

portunity of delivering my sentiments to them concerning the Mission in general, and their situation in particular. In the evening, the Lord's Supper was administered to the communicant congregation, at which I assisted. If I were to express my feelings on this occasion, it would be but a repetition of what I have written concerning my last communion at Gnadenthal. The appearance, devotion, and attention of the Hottentot congregation at this place, was anew the subject of my admiration and thanksgiving for such a miracle of God's power and mercy.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

*Departure from Groenekloof. Detained at Veldcornet Verwey. The Governor's offer of a passage in the Zebra sloop of war. Consequent arrangements. Visit to, and description of, Constantia. Its Vineyards, cellars, and beautiful situation. Return to Groenekloof.*

SEPTEMBER 2d was the day, when I expected to close my abode at Groenekloof. The visits of the Hottentots continued to the last moment before my departure, Mr. Stoll, the landdrost of the Cape district, arriving here in the forenoon, expressed great satisfaction with the present state and progress of the Mission. He has always approved himself a friend, ready to give advice and assistance.

Jacob Conrad, a Hottentot, of his own accord, offered his span of eight horses, to convey me and my travelling companions to Capetown; and as his waggon was a very inconvenient vehicle, Mr. Melville, who had given us the pleasure of his company for several days, lent us his travelling waggon.

After dinner, the family met in my room, and after a short address by Brother Bonatz, commended me and my young companion Adolph, to the grace and protection of God our Saviour, on our journey and voyage to England. A considerable number of Hottentots had meanwhile assembled before the door, with every one of whom I shook hands, and bid them farewell, not expecting that I should so soon see them again. While we were entering the waggon, they sung a farewell-hymn, and accompanied us for about two miles, to Papkills-fonteyn, not intimidated by the rain, which kept us shut up in the waggon.

Sister Bonatz having taken an affectionate leave of her son Adolph, returned with the Hottentots, and the Brethren Fritsch and Stein. Her husband, and Brother Schmitt and his wife, accompanied us to the Cape. Mr. Melville rode on, to bespeak a night's lodging for us at the Veldcornet Mr. Verwey's, where we met with a cordial welcome, and good accommodations. It blew and rained hard all night, and in the morning of the

3d. We found it impossible to proceed. We were, however, well housed, in good spirits, and, contrary to expectation, spent the day very pleasantly, as each felt disposed. Mr. Melville made some copies of his valuable sketches for me.

An old man, going from place to place, to teach the children reading, writing, and cyphering, but not good manners, which are not required, was at this time an inmate of the house, and, like most of these itinerant schoolmasters, seemed to lay down the law on all questions of importance. It would be cruel and unwise, to detract from their consequence or authority, by interference or contradiction.

The rain ceasing for an hour in the afternoon, we went to see the little Sout Revier, (Salt river), which, even in winter, is but a small stream, but now, by the heavy rain, was swollen into a very deep and rapid torrent of considerable breadth. It is chiefly owing to the want of the smaller streams and brooks, which in Europe, descending from the hills, intersect the plains in all direc-

tions, that South Africa remains, and I fear, must in a great degree remain, a wilderness. After all the observations I have been able to make and to collect, during my journey through great part of the colony, I must ascribe this deficiency to the character of the South African mountains. Almost all their summits consist of precipitous rocks. Very little earth, consequently very few morasses are found upon them, and the rain, which is abundant in the rainy season, instead of falling on a spongy soil, retaining the water for a considerable time, and gradually dealing it out in rivulets and brooks, dashes with violence, from the rocks, down the steep declivities, and in destructive torrents sweeps along the kloofs and vallies, frequently and suddenly destroying the labours of many years in places, where, in summer, a small streamlet scarcely furnishes water sufficient for the use of a family. The bushes, covering a great part of the waste, preserve, by their shade, some moisture on the ground, and are providentially furnished with roots of disproportionate thickness, which, imbibing the water, give them sustenance, and maintain their verdure in the dry season. It is also said, that in many beds of torrents, by digging, water may be found, though the heat of the sun has banished all appearance of it from the surface.

4th. Though the rain had continued violent all night, we ventured to proceed. Heavy showers occurred all day; but when we proposed to spend the night at the Riet Valley, the friendly farmer advised us rather to push on, and, avoiding the Drift, which was by this time an unsafe fording-place, to cross the Sandhills, and drive along the beach. We followed his advice, found the beach a good hard road, and though the surf looked rather wild, and in some places rushed in upon us as high as the axle-trees, we got on well, Mr. Melville and his groom Jephtha riding before us. By God's mercy, we passed safely through the little Drift, and the broad sheet of water at the Great Salt river, which were both of considerable depth.

6th. My friend, Mr. Hancke, informed me, that owing to the

rough weather, the *Brilliant* had not been able to take all her cargo on board, and would not sail as soon as first intended. All our baggage was yet on shore, which afterwards proved of advantage to me.

