

dom come from the mountains to steal peaches, or other fruit. The ringing of bells, cracking of whips, and firing of guns, often repeated, will at length drive them away, though they may, for a time, dispute possession.

When we left this beautiful spot, Mr. Scheper accompanied us for several miles. Our road to Kourney lay over a steep, stony hill, thickly covered with almost impenetrable bushes, at the top of which, during the war, the Caffres placed a huge beam, at each end fastened with thongs to the trees, hoping thus to prevent the boors and soldiers in the valley from following them, to recover cattle, or to attack them. From this circumstance, the place has acquired the name of Slagboom, or (turnpike-bar). In riding up the hill, Mr. Scheper pointed out the plant, from which the Bosjesmans extract poison for their darts.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

*Arrival at Kourney. A cow devoured by a wolf. Sand Vlachte. Night's encampment on the Zuurberg. Celebration of Good-Friday. Burning Kraal. Forsaken post at Commadocha. Hospitality of the officers at a military station. Arrival at the Great Fish River. Peep into Caffraria. Proceed to Somerset. Dr. Mackrill. The Boschberg. Easter-Sunday. Survey of Mr. P's farm.*

**F**OR some miles we passed through detached woods, then gained an open, uninteresting country, over which, after bidding farewell to our friendly guide, we pushed on, as fast as our weary and hungry horses could carry us, till after sunset, when we reached Kourney; and were joyfully welcomed by the rest of our company, who had safely arrived with the waggons. They had been very civilly re-

ceived and treated by the farmer, Mr. Osterhuysen, and by the officers of a detachment of infantry stationed here, who had invited them to dinner, and were waiting for our arrival, to treat us with coffee. But as Captain Terry was much fatigued by a ride from Graham's town, we only paid a complimentary visit, and went to the farmer's house, where we spent a very pleasant evening. Mr. Osterhuysen is a man upwards of seventy years of age, but remarkably lively, and full of anecdotes, which he relates with great spirit. There is something uncommonly benevolent and good-humoured in his countenance, and whole manner. After supper, Brother Schmitt was desired to read and pray with the family, all the slaves and Hottentots being admitted. When he had read the lesson of the day, as prescribed in our Church, he addressed them in a short discourse, which, as we afterwards heard, made a salutary impression upon several of the audience. Many expressed a wish, that we would form a settlement in this country.

Before we went to rest, a wolf, prowling about the farm, set up a dreadful howl. The cattle had just been secured in different kraals; but one unfortunate young cow had strayed and could not be found. During the night, the bellowing of the poor beast proved, that she was suffering from the jaws of the ferocious monster. Brother Stein, who slept, as usual, in the tent, with the Hottentot soldiers and some others, set out for her rescue; but as the cries became fainter, and at length ceased, they returned. In the morning, the mangled and gutted carcass was found among the bushes.

11th. I wrote a letter to the landdrost, and sent it by the Hottentot soldiers, who returned with the guides, horses, and oxen, to Uitenhagen. Mr. Osterhuysen having provided us with two spans, we set out about nine o'clock, and arrived by an uninteresting road, at Sand Vlachte, a farm in a dreary flat, with mean-looking cottages, out-houses, and Hottentots' huts. Soldiers were quartered here, as security against the Caffres, whose depredations were conducted at this time with great boldness. The military

live in huts, constructed of reeds and rushes. The farmer and his wife were hardly civil to us, and we had to wait long for the relays, ordered to meet us at this place. Standing with Mr. Melville and Brother Schmitt near a Hottentot hut, I heard a woman, with a good voice, singing a hymn to a very jiggish and trifling tune. I observed to my friends, how much it was to be regretted, that through ignorance and bad taste, such wretched compositions had been introduced, and were now sung by many congregations, instead of the grave and devotional old church-tunes, upon which a soldier, who stood near us, and every now and then had put in his unasked-for opinion on the subject of our discourse, interposed, and with much impertinence, cloaked in religious expressions, asserted, that the tunes were very fine, and pleased *him* wonderfully; "but," added he, "mayhap you are one of those gentlemen, who are enemies to the work of faith." After a vain attempt to convince him, that an enemy of bad music might yet be a friend to a genuine work of faith, we left him to the enjoyment of the quavering song, and the satisfaction of having boldly opposed an unbeliever. It is by such rudeness, that ignorant novices bring religion into disrepute with the world, forgetting the courteousness taught and practised by our Saviour and His apostles, as consistent with that humility and lowliness of spirit, which those should learn of Him, who profess to take His yoke upon them.

