

in Lord Macartney's time, and the early period of Sir George Young's government here. The colonists of this district were continually at war with the unfortunate Hottentots and Caffrees, and behaved with great cruelty towards them. By successive encroachments they drove them out of their habitations, and from one part to another, till they at length forced them back into the wild uncultivated parts; and though these poor wretches complained to the government of Cape Town, and applied for redress, it was become so impotent and embarrassed that it could afford them none. Those haughty Dutch boors, so far removed from the seat of government, disregarded its authority, turned its commands into derision, and continued to oppress the poor natives, shewing them no mercy wherever they met with them. This conduct called for the exertions of our government to suppress and keep down the rebellious spirit of the planters. Lord Macartney had determined to prevent them from using the natives with such cruelty and injustice; he accordingly sent a force against them which with some trouble reduced them to order, and a military force was stationed here to prevent any return of the disturbances. The hatred and aversion which those boors entertained for the English government for not sanctioning their unwarrantable conduct was extreme, and in the wars and disturbances, which afterwards broke out between the natives and ourselves, they were strongly suspected of being the instigators of the deluded Hottentots and Caffrees.

There is a civil government at Graaf Reynet, a court to

hear and adjust differences under a landrost or justice of the peace, who at certain seasons reports all proceedings to the Governor at Cape Town. The military enforce the laws, and assist the president of this court of justice when necessary. The inhabitants being so far removed into the country, trust mostly to their own produce and manufactures. Some of the principal farmers make journeys once or twice a year, in their waggons to Cape Town, to obtain such things as they cannot well do without, and which cannot be procured here.

Graaf Reynet possesses advantages which should not be overlooked, and might, by proper management, be made of great use and benefit to our government. The colonists, in order to be reduced to a proper subordination, ought to be confined to certain limits, and to be prevented from committing injuries on the natives. The district possesses the means of supplying with provisions not only Cape Town, but the casual demands of ships touching there; and by maintaining a friendly intercourse with the natives, a supply might be obtained of cattle, fruit, vegetables, poultry, and corn, at perhaps a still cheaper rate. Many inconveniences arise from allowing the colonists to spread so extensively. They are subject to the warfare of the Caffrees and Boschjies Hottentots, who, irritated at being driven from their native lands and treated with such sanguinary cruelty, look with detestation and abhorrence on the Dutch boors in this quarter, and retaliate whenever it is in their power. The ferocity of these natives against the boors has, indeed, arisen from a long

course of ill-usage, and not from any natural inhumanity of disposition; for to unprotected travellers who venture into their country, they often shew much civility and hospitality; and indeed to Englishmen, they always paid every attention.

The best mode of travelling to Graaf Reynet, and which the English generally employed in relieving or detaching troops to this part of the interior, is by water; coasting from the Table Bay, along Cape L'Aguillas, to Algoa or Plettenberg Bay, which last has a tolerably large harbour. It is distant about three hundred and twenty miles from Table Bay, lying in $34^{\circ} 6'$ south latitude, and $23^{\circ} 48'$ east longitude. From this bay the journey is about one hundred miles, by land, to Gaaf Reynet.

Plettenberg
Bay.

The winter season is the most proper for putting into Plettenberg Bay, as it is much exposed to the south-east winds. The Danish, French, and Portuguese vessels often put in here on their passage to and from their settlements in Asia, giving it the preference to Table Bay, from the cheapness of provisions, the excellent water, and abundance of timber; but the Dutch discouraged their touching here, because the government would lose the anchorage money and other customs exacted from all ships putting into Table or False Bay, besides the advantages which might be derived from disposing of the Cape produce to those ships. A pier or wharf was erected to accommodate small sloops and decked boats, in loading or unloading; and also a small barrack with a range of store-houses, and a magazine for timber.

A few poor houses, inhabited by farmers, lie close to the shore. The neighbourhood has some plantations, and the country round Plettenberg Bay is well wooded. The Dutch had a settlement here, and employed some of their people in procuring timber and bringing it down from the adjacent country, to be transported by water to Table Bay; the quantity was considerable, and indeed this was almost the only place from whence they were supplied with timber fit for ship-building. They maintained a small detachment here to keep an eye over any ships that occasionally put into the bay, nor would they in general allow them to be supplied with any considerable quantity of provisions. The English had a small force quartered here to watch the coast, and keep up a communication with the district of Graaf Reynet.

Algoa Bay, further on, also affords anchorage to ships, but is little frequented, except to procure timber, and a few other articles which the country in its neighbourhood affords. A small village, and barracks for a few men to guard the coast, are erected here. When any force is sent from Cape Town to quell disturbances in the interior of the country, beyond Graaf Reynet, they are sent first to Algoa Bay and disembarked there. This is the last place on this side the Cape, at which any of our ships touch. Sloops of war and small cruizers range along Cape L'Aguillas, to protect our trade from the French privateers, which issue from the Mauritius, or the Isle of Madagascar, to cruize in those latitudes in hopes of picking up English merchantmen, as they steer along the bank of L'Aguillas.

Boors of the interior.

The country which I have now been describing is inhabited by boors, who in their manners, habits, and dispositions seem a race entirely distinct from those of the more civilised parts of the colony; and one indeed sees with surprise the difference between the country Dutch, as they are called, and those residing in Cape Town and its vicinity.

Their wretched condition.

Though the country abounds with whatever can make life comfortable, yet the boor of the distant parts of the colony seems not to have the power of enjoying those blessings which are within his reach, and absolutely in his possession. Oxen he has in abundance, but rarely uses any for food; milk and butter overflow with him, yet he seldom tastes them; wine, which is so cheap, so easily procured, where almost every farm produces it, he rarely or never

Their houses and domestic habits.

drinks. His house is poor, mean, and incommodious; although it might easily be rendered comfortable, even without his own bodily labour, as he has always a sufficient number of slaves for all his purposes. The rooms are dirty and smoky in the extreme; the walls covered with spiders, and their webs, of an enormous size; vermin and filth are never removed from the floors till absolute necessity compels the indolent inhabitants to this exertion. The articles of furniture are but few; an old table, two or three broken chairs, a few plates and kitchen utensils, with a couple of large chests, commonly comprise the whole. Indifferent bread and vegetables, stewed in sheep's fat, are their usual fare; and when they eat meat, masses of mutton are served up in grease; this luxury they devour in great quantities, bolting

it down as some of our porters would for a wager. Sinoaking all the morning, and sleeping after dinner, constitute the great luxury of the boor; unwilling to work himself, he lords it over his slaves and hired Hottentots. At a middling age he is carried off by a dropsy, or some disease contracted by indolence and eating to excess. When he drinks, he constantly uses that poisonous hot spirit called brandy-wine, or geneva, when he can procure it.

The women pass a lazy, listless, and inactive life. After Women. having regaled herself with a cup of coffee for breakfast, the lady of the house sits at her ease in a corner till the next meal-time, seeming absolutely fixed to an old clumsy chair. Little of female delicacy is to be expected about her; a coarse loose dress thrown about the shoulders leaves many parts of the person altogether exposed. Of beauty the females can rarely boast; they generally go bare-footed, and their feet are washed by the male as well as the female slaves; nor do they make any ceremony of having this office performed before strangers. No amusement varies the scene with them, but one day is like all the rest of the year. They propagate children fast for the first ten or twelve years after marriage; but leave off breeding much sooner than the females of most other countries. It is not unusual to see eight or nine children all born in regular gradation, within a year of each other, adding to the domestic comforts by squalling and domineering over those of the slaves; for the first lesson they are taught is their superiority over the unfortunate Africans.

