

being obliged to follow the circuitous bends of the river, we left it occasionally, and crossing the channel, cut off considerable angles by stretching athwart the country on the opposite side. These deviations, however, from the beaten track were not very safe nor comfortable, especially in the dark, when, besides the apprehension of encountering lions or Caffers in the intricate paths through the thorny jungles on the river bank, our horses were in continual danger of falling or breaking their legs, from the innumerable holes of ant-eaters, porcupines, and jackals, with which large patches of country were perforated like a rabbit-warren. At daybreak we found ourselves surrounded by flocks of quaghas, ostriches, springboks, and other wild animals; and soon after, we came suddenly upon a numerous pack of jackals, not less than thirty in number, who scampered off very nimbly into the bushes. These last were a different species from what is commonly found near Cape Town, having a rougher fur and more bushy tail.

Saw on the opposite side, the confluence of the Little Fish River with the principal stream; and

about 8 o'clock again crossed to the colonial side at the residence of Adrian de Langè, where I procured some refreshment. Here I learnt that the Caffers had carried off from this boor, on the 15th instant, thirty-two head of cattle; and parties of these plunderers were supposed to be still lurking in the neighbouring thickets. Continued our route through a brown and barren-looking country, except along the immediate course of the river, which consists of deep alluvial soil, thickly overgrown with mimosa trees. It was in this vicinity that the traveller Vaillant resided among the Gonaqua Hottentots, and romanced about the pretty Nerina.

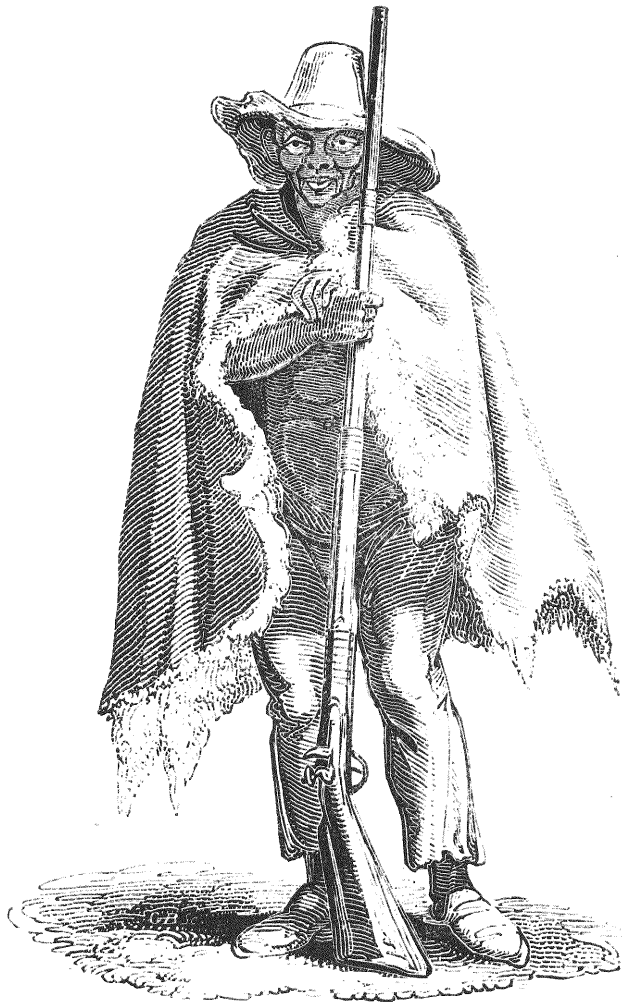
This once numerous tribe, like many other Hottentot clans mentioned by earlier travellers, is now entirely extinct. The residue of the Gonaquas sought refuge among the Caffers a few years ago, and they are now finally incorporated with that people. In this vicinity we passed an old herdsman tending his master's flocks, who looked like the last of his race. He was not a Gonaqua, but he well remembered the days, he said, when that tribe and his own were the mas-

52 DEGRADED STATE OF THE HOTTENTOTS.

ters of the country, and pastured their flocks and herds, or hunted the buffalo and the eland on the banks of the Fish River. Now the white men claim the entire property of the soil, and have even deprived the original possessors of the privilege of living *free* upon roots and game. They are accounted an inferior race, and born to servitude. They feel their degradation, but cannot escape from it: they are oppressed alike by the unjust regulations and the illiberal prejudices of the colonists. But happier times are now dawning upon them; and in the new arrangements about to be introduced, and the better code of laws soon to be conferred upon the Colony, the Hottentot race will find, I trust, that their case has not been overlooked by the beneficent Government of England.*

* The wood engraving here given, from a drawing by my friend Dr. Heürtley, gives a very accurate and characteristic representation of an old Hottentot herdsman, such as I have mentioned above: and the following sonnet, by my friend Mr. Pringle, almost seems as if it had been intended for a motto to the drawing, though written in the interior of the Colony long before he had seen it. The coincidence is easily accounted for—both drew *from life*.

