

more seeing his aged father, who was a hundred and four years old, was, to our sorrow, disappointed; being informed, that the old man and his wife were gone to see his sick sister, at the missionary institution at Hoogte Kraal, near George; but he spent the evening with another of his sisters, and her four children.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

*Haagekraal. Account of wild horses. Gowritz Revier. Meeting with Johannes from George. Baboons. Irish hospitality. Klein Vat Revier. Turbulent housewife. Pass the farms of Messrs. Du Preez and Lombard. The family at Schlangen Revier going "op de tocht." Buntebock antelopes. Dangerous ford. Reach Zwelendam. Church-affairs. Mr. Koster, an independent missionary. Heavy rains. Ferry over the Breede Revier. Mr. Heiman's account of wild Buffaloes. Manner of crossing the river. Mr. Van Helsingland. The plant Vlachdorn. Arrival at Gnadenthal.*

**MAY** 4th. The Haagekraal farm lies pleasantly on a green, surrounded by low hills, and watered by a large brook. The proprietor is brother to Mr. Meyer of Hartenbosch, near Mossel Bay, with whom we found such pleasant accommodations, (p. 189.)

We met here the son of our merry host at Groote Paerdekraal. Speaking of the singular situation of his father's house, he told some curious anecdotes of the wild horses in the Attaqua's Kloof. He once followed a young filly of that description, and had nearly come up with it, when he was charged with great fury by the wild stallion, and obliged to quit his horse. The stallion seized the horse by the mane with his teeth, and threw him down; but, satisfied with his victory, ran off with the filly. Both the wild horse, and even the quagga, are a match for the tame horse, but do not easily commence an attack. There are also ellands in the

mountains; but, besides rehbocks and a few bushbocks, very little game is seen in the plain.

The rain, which still continued to fall now and then in drizzling showers, made the roads so slippery, that the oxen could scarcely drag the waggons up any ascent, and we were thankful that this weather had not overtaken us, while we were yet in the kloof. After a ride of three hours, through a dull and naked country, we descended into a glen called Hunykliff Kloof. On an eminence to the left, lies a farm, belonging to a German of the name of Krieg. He received us kindly, and insisted on our partaking of his dinner, which was just ready to be served up. Never have I relished a dish of bean-soup more, than in this forlorn place. To me it was quite new. This man had travelled through a great part of the north of Europe, and was at length persuaded, by some crimps at Hamburg, to enter into the Dutch East India Company's service. He described the situation of their sailors to have been most deplorable, and the attention paid to their health and comfort so deficient, that no less than one hundred and forty men had died on board the ship he served in, during the voyage. He was thankful to be released, by being left at the Cape in the sick-house, and by degrees recovering, his industry put him in possession of this *erf*, a name given to a small lot of ground, not being a complete farm. I purchased of him a hat, made by one of his slaves, of a water-plant called palmite, which was an excellent piece of workmanship. We left this hospitable cottage, about two o'clock, and continued our route through the glen, to the Gowritz river. Brother Schmitt, Stein, and I, walked to the farm-house, about a musket shot from the road, and found a friendly family at dinner, who immediately invited us to partake of their humble meal, but we had dined. They seemed to be poor people, and the object of our visit was not attained. We could purchase neither butter, fowls, eggs, nor a spann of oxen. The latter were dearer by five dollars per head than in Uitenhagen district. On reaching the banks of the river, we overtook

Lebrecht Aris with our new purchase, and on the other side, saw Johannes coming across the heath with the oxen, left at George.

He brought me a most obliging letter from Mr. Van Kervel, regretting his absence in Plettenberg Bay, and desiring, that if we returned by George, we would consider his house as our home. This he had left with the secretary, Mr. Stopforth, to be delivered to me at my expected arrival at George. The cattle-keeper had suffered our Gnadenthal oxen to stray, and Johannes was obliged to follow five of them as far as Kayman's Gat. Not far from us, on the steep bank of the river, between twenty and thirty baboons, large and small, sat watching our movements. Marcus approached towards them, cracking his long whip, when the old dams took up their young, some in their mouths, others on their backs, and all scrambled up the steep with astonishing swiftness. Some had one young one in their mouth, and another sitting on their backs.