The men are clumsy, stout made, morose, illiterate, and truly ignorant; few have indeed any idea whatever of education. Though several were originally of French extraction, particularly the vine-planters, these settlers have been so mixed and intermarried, that little or nothing remains among them of the manners or character of that nation. It is particularly unfortunate for these colonists, that even if they understood the value of instruction, it is almost impossible, for want of teachers, to obtain it. Some villages indeed have a schoolmaster, but this man is obliged to labour as well as to teach, and is kept chiefly for the purpose of keeping their trifling accounts, writing their letters respecting their transactions at Cape Town, and singing psalms of a Sunday; for they affect to be strenuously religious, and are very ostentatious, of their devotion; it is a practice with them to be continually chaunting hymns and psalms, and before meals they uniformly use a long prayer or grace. Their children are bred up little better than their slaves, the greatest part of their education is to learn to shoot, crack whips, drive waggons, and perhaps barely to read and write a little.

Husbandry.

The planters about Swellendam, and the tract of country towards Mussel Bay and False River, make the greatest quantity of butter, from the number of cattle they graze hereabouts; some of them derive their whole income and support from this line of farming. The milk from two or three hundred head of cattle is collected together in huge clumsy tubs, till they can churn a large quantity together;

Mode of
making but-
ter.

this is done every three or four days in a round vessel like a hogshead. The churn staff is so heavy that it requires the exertions of three or four stout male slaves, in the same manner as we pump water out of a ship. They do not take so much pains to press out all the butter from the milk as we do; so that their butter-milk is much more heavy, greasy, and rank, than with us in Europe. They hold it in but little estimation; it is chiefly given to the dogs, and as often thrown away; sometimes they give it to their slaves with carrots, turnips, and pumpkins boiled in it. The English have expressed a good deal of surprize, that they would not attend more to the rearing and fattening hogs with the milk from which the butter is extracted, instead of throwing so much away. "No," said they, "pigs are not worth the trouble, as we have as many horned cattle as we wish for, and at a very cheap rate." Some of the farmers make from 1,500 to 3,000 pounds weight of butter every year, and some even more, if they have sufficient ground to feed the requisite number of cattle. They send it every six months to Cape Town, where it is bought up by ships, principally Danes, Swedes, and ships from India and the Spanish coast; it is generally sold by the planters to the merchants at the Cape for about *4d.* or *6d.* per lb. and afterwards by them for double that price at least. Some of this butter is excellent and well-tasted, particularly where the cows are kept confined to sweet pasture. I have frequently eaten excellent butter both at the Cape Town and while up the country, but

much oftener met with it strong, rank, and very ill-tasted.

Graziers. Those who graze cattle and make butter seldom enter into any other kind of farming, though their land allows of producing corn, vines, and vegetables. Neighbour such a one supplies him, and he therefore sees no occasion to have too many occupations on his hands at once. When the cows cease to give milk he sends them to the butchers at Cape Town, together with the young bullocks and sheep to be sold for various uses. When the fleets are expected, intelligence is sent from the Cape, if the butchers do not go into the interior themselves; and two or three thousand head of cattle are collected and driven to Cape Town to be slaughtered. Some attend to sheep only, and a farmer will have often a stock of one or two thousand. The sheep are chiefly reared in the drier plains, and it is surprising to see how quickly they get into good order. During the dry season for several months they are like skeletons, as the country is parched up and quite bare of grass, except a few acrid plants and shrubs, which barely serve for the sheep to subsist on. But when the rainy season comes on, and the land is drenched with nature's refreshing showers, and the heavy dews begin to prevail, then the grass springs up almost instantaneously, and the sheep in a few days get into flesh. When once fattened they are sent to Cape Town before the dry weather destroys the vegetable creation, and sold in their prime state. The nature of the country here is such that though it appears naked and barren to the eye, there is always some little verdure and

tufts of grass, and shrubs left in the clefts and chinks of the rocks, which in the summer season serve to subsist the sheep and oxen. It is remarked that the cattle, as well as the milk and butter, taste differently in the two seasons, being far sweeter in winter after the pastures have felt the influence of the refreshing showers. A variety of tender shoots spring in abundance, of which the sheep in particular eat with avidity, whilst the oxen go amongst the marshes, and along the rivers for reeds, coarse sedgy grass, and the grosser kind of plants.

The karroo land, beyond the district of Swellendam, is reckoned the best for sheep. A very extensive tract of low plain country lies in this part of the interior; the cattle which the planters generally breed are considered as a much smaller race than those belonging to the Hottentots farther up the country. By what means they have degenerated I could not accurately ascertain; but I should suppose it to be from the vast numbers which the Dutch farmers rear, and keep in the same farm, without allowing them to roam about, or go from one place to another, like those of the Hottentots according as they have devoured the pasturage. This cannot be helped in some measure, as the wild beasts would destroy numbers, were they not inclosed and secured at night. The colonists turn out their cattle regularly into the same pasturage, which being continually grazed on, and kept poor, is consequently less able to afford them proper nourishment.

The Dutch planters have never given their grounds a Remarks on

the Dutch
husbandry.

sufficient time to recover by fallow or lying unemployed; nor have they ever attended to the dressing or manuring the soil, though any quantity of dung might easily be collected from the number of cattle they rear, and laid on the fields by their slaves or Hottentots. The labours of this last class of men might be rendered infinitely more advantageous to them; few or none hire or employ Hottentots, except those they have entrapped and made slaves of, or forcibly taken from their own society and habitations. This circumstance has been productive of many evils to the colony, as I have already remarked in other parts of this work. Their own indolent habits present still greater obstacles to improvement: a farmer once settled in a farm, with a house ever so wretched, will never leave it though to his advantage, nor would he remove to a spot within three or four miles, although possessing the most eminent advantages in soil and produce; and knowing that he might easily obtain leave to change his abode from the government, who indeed seldom look after their settlements, provided they received the small tax to the treasury at certain times.

The avarice of these boors is also so great as often to disappoint their own objects: they do even not allow the calves a sufficient quantity of milk to rear them healthy and strong, so eager are they to make butter, and turn it into ready money.

Their blind-
ness to their
own inter-
ests.

Upon contemplating the various circumstances respecting the colonists, with the line of conduct which they have

pursued since their first settlement here, one cannot without surprize observe that they have, during so long a residence, continued to remain entirely ignorant of the vast improvements of which their possessions are capable. The dictates of common sense or common prudence, without any external instruction, might surely have been sufficient to point out a thousand advantages which force themselves upon the attention of the observer; and yet seem entirely to have escaped the notice of the colonists, not only in the interior, but even on the sea coasts. There is I believe in no part of the world an instance to be found of European adventurers so entirely destitute of enterprize, and so completely indifferent to the art of bettering their situation. A person, indeed, on observing the innumerable local advantages which the colony possesses, and the infinite means of becoming opulent and comfortable, which nature holds out to the inhabitants, cannot but express a degree of regret that so fruitful a portion of the globe should be assigned to those who are so little capable of estimating its value. Such ideas naturally occur to a stranger on his arrival at the Cape of Good Hope; yet it may be questioned, whether perhaps even the greater part of the indolence, and apparent stupidity of the settlers, is not to be charged to the depravity of the government under which they have lived, and the mistaken policy which the mother country of Holland has perpetually pursued with respect to her colonies.

