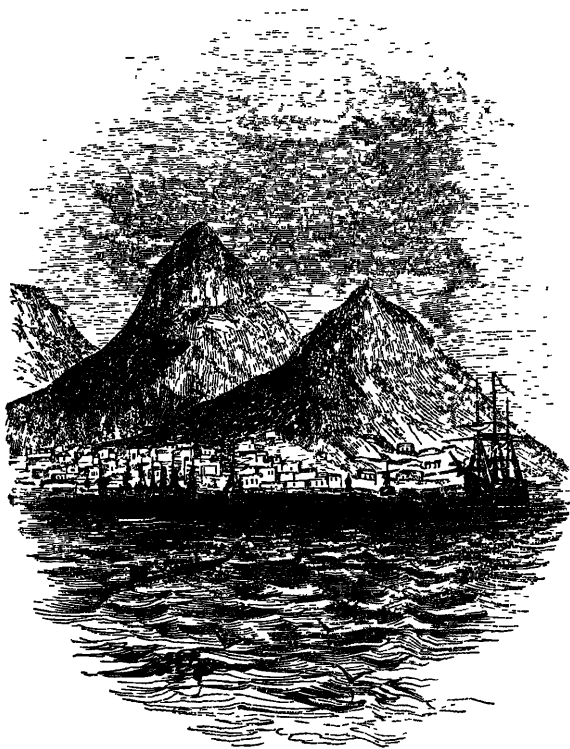


PERSONAL ADVENTURE.



CAPE TOWN.

PERSONAL ADVENTURE

IN

SOUTH AFRICA.

BY THE

REV. GEORGE BROWN,

GRAAFF REINET, CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

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PREFACE.

A BOOK without any sort of preface were an unusual thing. The writing of what I design to be prefatory to my book is, however, to me a harder task than the writing of the work itself. One can write with ease and freedom, when feeling well assured, that well-beloved friends will be gratified and pleased thereby ; but now, that both this, and what was originally intended for the partial eye of friends, is designed to be laid before strangers, I feel the sense of this to have a tremulous, stiffening influence upon my pen. Then why present to the public what was intended for the eye of friends only ?

I well remember the deep interest that was taken in the native races of South Africa, in those religious circles in which it was my happiness to mingle before I left my native land, and know the feelings that are cherished by the pious and benevolent there, in reference to especially the Caffre tribes here. Then I too cherished all those same feelings, and came gradually to an entire change of my views and feelings, only after I had seen things here with my own eyes. Every step of this change pained me.

Measures of injustice and oppression I had thought to be carried out against the "poor natives," by both the colonists and the Government, and that only the missionaries understood and practised the proper mode of treating them. Here I found the

Government seeking in every way to raise those natives from the most wretched barbarism, to a state of civilization and comfort. The establishment of missions was encouraged, assistance given to build schools, and salaries for native teachers; the materials too for decently clothing those who waited upon their instruction, were liberally distributed by Government among the missionaries. And no interference whatever with native freedom, or laws, or customs, save such as shocked alike humanity and morality. But these were just the things, the repression of which the natives were least disposed to bear—hence this outbreak. It is in reality, a war of despotism against freedom—of barbarism against humanity [the grossest licentiousness kicking at the first restraints of morality.

It is at the mission stations, that native character may be expected to be found farthest advanced towards improvement. That at which I had fullest opportunities of making observations, was the oldest, and, reckoned at home to be, the most prosperous in Caffreland. There the people possessed more land by far than they could cultivate ; land, too, which yields two abundant crops each year—wheat, barley, maize, potatoes, and the finest fruits, could all be produced in abundance, yet these people were yearly, from about the month of September to January, in a state scarcely short of starvation. Themselves unable to work, and their children fainting in the pathways from very hunger ! All this from sheer indolence, in-bred laziness, pride, and improvidence ! The adult population here was under one hundred and twenty, and the charge of the station to mis-

sion funds, was between £500 and £600 annually.

These things wrought a complete revolution of my sentiments and views. From both experience and observation, I know well the circumstances of that large class at home, who make sacrifices to keep up our mission funds, and have often wished that those self-denials of honest industry, were turned to other account, than supporting pride, the most hateful laziness, and squandering wastefulness. That money does not go to promote the cause of Christ, but the very reverse. Meetings are held—speeches made, and periodicals circulated, all to produce such excitement as will dispose people to contribute liberally. In all these, truth, if likely to be unpalatable, is withheld, or presented in

such language that it is misapprehended, and the result is, that it has all the effect of misrepresentation. In reference to this present outbreak, the sympathies of a Christian people, are sought to be drawn out in behalf of men perfidious and ungrateful, and the honest, industrious, and peace-loving colonists, whom they have pillaged and murdered, are slandered and scandalized.

It was on learning from the English papers with what zeal parties follow this course, that my resolution was taken to present, for the full information of the public, what I had intended for friends only. I state the truth ; beyond that I have no object to serve. I have no favour to court, nor censure, of which I am afraid. Operations for evangelising the heathen, must be conducted upon

very different principles, and the men conducting them must do so in a very different temper and spirit, before God can honour and bless them.

G. B.

GRAAFF REINET,

January 1855.

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