The shores of the Gowritz river are covered with bushes, for about two miles in breadth. Many large aloes mixed with, and rising above them, showed their magnificent radiant crown of scarlet flowers to much advantage. In the evening, by moonlight, we reached Mr. Lombard's farm, where we meant to take up our night's lodging. We went up to the house, in which we heard laughing, clapping of hands, and other tokens of merriment. Our humble knock was often repeated, before it procured us admission. Now general silence ensued. After giving a proper account of ourselves, we requested to know, whether we might have a room to sleep in, which was answered in the affirmative, yet with hesitation enough to prove, that we were not welcome guests. This was also plainly to be traced in the countenances of the women, who did not speak a word, but eyed us with fallen looks, as intruders, spoiling sport, and perhaps disturbing some family festivity. Hearing, therefore, that the Veldcornet's house was only one hour's distance, and the moon shining bright, we determined to leave the merry party to enjoy their frolics, and drove off.

The women could not dissemble their joy at our departure, but dismissed us with a hearty horse-laugh.

We reached the Veldcornet's place about half past nine, and accidentally stopt at the dwelling of his partner, an Irishman, Mr. John Miller. Late as it was, he and his wife rose, and did every thing in their power to show, that we were welcome. Milk, dried peaches, eggs, and cold meat, were provided, and an empty room appropriated for our sleeping-place. Irish hospitality was exerted in full vigour, even here in South Africa; and if some of the Africans themselves were inoculated with it, it would do them no harm.

5th. After a quiet night's rest, we found oxen provided by the Veldcornet, got breakfast, paid a visit to the latter in his own house, and procured several articles of provision for ourselves and our Hot-tentots. Our Irish host left nothing undone, that he thought would be a benefit to us. He has lived twenty-five years in this country.

The mountains present here a very magnificent outline. They are crowned with rocks of singular forms. Nothing particular occurred, till we reached the Kaffre Kuyls Revier, where we halted on its banks. Some of us crossed the river, to visit the farmer, but he was absent, and his farm and mill in dirty plight. From hence, passing by the farm of Mr. Cobus Du Preez, we hastened to the Veldcornet's place on the Klein Vat Revier. Our reception by the men was civil, but the women behaved towards Sister Schmitt and our whole party with determined coolness. The mistress of the house had a most stentorian voice, and in ordinary conversation kept up a continual bawl. As the Veldcornet's brother possessed the same strength of lungs, the uproar was great, while she at one table, and he at another, were exerting their utmost powers to entertain their friends. It was a novel scene, and we retired into our chamber, stunned with the noise: but as it blew and rained hard all night, we were thankful for a room, even in an inhospitable dwelling.

6th. When we rose in the morning, no notice was taken of us. Sister Schmitt, for once, did not succeed, by her conciliating manners,

in winning the affections of the turbulent housewife. The dragoons, quartered here, had a miserable hole to sleep in, and described the Veldcornet's dislike of the English and of missionaries, to be very great.

Oxen having been ordered at the next station, we employed our two spans, both of which had arrived during the night, to convey us thither. The Hottentots had again some trouble to make our young oxen submit to the yoke, but managed it with their usual dexterity. When subdued, they behaved well, and notwithstanding the rain had made the road, which was a greasy clay, almost as slippery as ice, they brought us, about noon, to the farm of our old friend, Mr. P. Du Preez. By the way, we remembered our breakfast in the vale of vultures, and several pleasant and useful conversations, which passed between us, about two months ago. We found a large party at the house, but not the worthy father of the family. His son received us kindly, and we were invited to dinner. The parents were gone to Zwelldam, to attend the sacrament.

A report having been spread, that the rivers had swollen, we hastened to cross the Duivenhoeks Revier, at Mr. Lombard's farm, which we did, without any trouble. Calling on our old friend, Mr. Lombard, he and his family used all their eloquence to prevail upon us to spend the night at their house, but as it was yet early, and feeling impatient to get home, we made but a short stay; and passing by the next farm, reached a place on the Schlangen Revier after sunset, to which we repaired for lodgings, the night being cold.

