart skirmish, the Caffers took to flight, and were pursued by the Dutch for two or three leagues. A great number of the Caffers were killed,

in one place twenty, and in others two, three, and more having been seen lying together dead. One was taken alive, and afterwards beaten to death by the Hottentots, at the command of the Dutch. The latter lost one man, who was killed by an assagai. They assign as a reason for not following and pursuing the Caffers farther, that they were short of powder, ball, and provisions, and their draught-cattle began to die.

After this skirmish they remained at the place till the following morning, when they returned to the kraal of Captain Snel, where they had left their waggons. Being furnished by this captain with a Hottentot to assist in guiding them to the kraals of the Horisons and Gonaquaas, they came to the kraal of Kanno, belonging to the former tribe, by night. This kraal being surrounded with bushes, they lay quiet among them till the break of day, when, being rather short of provisions, they formed the design to surprise it; and accordingly they fired into it two shots with ball to frighten the Hottentots, who immediately took to flight, leaving all their cattle, about seventy head, behind them; the whole of which the Dutch took with them, except a few calves which they could not drive along. Continuing their march with the stolen cattle, after fourteen or fifteen days travel, they came to the kraals of the Gonaquaas, and, lying quiet during the night, as on the former occasion, they hastened at day-break to beset and surround them, commencing the attack by rapidly firing into the kraals; upon which the inhabitants, as well as they could, took to flight, the Dutch continuing to fire at the flying Hottentots till they became masters of their flocks and herds. These they took as lawful prey, amounting to about two thousand two hundred head of

cattle, and two thousand five hundred sheep. Remaining all night at this place they sent for the Hottentots, had some talk with them, and at their earnest request, and after long supplication, they gave them back forty head of old cows and a small flock of sheep, to enable them to breed again some cattle for their subsistence. They also presented them with some tobacco, beads, and other trifles. In the kraal of the first-mentioned tribe, namely the Horisons, no people were killed, because they had too quickly taken to flight. In the last, several men, women, and children were shot, but their number is not known. Fourteen days afterwards, on their homeward journey, this party of barterers separated, and divided the cattle amongst them, having first drawn up and signed an agreement, by which they bound themselves not to betray one another. This agreement was written on a blank leaf at the end of a certain book called "THE CHRISTIAN NAVIGATION.\*"

By such expeditions, which became more and more frequent as the boundaries of the settlement were extended, and by the constant demand for cattle on behalf of the Company, the Hottentots were soon reduced to a state of great indigence. They were now in a very different situation from that in which they had been found by the Dutch ; when, possessing more territory than they required for their own use, and caring little whether they were situate in the neighbourhood of a bay, or were inclosed within a range of inaccessible mountains, provided they found grass for their herds and flocks, they could view without jealousy the

\* A popular work by the Rev. J. Flavel, which appears to have been translated into the Dutch language soon after its publication.

encroachments of the colonists. While they were treated by their new visitors with apparent fairness and a certain show of kindness, these simple children of nature readily conceded to them as a boon, or for a trifling recompense, what they would have defended with their lives had attempts been made to deprive them of it by force. Ignorant of the insatiable and boundless desires of a rising community of mercantile adventurers, they had welcomed them with the generosity which marked their character, and which disposed them to share with their friends and allies all that their own necessities did not require. Thus they had permitted a power to gain stability among them, which never became an object of their dread till it could no longer be opposed. Finding themselves at last confined, harassed, pressed upon, and plundered on all sides, and perceiving that no union of their strength against the colonists would avail, they divided themselves into smaller parties, hoping thus more easily to find the means of subsistence, and to preserve from their oppressors the little property which they had still remaining. With this view, such of them as preferred famine itself to slavery, with the few sheep and goats left them, retired to the mountains, or to the most barren and uninviting parts of the deserts ; and those who remained in the fertile territory gradually lost their independence, sinking into servitude as herdsmen and domestics of the boors. Nor were the former long protected by their seclusion against the cupidity of their encroaching neighbours.