We now proceeded towards the Zuurberg, and after some time, entered a woody country. In one place, a road has been cut through the bushes and wood, parallel to the old worn-out track. The nearer we approached the mountain, the more were we entertained with the surrounding scenery, the road winding through narrow valleys, or over eminences, covered or crowned with wood. On arriving at the foot of the mountain, which is very steep, the oxen made a dead stand, and it was long before they could be brought to go forward. When driven, they turned about, or backed, so as to endanger the safety of the waggons. Having

thus extorted some resting-time from their impatient masters, and recovered strength, they patiently dragged the waggons up the hill, though towards the summit the road was extremely rough and stony. After quitting the wood, we found ourselves on a barren heath, from which the prospect was very extensive, and we could trace our route nearly all the way from Uitenhagen. Looking forward into the country, into which we were about to descend, our guides pointed out to us, at a vast distance, the Boschberg, the proposed extent of our journey. The sun had set, and we were anxious to reach the valley, the wind being high and very cold, but our guides declared it impossible for the oxen to proceed a step farther. By blundering or ignorance, they also missed a place, where there was a sufficiency of water for their poor beasts; thus, after searching in vain, we were obliged to encamp on a dry spot, where very little fuel was to be procured. The moon shone bright, but the wind rose, and our tent was nearly blown down.

12th. Glad to leave this uncomfortable night's lodging, as soon as the day dawned, we descended into the valley. We were overtaken by ten dragoons, and pleased to be able to serve one of them, by taking his and his horses accoutrements into our wagon, the horse being sick, and obliged to be led. Among other singular plants on the Zuurberg, we noticed a species of the Wageboom, with a much broader leaf than that, which we had hitherto seen on the hills about the Kromm Revier. The outside was a dark green, the inside silver-grey, covered with a white down. At the bottom of the hill, we encamped near a farm destroyed by the Caffres, and forsaken, where we found the bed of a brook, with only a few puddles of muddy water remaining in it. This, however, was all we could procure, both for ourselves and our thirsty oxen.

Being Good-Friday, we called to mind the great event celebrated on this day, in the Christian Church. We were in spirit with our congregations, met in so many other parts of the world, as it

were, under the Cross of our Redeemer, and partaking of that consolation, which is to be found in the remembrance of His sufferings and death for us. But even here, in this lonely vale, secluded from all Christian society, we and our Hottentots were not forgotten by Him, who has promised, that He will be with His followers alway, even unto the end of the world. Having seated ourselves, after breakfast, in a semicircular excavation of the bank of the brook, Brother Schmitt first read the lessons of the day, out of the Dutch translation of the Harmony of the Evangelists, while we followed our Lord, in spirit, through all the scenes of His sufferings. We prayed, that the Holy Spirit might apply the merits of His passion and death to our souls, and convince us, that "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, and bruised for *our* iniquities," and that the word of His Cross might approve itself the Power of God in this country also, for the conversion of many heathen. No service in any church or chapel could be attended with more solemnity and true devotion, nor with a more heart-reviving sense of the presence of the Lord, than our worship in this earthen temple.

On leaving this place, we ascended to a wide waste, similar to the Karroo, in view of a range of hills, connected with the Zuurberg, and remarkable for that regular division by kloofs, so common in this country. Each has a hillock at its foot, shaped like a cushion, of which we counted above twenty, having almost exactly the same form and dimensions. Not nature herself, but some violence done to her, has produced this extraordinary phenomenon.