Private persons in Europe, against whose interest it mili-

tated, or seemed to militate, were unwilling to see this colony properly cultivated; and those in high offices at the Cape, and who had the direction of its government, either did not understand its interests in a proper light, or did not concern themselves with any thing beyond the increase of their own private emolument. Various other reasons rendered the efforts of the government at home for the improvement of this colony very feeble. Their jealousy of other European nations, who might regard it as a desirable object, made the Dutch consider it as a matter of prudence, that the Cape should be kept in poverty and insignificance; and this policy was farther pursued with a view to prevent the settlers from revolting, when getting too opulent and powerful for the impotent government which ruled both Holland and her settlements for many years. The want of patriotic and energetic public characters has long been a circumstance detrimental to the improvement of the Cape; and the prejudices of its own inhabitants have strongly militated against its welfare. The English required but little insight to observe what injustice has been done to the settlement for ages past in the management and government of it; and the planters and farmers cannot be considered as exempt from a heavy share of the blame. It is only necessary to know the colony, even so far as comes within the reach of a temporary visitor, to acknowledge the justice of what I have here remarked, and the truth of the causes which I have assigned. The evil may be said to have originated in the councils of the republic at home, followed up by the ma-

nagement of the colonial government, and confirmed by the habits of the settlers. The manner in which the Cape was colonised, was indeed the original cause of many of its misfortunes; neither able to rise against their tyrannical governors, when injured and oppressed, nor to assist with any effect against their external enemies, it was evident that the colonists must instantly submit to the first enemy that appeared against them; for having entirely lost the affection of the natives, they could neither assemble in time to form an effectual resistance, nor could they leave their homes without the utmost risk of having them destroyed by the enraged Hottentots. The colony, though possessed of so many natural advantages, cannot however be considered at present but as unproductive, and feeble, and impotent. Little advantage is derived from its coasts, with its different harbours and bays, so bigoted are the people of the interior to their habitual mode of travelling through sandy and desert plains, and penetrating those huge ranges of mountains which bound their settlements. The instances of the inconvenience and ill-consequences arising from this conduct are many. For example, timber and such heavy loads, instead of being drawn to the sea-coast, perhaps only a few miles off, and shipped on board small vessels to be sent to Table or False Bay, are sent two, three, and four hundred miles by land. The price which the owner gets for a load of timber, perhaps from seventy to one hundred rix-dollars, hardly pays him for his trouble and expense; for, besides the time lost in felling and bringing it down.

Natural advantages overlooked.

Disadvantages from not using water carriage.

the number of cattle employed in drawing it, and the loss of some of them, with the wear and tear of the waggon itself, form an expence so great that he has hardly a fourth part of the profit. Although timber on the spot is a mere drug, and of small value to the farmer, he must sell it proportionably to all those losses and expences at Cape Town; so that the people then have to purchase it at a very considerable price, in consequence of which all kinds of wood work and building are excessively dear.

The planters have to re-purchase part of their own timber in a manufactured state, at a dear rate; such as wrought timber for casks, waggons, and other such like articles. The planter is obliged moreover to take them to and from Cape Town, to have iron work, &c. put to them; though he might with a little activity have done all these things at home. In the same manner butter, corn, wine, and other articles of husbandry, become incalculably dearer at Cape Town by being conveyed in waggons instead of being put on board of large boats, sloops, or coasting vessels at the different harbours or mouths of rivers which run into the sea from many parts of the interior. The number of days lost on the journey, and the loss arising from the farmer being kept so long from overseeing his plantations, are disadvantages not easily to be retrieved. If the transporting all those articles by water were carried into effect, such a market would be opened for the produce of the interior, that it is impossible but industry must be stimulated; and those deserted and solitary harbours might be the

Great advantage to be derived from establishing an intercourse between the different parts of the colony by sea.

means of enriching the colony beyond computation. Market towns would soon necessarily be erected in various parts along the coast, and the number of inhabitants increased by the additional inducement held out to foreigners and people from the mother country to settle here, and add at once security and affluence to the colony.

Manufactories, of which they are in the greatest want, might be established in the neighbourhood of the markets; and the wool, which is seldom or ever used, the skins being thrown away or given to the slaves and Hottentots, might be made into coarse cloths, blankets, rugs, stockings; and might comfortably clothe both the planters and their slaves, at a very small expence. Hemp grows in abundance in many places, and is reared both by the Dutch and Hottentots, the latter of whom use it instead of tobacco. This hemp, might be wrought into sail-cloth, canvas bags, cordage, &c. and might thus open up a new source of wealth hitherto little attended to. Flax also might be introduced in many spots, and I have no doubt might soon be brought to great perfection. A great part of the ready money, which the people at the Cape are forced to part with to foreigners, in the purchase of various articles of clothing, and other necessaries, might thus be retained in the colony by the establishment of internal manufactures for its own produce; and by this means a great fund saved for internal improvement. The people at the Cape get all their woollen, linen, and cotton goods from the ships that touch at Table or False Bay; and for these they

are obliged to pay in silver or gold, which has been always extremely scarce amongst them. On every article they buy a tax is levied by government, besides the exorbitant price charged by the owners of the vessels. I believe few or none, at present, manufacture the wool at the Cape; at least I have often enquired into the subject and, could never learn that it has been done to any extent. It certainly is of a coarser and much inferior quality to that of Europe; but might still be applied to the purposes I have above suggested. It could undoubtedly afford a species of clothing infinitely more comfortable than what is worn at present, even by the better class of farmers. A wealthy farmer who is possessed of from one to two or three thousand head of sheep, is most commonly seen to go almost naked; or if he has on something to screen him from the weather, his breeches and doublet are made of leather barely tanned, and equally disagreeable to the smell, as wretched to the eye. The children and young lads are left almost naked, except they can contrive to stitch up those half tanned sheep skins into some kind of garment.

The farmers and their slaves are obliged to make their own shoes and clothes, which they do in a very unskilful and bungling manner. They have likewise to make for themselves all kinds of household furniture, chairs, tables, beds, and chests; which hardly deserve the name, they are so clumsy and ill-formed. Any earthen-ware they have is also brought from Cape Town by the waggons, and the greater part is usually broken in the carriage, so that they

are obliged to have equally clumsy wooden vessels for their tables.

The good effects of an extensive communication by water carriage, between Cape Town and the distant parts of the colony, would, I am convinced, soon prove to be much greater than it is at present possible even to foresee. Those many long journies by land, which take up so much time and labour, might be altogether avoided; and such a number of draught oxen, which are obliged to be kept solely for that purpose, might then be dispensed with, that the increased number of cattle for slaughter, and cows for the purpose of making cheese and butter, which might be kept in their stead, would be able to answer the demand of a large influx of people into the colony, to carry on trade and manufactures. To all the conversations I had with the Dutch on this subject, and in reply to all my observations on the very improvable nature of the colony, the constant answer was, that I did not know the Cape; it was but a poor place, and if they brought artisans and people to carry on the different manufactures, there would be nothing to subsist them; for there was little enough for those who were already settled in it. To these prejudices the present settlers are so firmly wedded, that it would be extremely difficult to convince them of their error. A proof however of what might be accomplished by the example of a more industrious people, was clearly shewn in the change produced in the sentiments of many of the Dutch, while our countrymen held possession of the colony. They soon found

out the way of bringing to market a greater quantity and a greater variety of articles when they once found a consumption for them.

