



TRAVELS
INTO THE
INTERIOR OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

IN WHICH ARE DESCRIBED
THE CHARACTER AND THE CONDITION OF THE DUTCH COLONISTS
OF
THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE,
AND OF THE SEVERAL TRIBES OF NATIVES BEYOND ITS LIMITS:
THE NATURAL HISTORY OF SUCH SUBJECTS AS OCCURRED IN THE ANIMAL,
MINERAL, AND VEGETABLE KINGDOMS;
AND THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE SOUTHERN EXTREMITY OF AFRICA.

COMPREHENDING ALSO
A TOPOGRAPHICAL AND STATISTICAL SKETCH OF THE CAPE COLONY:
WITH AN INQUIRY INTO ITS IMPORTANCE AS A NAVAL AND MILITARY STATION;
AS A COMMERCIAL EMPORIUM; AND AS A TERRITORIAL POSSESSION.

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"Africa semper aliquid novi offert."

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

THE SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS.
ILLUSTRATED WITH SEVERAL ENGRAVINGS, AND CHARTS.

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TO
THE LORD VISCOUNT MELVILLE,
LORD PRIVY SEAL OF SCOTLAND,
&c. &c. &c.

UNDER WHOSE AUSPICES, THE EXTENSIVE AND IMPORTANT COLONY
OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE
WAS ACQUIRED AND ANNEXED TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE,
BY WHICH OUR POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN THE EAST-INDIES
WERE EFFECTUALLY SECURED AND PROMOTED;

THESE VOLUMES OF
TRAVELS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, &c.

HIS MOST FAITHFUL
AND OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,

JOHN BARROW.

in his closet from recollection, otherwise errors of two and even three hundred miles in latitude, as we shall presently see, could not have happened. *Thunberg*, another Swede, travelled a great deal within the limits of the colony, and made many valuable additions to the discoveries of *Sparrmann* in the natural history of the country; and although he describes, in an artless manner, objects as they presented themselves before him, and touches on a variety of subjects, yet his book, being made up of a collection of incomplete and unconnected paragraphs whose juxtaposition are sometimes whimsical enough, conveys neither accurate topography nor even a general idea of the colony.

The work of our countryman *Mr.* (now lieutenant-colonel) *Patterson* is a mere journal of occurrences, with descriptions of a few subjects in natural history, some of which, at that time, were new; but the information it contains, with regard to the extent and population of the colony, the character of the settlers and of the natives, is very slight; and he has republished the very defective map of *Sparrmann*.

There are, also, two modern publications of travels made by Dutchmen. The one is by *Hoppe*, who attended an expedition that was sent from the Cape to the northward, in search of a nation that were reported to wear linen cloathing. This expedition made very little progress, on account of the want of water, and the failure of their cattle. The nation, in all probability, was the Portugueze colony on the southern part of Angola; or, perhaps, some seamen belonging to a whaler that had touched at *Angra Pequena*, a small bay in latitude 26° 36' south, might have been seen by the Damaras, or the Great Namaquas. The other publication is a journal of *Van Reenen*, who, with some of the Dutch peasantry, proceeded through the Kaffer country, in search of the passengers and crew of the *Grosvenor* that was wrecked on the coast a little to the southward of De la Goa Bay. This journal was published by *Captain Riou* in England, with the addition of a map, constructed from the materials contained in the journal, and the

P R E F A C E.

ALTHOUGH the sale of an edition unusually large, and the demand for a new one, may not afford any proof of the merits of a work, they furnish at least a fair conclusion that the public is not indifferent to the subject of it. Africa, indeed, independent of its being the source from whence a very considerable portion of European knowledge had its origin, has lately excited a more general and lively interest, since the condition of its ill-fated inhabitants has engaged the attention and the sympathy of their fellow-creatures on another and more happy continent. To those who have so laudably exerted themselves in the cause of suffering humanity it must afford no inconsiderable degree of pleasure to find that, in the southern parts of this country, there are still to be met with hordes of natives, who, though suffering unmerited ill usage, have yet escaped the horrors of slavery. Africa is interesting in another point of view. Though known anciently, it is still known but imperfectly; so that the old Greek maxim, adopted in after-ages by the Romans, is equally applicable at the present day as it was two thousand years ago, *Africa semper aliquid novi offert*. Africa never fails to present something new to the inquisitive traveller. It might have been expected, however, from the length of time that the Dutch have had possession of the southern extremity of this quarter of the continent, that not only their extensive colony would have been accurately described, but that a competent knowledge would have been obtained of the manners, customs, and conditions of the surrounding tribes of aboriginal inhabitants. This, however, is far from being the case. Numerous as the