We ought now to have directed our course, according to the landdrost's advice, to the farm of Cornelius Engelbrecht, but our ignorant and obstinate guides, notwithstanding all my protestations, carried us right out of the regular track. We passed a farm, said to be burnt by the Caffres. Either by accident or design, the beast-kraal was also fired. The immense quantity of dung, heaped up for years, and now as dry as chaff, was yet smothering, and

volumes of smoke arising from it. The house, and several soldiers' huts stood empty. About two in the afternoon, we reached Commadocha, a military post, lately forsaken. Viewing it at a distance, we pleased ourselves with the hopes of there procuring a fresh supply of good water, milk, and other articles, of which we were in want. But not a dog came forth to notice our arrival, much less a human being. The place was surrounded by a mud-wall and a ditch. The wall had loop-holes, and small bastions at the angles, sufficient to resist any attack of undisciplined Caffres. We entered this lonely place with some caution, but found every part of it completely emptied of furniture. Two or three old hats were lying about, which might have been very serviceable to our Hottentots, but they would not take them, observing, that their owners were not there to permit it. We acted with the same honesty, in not seizing upon three pigs, and a number of hens and chickens, running about the garden and bushes. Three small dogs, nearly dead with hunger, were lying within the wall. A fine cat came purring towards us out of a bush, which we fed and intended to carry to the next post, but she would not stay in the waggon.

The whole situation, with the surrounding country, looked dreary and comfortless in the extreme; and having rested about half an hour, we proceeded, and arrived about sunset at a military post, at that time commanded by a Lieutenant Forbes. The lieutenant, and Ensign Dingley, offered us every assistance. Being in want of several articles, we procured them from the contractor, whose shop was situated on the other side of a narrow vale. The ensign, however, soon came to fetch us back to his hut, and insisted on getting a dinner cooked for us. Having been advised to take advantage of the full moon, and proceed to the next station, we were obliged to decline his offer, but accepted of that of the lieutenant, to take coffee with him. He presented Sister Schmitt with a loaf of wheaten bread of superior excellence, which proved a great treasure to us. The road was good, and we arrived in about two hours at the post, near the banks of the Great Fish

River, the boundary between the colony and Caffraria. Having pitched our tent not far from the kraal, we spent the night quietly, though we afterwards heard, that, on that very day, the Caffres had stolen fifty head of cattle from the neighbouring farm, and that several boors and soldiers were in pursuit of the thieves. Report added, that being overtaken, they quitted their prey, but wounded a boor in the neck with an assagay, and carried off the fire-arms of two others.

Some Hottentots from the kraal, visited us late in the evening, among whom were two women belonging to Gnadenthal, whose husbands were soldiers. Brother Schmitt had some conversation with them, admonishing them, so to conduct themselves in this strange country, that the cause of the gospel might be honoured, and not disgraced.

13th. Rising at day-break, we heard some people singing hymns in one of the Hottentots' huts, near the farm. They belonged to Mr. Vanderhagen's congregation, at Grahamstown. Meanwhile Mr. Melville on foot, and Brother Schmitt on horseback, had set out for the river, being determined to cross it, if only for a few moments, to set foot on Caffre ground. Thither we followed them with Brother Stein. They had found the ford very bad, the bed of the river being full of sharp rocks. However, both gained their point, and stood some time on the opposite bank. The rest of our party were satisfied to get upon a sand-bank in the middle of the river, which was here no wider than a large brook.

This part of Caffraria presents itself with hills of moderate height, and a smooth outline. The plain next the river, and ascent towards the hills, are studded with the mimosa, and seem to be good grazing ground. The road on the Caffre side was blocked up with thorn-bushes, as a signal that none are allowed to pass that way. On returning, Brother Schmitt found some difficulty in remounting his horse, and we felt rather in fear, lest the frightened animal should do some harm either to his rider or himself.