With respect to that objection of the Cape not being in a state to produce subsistence for a greater body of people than it contained, there is not a shadow of ground for such an opinion; in confirmation of which, the sudden arrival of such a number of English of every description, who came to it in 1795, when it was considered to be in a poor state, and yet both the former inhabitants and the additional troops and settlers, were always well supplied with a sufficient quantity of provisions of every kind, at a cheap and easy rate, speaks strongly in favour of what I advance. Nor am I so bold and confident as to speak entirely from my own knowledge or experience. The best-informed people with whom I have conversed on the subject, and whose prejudices were not engaged in the question, were uniformly of opinion, that the Cape was capable of maintaining a very great number more than its present population.— While large tracts of country round Cape Town, which might easily be brought into cultivation, still lie waste, a sufficiency of wine, corn, and other articles, is reared not only to supply the inhabitants, but the vessels which touch here for refreshment; and considerable quantities are often sent to Batavia, and the Isle of France. The immense tracts which lie uncultivated along the eastern shores of the colony present a yet more unbounded prospect of supply. Were these once reduced to cultivation, corn, wine, and

a variety of other articles might be produced in such abundance, that not only would a sufficient supply be procured for any possible increase of inhabitants, but a large surplus would be left after satisfying the demands for home consumption. Among many articles from which opulence might be derived, it may be observed that mulberry trees grow here; and the plant which feeds the silk worm, called nopal, or prickly pear, grows spontaneously every where. By proper attention to this branch of trade, silk might soon be rendered a valuable article of exportation. The olive tree likewise grows with a little attention and its produce might be turned to advantage.

Their system of manuring their fields, of threshing corn, and using the straw have ever been most disadvantageous. Bad management in husbandry. They seldom, indeed, make use of the straw for any other purpose but to thatch some of the offices or sheds for their cattle and waggons; it is usually left to rot on the ground. Adhering to the custom of trampling the sheaf with horses or oxen, instead of threshing with flails as with us, a great deal of the corn is necessarily wasted by the cattle themselves, and destroyed by being mixed with their dung; besides leaving in the straw a considerable proportion of ears; and though this is made evident to their observation, by the number of stalks and shoots of corn, which spring up where the straw is left to rot, they will not adopt the European system. Lord Macartney, during his stay at the Cape, endeavoured to introduce the English manner of agriculture, but without effect. Whether from a perverse

bigotry to their own customs, or from that indolence which characterizes the Dutch colonists here, they rejected every offer made them to improve their grounds, and make them yield what the bountiful hand of nature, by means of a favourable soil and climate, had enabled them to produce. What seems more remarkable than even the conduct of the planters is, that their government prevented the navigation of the different harbours, and the transporting by water the fruits of their labour, except indeed where the particular interests of the persons in power were concerned. A farmer makes as much preparation for a journey to the Cape, as we would for a voyage to the East-Indies; and it is in proportion equally troublesome and expensive.

Obstacles to
the land-car-
riage to Cape
Town.

The great difficulty of the roads, the different mountains or kloofs they have to pass, render it necessary to have their waggons remarkably strong, and consequently heavy and clumsy, so as to require two or three sets of cattle to draw them, if at a considerable distance from the town. For miles they are frequently obliged to have chains and ropes fastened to the wheels, often to all four, to prevent the heavy waggon from running on the cattle in going down the declivities; and often the wheels are put into a kind of wooden trough, as I mentioned above, shod with iron, and made fast to the body as well as the wheel, so that the waggon might be said to be drawn on a sledge.

Another obstacle arises from the rivers which they must cross; as at the ferries only small boats are stationed for single passengers, who have to pull themselves over by means

of ropes reeved through posts at each side. It sometimes happens when the cattle have to swim over with the wag-gons, that they get unruly, and both drown themselves and destroy their loading. Their journies, as I have said above, are computed by hours: a journey of four hours takes up a whole day, as an hour with them is computed, on a plain, firm road, at seven miles; and from 24 to 28 miles are the usual limits of a day's journey. The exact distances from even the principal places of the country were never ascertained by measurement under the Dutch government; and they are indebted to the English for having determined the distances in English miles to several parts of the colony. A distance of four hundred English miles is reckoned, on a rough computation, about twenty days continual travelling, and with the assistance of one or two spare sets of cattle. However it oftener happens that it takes thirty days to arrive at the Cape, even without any material accident or obstacle. The length of such journies, it is evident, must be extremely detrimental to the interests of the colonists; and as they are obliged even by law to repair on certain occasions to the Cape, it becomes often very vexatious.

Hardships
arising from
it.

By a law long in existence when a planter or farmer, ever so remote from the Cape, wishes to marry, he must bring the object of his affections with him to town, and be there joined in wedlock by a particular licence from the Governor, in the presence of the Fiscal, at the same time paying handsomely for that privilege, and for leave to enter into the state of matrimony.

Peasants
obliged to
marry at the
Cape by law

Ill effects of
this law.

The instances of the pernicious effects of this law have been many, and ought long since to have opened their eyes to its impolicy ; for it often happens when the lovers and their parents agree about the match, that the young woman is intrusted to the care of her future husband, as probably her parents cannot accompany her on such a distant journey. She is in consequence left to his protection to take to town ; when as a natural consequence arising from two young people, with perhaps no other attendants but the slaves, being so long together and almost looking on each other as already united, the consummation frequently takes place before they arrive at their destination ; and when that happens, the lover's passion being cooled by enjoyment, he frequently refuses to marry the unfortunate young woman, who must consequently return the best way she can to her parents, whilst her deceiver only pays a certain fine for his breach of faith. Luckily for the poor deluded female she is not considered in much the worse light for such a misadventure, but often meets with another lover, who makes no great account for the loss she has sustained : the colonists indeed are seldom over nice in those matters. The original intention of this law was to prevent the colonists connecting themselves with any women but those of their own description.

Perhaps the chief cause of the great depravity of mind found among the distant boors of the colony, is to be ascribed to the cruelty and contempt with which they are accustomed from their infancy to treat the Hottentots.

Without the leave of government they frequently make open war on them, and their neighbours the Caffrees, without provocation, and merely for the purpose of depriving them of their cattle and lands, and making them slaves. Several attempts had been made by the Dutch government at the Cape to check this cruel and barbarous conduct, but without any material effect. The first great stop that was put to the tyranny and inhumanity of the farmers and planters was by Sir James Craig, who seeing in its full extent the bad policy and barbarity of their conduct, sent positive orders for them to desist, which however they at first disregarded, till he sent a force up the country against them. By that determinate and spirited conduct, however, which has ever distinguished his measures, he speedily brought them to a proper sense of obedience, and a salutary awe of the English government. The humanity and upright conduct of this officer, whilst in the command here, evinced itself in many other instances; and has made the English name to be revered by the poor natives, and feared by those proud and insolent boors, who cannot without the aid of terror be made to respect the rights of their fellow-creatures.

CHAPTER XIII.

Character of the Planters near the Cape—Quarrels amongst themselves respecting the Division of their Property—Utensils for Husbandry, Plowing, and Dressing the Land—Improvements attempted by the English—Obstinacy of the Dutch—No Roads through the Country—Great Inconvenience arising from thence—No Boats to transport Waggon's or Passengers across the Rivers—Ignorance of the People of the Interior—Many English better acquainted with their Country—Remarks on the Cape and its Inhabitants, and its Connections with the Mother Country.