THE



THE OLD HOTTENTOT HERDSMAN.

At noon, we unsaddled and rested our horses for an hour near the deserted military post of Van-Aards. It was on a hill opposite, that the insurgent boors in 1815 showed themselves in a strong body under the command of Piet Erasmus, and sent a summons to Captain Andrews to surrender the post to them ; to which, in conjunction with Major Fraser, who had just arrived, he returned such a resolute reply, that, although he had only a handful of men, the cautious Africaners did not think it prudent to attack him.

THE HOTTENTOT.

Mild, melancholy, and sedate he stands,
 Tending another's flocks upon the fields—
 His father's once—where now the white-man builds
 His home, and issues forth his proud commands :
 His dark eye flashes not ; his listless hands
 Support the boor's huge firelock ; but the shields
 And quivers of his race are gone : he yields,
 Submissively, his freedom and his lands.
 Has he no courage ?—Once he had—but, lo !
 The felon's chain hath worn him to the bone.
 No enterprise ?—Alas ! the brand, the blow
 Have humbled him to dust—his *HOPE* is gone.
 " He 's a base-hearted hound—not worth his food"—
 His master cries ;—" he has no *gratitude* !"

A ride of about three hours farther across a more open country, pretty well clothed with grass, brought us to Somerset Farm, at the foot of the Boschberg ridge of mountains. This place is distant about fifteen miles from the course of the Great Fish River. It is watered by the stream called the Little Fish River; but the arable land, which lies in a sort of basin in the form of a horse-shoe, is not irrigated from the river, but from various fountains which issue from the steep woody kloofs of the Boschberg, the principal of which drives a large cornmill before it is brought upon the land. There is, however, not nearly enough of water to supply the whole extent of land under cultivation on this farm, which amounts to about 600 acres; but the greater part of the arable soil having been formed out of a swamp, which, though drained on the surface, is still full of springs and moisture underneath, it is seldom requisite, even in the hottest seasons, to irrigate more than the drier portions around the borders of this marshy basin.

The farm-house and offices are delightfully situated close to the foot of the mountain, which

rises steep behind to the height of 2000 feet, most picturesquely diversified with hanging woods, rocks, and waterfalls; and seemingly supported at regular intervals, like the wall of a gothic cathedral, with narrow sloping buttresses covered with a smooth turf of the liveliest verdure. The garden is watered by a little brook, and contains a few fine orange trees, and a variety of other fruits. These trees are some of them of considerable age, having been planted by the boors who first occupied this fine country about sixty years ago. It was, I believe, at this very spot, or at a farm in its immediate vicinity, then occupied by a family of the name of Prinsloe, that the Swedish traveller Sparrman resided some time in 1776; the banks of the Fish River in Agter-Bruintjes-Hoogte being the farthest limit attained either by Sparrman or Vaillant. A descendant of Sparrman's host, who occupied the farm adjoining to this, was the principal leader of the rebels in 1815, and was one of the five individuals executed in consequence of that foolish and criminal insurrection.

Somerset Farm, at the time I visited it, was an

extensive Government establishment, under the superintendence of Mr. Hart, formerly adjutant of the old Cape Corps, assisted by Lieut. Devenish of the same corps, and Mr. J. Pringle, a practical farmer, from the Scotch party of settlers. The agricultural part of the concern was by no means the principal department. The supply of rations to the British settlers for two years after their arrival, and the provisioning of the troops on the frontier for several years past, was committed to this establishment. It was in fact rather a commissariat depôt than a farm; and the purchasing of cattle, sheep, and corn from the boors, and forwarding them as required to the various military posts, constantly occupied a great number of Hottentot herdsmen and waggon-drivers. Five or six English ploughmen and three or four mechanics, with a clerk or store-keeper, were the whole of the British population of the place, exclusive of the three superintendants and their families. The greatest activity and bustle appeared to pervade every part of the establishment; and even the languid Hottentots seemed here to emulate the ardour of Englishmen, as if they had

caught a portion of the activity and enterprize for which the indefatigable Mr. Hart has been long distinguished.*

20.—Having spent the preceding evening very pleasantly in conversation with Mr. Hart, (who is a very meritorious man, and extremely well informed in regard to the capabilities of the eastern districts,) I proceeded as usual at an early hour upon my journey. Leaving the course of the Great Fish River, I pursued the nearest route through the mountains to the village of Cradock. My road lay for about an hour along the foot of the Boschberg to the westward. We then struck