The master of the house, having purchased a quantity of arrack from the wreck of the Arniston East-Indiaman, stranded on the coast near Cape Aguillas, was about to set off in the morning, on a trip into the interior, and to Graaf Reynet, to dispose of it, in barter for oxen and other articles of trade. They call this, going *op de tocht*. Two waggons were ready packed, into which the family had retreated, to be ready to start early in the morning. The house, therefore, was at our service, and indeed, but just large enough to hold us, without the family; for, besides a

little dark kitchen, in which lay two or three slaves, it had only two rooms, not much larger than closets. William Sluiter's psalm-book lying on a shelf, and an old pewter coffee-pot, appeared to be the only moveables left in the house; for the few articles, which serve them at home, were also their travelling equipage. We did not see one of the family, to thank them for the use of their house, as they were yet fast asleep in their waggons, when we set out, before day-break.

7th. We passed through a country, where formerly that beautiful antelope, the buntebock, was found in great numbers. The destruction made among them has caused the Governor to prohibit the shooting of them, under a penalty of five hundred rix-dollars. They are therefore again multiplying, and we saw several of them, not far from the road. They are very stately-looking animals. Ostriches also made their appearance, and were followed, but without success.

The mountains, to our right, being by degrees disencumbered of clouds, afforded us a most agreeable prospect. About two o'clock, we reached Mr. Buissini's farm on the Bueffeljagd's Revier, and hoped to have been able to get to Zwellendam that night; but the river had swollen, and was not fordable. The people treated us with civility, and we spent the evening in a variety of useful employments. Mr. Melville, however, anxious to get home, and to meet his family as soon as possible, left us here, swam across the river with his horse, and proceeded through Zwellendam to Gnaden-thal. The wolves howled dreadfully, and we were afraid, lest our oxen, running loose on the waste, might be attacked in the night; but on the

8th. Early, they were all brought safe to the yoke. On examination, the river had fallen sufficiently, to allow us to venture to ford it. For about a quarter of a mile in breadth, its banks are covered with thorn, and other bushes.

Every thing likely to suffer by wet, being put upon the seats of the waggons, we entered the river. The passage is not easily

found by persons not acquainted with its bed, as, unless an island in the midst of the stream is doubled on the right side, there is danger of getting into deep holes and oversetting. We were rather under some apprehension, as to the strength of our cattle. The Gnadenthal oxen in the baggage-waggon were weak, and the new spann young, and not used to cross so large a river, the stream of which was very rapid and strong. Marcus also, having once, in crossing the Buffeljagds Revier, at this very place, overset, and lost seven oxen, expressed some fears; but by God's mercy, we reached the opposite shore in safety. Poor Rambler, our faithful dog, who had been our companion and pet, during this whole journey, happened to be left behind, but swam across, following the waggons by the same circuitous course round the island. For this exertion, he was rewarded with a larger portion of meat than usual. The weather continuing fair, we much enjoyed the view of the Zwellendam range of mountains, with their peaked, square, and round tops, deep gullies, and woody kloofs, which appeared to great advantage, illumined by a bright morning sun.

About noon we arrived at the drosty. The landdrost and his lady received us with their wonted kindness, and, by their hospitality, made us feel quite at home with them.

After dinner, we accompanied Mr. Buissini on a visit to the clergyman, lately appointed to this living, who but lately arrived from Holland. With him we went to see the church. It is a convenient building, in form of a cross, without a steeple. The organ, being but small, and out of repair, stood in the vestry. Government have not as yet done much towards the support of the ecclesiastical establishment in this colony, of which many complain, thinking it neither consistent with their usual liberality, nor with that union, which, under British dominion, exists between church and state. I believe it would tend much to conciliate, and stop the mouths of the disaffected, if the Government at home should think fit to authorize more assistance to be given towards its maintenance.

In the evening, Brother Schmitt was desired to deliver a discourse to the Hottentots and slaves belonging to the family; which he did, much to their edification. They expressed their gratitude in lively terms. The moon shone bright till midnight, when most unexpectedly, a storm of wind arose, black clouds covered the mountains, and the weather underwent a total change.

9th. Our generous host and hostess insisted upon our taking an English breakfast with them, before we left Zwellendam, though we felt rather in haste to get across the Breede Rivier, before the heavy rain had swelled its waters.