THE planters, who live more in the neighbourhood of Cape Town, present several features in their character very different from the boors of the interior. More of artificial life, and apparent civilization is to be found among them; yet in the essential qualities of real refinement, the difference between the two is perhaps in fact very small. The same unsocial and selfish character is conspicuous in both; neither have the smallest idea of promoting the happiness of any of the human race beyond the precincts of their own family; nay, the cares of each individual seem nearly concentrated in his own person. A perpetual inclination to quarrel, and a thirst of revenge equally distinguish the boor of Graaf Reynet and of the Cape. The malevolent pas-

sions of the former are kept continually alive by the opportunities which he has of exercising them with impunity on the wretched Hottentots and Caffrees; while the planters of the Cape bear as deadly animosities towards each other, often on the most trivial grounds, a dispute about an acre of land, a well, or the course of a stream, which might easily be made to accommodate both. That quarrels should originate on this ground seems the more strange, as their possessions are in general larger than they can turn to any good use. Every individual has indeed as much as he can manage or cultivate, and the land is so cheap that a half-penny or penny an acre is an average price that many pay to government. The greatest inconvenience arises from their measurement of distances by time. The quantity of ground assigned by the original law of government to each individual is the square contained by an hour's walk. A stake or post is placed at each angle to mark the boundaries. This undeterminate measure however breeds continual quarrels among them; for if a farmer once imagines that the land-mark interferes with his rights, or has been anywise removed, by a neighbour wishing to encroach on his property, a suit immediately commences, and open war ensues. To redress any grievances, and to adjust all differences of this kind, the government ordained a certain person called a Fields Wagts Meester, or surveyor of land, to decide them on the spot. On his being called on to judge between the parties, he that brings him must pay three dollars; but if either is not satisfied with his decision, an ap-

Quarrels
amongst the
farmers near
Cape Town
about their
grounds.

peal lies to the landroest and council of the district, which generally consists of a president and four members, each of whom is to have three dollars for determining how much a man is to walk in an hour. The price they in this manner pay for law is more than the rent of their whole tenure. It is curious to observe that, notwithstanding the animosity and feuds which subsist between neighbours, yet they seldom pass by the houses of each other without visiting. A Dutch farmer hardly ever fails to stop at any dwelling he comes to on a journey, though perhaps he is at open war with the owner. Here he baits and rests the night, whether he be a friend, stranger, or on bad terms with the landlord, without waiting for invitation. He sits down to meals and takes his chance of a bed; in the morning after eating his breakfast, and drinking a quantity of raw spirits with the host, and kissing him and the women, he mounts his horse or gets his waggon ready, and sets forward again on his journey.

Private hos-
pitality.

Their know-
ledge of the
country, and
soil very
confined.

Even the rudest and most uncultivated amongst them appear to be hospitable to visitors and strangers, and ready to impart what they possess; but this seems for the most part to proceed from ostentation rather than from any real generosity of heart; as they give so many proofs of being naturally averse to society, or mixing with any one not belonging to their own family. Their prejudices in this respect are indeed very strong. Their knowledge of the country is in the same manner very confined; for they are perfectly satisfied if they merely know the road from their

own house to Cape Town, or that part of the country in the immediate vicinity of their own dwellings. Nor do they seem to have ever taken any pains to understand the soil, the nature of the ground they cultivate, nor the best manner of making the most of it. They seldom or ever manure the ground, except a few scattered spots for barley. The Dutch farmers never assist the soil by flooding, being satisfied with the moisture it derives from the water in its neighbourhood. Their only labour is sowing the seed; leaving the rest to chance and the excellent climate. Their ploughs, harrows, and utensils of husbandry are clumsy, ill-formed, and clogged; but they cannot be prevailed on to make any alteration in the system of their agriculture.

Manner of tilling the ground.

Utensils of husbandry.

I have already noticed the attempts of Lord Macartney, a man of most benevolent and amiable manners, to better their situation, by pointing out the means of improvement to the colonists. He used every argument to stimulate the planters to make the utmost of their grounds by the most effectual and easy process; and to prevail on them to adopt the modes and implements made use of by the English farmers in husbandry. But all his beneficial intentions were rendered useless by the rooted dislike of the Dutch to any innovation in their own customs and habits. Lord Macartney when he had been some time at the Cape, sent for an experienced farmer to England, to teach the Dutch the most useful and lucrative mode of Agriculture. A man of the name of Duckett arrived, and brought with

Improvements attempted by the English.

him all those implements of our husbandry which are most convenient and useful. He went up to Stellenbosch, settled there, and commenced cultivation in the same manner as his countrymen. He turned up a quantity of ground, burned the heath, weeds, and stumps, and spread the ashes over the fields, mixed with slime taken from the marshes. The produce of the crops he planted was very flattering and promising; and in one day he brought more ground into order than any Dutch farmer, with the same means and his utmost exertions, could in three. Still they were not to be convinced: “No English ways for the farmers at the Cape; they do very well in their own country; we don’t want them here; we don’t like the English, and won’t, to please them, alter our own customs.” With those sentiments they refused availing themselves of Lord Macartney’s kind and praise-worthy endeavours to promote industry and opulence among them. A few indeed were found to adopt farmer Ducket’s system; but they soon left it off, and resumed their old habits; being ridiculed and discouraged by their countrymen. This man passed but a very unpleasant time amongst them; for they not only avoided his society, but missed no opportunity of annoying him in every way they could, without subjecting themselves to the law or cognizance of the English Governor.

Rendered abortive by the obstinacy of the Dutch.

Sowing and harvest months.

The sowing months for corn are in May and June; the harvest in November and December. The corn is cut down with long knives, and the grain trodden out by horses or oxen, on circular floors or beds made of plaster and

cow dung, hardened in the open air. I have already observed on the great waste attending this mode.

It is remarkable how few improvements have been introduced into the colony, even where most loudly called for, not only as public benefits, but as private conveniences. Roads have scarcely ever been made; and where broken up, are never repaired. No conveniences are provided for passengers to halt and refresh themselves during the fatigues of a journey. How far are the Dutch colonists outdone, in this respect, by the simple natives of Asia, who, purely from motives of religious zeal and public spirit, have erected at convenient distances choultries and pagodas, for all ranks of travellers to stop at and refresh themselves. Throughout all India those buildings for temporary residence and shelter are erected, and persons appointed to take care of them, keep them clean, and assist the travellers. The Cape greatly requires accommodations to be erected for travellers. Not even a directing post is to be found, where the country is in the wildest state, and the roads crossed and intersected by ridges of sand, and by various paths through the plains. A traveller here may wander about considerably out his way, if he has not Hottentots and guides to attend him; and the Dutch themselves, from their limited local knowledge, often experience this inconvenience. Were it not for the ranges of mountains, which the eye is enabled to take as a point of direction, the difficulty of finding out the way from one place to another would be very great. When they meet with a river, each gets over as he

Roads much neglected.

Difficulty of travelling

can, no boats or rafts being attached to them to transport passengers. The obstructions presented by rivers are often extremely perplexing. A river not more than fifty yards in breadth often takes up a whole day in crossing. They are at times obliged to unload every thing out of the waggon, and make a kind of raft of it, which takes up a great deal of time. The horses and cattle swim over, a slave holding them by the bridle.

Ignorance of
the farmers.

Take the Dutch planters altogether, there never existed a set of men so void of resources in overcoming difficulties. Even self-interest is not sufficient to stimulate them to action, and to overcome the indolence of their bodies and minds. Their ignorance is great; and education is equally unknown among the boors of the Cape, and of Graaf Reynet. No books, but a Bible and hymn book, are to be found amongst them; no printing-press is established here, except one at Cape Town, for stamping the cards or paper used in making their paper-money or rix-dollars, the only currency of the country. Government never indeed took any pains to promote principles of public spirit among them. Few men of dignity or learning came from Europe to settle at the Cape; nor have any measures ever been taken for public instruction. Many of the farmers have never seen Cape Town, nor travelled more than a few miles from their own habitations. They seem not to be acquainted in any degree, even with their native country. Many officers in the British service assured me, that most of the privates of the 8th light dragoons, had a far better

knowledge of the Cape than the Dutch themselves. This fine regiment had been a great deal in the interior, and had been much employed on active service against the Caffrees and Hottentots at warfare with our government, and in repressing the turbulent spirit of the Dutch peasants. Their knowledge of the country was greatly extended by continually passing and repassing to and from the different military posts. This regiment, for their high state of discipline and excellent conduct whilst at the Cape, deserve the greatest praise. The uncommonly fine appearance of the corps, with the perfection to which the horses were brought, reflects the highest credit on Colonel Hall, as well as their other officers. Nor do I mean to exclude the infantry regiments then stationed at the Cape, from their share of praise for their steadiness and good behaviour. Few or no complaints were ever preferred against them by any individual of the Dutch inhabitants, either in Cape Town or the interior. For a long period the Hottentot Corps was commanded by Lieutenant John Campbell, of the 91st regiment, who, though a very young man, filled the situation with much applause, and shewed himself a very intelligent officer.