* In January 1825, Somerset Farm was established as the site of a new Drostdy of the same name, and the plan of an extensive village was laid down. At the public sale of the *erven*, or lots of ground for houses and gardens, there was great competition, owing to the concourse of purchasers from all parts of the eastern districts, especially from Albany; and the prices ran very high. The progress of building in the new village has, however, scarcely corresponded with this eager desire to obtain property in it; for, by the latest accounts, not above a dozen private houses have been yet erected. The district of Somerset comprehends the whole of the Sub-Drostdy of Cradock, part of the Graaff-Reinet and Albany districts, and the finest portion of the territory lately wrested from the Caffers beyond the Fish Ri-

into an opening of the mountains on the right, and following the course of the Little Fish River towards its source, passed many comfortable-looking farm-houses, at some of which I alighted and partook of a cup of coffee, or a dram (*soopie*) with the hospitable boors. These people I found generally to be in much more comfortable circumstances than their countrymen along the coast. They had generally substantial houses, and gardens well stocked with fruit-trees and vegetables: all of them had good bread, too, for their own consumption; and many had sold quantities of wheat to the Somerset establishment, the blight in the crops having been less destructive here than nearer the coast. Their gardens and corn-fields were all irrigated either from the river, or some of its tributary streams. This valley branches out as it ascends into a variety of glens and dells, almost all of which are inhabited and covered with herds of cattle and sheep. It is on the whole a fertile and populous district, and has been long settled, and comparatively little disturbed by the Caffer wars. It is known by the

name of Zwagershoek, or "Brother-in-law's Corner."

At the Veld-Cornet, Paul Plessie's, I got fresh horses; and, pursuing my route through the devious windings of the mountains, again changed horses at a boor's of the name of Malan. Soon after leaving the latter, I got upon the ridge which divides this *hoek* from another winding glen called Gannahoek. The latter, which runs down towards the Great Fish River, makes an extensive sweep round the other extremity of the Boschberg ridge. The mountains I now stood upon were of very considerable elevation, for I had been ascending, though gradually, all the way from Somerset. It took us nearly an hour to descend the steep declivity into the Gannahoek, and the sun sank down just as we reached the level plain extending to the banks of the Great Fish River. The country here again was of quite a different character from the grassy pastures of Somerset and Zwagershoek, being what they call *Karoo* soil, and covered with a short shrub much resembling heath. On

this pasture, sheep and goats thrive better than even on the finest grass, and the greater part of the Cradock district, containing the best sheep-farms of the Colony, possesses this description of soil.

We continued our journey about three hours by moonlight, when coming to a respectable-looking farm-house, and understanding from my guide that I was still an hour's ride from Cradock, I rode up to the door and solicited lodgings. My request was instantly complied with, and I was welcomed in and invited to take my seat at a plentiful supper which was just serving up. My host, a jolly consequential-looking person, was, I found, a Mynheer Van Heerden, a *heemraad* and *kerkraad* of the district (i. e. a member of the district-court and a churchwarden), and who did justice to the reputation for hospitality still maintained by the farmers of this remote part of the Colony. I had travelled this day about fifty-six miles, the last thirty at full gallop on a hardy African pony, saddled for me fresh from the pasture. This would have killed almost any English horse, but the country breed of Cape

horses is far more hardy than ours, and the grass less relaxing and approaching more to the character of hay ; so that upon a long journey, although the horses seldom get any other food than what they can pick up while the traveller is resting, yet upon this scanty fare they carry on at a spirited canter the whole day long.

21.—After a cup of coffee with my host I proceeded, and passed through the village of Cradock without stopping. It contains about twenty houses with gardens and orchards, watered by irrigation from the Great Fish River. A decent-looking church was erecting. The country around is bleak and desolate, and presents no capabilities of improvement or of alteration from what it is—a heathy range for sheep and goats. The village contains a couple of small retail shops, or *winkels* as they are called, and two or three mechanics. The clergyman and one or two of the families in the village are English. It is supported merely by being the residence of the magistracy and the clergyman, which brings the inhabitants from very distant parts occasionally to visit it, and insures it a trifling share of small trade. The

residence of the deputy landdrost is a farm-house fitted up for his accommodation about three miles distant, no drostdy-house and offices having been yet erected. To this place I proceeded, and met with a cordial welcome from the magistrate, Captain Harding, and his amiable lady.

After breakfast I went to see a hot mineral spring, about two miles distant: the thermometer when placed in it rose to about 86°. The taste of the water much resembled that of the Harrowgate or Gilsland Spa. It is resorted to for bathing in several complaints. It issues from the ground close to the bank of the Great Fish River, which is here but a small stream, being about two hundred miles from the sea. The ground in the vicinity is much impregnated with saltpetre, and I was informed by Captain Harding that considerable quantities of this substance in a pure state are to be found in the neighbouring mountains. Throughout all this quarter indeed of the Colony the soil is profusely impregnated with nitre, and in many places is even rendered barren by its superabundance. At no great distance from Cradock, near the Bamboo

Mountains, there are three salt lakes similar to those in the vicinity of Algoa Bay, from which the neighbouring colonists supply themselves with excellent salt.