accounts of this colony are, which have been published at various times and in various languages, I may safely venture to say that, taken individually or collectively, they do not afford such satisfactory information as would enable the most diligent inquirer after truth to form a just estimate of the Cape Colony as a settlement, much less of the real character and condition of the native inhabitants dwelling beyond its limits. Had any such account been in existence, I should not have obtruded the present work upon the public ; but without being apprehensive of incurring the charge of arrogating to myself any superior knowledge beyond what local experience acquired from extensive travelling, and the opportunities of collecting information which my public situation in the colony enabled me to do ; and, at the same time, without derogating from the merits of other writers, I may venture to observe that few persons in this country are informed how far the Cape of Good Hope may or may not be considered as an important settlement to Great Britain. This want of information, too apparent both when the colony surrendered to a British force and when it was ceded to the Dutch at the peace of Amiens, can be attributed only to the imperfect and partial accounts that have hitherto been published, which may also, in some measure, explain the jarring and contradictory opinions that have been held with regard to its importance, whether as a point of security connected with our Indian trade and settlements, or as a territorial acquisition. This remarkable promontory, the doubling of which formed a new æra in the annals of navigation, and on that account alone ought to be well known, has been very variously represented. Whilst some of our public orators have held it out as a terrestrial paradise, where nature spontaneously yielded all that was necessary, not only for the supply of the ordinary wants and conveniencies, but also of the luxuries and superfluities of life, and some have surrounded it with deserts of thirty miles in extent ; others have described it as an useless and barren peninsular promontory, connected by a sandy isthmus to a still more useless and barren continent.

In the instance of the Cape, as in most other cases, we may, probably, discover the truth to lie in the middle. It offers nothing very peculiar,

either in the productive quality of the soil, or in its sterility. Where there is moisture the warmth of the climate promotes vegetation, without the preparation of an artificial soil by the aid of composts or manures ; hence, one crop of grain in the year may be procured from the shallowest soil and even in sheer sand. But, unfortunately for the country, in the hottest months of the year, from the beginning of December to the end of March, and sometimes to the middle of April, there scarcely falls a single shower of rain. In these months, the verdure totally disappears ; and the whole surface of the country presents to the eye either large tracts of white sand dotted with shrivelled heaths and other shrubs, struggling as it were to maintain the living principle, or regions covered with that brown sickly hue in which an angry poet, with more wit than justice, has dressed the surface of that part of our island to the northward of the Tweed :

“ Far as the eye could reach no tree was seen,
“ Earth clad in russet, scorn'd the lively green.”

To persons arriving from a long sea voyage, and immediately meeting with most of the European, and some of the tropical, fruits, the Cape must, no doubt, appear a most delightful spot ; and such persons, making a short stay, and loaded with refreshments for the succeeding part of their voyage, are apt to extol and to exaggerate the pleasantness and the value of the country. Botanists, also, and florists, are so taken up with the beauty and vast variety of flowering shrubs and bulbous rooted plants, that they are apt to overlook the sandy surface out of which they grow, entirely bare of any kind of grass, and destitute of that verdant turf which is so distinguishing a feature of our happy island. Beautiful as the heaths of the Cape most unquestionably are, yet those who have been accustomed to look at them nurtured in the green-houses of England, where all or most of the numerous species, and variety of the species, are collected into one groupe, and arranged so as to convey the most striking effect, would be greatly disappointed if they expected to meet with them, in the same state

of perfection, in their native soil. They would here behold whole tracts of country covered, in the same manner as our heath lands, with one or two species within a certain tract, shattered and jagged by the force of the winds, shrivelled by the drought, or stubbed by the cattle. Even in the boggy grounds, where they grow to a size of which no idea can be formed from seeing the same species in England, they are neither so elegant in their habit, nor flower so freely, as in their cultivated state.