I have found it necessary to enter largely into the manners and habits of the colonists who reside in the country, to account for the state in which this settlement was found by us, and still continues. No part of the world has had its natural advantages so abused as the Cape of Good Hope. The very minds and dispositions of the settlers in-

Remarks
concerning
the Cape and
its inhabi-
tants.

terfere with every plan of improvement and public utility. I have endeavoured, without prejudice or partiality, to paint their characters in their natural colours; and I appeal to those of my countrymen who are acquainted with the Dutch colonists, from a long residence amongst them, for the truth of the observations I have made on them. The situation in which such a colony as the Cape of Good Hope has so long been left, might indeed appear altogether unaccountable, were we not to turn our eyes towards the state of the mother country. At one time independent, active, and enterprising, the Dutch extended their navigation and colonies to the most distant quarter of the globe. For many years, however, their decline has been rapidly going forwards; a factious government at home, continually actuated by a party spirit, was unable to attend to great and extensive measures of public good; and very soon became sacrificed to the narrow views of interested individuals.

Degeneracy
of the mo-
ther country.

The picture which Holland presents to all the states of Europe, should be an awful, and will, I hope, prove an useful, lesson to them. The degeneracy of the Dutch colonists ought indeed to surprise us less, when we observe the sad changes which have taken place in the spirit of the mother country, situated as it is in the midst of Europe, and of civilization. When we observe the present inhabitants of Holland, we can scarcely believe them to be the same people who formerly were so zealous in the cause of freedom; who asserted their independence by greater and more vigorous efforts than could possibly be expected from the

size or situation of their country. In spite of the vast armies of Spain, and the ambition of France, they shook off the yoke of the one, and resisting every attempt of the other to enslave them, exhibited to mankind for a century, the most perfect picture of a flourishing commonwealth, whose prosperity had arisen from public and individual heroism. What is that people now become? Dead to all sense of public interest, and to every generous sentiment of the soul, the thirst of gain and individual aggrandisement has extinguished from amongst them the spirit of patriotism, the love of glory, the feelings of humanity, and even the sense of shame. A total want of principle prevails in Holland. Every other sentiment is absorbed in the desire of riches, which the stupid possessors want taste to convert to any pleasurable use or real enjoyment; but which are superior in the eyes of a Dutchman to all the talents of the mind, and all the virtues, of the heart. Avarice is the only passion, and wealth the only merit in the United Provinces. In such a state, a sordid and selfish happiness may be found, like that which the miser enjoys over his hoard, or the glutton over his meal; but the liberal arts cannot thrive, and elegant manners are not to be expected from a people under those existing circumstances. Indolent and sluggish in their habits; carrying on trade without that spirit or activity found in other nations, their minds have few resources; sound policy and true patriotism have long slept among them. The behaviour of Holland to her allies has been particularly dishonourable, first forming alliances

for mutual protection, and then deserting them whenever some appearance of immediate interest presented itself, or more vigorous efforts were requisite to maintain their engagements.

The conduct of Holland towards England in every war has been notoriously shameful. England, who had been always her support, by whose assistance she was enabled to establish her liberty, her independence, and her religion; which otherwise must have been crushed by the power of her oppressors. England, who kept her from sinking under the ambition of the house of Bourbon, whose treasures and blood had been so often expended in fighting her battles; and yet this ally, of unbounded and unwearied generosity, found her forces in every engagement in the field, in conjunction with the Dutch troops, left a sacrifice, or compelled to extricate themselves by their own efforts and bravery from the dangerous situations into which the want of courage and conduct in the Dutch officers, and the laziness and cowardice of their soldiers had brought them. The plains of Fontenoy will always remain a memorial of the dishonour of Holland, and the prodigious efforts of courage exerted by the English troops, after being so shamefully deserted and abandoned by the troops of their ally; and, after seeing by this means, a well-earned victory changed into a most disastrous defeat. In our own times, the Hollanders have yet exceeded their former degeneracy. Imbibing with eagerness the principles of the French, and those false and delusive shadows of liberty and equality, the little spark of

patriotism that remained in their breasts was speedily extinguished. We need only observe their treatment of the house of Orange, the descendants of their great William their true patriot, Nassau, who so nobly exerted himself for their independence, their religion, and their existence as a nation. Shaking off their allegiance to a mild and beneficent prince, who, on account of his own good qualities, as well as the house he sprung from, should have been honoured and protected, they forced him to leave his native country, and apply to England for refuge and redress; England which has ever afforded an asylum to unfortunate princes, and by her firm, wise, and prudent conduct has long kept up the balance of power, and prevented the continental powers from destroying each other. Englishmen! behold, with pride, your nation, your government, and your sovereign; but for you anarchy and confusion would reign over all the world. The very farthest part of the globe would feel the baneful effects of French tyranny, French freedom, and French oppression. When England, at the beginning of the war, sent over troops to save the frontiers of Holland from being invaded by the republicans, it was expected that Holland would unanimously and vigorously join to prevent the French from conquering their country; a country so naturally strong, so easily defended, from its numerous fortified towns, its canals, dykes, and sluices; and the readiness with which its forces could be collected, that it seemed next to impossible for the armies of the republic to penetrate into it, if in any degree opposed, with vigour.

At the supplication of the Dutch themselves, England sent them a large body of her troops to assist them in repelling the republican forces; but, to the astonishment of all Europe, no sooner had the English army experienced a reverse, than the treacherous Hollanders conspired to introduce the French into their country, and forced the Stadtholder and the few men of any patriotism, to fly to England for refuge; while they perfidiously made terms with the French, without the concurrence or knowledge of their allies, whose troops were left to shift for themselves, and make their way in the best manner they could out of the country. In some places, at Breda, Bois le Duc, and Helvoetsluys, they actually gave up the English, their real friends, to their specious friends the French army; and during all the retreat of the English troops, they were used by the Dutch more like enemies than friends. How often did they refuse us refreshments to the weary and tired soldier after his march; and even add insult to their treachery and inhumanity. At a much later period, when harassed and goaded by their new friends and allies the French, they again applied to England, promising to stand forth and assist us with all their force and vigour to recover their freedom, and drive their tyrants out of Holland. England, with her usual generosity, pitied their situation, and sent a large army of English and Russians, in the hope that the Dutch might yet recover their spirit, and unite in a cause where they alone were the oppressed and the victims. When our troops landed at the Helder, however, instead

of being animated at the appearance of such a body of veteran soldiers sent for their support, and when their patriotism and the natural wish of freeing their country should have stimulated them to stand foremost in the attempt, and have induced all ranks to rise, they slunk away and held back, without affording their deliverers the least assistance. Incapable of being aroused to any active effort of patriotism, they continued unconcerned spectators, and left to the English forces, what every nation should be most eager and anxious to undertake for itself, the task of extricating itself from foreign invaders and oppressors. They again treated us as enemies and the French as friends; we received nothing but baseness, and dissimulation at their hands. Britons, if they could be capable of enjoying such a poor revenge, have now an opportunity of seeing their treachery returned ten-fold on their faithless allies, by the people whom they called in and embraced as the defenders of their freedom. Their new friends, the natural enemies of their religion and country, now rule them with a rod of iron, giving them a severe and justly merited sample of French liberty and equality. Loaded with taxes and requisitions, robbed of their darling wealth, and, to complete all, made tools of a tyrant, and forced to obey his caprices, under the most absurd pretences, the Dutch are now, in every sense of the word, a wretched and impoverished people. Let other nations take example by the fate of Holland, unpitied, as she is, by all, from the inglorious

conduct of her people, and equally contemned by the French nation, to whom she has sacrificed herself.