I spent the day at the Deputy Landdrost's, and had much agreeable conversation with this intelligent officer, who had seen a great deal of service in different parts of the world; having been in Egypt with Abercromby, in Spain with Sir John Moore, in the deplorable expedition to Walcheren, in Sicily, Malta, &c. Yet in all his campaigns he told me he had never seen a more spirited little action than that at Graham's Town three years ago, when 10,000 Caffers stormed the town and barracks, which had only about 250 soldiers to defend them. For a considerable time, Capt. Harding declared he absolutely thought the savages would have gained the day; and had they possessed better arms than their slender missiles, the handful of troops certainly could not have withstood them. But at length they gave way, and some field-pieces being turned upon their encumbered masses, upwards of 1300 were left dead on the ground. They had been excited to

this assault, and wrought up to a high pitch of enthusiasm by their prophet Makanna, (or *Lynx*, as the Dutch call him,) who on this occasion, it is said, assured his countrymen that his powers of magic would render the English troops an easy prey to them, and change the balls even of their destructive guns into water. An old Hottentot chief of the name of Boesak, who happened accidentally to be present at Graham's Town, greatly distinguished himself in repulsing the Caffers at the most critical moment of this assault, and obtained a high and deserved reputation for good conduct and intrepidity.

The sub-district of Cradock forms part of the extensive province of Graaff-Reinet, on which it is partly dependent; and the magistrate here, who transacts all business with the Colonial Office through his superior officer the Landdrost of Graaff-Reinet, is called Deputy Landdrost. Cradock district, though generally of a dry and desert aspect, is rich in sheep and cattle: and produces also by irrigation corn more than sufficient for the consumption of its inhabitants. The boors here are generally thriving and affluent

in stock, though few of them, perhaps, possess much money, or many of those comforts which in Europe we have accustomed ourselves to consider indispensable. The farms here, and indeed throughout all the frontier districts except Albany, are of the average extent of 6000 acres; this large extent only being considered a *full place*. But they are in general merely cattle farms, not above two or three acres probably of this large extent being on an average capable of culture; and even where a larger extent might be irrigated, the great distance from any market, and the precarious demand, will not admit of its being profitably cultivated. In general, therefore, the boors only raise corn for their own use, or to exchange in barter with such of their neighbours as have not the means of cultivating corn at all.

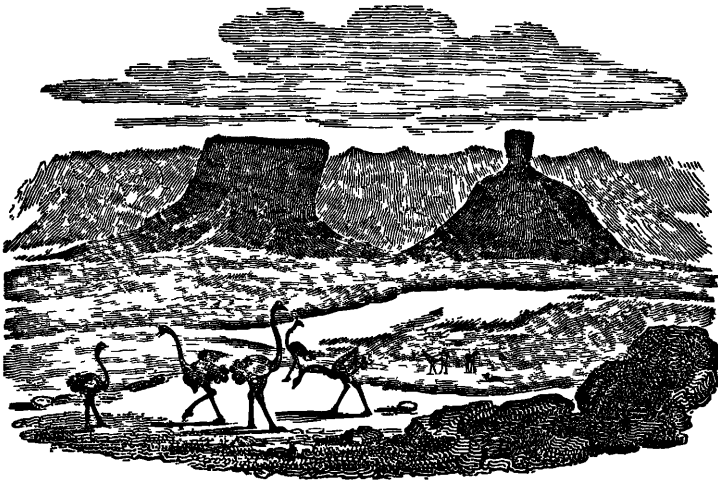
The blight or *rust*, though also prevailing here of late years, has never been so universal or inveterate as in Albany and other tracts along the sea-coast. Captain Harding himself cultivates, by means of an abundant spring, a large field of corn-land, and also a well-stocked garden and

vineyard. From the latter he makes some very good wine for his own use, the best I had yet tasted of frontier manufacture. This farm, called Drie-Fonteyn, (Three Fountains,) where he resides, had been formerly occupied by an extensive cattle boor, who had left a memorable monument of his residence in a prodigious dunghill just in front of the house. This had been the station of his cattle kraal, and the manure had accumulated in the shape of a solid mountain, which Captain Harding had for several years been exerting himself to reduce, though with but little apparent effect, by cutting it out in square pieces like peats, and erecting out of this material, extensive enclosures, and farm-yards. In the vicinity of London this mountain of manure would be worth many thousand pounds.

Capt. H. informed me that, desolate as the country looked, he could call out in six hours upwards of 1000 Burghers, armed and mounted, and that he required nothing but a sufficient supply of ammunition to be perfectly prepared to repel any irruption of the native tribes upon his extensive frontier. At present the inhabitants

were harassed chiefly by the hordes of wild Bushmen, who still infest the mountainous regions, which indeed may be said to be their native territory, and from which the colonists had in the first instance unrighteously expelled them. But it does not seem improbable that they may have some day a more formidable enemy to encounter on the north-eastern frontier. The Tambookie tribe of Caffers, indeed, who have for some time lived close upon this frontier along the banks of the river Zwart-Kei, have hitherto conducted themselves in the most quiet and inoffensive manner. But to the north and east of the Tambookie nation are other tribes, who seem to be in a state of commotion, and to be hostilely impelled upon the Colony by the warlike and marauding hordes beyond them. A few days before my arrival, three fugitives from some tribe, entirely unknown to the colonists, were found in the Tarka, and were made prisoners with some difficulty, and sent down to Cape Town. It was ascertained from them that they belonged to a remote country north from Tambookie land, from which they had been several moons in

travelling; and that their country had been overrun and plundered by a numerous and fierce nation who press upon them from the north and east. I have got in my possession their weapons, which are merely assagais of a somewhat lighter construction than those of the Caffers. I shall hereafter revert to the discussion of the disturbances among the native tribes, and bring down the details I have collected respecting them to a more recent period.