Among the principal authors, who have furnished information on the subject of the Cape, may be reckoned *Tachard*, *Merklin*, and *Valentyn*, none of whom, however, were a day's journey from the town, and must, consequently, have drawn up their relations from what they could collect from the inhabitants, or written documents out of the offices; the former has rarely been found to be correct, and the latter as rarely to be important or interesting. The same remark will nearly apply to the work of *Kolbe*, who, although professedly sent out in the character of a naturalist, has described subjects that he never saw; retailed idle stories of the peasantry that betray his great credulity and imbecility of mind; and filled his book with relations that are calculated to mislead rather than inform. The *Abbé de la Caille* had little opportunity of collecting general information, being principally engaged in the arduous undertaking of measuring a base line, of thirty-eight thousand eight hundred and two feet, in order to determine the length of a degree on the meridian; and in ascertaining the situations of the principal fixed stars in the southern hemisphere. His account of the Cape is, therefore, partial and imperfect. *Sparrmann*, the Swede, was the next in succession, and, by his indefatigable labors, supplied a very extensive and satisfactory account of the natural productions, especially in the animal kingdom, of those parts of the settlement over which he travelled; but he was credulous enough to repeat many of the absurd stories told of the Hottentots by his predecessor *Kolbe*, with the addition of others collected from the ignorant boors. His map is also so miserably defective, and so incorrect in every part, that he must certainly have constructed it

information of a Dutch navigator. It is therefore hardly necessary to observe, that, from such *data*, it could not be otherwise than defective in most of the essential points that constitute the value of a sea-chart. A partial map of the colony by *De la Rochette* has also been lately published, which is so far incorrect, even in the vicinity of the Cape, that the *four-and-twenty rivers* are made to flow in an opposite direction to that which is actually the case.

In speaking of charts, it may not, perhaps, be considered unimportant to observe in this place, that the whole of the coast of South Africa, between Algoa or Zwartkop's Bay, and that of *De la Goa*, stretches, in reality, much farther to the eastward, (making the continent in this part much wider,) than it is laid down in any of the sea-charts that have hitherto been published; by several degrees more easterly than some of them make it. To this circumstance may, probably, have been owing the loss of the Grosvenor Indiaman, and many other ships that have been wrecked on the Kaffer coast: and by it may be explained the reason why ships, coming from the north-eastward, almost invariably fall in with the land, to the northward of Algoa Bay, a full degree or more before they make it by their observations or reckoning. Immediately beyond Algoa Bay the coast, in the charts, is usually made to trend to the north-east, and even to the northward of this point, whereas, in reality, it runs only east-north-east to the mouth of the Great Fish River, or Rio d'Infanté, whose latitude at this place, by repeated observations, I found to be $33^{\circ} 25'$ south; and from hence to the mouth of the Keiskamma in the Kaffer country, the direction continues pretty nearly the same; after which, and not before, the coast begins to trend more to the northward. At the mouth of this river I had also an observation for the latitude, which I found to be $33^{\circ} 12'$ south. The latitude of the true Cape point is $34^{\circ} 22'$ south; so that, in the distance of about six hundred and fifty miles, the coast inclines to the northward no more than seventy miles from the parallel of the true Cape of Good Hope, which is very far from being the case in any of the sea or

land-charts I have ever seen. It may not be amiss to subjoin the difference in latitude of these eastern points, as they appear in some of the charts, and their real position as ascertained by repeated actual observations, which I had the opportunity of making with a good sextant.