I was engaged all day in visiting my friends. At the Colonial Office I called upon Colonel Bird to thank him for the many civilities experienced from him during my stay in the colony. The Governor was not at home, but in the evening, wrote a note to inquire, whether I would return to England in the *Zebra* sloop of war. In answer, I informed his Excellency, that I had taken my passage on board the *Brilliant* brig, Captain Young.

We spent a very pleasant evening with the Rev. Mr. Hesse, where we met the Rev. Mr. Thom, who declared his intention of making a journey into the interior, to visit Kango cave, and endeavour to ascertain the geographical position of sundry places. His object also was to preach to the Hottentots and slaves, wherever he might find an opportunity.

6th. After breakfast, having received a note from his Excellency, I waited upon him at the Government-house. He observed, that he deserved no thanks for offering me a passage on board the *Zebra*, as he was seeking his own profit by it, wishing me to accompany his son Plantagenet, who was going to England in that vessel. I felt greatly distressed not to be able immediately to comply with his wish, the more so, as it was my duty, to show, by every means consistent with prior obligations, my gratitude to him for the great kindness he had shown me, during my stay in the colony. The engagement I had made with Captain Young was easily dissolved, but my promise to take home the son of my friend Bonatz seemed an insurmountable obstacle. It is needless here to enter into a detail of the conversations and negotiations that passed on this subject, suffice it to say, that though the father's disappointment and uneasiness were great, on first mentioning to him his Excellency's proposals, yet as both he, and the rest of my companions, were desirous, that I might yield to the Governor's wishes,

an arrangement was made, by which I was set at liberty, to the entire satisfaction of the father, to whom I considered myself bound by previous promise. The Captain was a man, in whose faithfulness he could place full reliance, and a family, going home as passengers on board the *Brilliant*, were willing to pay every attention to his son. Having paid the Captain half of the passage-money, I put myself under the direction of the Governor, and of Captain Henry Forbes, commander of the *Zebra*, to whom his Excellency had previously introduced me. The *Zebra* was to sail on the 20th.

8th. Though the termination of this affair had been completely satisfactory to all parties, yet some gloomy thoughts continued to haunt my mind, regarding the extraordinary situation, into which I had been so unexpectedly thrown. Nor did I willingly part with my young friend Adolph, whose affectionate disposition and good sense had made his constant attendance in my various walks about Groenekloof very pleasant to me. But as I verily believe that nothing happens to me, but by the permission of God, to whom I have fully committed myself in all my ways, I endeavoured to "cast my burden upon the Lord," and to believe, that all things would work together for my good. Of this I have now made full experience.

Mr. and Mrs. Melville set out this morning for Groenekloof. After they were gone, we went to the parade, where the military were drawn up to receive General Sir Alexander Campbell. I spent a good part of the forenoon with Mr. Poleman, in whose company I always receive much pleasure and information. We dined at home, to celebrate Mr. Grant's birth-day, and spent the evening most agreeably with the Rev. Mr. Hesse. He and his family were going into the country, and fearing, that I should not see them again, I took leave of them.

9th. This day was devoted to a trip to Constantia. Mr. Hancke was the contriver and director of this excursion. He had provided two soci bies and six. The company consisted of Mr. Hancke, a lady of my acquaintance, Brother Schmitt and his wife, Brother

Bonatz and his son, and myself. We set out at six o'clock, and took the road by Newlands. The weather was delightful. The oaks and other foreign trees were fast getting into leaf, and throughout all nature, spring showed itself swiftly approaching.

Our Conductor ordered the carriages to proceed by a road, which gave us a view of several romantic situations. We passed through the Wynberg-camp, a place I was glad to see, as having been the residence of our late missionary, P. Kohrhammer, when, in 1805, he was appointed Chaplain to the Hottentot regiment by Governor Jansen. The camp lies in an elevated situation, and is considered the most healthy spot in the neighbourhood of Capetown. The soldiers are quartered in barracks. An extensive prospect opens from hence across the Cape Downs, towards the mountains of Stellenbosch and Simon's Bay.

About half-past nine we arrived at the house of Mr. Colin, one of the proprietors of Constantia and son-in-law to Mr. Cloete, by whose family we were kindly and hospitably received. After a short introductory conversation, we walked out to see the gardens. They lie in a hollow, below the house, and are laid out in the Dutch style, with a covered walk. The vineyards are situated on an eminence, gently sloping towards the east. Many of the vines are old, and will be removed next year, to make room for others. They are without spaliers or poles, standing singly, like currant-bushes in a garden. The rich, sweet, Constantia wine grows only within a certain boundary. Mr. Colin, junior, pointed out a hedge, behind which, all attempts to raise the same grape have failed.

We now walked across part of a farm, belonging to Mr. Sebastian Van Rhenen, who is preparing to make vineyards, and hopes, in a few years, successfully to vie with Messrs. Cloete and Colin, as he supposes the soil to be of the same quality. On the road we met a Hottentot boy, who had just killed a black serpent, about five feet long, and an inch and a half in diameter.