CHAPTER IV.

Journey over the Mountains.—Description of the Town of Graaff-Reinet.—The Landdrost Stockenstrom.—Condition of the Sneeuwberg Boors.—Journey across the Sneeuwberg ridge to the Northward.

MAY 22.—Having been provided by Captain Harding with fresh horses and a guide, I proceeded towards Graaff-Reinet, to which my road now lay south-west over part of the Sneeuwberg range of mountains. The mountains in view

were mostly of the tabular conformation, and some of them assumed very regular and curious shapes. I saw at a distance the elevated peak called the Taay-Bosch-Berg, a singular hill resembling a cylinder placed upon a cone. The country through which I passed abounded with springboks and ostriches. At three o'clock, P. M. arrived at the Veld-Cornet, Van Wyk's, close under the Agter-Sneeuwberg, where I stopped for the night. I had still thus far the company of the Great Fish River, but it had now become a diminutive brook, its source being only a few miles distant from this place. I found the boors in this remote quarter extremely hospitable, but also exceedingly inquisitive—a circumstance perhaps not to be wondered at, when it is considered how seldom a visitor, especially an European, appears among them. The same questions were put to me at almost every place I came to:—"Who are you? Where do you come from?—Whither are you going?—What is your profession?—What is your age?—Are you married?" and a hundred other interrogations equally uninteresting to a weary traveller. This practice

recalled to my mind the plan fallen upon by Dr. Franklin, when travelling in the United States, where the people are equally inquisitive. As soon as he arrived at a house he immediately called all the family together, and said, "I am Dr. Franklin, from New York, on my way to Philadelphia,"—adding all the other information he knew he must otherwise give by detail; by which means he obtained quietness for the rest of the evening. And this communicative system is so much more popular and preferable in every respect to the morose and dogged silence which many English travellers resort to when pressed by the familiar but good-natured interrogations of the colonists, that I often adopted it to a considerable extent. It is obvious, that while a stranger by his frankness thus gains the good graces of his hosts, he need not tell more of his private affairs than he thinks proper.

I was often much amused, too, by the curiosity and wonder of those rustics, when I placed my map, compass, and thermometer on the table, and proceeded to fill up my daily journal,—the whole household gathering round me and

staring, open-mouthed, as if I had been a magician or astrologer.

This Veld-Cornet Van Wyk is in some respects superior to the generality of his countrymen, and had considerable merit in aiding the Landdrost Stockenstrom to arrest the progress of the insurrection in 1815. But he is, nevertheless, a bitter hunter of the Bushmen.

23.—Proceeded at an early hour, with a son of Van Wyk's for my guide. The morning was fair; but we saw about two miles ahead, upon the mountains which we had to cross, the driving of a snow-storm. On approaching the foot of the mountains we secured ourselves with our great coats and caps. The sun was yet shining brightly on us, while only a few hundred yards higher the storm raged in grand array, and produced a magnificent effect. We now began to ascend, and were soon enveloped in the rolling blast; and the drift was so dense, that we could scarcely discern our path. I was soon completely cased in snow, which I in some measure enjoyed, not having seen any, except at a great distance, during the last five years. As we ap-

proached the summit, the storm became more violent, and it was not without difficulty that we were enabled to proceed. My thermometer immediately fell to 32°.

Having at length passed the heights, we gradually gained, as we again descended, a more genial climate; and about noon arrived at Karel Okom's, where I found horses ready,—having sent forward a messenger from Van Wyk's to order them. The snow had now given way to rain, and I was already wet through; but finding no comfort in a *Vee-boor's* open house without a fire-place, in this cold region, I thought it best to proceed in my wet clothes; and accordingly set forward, after some slight refreshment.