Our prayers, this morning, were offered up with peculiar fer-

vency, that the Lord might soon cause the light of His Gospel to shine upon that benighted country, in full view of which, we travelled nearly the whole of the day, at no great distance from the banks of the river, through a dry, barren waste. We halted near a farm, where we were long detained, to give our weary oxen time to pick some food. The young men from the farm paid us a visit. Our ignorant guides being quite unacquainted with the road, we had to depend upon the sagacity of our own people, to bring us to the Boschberg. Mr. Melville had left us this morning, having received information, that his friend Mr. Swann, a Surveyor to Government, was employed at a neighbouring farm. He intended to join us again at Somerset, the residence of Dr. Mackrill, in Bruntjes Hoogte.

At sunset, we arrived at a farm, to which the road prescribed by Colonel Cuyler, would have brought us in the forenoon. The farmer, Van Klerk, received us civilly, and sent a lad to show us the way to Somerset. But on arriving at the ford of the Little Fish River, which we were now about to cross for the third time, and not knowing, whether Mr. Melville had reached Somerset to announce our approach, we thought best to encamp on its banks, lest we should prove troublesome to the Doctor, by an unexpected arrival, at so late an hour. Our people kindled two large fires, for which we found plenty of fuel. As it was very cold, and the wind rose so much, as to threaten our tent with an overthrow, we spent the night rather uncomfortably.

14th. Easter-Sunday morning. How different was our situation to that of most of our Brethren on this great memorial-day! Instead of being, with them, early engaged in declaring our joy over the glorious resurrection of the Lord, and remembering, at the graves of our departed friends, the truly Christian hope of a blessed immortality, imparted to us by faith in our glorified Redeemer, in whose likeness we once shall rise, we were here encamped on the banks of an African river, never before visited by a member of our Church, and consulting how, we should best introduce our-



selves to a man, with whom none of us, but Mr. Melville, had the smallest acquaintance. However, we were in spirit with our congregations, adoring our risen Lord and Saviour, who, though withdrawn from mortal sight, is present with His people, in every corner of the earth. The result of our deliberations was, that I should take old Paerl, and ride to Dr. Mackrill's house, previously to announce the party. After crossing the river, and reaching the top of the bank, the country assumed the appearance of a park. The land was covered with short grass, and the thorn-bush, dispersed in clumps, or standing singly, its greatest ornament. The mountains of the Boschberg had a pleasant appearance, illumined by a morning-sun. Dr. Mackrill's house lies under one of the highest parts of the range, and is a small neat building of unburnt brick, stuccoed. Adjoining to it, are several out-houses, and huts for his slaves. The premises have a much cleaner appearance than those of even the most respectable farmers in the country, with whom neatness and cleanliness seldom enter into calculation. One of them once answered an observation I made on the subject, thus; "What should I be the richer for it? Plantations, and the other arrangements you propose, would cost me money, and do *me* no good." But Dr. Mackrill is an Englishman. The name of Somerset has been given to the place, in honour of the present Governor.

On approaching the house, I was met by Mr. Melville, who had arrived last night, expecting that we should soon follow, preparations having been made for our accommodation. The Doctor, to whom I presented the letter from Colonel Cuyler, received me with great politeness, and immediately dispatched a servant to the river, to bring in the whole party. After breakfast, we went out to view the garden. It lies at the foot of the mountain, and is stored, not only with a great abundance of every kind of garden-produce, but, the Doctor, being a good botanist, has transplanted into it a great many of the flowering plants from the wilderness and woods, and by culture, very much improved their quality and beauty. Here is every thing requisite for an excellent garden: great depth of the

richest soil, water in abundance, and hands to work. The orange, and other fruit-trees, appear in great perfection. The Boschberg, rising immediately behind the garden, is a beautiful mountain, of considerable height, intersected by many kloofs, filled with wood, the intermediate eminences, like buttresses, supporting the mountain. They swell, towards the bottom, into hills of fanciful shape, covered with green sod of the richest hue, excepting where the wood stretches from the kloofs over part of them. At the top of these buttresses runs a horizontal ledge of rock, partly covered with bushes and creepers. A precipice of a red colour, with grey veins, and overhanging a wide kloof filled with timber-trees, has a singular effect. The region, beyond the rocky ledge, is rough, but grassy. The mountain recedes to the right and left, and, towards the north-east, seems to rest upon another range, of similar character. It has an even outline, and, beyond the summit, on the side of Graaf Reynet, is said to shelve off more gradually.