	Keiskamma.	Rio d'Infanté, or Great Fish River.	Zwartkop's Bay.
Neptune Oriental -	32° 0'	32° 50'	33° 37'
Actual Observations	33 12	33 25	33 56
Errors - -	1 12	35	19
Captain Riou -	32 30	33 25	33 46
Actual Observations	33 12	33 25	33 56
Errors - -	42' miles		10
Sparrmann - -	28 12	30 0	30 57
Actual Observations	33 12	33 25	33 56
Errors - -	5 0	3 25	2 59
Mr. Le Vaillant -	29 42	30 44	31 54
Actual Observations	33 12	33 25	33 56
Errors - -	3 30	2 41	2 2

With regard to the last-mentioned gentleman, I should not have noticed his map had he not endeavoured to impress the world with an idea of the great pains that were taken in collecting the materials, and of the assistance he afterwards received, and the attention that was bestowed, in putting them together. And in order to add force, as he supposes, to the value of his observations, with a pretended zeal for the cause of humanity (pretended because he knew that every line in his chart was false) he breaks out into the following apostrophe:—" Had my voyage been productive of no other good than that of *preventing a single shipwreck*

“ I should have applauded myself during my whole life for undertaking “ it !” The fact is, he has done little more, in the eastern part of his map, than copy from Sparrmann ; and the whole to the northward of Saint Helena Bay is a work of fancy. Two instances will be sufficient to shew how very little he is to be trusted. He places Camdeboo, and the beginning of the Snowy Mountains, in the latitude of about 28° south, instead of $32^{\circ} 15'$ south, an error of more than 290 English miles ! And he makes the Orange River *descend* from the northward, nearly parallel to the coast, which, in fact, takes its rise near the eastern coast, and *ascends* towards the north-west. Messrs Truter and Somerville, who, in the years 1801 and 1802, penetrated farther into the interior of Southern Africa than any Europeans had ever done before, calculated that they crossed this river in about $29^{\circ} 0'$ south, and between 23° and 24° east of Greenwich. I skirted its banks from $29^{\circ} 40'$ to $30^{\circ} 15'$ south, and between the longitudes of $25^{\circ} 45'$ and $26^{\circ} 30'$ east, which shews, as I said before, that its course is north-westerly. *Monsieur Le Vaillant* cannot be offended at my pointing out his mistakes, as he himself has observed, that “ a traveller ought to conceal nothing that may lead to error in the sciences.” Besides I feel myself called upon to answer a charge, preferred against me by *Monsieur Grandpré*, the translator of the first volume of this work, that I have attempted to invalidate the truth of *Monsieur Le Vaillant's* travels, *because they were from the pen of a Frenchman*. I can very seriously assure *Monsieur Grandpré*, that he is mistaken ; that I consider the work of *Monsieur Le Vaillant* as replete with valuable matter, and ingenious observations ; but they are so jumbled together with fiction and romance, that none but those who have followed his steps can pretend to separate the one from the other. It is of little importance to mankind to know what exquisite amusement *Monsieur Le Vaillant* could derive from caressing his favorite ape ; or to tell the world that “ *Kees* was still a virgin !” It is sometimes allowable for a traveller to be “ himself the hero of each “ little tale ;” but *Monsieur Le Vaillant* is an hero on every occasion. To magnify his courage and his perseverance, to detail the prudence of his measures, and to describe in glowing language his sufferings, were sooth-

ing to his vanity ; and, as most readers know how to appreciate them, the florid descriptions of his compiler can do little harm ; but when he endeavours to mislead the world on subjects that are important, and to impress false notions of the people and the country he pretends to delineate, he lays himself open to censure, and ought, in justice to the public, to be exposed.

With regard to his not having crossed the Orange River, I consider the information of his best friends, the *Slabert* family, to be decisive : “ he left Zwartland in July, travelled to the Orange River, and returned in “ the beginning of the following December.” I may surely then be allowed to pronounce this part of his chart as a work of fancy, and his *Koraguas*, *Kabobiquas*, and *Hoosuanas*, as “ creatures of the brain.” By the first he probably meant the *Koras*, a tribe of Hottentots dwelling on the banks of the said river, considerably higher than the place where he visited it ; and of whom he might have obtained some account from the *Namaaquas* ; and his *Hoosuanas* might, perhaps, be intended for the *Boosbuanas*, whom the two above-mentioned gentlemen visited in their travels ; instead, however, of the Pigmy Hottentots, which the first are represented to be, the latter were found to be a tall athletic race of Kaffers. These gentlemen, on comparing *Monsieur Le Vaillant's* book with the country, and the natives beyond the Orange River, were decidedly of opinion that, so far from advancing to the Tropic, he had never crossed the said river. But enough of *Monsieur Le Vaillant*. As to a work lately published under the name of *Dambergher*, it would be an insult to the understanding of the public, to suppose that so gross and clumsy an imposition could for a moment pass detection.