While at this place, I heard that a *Commando* (or expedition of armed boors) had been recently out against the Bushmen in the mountains, where they had shot thirty of these poor creatures. I also learned that above 100 Bushmen had been shot last year in the Tarka. This is certainly lamentable work, whatever be the cause of it,—that we should be under the necessity of hunting

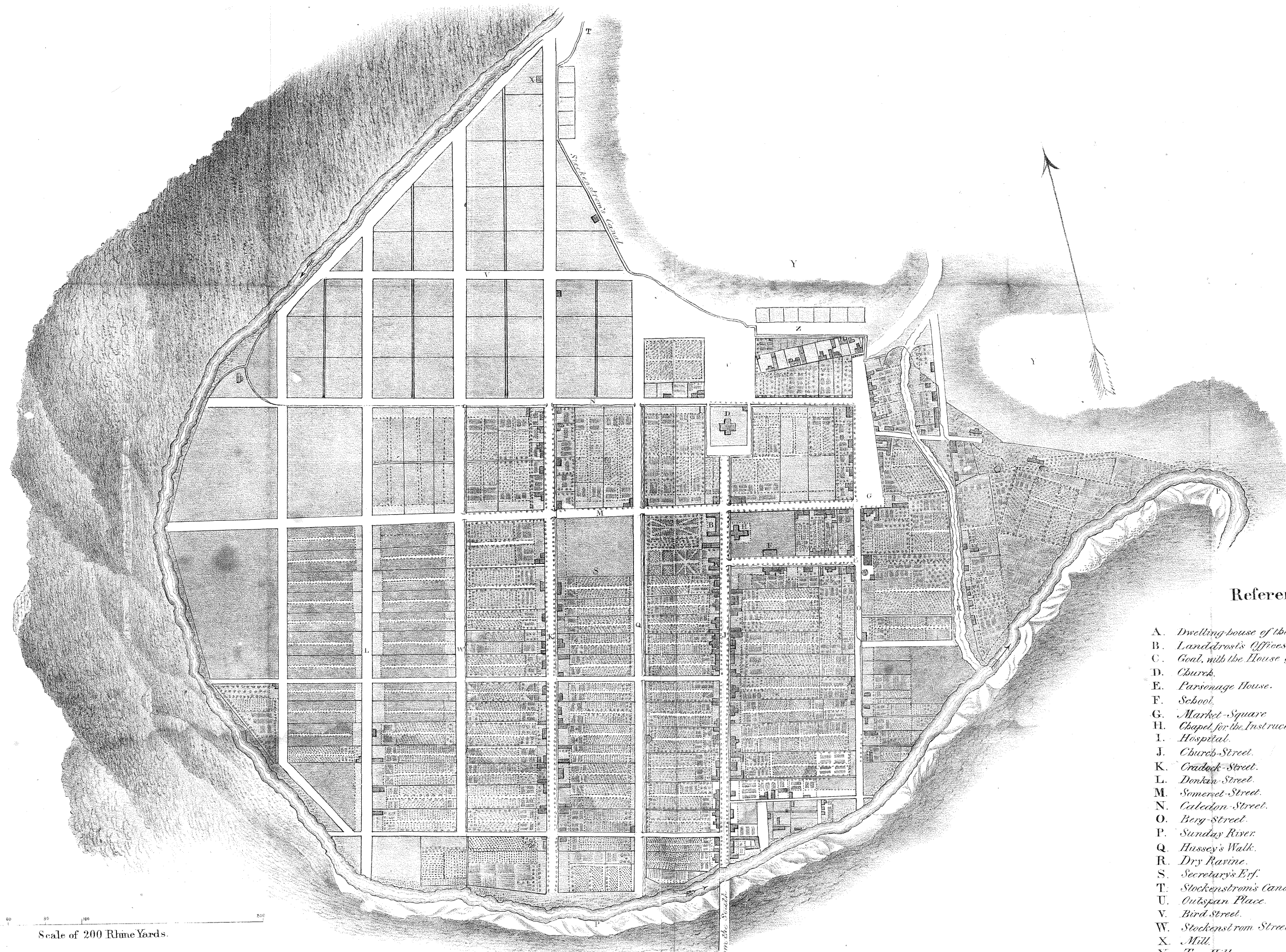
down our fellow-men like the wild beasts of the field. On this subject I shall have occasion to animadvert more particularly hereafter.

After travelling about five hours from Karel Okom's, always gradually descending, I reached the town of Graaff-Reinet just at nightfall. Captain Stockenstrom, the Landdrost, to whom I had letters of introduction, not being at home, I took up my lodgings at a Mr. Minaar's.

24.—I spent this forenoon in transacting some commercial business, and in surveying the town and its vicinity. In the course of the day, Capt. Stockenstrom returned home, and immediately sent me an invitation to the Drostdy, to which I accordingly shifted my quarters.

I had here the satisfaction of receiving letters from my relatives and friends in England, which in this remote quarter of the world, and previous to my proceeding farther into the interior, afforded me peculiar satisfaction.

25.—This being Sunday, I attended divine service with the Landdrost's family at the district church, and heard the Rev. Mr. Murray preach in Dutch to a numerous and attentive congrega-



Scale of 200 Rhine Yards.

VILLAGE OF GRAAFF REINET.

References.