The flattering and fabulous accounts of the new colony published by Kolben, drew thither every day new settlers from the mother-country ; and this influx of



strangers, together with the children born to the former colonists, occasioned an increasing demand for new lands and servants. Every addition of territory requiring additional hands to cultivate it, the colonists, after having deprived the poor natives of their springs of water, now penetrated into the deserts and mountains to seize their women and children, and to reduce them to slavery on the lands which their husbands and fathers had occupied as a free and independent people. The aborigines, who had for a long time suffered with exemplary patience the injuries inflicted upon them, finding that no retreat could protect them from the cruelties of their oppressors, sought resources of annoyance from the desperate condition to which they were reduced ; and the colonists, smarting under the reaction of the accumulated evils they had heaped upon them during the space of seventy years, and which could no longer be endured, formed the project of making the colonial government a party in assisting them to enslave or exterminate all that remained of the original inhabitants. But to attempt so monstrous a project as this, or even openly to seize the property of a whole nation, without some alleged provocation or imminent necessity, would, in all probability, have excited the disapprobation of the governor, and retarded the accomplishment of their design. They sent, therefore, to the seat of government the most vilifying representations, imputing to the Bushmen the most depraved and pernicious propensities, and accusing them of incessantly plundering the property of the colonists. The government, which had by this time (1770) declined from the purity of its principles, was misled by the force of these charges, aided, perhaps, by a share of

the colonial habits of feeling with respect to the natives which it had by this time acquired: this scheme of the colonists was therefore speedily authorized; and it was not long before the administration entered as warmly into it as the colonists themselves: for we find that in the year 1774, the whole race of Bushmen, or Hottentots, who had not submitted to servitude, was ordered to be seized or extirpated; the privilege of slavery was designed exclusively for the women and children; the men, whose natural habits disqualified them for the purposes of the colonists, and whose revenge was probably dreaded, were destined to death.

The decision of government was followed by an order for the raising of three *Commandoes*, or military parties, to proceed against this unfortunate race. These were usually raised by the different field-cornets, who collected the colonists on the frontier in their respective jurisdictions, having one commandant over the whole. They were to be armed, and to scour the neighbouring country to discover the abodes of the Bushmen; and when they espied a kraal, they were to surprise it if possible, and, singling out the men, to shoot them. The surviving women and children were to be divided and shared among the members of the expedition, or distributed among the neighbouring farmers.

There is no record remaining to show the district to which the first commando was sent, or how long it continued in the field; but it appears that the party engaged in this service in the month of September, 1774, in the space of eight days succeeded in shooting ninety-six Bushmen. The women and children taken prisoners were divided among the men, but their number

is not specified in the official report. Van Wyk was the name of the commandant.

The second commando was conducted by a Boor named Marais. In his report to the Colonial Office, he states that he had taken one hundred and eighteen prisoners, who, it is presumed, must have been women and children, but the number killed is not mentioned.

The third commando, under Vander Merwe, was commissioned to the Bokkeveld, where they destroyed one hundred and forty-two Bushmen. Whether his humanity was shocked at his sanguinary employment, the duration of which, to fulfil the purposes of government, must then have appeared indefinite, or whether he dreaded their superior numbers, is uncertain; but in violation of his instructions, he concluded a peace with the remaining chiefs. The government, on hearing of this transaction, highly resented it, and degraded all the field-cornets who had concurred with him in the measure. And on the following year these expeditions appear to have been repeated twice; one, on the 12th of June, succeeded in killing forty-eight of the devoted Bushmen, and would have followed up the carnage had not their numbers been insufficient. The number of wounded would, in all likelihood, greatly exceed that of the slain on these occasions, as they never ceased to run or scramble among the rocks in search of hiding places, till life forsook them; appearing to dread being taken more than death itself.