We observed two large baboons, sitting separately on projecting rocks, probably placed there by the troop, as centinels, to guard against surprise. Though somewhat intimidated by our shouts and menacing gestures, they seemed determined to keep their station, sometimes slowly retreating a few paces, and then returning to their seats, showing their teeth and grinning defiance.

When we left the garden, passing by a low shed, a serpent, of the most vivid green colour, beautifully marked upon the back, and spangled with silver-coloured spots, reared its head from the thatched roof, and hissed at Brother Schmitt. He killed it with his stick, and brought it out. The Dutch call it, *Dachslange*, (roof-serpent), as it seems to like to hide in old thatch, and is said to be very venomous.

We now visited the shop, containing every article, of which either the boors, the Hottentots, or Caffres in the neighbourhood might stand in need. It is under the superintendency of Dr. Mackrill. Here may be had iron and tin-ware, cloth, muslins, silks, pots and pans, and even tobacco and snuff. Government, in promoting this

speculation, had a benevolent design; wishing to promote confidence among the neighbouring Caffres and other tribes, who, being in want of many articles of convenience and comfort, might purchase them here by barter, or otherwise. Thus, friendly communication being established, and more wants created, or rather, a better knowledge given them of the advantages of the arts of civilization, a disposition to industry might, by degrees, be introduced.

In this view, no objection can justly be raised to a creation of additional wants among a savage and ignorant people, whatever some philosophers may say of the happiness of a state of nature. To assert, that at length, by abuse, it may end in greediness, covetousness, and rapacity, is no more than saying, that every faculty and disposition of the human mind, may be turned, either to a good or bad use, as directed by a good, or perverted by an evil spirit. The original plan of the establishment at Somerset, was, to improve the extraordinary goodness of the ground belonging to the farm, for the cultivation of tobacco, which during the American war had risen to an enormous price in the colony. Dr. Mackrill being a man of extensive knowledge and active patriotism, proposed to Government the improvement of the growth of that article in this newly-acquired colony, not only with a view to cheapen it here, but to furnish a supply for exportation. Being permitted to fix upon a situation for that purpose, he wisely chose perhaps the finest in the whole district of Uitenhagen. But the war ceasing, and tobacco being again sold at a price so low, as to destroy every prospect of advantage to the colony, the plan was changed. Corn is to be the principal produce in future.

After dinner, we took a walk to see the land belonging to the farm. Its boundary, to the eastward, is a rapid brook, proceeding from the mountain, and emptying itself into the Little Fish River. The greatest part of the valley is sprinkled with thorn-bushes, some of which are of extraordinary size and beauty. The brook forms two very fine cascades before it enters the river, and the glen, through which it descends, is truly romantic. The upper

fall is over eight or ten ledges of rocks, and the lower plunges, in several streams, into a deep basin. Large timber-trees, and wide-spreading bushes adorn the steep banks of the brook.

Our company accidentally dividing, I walked with Dr. Mackrill through the wood, in which he hoped to treat me with a sight of buschbocks, and some of the many monkeys that inhabit it. We saw none; but the footsteps of a tyger were distinctly marked on the sandy path; and two serpents were killed.

After tea, many Hottentots and slaves came to the tent, to whom Brother Schmitt read the history of our Saviour's resurrection, and delivered a short discourse. The poor people seemed very attentive and thankful.