- A. Dwelling-house of the Landdrost, and other Buildings.
- B. Landdrost's Offices.
- C. Gaol, with the House of the Under-Sheriff.
- D. Church.
- E. Parsonage House.
- F. School.
- G. Market-Square.
- H. Chapel for the Instruction of the Heathen.
- I. Hospital.
- J. Church-Street.
- K. Cradock-Street.
- L. Denker-Street.
- M. Somerset-Street.
- N. Caledon-Street.
- O. Berg-Street.
- P. Sunday River.
- Q. Hussey's Walk.
- R. Dry Ravine.
- S. Secretary's Erf.
- T. Stockenström's Canal.
- U. Outspan Place.
- V. Bird-Street.
- W. Stockenström Street.
- X. Mill.
- Y. Two Hills.
- Z. Noorderkant.

tion. Mr. Murray, like all the late-appointed clergymen of the colonial establishment, is of the Church of Scotland, which in doctrine and discipline corresponds almost entirely with the Dutch Reformed communion.

26—29.—I spent these four days in Graaff-Reinet. This place is wonderfully improved since the days of Barrow, when it consisted merely of a few miserable mud and straw huts. It contains now about 300 houses, almost all of which are neat and commodious brick edifices;—many are elegant. The streets are wide, laid out at right angles, and planted with rows of lemon and orange trees, which thrive here luxuriantly, and give to the place a fresh and pleasing appearance. Each house has a large allotment of ground behind it, extending in some instances to several acres, which is richly cultivated, divided by quince, lemon, or pomegranate hedges, and laid out in orchards, gardens, and vineyards. These are all watered by a canal from the Sunday River, which branches out into a number of small channels, and each inhabitant receives his due portion at a regular hour. This canal has been greatly

improved, or rather constructed anew, on a much higher level, by the present Landdrost, who, by indefatigable exertion and entirely at his own risk, has carried it along the front of a rocky precipice, and by these means gained a large addition of arable ground, and a more certain and abundant supply of water. I was not a little surprised to find that this arduous task had been accomplished without even the aid of blowing irons or gunpowder, merely by kindling large fires upon the rocks, and when they were well heated, dashing buckets of water upon them. By this simple process immense blocks had been split, and rolled from the path of the water-course. This useful work, so essential to the prosperity of the town, was effected almost entirely by the labour of the convicted felons of the district under the immediate superintendence of the Landdrost.

The population of Graaff-Reinet, of all colours, amounts to about 1800 souls. The town is built in a sort of basin, almost encircled by the deep channel of the Sunday River, and closely environed by an amphitheatre of steep rugged mountains.

This position, and the arid quality of the red Karroo soil, render it oppressively hot in summer. At that season, however, the atmosphere is sometimes agitated and cooled by violent thunderstorms, accompanied by heavy rains. In winter the weather is frequently rather cold, owing to the elevated situation of the country just at the foot of the Snow Mountains: but while I was there, the air was delightfully temperate, and the sky cloudless and serene.

Formerly, a considerable trade was carried on between this place and Cape Town, by means of waggons, which crossed the Great Karroo (or Arid Desert) in the winter or spring, and returned before the summer heats had destroyed the vegetation and dried up the springs and rivers. By this road the Cape butchers still procure a large proportion of the sheep and cattle which are wanted for the use of Cape Town and the shipping in Table Bay. But of late years most of the merchandise required by Graaff-Reinet, which forms a sort of emporium for a large extent of country, is brought by coasters to Algoa Bay, and forwarded by waggons from that port. This

reduces the land-carriage to about one-third of the distance through the Karroo.

This town owes much of its prosperity and embellishment to Captain Stockenstrom, who, though an African born, and educated entirely in the Colony, has been long distinguished as one of the most intelligent, enterprising, and public-spirited magistrates which the Cape settlement has ever possessed; and his district, though far the most extensive, and the wildest in South Africa, is administered on a system at once mild and efficient; so that I found every where and among all classes his character respected and beloved. At Graaff-Reinet he had just established an agricultural society, to promote emulation and European improvements among his countrymen. On the recent appointment, too, of an English teacher for that district by Government,* he added 600 rix-dollars to his salary from his own pocket, in order to secure the opening of a class for the classics at the teacher's leisure hours. Besides

* A teacher of respectability has lately been sent by the home government to every Drostdy to teach the English language gratis to the inhabitants.

this, he provides a salary of 400 rix-dollars to encourage a day-school for females, just opened here by the daughter of an English settler: and what seems to me no less worthy of notice than all this, he has lodged his private library, collected with much expense and difficulty, in one of the school-rooms, and rendered it accessible to every respectable person who in this remote quarter of the world may be disposed to avail himself of such a privilege. Many of these circumstances I only became acquainted with after my departure from Graaff-Reinet, as Captain Stockenstrom's house, where I resided, was the last place where I was likely to hear them spoken of.