Policy of the Dutch with regard to the Cape of Good Hope.

I hope I shall be pardoned for this digression: some observations on the state of the Dutch at home was necessary to account for the miserable neglect of their colonies; and to reflect on the conduct of that people for some time past without indignation is impossible, at least for a British soldier. I shall now proceed to give a view of the policy pursued by the Dutch in respect to the Cape of Good Hope from their first settlement there.

Original purchase from the natives.

The establishment which the Dutch East-India Company had made on either side the Cape of Good Hope, though originally confined to a small tract of country little more than the isthmus or peninsula, where the two great harbours of Table and False Bay are situated, has by degrees been so considerably increased that it extends by computation upwards of five hundred miles from east to west, and nearly three hundred from north to south. For once in the gaining possession of territory the Dutch seemed to regulate their conduct by the laws of justice; for the territory of the Cape was at first acquired by fair purchase without fraud or oppression; at the same time however it may be observed that this solitary instance, in the united states, of equity prevailing over avarice, is to be attributed more to the virtue of an individual than to the community at large. Mr. Van Riebeck, a surgeon of one of their ships, an intelligent and enlightened man, observing the excellent

harbours the south extremity of the Cape contained, and the mild and peaceable disposition of the natives, having also a very extensive power which accidentally fell into his hands, and being actuated by a liberal and patriotic spirit, he determined to render it useful to his country, and purchase from the natives a portion of land contiguous to those harbours, and by toys and a few trifling articles of commerce, to the amount of four thousand pounds, he quietly got an unlimited possession of this valuable acquisition. The Dutch seeing the excellence of this bargain, and the happy prospects it afforded, for once did violence to their nature, and acted justly, confirming Mr. Van Riebeck's purchase, and granting him full powers to traffic with the natives, and colonize the Cape. The Hottentots, who were the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, being of a mild, peaceable, and tractable disposition, were well satisfied with their new guests, and by degrees easily reduced to servitude, and made useful to the Dutch in the management of their cattle, and the cultivation of the soil. The farther to encourage those people to remain amongst them for these necessary purposes, and to prevent their harbouring any idea of the Dutch wishing to transport them out of their own country, or to force them into servitude against their inclination, a law was passed in the colony that the Hottentots were never to be made slaves, but declared to be a free people capable of enjoying certain privileges. This law has never been repealed, though a great deal of its advantages have been long done away as I have shewn in a former chapter.

Their first
conduct
towards
them.

The Cape, when the Dutch first arrived, was capable of being made by the simplest means a populous and commercial colony. Its temperate climate was in every respect favourable to health, longevity, and an increase of population; its soil, though not apparently rich, was from the genial temperature of the air, alternate dews, and sun shine, so kindly vegetative that it nourished with little culture, and almost spontaneously, what the husbandman might chuse to plant. The first appearance of the country was indeed unpromising; and the richer spots seemed almost lost amidst the surrounding mountains and sandy desarts: yet the fertility of the intervening vallies, and the uncommonly prolific nature of the climate, must soon have shewn the colonists that there was nothing desirable in any other quarter of the world which could not be produced here.

Such was the state of this country when the Dutch first colonized the Cape. The Dutch however seem from the first not to have understood the advantages possessed by the different parts of the colony. The eastern side of the promontory, and the interior parts, are by far the richest and capable of the highest cultivation; the more southern parts, and the country round Cape Town, certainly labour under physical obstructions, which must ever prevent them from attaining such a general state of cultivation. The unpromising nature of the soil in the south-west parts is however abundantly compensated by the harbours of False and Table Bay, which for the purposes of commerce are large and safe, and so formed and sheltered as to yield alternately security against the two

prevailing winds peculiar to this latitude. There are many other bays along the coast, some of them sufficiently large and spacious, but the policy of the Dutch East-India Company, its chartered sovereign, drew a veil over the true knowledge of them, and the advantages to be derived from their use. The same short-sighted policy prohibited the more distant colonists from transporting on any pretext their produce or effects to Cape Town, and Simon's Town, coastwise by water.

Though it appeared to other European nations not well acquainted with the Cape, that it was in a flourishing and prosperous situation, yet it was not so by any means. Long labouring under the heavy hand of their East-India Company, who with a narrow, selfish, and short-sighted policy, had been always studious to discourage population, to crush the settlers, to prevent their extension, and to counteract as much as possible the natural operation of a genial soil to enrich its possessors, it had never attained in any quarter the improvements of which it was capable. Had the East-India Company encouraged their countrymen at the Cape by inviting them to avail themselves to the utmost of its extent and fertility, it would have been in a condition to furnish their settlements in Asia with many of the necessaries and luxuries of life, as well as supplies of men for securing and strengthening their possessions in the East. The recruits sent out from Holland to Asia, as well as many of the late and present race of colonists at the Cape, have long been for the most part composed of low and profligate

Policy adopted by the Dutch. Narrow and confined.

wretches, chiefly kidnapped from the sea-port towns and country in their vicinity, and unhappy emigrants from the different German states, who fled from poverty and the despotism of their princes. At Batavia many of those unfortunate people find a grave, and an end to their misery and slavery.

Ill effects of
it.

From what the colonists at the Cape of Good Hope have done under all those obvious disadvantages, and discouragements they met with from a jealous government, I must do them the justice to believe much more might have been effected had they been subject to a moderate and popular government, animated by the free spirit of a true republic; with enterprise and vigour what might not be effected by Dutch perseverance? the objects of monopolists are ever opposite to the general prosperity of the nation to which they belong; their plans are not founded on the comprehensive views of sound policy or justice, but on confined and selfish principles, wholly incompatible with the public welfare. The Dutch East-India Company adopted the plan of an establishment on the southern point of Africa, for no other purpose than as a place of refreshment for their shipping employed in their Asiatic commerce. Under this idea they did not wish to extend the colony beyond the narrow limits of the southern shores and harbours; a policy worthy of praise if it had proceeded from any sentiments of justice and moderation towards the natives.

The improvement of the territory was not their object; their policy indeed discouraged any effort towards this object,

for were the Dutch dominions at the Cape to be improved and peopled to that degree of which they are susceptible, their East-India Company well knew they could not long retain its sovereignty, but that when arrived to so great a pitch of consequence, from its population and extent, the government of the mother country would assert its claim to the chief direction. Whilst only considered as a possession merely retained from commercial views, it might be allowed to remain in the hands of a chartered company of merchants; but when brought into consequence in the political scale, they were well assured it would be an object of too much consequence not to belong to the government at large. From those motives the Dutch East-India Company discouraged the improvement of the Cape, and checked the many natural advantages it enjoyed. They restrained the discovery and working of any mines; for the bowels of this country, for reasons I have already given, are supposed to contain copper and iron ore; and indeed the appearance of the soil clearly indicates in many places the possession of those useful metals. The wines of the Cape, if encouraged and improved, might be equal to those of Europe. Aloes, sucotra, myrtle-wax, salt, paints, indigo, castor oil, cotton, coffee, sugar, rum, tobacco, ivory, whale oil, iron, and copper, ostrich feathers, hides, butter, and many other articles, might afford the means to carry on an extensive trade; as well to the coast of Africa as to India, America, and Europe. The colony might thus soon become a manu-

facturing state; but all advantages of this sort were overlooked by the short-sighted policy of the Dutch.