15th. The aim of our visit to Somerset, was, by Dr. Mackrill's assistance, to obtain some knowledge of the farm, belonging to a Mr. P., now taken from him by Government, on account of the part he took in the late rebellion, and, as above stated, proposed by the landdrost, as an eligible situation for a missionary establishment, for which he thought it might be easily obtained, notwithstanding there had been some idea of making it a military post. Though we could not get over our objections against applying for the possession of a confiscated domain, yet we should not have felt satisfied hereafter, had we not accepted of the landdrost's kind offer, to give us an opportunity of seeing its situation. We therefore left Somerset for Mr. P.'s place, about nine o'clock, Mr. Austin, the deputy farmer, and Mr. Oakely, a young gentleman, studying under the Surveyor Mr. Swann, accompanying us on horseback. Mr. Melville had gone to the house of Commandant Nels, to meet his friend Mr. Swann, and we sent the baggage-waggon, to wait for us at Mr. Van Klerk's.

Our conductors thought, that our aim in visiting Mr. P.'s farm, had better remain unknown, and the party be announced as only accompanying an English gentleman on his travels through the colony.

We crossed the Little Fish River twice, keeping along the plain,

in a line with the mountain, and in about an hour's time, reached the dwelling of this singular man. It was a poor cottage, no better than a Hottentot's house; but the *vorhaus*, or hall, was large enough to contain a pretty numerous company of rebels.

Mr. P. 's father to one of those lately executed: another son was transported; and one would feel more pity for the poor man, had he not been a principal promoter of the late disturbances, though prevented from taking an active part, on account of age and infirmities. His house, however, is said to have been the nursery of sedition, where the rebellious boors had frequent meetings, and were advised and encouraged by the old man. He had, throughout life, been noted for his opposition to Government, and more particularly hated the English, for making its measures more effective, than the Dutch were able to do.

Notwithstanding his escape from the fate, which overtook his rebellious sons, yet both his former conduct in aiding and abetting, and even his present encouragement of every remaining disposition to revolt, has induced Government to use the power vested in it, and, by cancelling his lease, to make him quit the farm, remuneration being given for the opstall, that is, for the buildings and improvements. The official notice had not yet reached him.

I could not help contemplating the old man with much compassion. He spoke of the loss of his son, "who was no more," and of the other, "who had left the country," as having so discomposed his affairs, and disturbed his mind, that he intended to sell his farm, and move into some other part of the colony. He related, that he had been settled in South Africa, ever since the year 1771, and for his own pleasure, travelled through it in all directions, even among the Bosjesmen and Caffres, by whom he had always been treated with the greatest kindness and regard. He had a good deal of the cant of our English democrats, and self-named philanthropists about him. He behaved very civilly to us, though I was announced as an Englishman, but while I was walking over part of the grounds with Messrs. Austin, Schmitt,

and Stein, not knowing that Sister Schmitt was an English woman, he betrayed his hatred against the nation: "The English," said he, "pretend to know, that this country lately belonged to the Caffres, but I know better. Not a Caffre lived here, when I first came into it, nor yet within a great many miles beyond the Great Fish River, but the English think themselves the wisest of men."

This place is undoubtedly a most eligible situation for a missionary settlement, possessing corn-land and pasturage, and well supplied with water. The valley is very extensive, and connected with others, enclosed by branches of the mountains. We looked at a wolf-house on a heathy eminence behind the garden. It is a walled trap, resembling a mouse-trap, with a falling door, awkwardly constructed. In this trap, five wolves have been caught within the last three months. The Brethren Schmitt and Stein continued their walk towards the hills, and down the valley, while Mr. Austin returned with me to the house. The buildings form a very unsightly groupe of hovels, bondhoeks, and ruinous walls. Dung, rags, remnants of half-devoured carcasses, and other filth, surround the dwelling on all sides.

Beyond this place we did not extend our reconnoitring journey. The landdrost had indeed most kindly expressed a wish, that we would go yet farther, and examine situations on Bavians Revier, in Graaf Reynet, a river flowing into the Great Fish River; but as he could not point out any particular place, yet unoccupied, and I had heard, that the only land worth possessing, on that river, was on the Caffre side, where no Hottentot settlement could be formed with safety, and having likewise far exceeded the time appropriated for this expedition, we resolved to return from hence to Gnadenthal.