After a pleasant walk, we reached Mrs. Van Helstinge's house. The old lady received us very politely, and insisted upon our tasting

all the different wines made on her property. Among them were Hahnen Pootgen, white and red; Frontiniac; Klipp-wine, and another, of a rough taste. From her garden, a charming view presents itself. A narrow, woody glen, with a pretty villa at the farther end, belonging to one of her relations, runs up to the south-east side of the Table Mountain. Over the woods to the left, are seen the rocks and mountains forming Hout-bay. Near the dwelling, an avenue of large oaks affords some shade, but little attention has been paid, either to convenience or elegance.

We returned through a forest of Witteboom, in which the late storm had done much mischief. Many hundred trees were thrown down, or torn up by the roots. On our return, Mr. Colin took us into his cellar, or rather warehouse, a long building, containing casks holding several tuns of wine, standing upon racks, in rows, down each side, leaving a wide passage between them. In the centre stands a table, set round with sofas and chairs, where the company is regaled with some of the choicest Constantia, at the fountain-head.

After dinner, as soon as the cloth was removed, a merry fellow entered the room, took a chair, and seating himself between two ladies, began to talk, laugh, and drink wine, as if he were one of the party. This man was an old slave, of a frolicsome turn, kept for the amusement of the family. He addressed me, in gibberish, which I did not understand, but suppose I lost no instruction by it. Though his office seemed to be that of a jester, kept to fill up the vacuities occurring in African conversation, his presence was very annoying. Much rather would we have seen the natural grimaces and tricks of a tame baboon, generally holding the same situation with many farmers in the interior, than such a prostitution of human intellect.

After dinner, we visited Mr. Cloete. His house, which is not far from that of his son-in-law, is situated on an eminence, commanding an extensive prospect over the Cape Downs, to the

Hangeklip, on False-bay. The house and premises are well built, and prove the long-existing wealth of the owners.

Constantia was built and settled by the celebrated Governor, Van Stell, the founder of Stellenbosch, who, by his superior sense and liberal mind, proved a great promoter of the welfare of this colony. He named the place Constantia, in honour of his wife, that being her Christian name. He was a man of great activity; enterprising, and generous. Many of the best situations in the colony owe their origin to him. But it is said, that the Company gained nothing under him, as he studied only his own private interest. Be it so; they have, however, been great gainers by the effects of his industry, and, no doubt, he deserved to reap the benefit of his talents, while he lived. Two statues, in niches, one over the door of the mansion, and the other over the cellar-door, are intended to represent the lady Constantia.

After walking out to see the vineyards, which are very extensive, we spent an hour in pleasant conversation. The cellar is constructed like that of Mr. Colin, and his wine not superior.

Adjoining the cellar, is a room with a billiard-table. From the back-door, a flight of stone steps leads to a brook in a close vale.

Mr. Cloete has always been a friend to the missionaries at Groenekloof, and was some time ago their neighbour. He is now lame, and thought, that he could not return the visit, at Groenekloof.

A large grove of old oaks, planted in quincunx, affords shade to the premises, and the plantations are kept in good order. There is an appearance of ancient grandeur about the place, which pleased us much. In the hall stands a stalactite, taken out of a cave near Caledon, about eight or nine feet in length. It is set upon its broad top, and narrowing fast towards the middle, made a Dutchman think that its beauty consisted in its resemblance to a huge candlestick, with the candle in it. That vitiated taste, however, is fast declining among the Dutch, and nature is no longer outraged as formerly, when trees and hedges, cut into all manner of



shapes, constituted the beauty of a Dutch garden. At this absurdity we English laugh, while we are committing a far greater outrage, in cruelly maiming horses, dogs, and cats, by cutting off their tails and ears, to improve their beauty!

After taking a dish of tea in the English fashion, we bid adieu to our hospitable host, and returned to town. The evening of this bright and very hot day, turned out so cold, that we were glad to get soon housed, and comfortably seated at Mrs. Disandt's fire-side.

10th. I had a long conversation at the Government-house with the Rev. Mr. Hough, and afterwards with his Excellency in his study. We dined with Mr. Sebastian Van Rhenen, and spent the rest of the day agreeably with our friends.

12th. I dined with the Governor. A mail having arrived from England, much interesting intelligence was communicated. Captain Forbes informed me, that the Zebra would come round to Table bay at the end of the week, and that I might entertain hopes of soon following the Brilliant. I then prepared to return to Groenekloof, where I intended patiently to wait, till summoned to go on board.

14th. Having paid several short farewell-visits, we left Capetown in Mr. Slabbert's waggon, with ten horses in hand.

When we arrived at the Drift, near the Riet Valley, seven oxen were lying dead on its bank. They belonged to a waggon with fourteen, which had attempted to cross the Drift, when, by advice of the farmer, we took the road along the beach, as mentioned above (p. 337). The water being very deep, and the stream too powerful, the poor creatures were taken off their feet. The waggon was saved with difficulty, and seven of the fourteen oxen were drowned. The carcasses had been skinned, and left to the wolves and jackals. Our horses took fright at the disgusting sight, and set off with us into the bushes, but the skill of our driver soon brought them again into order.