Having received every possible mark of attention from the landdrost and his lady, we took leave about ten o'clock. In passing, we called upon Mr. Koster, who went out as a missionary under the direction of the Missionary Society in London, and had been both at Bethelsdorp and Latâkkun; but afterwards, with a view to a more independent maintenance, commenced business in this place as an apothecary and surgeon, and now supports himself and his family with credit; at the same time holding meetings with the Hottentots and slaves, and endeavouring to do the work he was called to, though no longer directed and supported by the Society.

It rained now so hard, that we made all haste to reach the Breede river. It is crossed by a ferry. The cattle, all but the shaft oxen, being unyoked, are driven into the river, and swim across. On landing, the road was rendered so slippery by the rain, that, with every exertion, ten oxen could not drag the waggon up the steep ascent, but frequently fell down. Both spans were necessary to bring each waggon to the level. No attention seems to be paid to the road, which might very easily be cut down, so as to make the approach to the water more convenient. In the evening, we reached a farm near the Sonderend, belonging to a Mr. Heiman, where we met with a hospitable reception, being recommended by the landdrost. Our host had formerly been in the interior, and speaking of the wild buffaloe, mentioned a singular stratagem, practised by that fierce animal, when hunted in the woods. It runs forward, till it is



out of sight. The huntsman follows its track, assured that the animal is before him. Meanwhile, entering the underwood, it returns part of the way, under cover of the bushes, waiting in ambush for its unwary pursuer, who finds himself suddenly attacked in flank, and sometimes loses his life in the conflict.

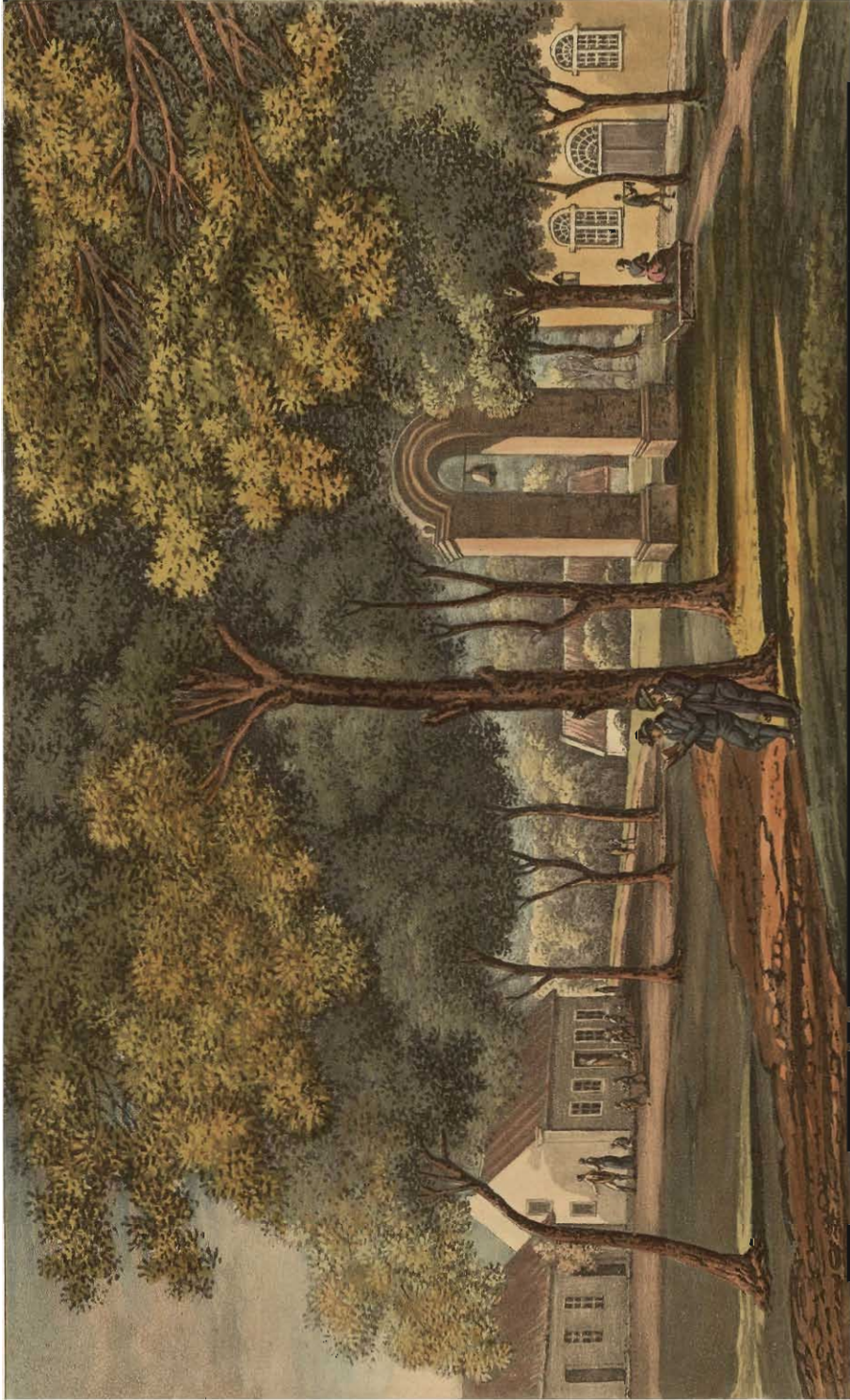
10th. We crossed the place, where, on the 7th of March, we had suffered so much from the heat, as to make us call it, the Hot Outspan, got fresh oxen at Veldcornet Van Eckstein's, and reached the ford about two o'clock. The water was too deep to pass through it. The waggons, having been emptied of their loading, and empty casks placed within, to buoy them up, they were floated across. The oxen swam, and the travellers and baggage went over in a small boat. The weather favoured us, and we reached Mr. Van Helsland's hospitable mansion in the afternoon, without any harm to our goods by water or rain. His lady was gone to Capetown, but we spent a very agreeable evening in his company.