To convey a clear idea of the manner in which the commando system was carried on, I shall subjoin an extract from a journal of Van Jaarsveld, addressed to the landdrost of Stellenbosch. After mentioning the names of the persons, whom he had under his com-

mand, the place at which they met, and the names of the individuals who had refused to accompany him on the expedition, he goes on to state as follows :—

“ *August 4th, 1775.* We proceeded in a north-east direction to the upper end of the Sea-cow River, when we met, unawares, one of these cattle plunderers, and also saw a great many of these thieves at a distance. In order to create no suspicion in the mind of the thief whom we had caught, we behaved peaceably to him in order to get the other thieves \* in our power. Wherefore it was thought good by every one in the commando to inform this Bushman, that we came as friends, and were only journeying to the above-mentioned river to kill sea-cows (hippopotami). We gave him a pipe and tobacco, and sent him to his companions to offer them our peace, that they also might come to us to show us the right road to that river. But we have not seen that thief since.

“ *5th.* Journeyed north-east along the Sea-cow River, with the commando, to Eiland’s-Drift, when we saw fires on the way burning in various directions, where they had driven the cattle, which we knew were the signals they made that a commando was coming.

“ *6th.* Took twelve men and two waggons, with which I went to Rondekop; when on the road we unexpectedly met with five thieves, and addressed them in the same way as we did the first one; and as a token of peace, we killed a sea-cow for them at the Kop.

“ *7th.* Sixteen Bushmen came to us at Rondekop from the mountains to the south, when we killed some

\* These “thieves,” it must be remembered, were the original inhabitants of the country, and had been, shortly before this period, plundered and proscribed by the Dutch.

more sea-cows, to entice the thieves with their flesh, because I knew no other way to pay them for their continual murdering and stealing our cattle. I thus left the bait, and departed with our men to Blauwe-Bank.

“ 8th. Killed twelve sea-cows, and ordered, through the medium of the Bushmen I had with me, my men whom I had left at Eiland's-Drift to join me, which they did about sunset.

“ 9th. We remained at the place where we had killed the sea-cows, until another party of Bushmen came to us, whom I questioned, through the interpreter, where their captain lived. They answered, that “ he lived in the Roodebergen (Red Mountains).” I told them they ought to go to call their captain to show us the way to the Great River (Gariep). They answered it would be useless ; for they knew assuredly he would not come. I immediately concluded it might be because all the stolen cattle were driven in that direction. Shortly after something was heard by us like the firing of muskets, whence we surmised that some of the thieves had gone back, and again stolen cattle, and that the men who remained at home had assembled and retaken the stolen cattle, which I believe the Bushmen we had with us also supposed. I was confirmed in this my supposition on the following morning, because they all secretly left us during the night, and went to their hiding-places.

“ 10th. Proceeded from Blauwe-Bank along the river about two hours, with the whole commando, to a place called by us Keerom, whence, the manners of the natives being known to me by experience, I dispatched, the same evening, some spies to Blauwe-Bank, to learn whether the Bushmen were not with the sea-cows ;

for they will always assemble in the night where they know something is to be had.

“ About midnight the spies returned, saying, they had seen a great number of Bushmen there, when I immediately repaired thither with the commando, waiting till day-break, which soon appeared; and having divided the commando into parties, we slew the thieves, and, on searching, found one hundred and twenty-two dead; five escaped by swimming across the river.

“ After counting the slain, we examined their goods, to see whether any thing could be found whereby it might be ascertained that they were plunderers; when ox-hides and horns were found, which they were carrying with them for daily use.”

The ideas entertained by this commandant of the nature of his expedition, are sufficiently illustrated by the tone of his journal. It was to extirpate the “ thieves;” but he has failed to record a single fact to show how they merited this title. The ox-hides and horns found among them after the massacre afford no proof of their guilt, as these might have been the produce of their own flocks before they were plundered by the colonists, or they might have been honestly obtained from the frontier Boors or Hottentots.