The government of Holland, for a long period, never kept a vigilant eye over their East-India Company; and the people vested with power, sent out here, were either incapable or indifferent towards its improvement. With a strong bias for trade themselves, they were mostly unfit for conducting and governing a state on the true principles of public spirit or sound policy. The East-India Company, besides their fears of having the country wrested from them by the jealousy of their government at home, were afraid to improve or extend their territories, lest they should be unable to defend a rich and extensive range of coast from invasion. Their greatest security they believed to consist in not allowing it to be an object of temptation to their neighbours. Actuated by the same motives throughout their whole colonial policy, they held back the improvements of their Asiatic settlements, particularly the island of Ceylon; as I have shewn in my account of that island. Yet notwithstanding their despotic government, so jealous of improvement, wholly restraining manufactures, commerce, and even many branches of agriculture, the southern parts of the Cape have in many places been cultivated and improved, the population has increased considerably, and would have done so much more, but that the hopes of amassing speedy wealth in their Asiatic settlements induced numbers to quit this salubrious climate for those regions of

intolerable heat and rapid mortality. The Cape in another view, was an important object to the company, by the uncommon charges and exactions made on all shipping who touched at her ports, and by their many extortions on the inhabitants. Those entrusted with the government enriched themselves considerably, and supported their usurpations under the most specious pretences of their being highly necessary for the welfare of the settlement; and although it was for a long time notoriously maintained out of the pockets of the Dutch settlers, and by the exactions from ships of all nations, they contrived fairly to blind the eyes of the directors, the proprietors, and the credulous public, with false accounts and vague ideas of loss and gain.

For some time back the dominion of the Cape has by degrees slipped from the hands of their East-India Company, who barely retained the shadow of any power or influence there. In reality the settlement had become subject to the Dutch government of Batavia, which last ranked as the first in consequence and authority of all their Asiatic settlements. From the period that their East-India Company's influence and power were lost, and the Cape had come under the cognizance of the Governor of Batavia, it of course became part of the possessions of the United States of Holland; and the population and improvement soon after considerably increased. It must ever be regretted that this mild and excellent climate has been so long degraded and withheld from the enjoyment of its natural

The improveable nature of the Cape.

advantages. It will thence take some time to render it a great and valuable acquisition, even if it should again be recovered to this country. In the hands of the British government, whose mild and beneficent conduct has always been the envy and praise of all nations, it would, however, shew itself in a different light. It would acquire a consequence and weight in itself hitherto but superficially attended or looked to; and add a powerful security to our East-India possessions, now so valuable and extensive. In some little period of time, new resources arising from the commodities it produces within itself, for carrying on a lucrative trade with different parts of the world, would soon be discovered and turned to advantage by industrious and enterprising British settlers, who would, no doubt, seek this colony in pursuit of opulence. The original inhabitants of the more remote territory, now possessed by the Dutch boors and planters, might be easily brought by gentle means to habits of industry. Of a peaceable and mild disposition, extremely averse to warfare, and peculiarly attached to the English since our residence in their country, by wholesome laws and salutary regulations they would enter warmly into our interests, and shake off that laziness to which they have become addicted from the extreme state of degradation to which they have been reduced. Averse, as we are, by our education and habits, to slavery, perhaps more so than any race of people upon earth, it should be totally and immediately abolished by us in this colony, if it ever come into our possession. In a great measure the

want of energy, and the natural indolence of the Dutch at the Cape, are to be attributed to the great number of slaves amongst them. A farmer seldom labours himself, but leaves all to his slaves. An enlightened and intelligent mind acquainted with this part of the world, will readily see the bad consequences which have arisen from this policy, and agree with me in the remarks I have made on this subject. A wide difference exists between this country and the East and West Indies; in the latter, many arguments may be adduced to shew the necessity of employing slaves; at the Cape they might be dispensed with. If the Dutch depended less on the handy-craft of their slaves, they would occupy themselves much more in the mechanical trades. Most families at the Cape employ their slaves in making their wearing apparel; they manufacture their own leather, make shoes and clothes of all kinds, by the hands of their slaves. The dresses of the ladies also, and the various articles of household furniture are all made in the same manner; so that the colonists merely import from Europe and Asia the raw materials, and then transfer them, without any labour on their own parts, to be manufactured by their slaves. They have but few mechanics and tradesmen amongst themselves, nor did they require them, because such services were performed by their servants; he who waits on them at table is equally dexterous at the needle, the awl, the axe, the plane, trowel, and brush. From principles of economy, every individual Dutchman employed his slave at some trade; and besides obtained

Slavery not
so necessary
as in the
West-Indies.

money by hiring him out, or selling the produce of his labour. Every thing indeed is produced in this climate with so little labour to man, that slavery could never have crept into this angle of Africa, if a spirit of industry had pervaded the minds of the original colonists. A temperate climate, fertile soil, a mild and peaceable race of natives, were advantages that few infant colonies possessed. These happy circumstances still exist, and may yet be turned to good account. To encourage the Hottentots in useful labour, by giving them an interest in their servitude, to make them experience the comforts of civilized life, to feel a value for and a place in society, which the miserable policy of the Dutch denied them, would be the sure means of entirely removing the necessity of slavery. While the English held the colony, few were imported, and those few by special permission under peculiar circumstances.

Good effects
to be expect-
ed from a
British go-
vernment at
the Cape.

Our government abolished, as much as it was in their power to abolish, the baleful traffic of slavery. By the capitulation entered into on getting possession of the Cape, we could not deprive the Dutch of those slaves already in their possession, as private property of all sorts was secured to them; but we suffered no more to be added to the number of this unhappy class of people. Our detestation of slavery and the cruelty practised against the poor wretches, did not escape the penetration of the Hottentots. Though on our first coming they were led to believe us a race of cannibals, who would destroy them without mercy, by the invidious arts of the Dutch, yet these people soon

formed a favourable impression of the humane and liberal spirit of the new power they had fallen under, and many entered into our service a short time after its capture. A little more knowledge and acquaintance with the character and conduct of Englishmen soon taught them to be disgusted with their late masters, the Dutch. And on finally giving up the Cape by the late treaty of peace, the Hottentots and slaves beheld our departure with extreme sorrow. I have been told by an officer, who left it on the evacuation, that the Hottentots asked the English for ammunition and arms to drive the Dutch out. "We will give you," said they, "the country if you stay; it is ours and ours only; the Dutch have no right to any but a small territory round False and Table Bay; that we will take from them and give to you, if you only supply us with arms and ammunition." Many of the Hottentot soldiers cried, and shewed every symptom of the deepest regret on parting with us. Should the Cape be attacked again by the English, the Dutch will find them unsteady allies; and in all probability will receive but little assistance from them in its defence.

The mode of policy adopted by the Dutch, to inspire the natives of their settlements with fear and hatred of other nations, was equally base and pusillanimous. The Malays inhabiting their Asiatic settlements were led to believe the English were the most cruel and oppressive of all the European race; and that any connexion with that people would overwhelm them in the most miser-