11th. Rising early, we walked for some time about the premises. The mountains present themselves here in all their grandeur, and on the spot, from whence I had before made a sketch of them, I undertook a revision, and endeavoured to trace their outline, and the many kloofs in them, with the most scrupulous exactness. Mr. Van Helsland made me attentive to a singular plant, called Vlachdorn, or Flat-thorn. Its leaves lie horizontally, close to the ground, forming a kind of star. They are studded with small thorns or prickles. From the centre issues a naked stem, ordinarily about a foot in length, with a small flower. Its root, like the roots of many plants and bushes in this country, is disproportionately thick, and strikes deep into the ground, like a carrot. A decoction of it is considered an efficient remedy against the stranguary in cattle, a distemper, of which many die, at a season of the year, when a certain herb, ripening among the common grass, is supposed to be the cause of it. Brother Schmitt knew it, as used by the Hottentots in the cure of similar disorders in man, but Mr. Van Helsland told

us, that he had saved twenty oxen last year, who must otherwise have died of that terrible disorder.

About half past nine, we left Bock Revier, and proceeded with Mr. Eckstein's oxen to a place beyond Hartebeestkraal, where we again met our own. The mountains increase in singularity of shape, and picturesque combinations, the nearer we approach to Gnadenthal. When we had arrived in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Giebeler's farm, we saw about a hundred Hottentots on foot and on horseback, coming to meet us, headed by the missionaries Leitner and Lemmerz, with Mr. and Mrs. Melville and two children. It was truly affecting to hear the expressions of sincere joy and gratitude for our safe return, which burst upon us from old and young; and we all joined in humble thanks to God, our Saviour and Protector, whose mercies unto us during the whole journey, had been every morning new. About three o'clock we entered Gnadenthal, and the renewed impression made upon my mind, by the view of this charming place, accompanied by all the reflections on its origin, aim, and progress, filled my eyes again with tears of gratitude to God, for such a visible display of his mercy and power. While we were at dinner, a large company of Hottentots assembled before the dining-room, and sung a hymn of praise to the Lord, for having brought us safe home again. In the usual evening-service, the whole congregation joined in our thanksgivings.





*Seidler's sketch*

Church

Belfry

School

*Drawn by R. C. C. from a sketch by G. L. C. at G. L. C.*  
Dwelling

INTERIOR of the MISSIONARIES' PREMISES at GNADENTHAL.

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