Having thus noticed some of the defects and omissions in the works of the most esteemed authors who have written on the Cape, I shall beg leave to say a word with respect to the manner in which the general chart, in the second volume of the present work, was constructed.

The geographical knowledge of the colony being so very imperfect, and only two partial maps in existence that could at all be depended on ; one, that of *De la Rochette* already noticed ; the other, a survey on a very large scale, having all the farms marked down from Zwellendam to Algoa Bay, and from the first chain of mountains to the sea-coast, comprehending, however, only a small portion of Zwellendam, Lord Macartney, in the instructions I had the honor to receive from him, enjoined me to pay a particular attention to this important subject. I furnished myself, accordingly, with a sextant of six inches radius, by Ramsden ; an artificial horizon ; a good pocket chronometer ; a pocket compass ; and a measuring chain. Having been able, in the course of a few days, to ascertain pretty nearly the usual rate of travelling with waggons drawn by oxen, I carefully noted down the time employed from one halting place to another, with the direction of the road, as pointed out by the compass.

The uniform pace of the oxen, the level surface of the great Karroo or desert, and the straightness of the road, were *data* that might alone have supplied a sketch of tolerable exactness ; but, in order to ascertain any little deviation that might have been made, either to the northward or the southward, a meridional altitude of the Sun was regularly taken every day, the constant clearness of the weather being favorable for such observations. A series of latitudes thus obtained, at intervals of about twenty miles of distance, supplied a correction by which the route might be reduced to a great degree of certainty.

The stations or resting-places of each day being verified by these means, I then took the bearings, and made intersections, of any remarkable point in the distant mountains, as long as it could be seen, for the purpose of determining its position upon the chart. The uninterrupted lines, in which the chains of mountains generally run on the south part of the continent of Africa, are particularly favorable for laying down a sketch of the country, without going through the detail of a regular survey.

Having proceeded, in this manner, to mark down the route and the chains of mountains on each side of it, as far as the distance of Graaf Reynet, and from thence to the sea-coast at Algoa Bay, I here joined Lieutenant Rice of the navy, an able and intelligent navigator, who had been sent in His Majesty's brig the *Hope*, under the instructions of Rear-Admiral Pringle, to make a survey of this bay, and of the coast and bays from hence to the Cape. Here we made repeated observations for the latitude, but had no opportunity, during our stay, of taking the angular distance of the Sun and Moon, in order to determine the longitude. I therefore retained the longitude arising from the *data* I procured in the manner already mentioned, although it differed a little from Mr. Rice's, being about a degree more easterly. His longitude was the result of the log-reckoning; but as the currents that, at all seasons of the year, are found to set in one direction or another upon the Bank of L'Aguillas, render the log-reckoning very uncertain; and, as the result of observations, afterwards made, gave about the mean longitude between ours, it did not appear important to make any change in the chart. I was moreover induced to retain the longitude, brought out by computation of the distance and direction travelled, on perceiving that it differed not half a degree with that of Algoa Bay, as laid down in the excellent chart of the Bank of L'Aguillas, published by Major Rennell.

I have little to observe with regard to the alterations and the additions which will be found in this new edition. The most material is perhaps the illustration afforded by a few prints from sketches for which I am indebted to my friend Mr. S. Daniell, whose elegant work on African scenery and animals, just ready for publication, will be highly gratifying to the lovers of the arts and of faithful representation. In the arrangement of the materials I have made some little change, and rejected some superfluous matter and repetitions which were unavoidable in the former volumes, on account of their having been published at different times.

I am sensible of the many imperfections under which they still labor, but the want of time would not permit me to render them less conspicuous. Their chief merit is fidelity, and on this ground only I submit them with confidence to the public.

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