This expedition a few days after, having surrounded a kraal, fired upon it, and either killed or made captive the whole. Two spies were, about the same time, sent out with two Bushmen, who had promised to show where some of their countrymen were concealed. But these Bushmen, instead of conducting them right, only deceived them. A few days afterwards, therefore, seven other spies were sent out with them; and they were

assured that, in case of a second failure, they should certainly suffer death ; but if they pointed out their comrades, they would as certainly be spared. After proceeding about an hour, the Bushmen, resolved not to betray their countrymen, fell upon the ground, and on being commanded to rise, behaved as if they were dead. When no answer could be obtained from them, blows were inflicted, but as their determination was inflexible, and the invaders could not remove them, they slew them on the spot. As the Bushmen were fully aware of the consequences of their resolution, their conduct was an instance of patriotism not surpassed by any thing in ancient or modern history. But the individuals who composed the expedition appear to have been utterly incapable of appreciating this magnanimous action ; and it failed to save those in whose behalf it was performed ; for the spies, having ascertained their places of refuge, conducted the whole commando thither ; and early in the morning firing into their caves, they suffered not an individual to escape. Forty-three were killed, and seven children made captives, who informed them that a captain was among the slain, but not the chief captain who had the command over the whole Sea-cow River. The commandant, having informed the government that he was in great want of powder and lead, received, in consequence, fifteen hundred pounds of powder, three thousand pounds of lead, and three thousand flints.

In the year 1777 several commandoes were sent against the Bushmen. One, under the command of Opperman, met with a kraal in which were three hundred men, but, his number being small, he killed only twenty. Anxious, however, for greater means of de-

struction, having informed government of the fact, he sent a letter, signed by six-and-twenty colonists, stating that two commandoes had been sent against the Bushmen, but their numbers were so great that they could not subdue them, and that, in consequence, many farmers had been compelled to leave the Sneeuwberg for Bruintjes-Hoogte. This application had the desired effect. Orders were instantly issued that the colonists on the frontier should renew their attempts to extirpate this proscribed race, and many Bushmen were sacrificed.

About this time the governor of the colony took a journey into the interior, and finding the system there adopted insufficient to extirpate the Bushmen, he ordered, on his return, the commandoes to be increased, and directed, in the most positive manner, that this unhappy race should be destroyed.

In the year 1779 the commando system was carried on with great vigour. Most of the reports are lost, but from what remains we learn that one hundred and fifteen Bushmen were killed, while the orders of government for their entire extermination were repeated so peremptorily, that it is matter of surprise that the whole country was not depopulated.

In the month of March, at a meeting of his court at Stellenbosch, the Landdrost mentioned that depredations had been committed by the Bushmen, and that he had thought fit, for their utter extirpation, to order several field-cornets, with one half of their men, to form a joint corps, under the direction of one of their number who should be chosen by lot, assisted by another officer also chosen by lot, who should be in the field at least one month; and after the return of this corps the other half of their men were to be commanded on a similar expedition, with officers chosen in the same manner,



These officers were enjoined to take strict notice, and to report concerning those who, being required for these expeditions, were unwilling and disobedient, that they might be punished according to law ; and, in case of neglect, the officers were to be responsible.

For several successive years this system was carried on with various success, as the Bushmen became more cautious as well as more resolute in their resistance, and government from time to time granted supplies of ammunition. The reports, however, are missing ; but the numbers slain must have been very great, since, besides those killed by the commandoes, many were shot by private hands.

In 1785, the Commandant Villiers reports that cattle would soon be scarce, unless government resorted to more effective measures with the Bushmen ; and he submitted to the Governor and Council the propriety of making a grant of the land between Plettenberg's Baaken and the Zak river, to be held in perpetual quit rent by those who had been most zealous in the depopulation of the Bushman country, and for which nothing was to be paid the first ten years, but afterwards the annual sum of twenty-four rix dollars. This was readily complied with, and a grant of ammunition ordered for a commando to clear the country for its intended inhabitants. Two years previous to this, two field-cornets, having reported that they had killed sixty-seven Bushmen, and taken twenty-two prisoners, declared that they were unable to do greater execution for want of powder and lead. "The Bushmen," they observe, "live in the mountains like baboons ; we may fire fifty or an hundred times before we kill one. We therefore apply most humbly to you to send us six