I now made arrangements for extending my excursion beyond the northern limits of the Colony, in which I was much facilitated by the fortunate coincidence of the Landdrost being about to proceed, on the 30th, to the Zeekoe River upon that frontier, in order to inspect lands to be granted to the boors. On this expedition he was to be accompanied by a land-surveyor and one of his heemraden, and by two waggons to carry tents and baggage, besides his travelling

horse-waggon, in which he kindly offered me a seat. Without this friendly furtherance, I should have found it almost impossible to proceed through the Sneeuwberg Mountains at this season of the year, when the greater part of the farmers abandon their dwellings in that cold and stormy region, and retreat with their flocks and herds to spend the winter months in the more genial climate of the plains; returning again in the spring, when the melting of the snows leaves the mountains covered with vegetation.

A dispatch, which arrived on the 29th from Mr. Melvill, the government resident at Griqua-Town, mentioned, that some civil broils had arisen in his semi-barbarous community; and that gentleman strongly urged Captain Stockenstrom to send a commando against the party which he accounted disaffected; an application which, however, the Landdrost was too prudent to accede to. This information indicated that my journey through the wild and wandering hordes of the interior might not be unattended with difficulty, and perhaps some danger; but I determined to encounter these, rather than lose

the present favourable opportunity of prosecuting an excursion on which I had long set my heart.

30.—Accordingly, the baggage-waggons having been dispatched at an early hour, the heemraad, land-surveyor, and myself, started at noon in the lighter vehicle, drawn by eight fine horses. The Landdrost, being detained by some urgent business, was to follow on horseback next morning. We wended for some time up the valley of the Sunday River; then mounting the Sneeuwberg ridge by a long and steep ascent, in two hours more reached the place of a boor named Vandermerwe, where we stopped for the night, the bullock-waggons being still ahead of us. From this place I took a ride of about two miles before sunset, to see a very fine waterfall, where a considerable stream dashes itself over a smooth ledge of rock about 200 feet perpendicular into a romantic glen.

The farm where we now stopped is named Modder-Fonteyn (Muddy Fountain), an appellation so common in the Colony, that I have visited, I believe, above a dozen places of that name. It is strange to observe the barrenness of fancy

of the boors in giving names to places. In every quarter of the Colony we find *Brak Rivier*, *Zwart Rivier*, *Zeekoe Rivier*, *Palmiet Rivier*, *Baviaan's kloof*, and so forth; the appellation being given generally from some quality common to many places, and seldom with that nice and accurate discrimination which seizes the distinctive and peculiar features alone, and embodies them in the name. This may, perhaps, be ascribed in a great measure to the sameness and monotony of South African scenery: it, however, occasions much inconvenience and confusion to the traveller.

At this place I learned from the conversation between our host and my fellow-travellers, that we were approaching the haunts of the Bushmen; all the talk of the evening being about this unhappy race. There is considerable risk in travelling through the mountains, not only from the lurking Bushmen, but also from runaway slaves, who occasionally rush down and plunder the solitary traveller.

The farm-houses in the Sneeuwberg, and in most of the colder districts of the Colony, are usually of the following description.—The house

resembles a large barn divided into two or three apartments. One of these is the kitchen, which also serves for the sitting and eating apartment. In the others the family sleep; while, in the outer one already mentioned, visitors and travellers are accommodated with a rush mat, a feather-bed, and a coverlet spread on the clay floor. In this situation I have often enjoyed, after a fatiguing day's ride, the most balmy repose; while a swarthy train of slaves and Hottentots were moving round the embers of the fire, wrapped in their sheepskin mantles, and dogs, cats, and fowls, were trampling over my body. The more wealthy and long settled families, however, usually have the kitchen separate from their sitting-room. In such houses curtained beds, and other articles of decent furniture, are not unfrequently found; but the poorer classes are content with a few thong-bottomed chairs and stools, two or three waggon chests, and a couple of deal tables. At one of the latter sits the mistress of the house, with a tea-urn and chafing-dish before her, dealing out every now and then *tea-water*, or coffee, and elevating her sharp shrill voice occasionally to

keep the dilatory slaves and Hottentots at their duty. In this same apartment is also invariably to be seen the carcase of a sheep killed in the morning, and hung up under the eye of the mistress, to be served out frugally for the day's provision as it may be required. The houses, being without any ceiling, are open to the thatch; and the rafters are generally hung full of the ears of Indian corn, leaves or rolls of tobacco, slices of dried meat, called *bill tongue*, &c. The last is a sort of ham from the muscular part of the thigh of the ox, or the larger species of antelopes; it is very convenient for carrying on journeys, and is found in the boor's houses in every part of the Colony. It is cut into very thin slices, and eaten with bread and butter, or with bread and the melted fat of the sheep's tail, which is a common substitute for butter: either way it is no contemptible dish when one is a little hungry, and many a time I have heartily enjoyed it.

A traveller, on arriving, if it does not happen to be meal-time, is always presented with a cup of tea, without sugar, milk, or bread; unless oc-

asionally, when you may be favoured with a small piece of sugar-candy out of a tin snuff-box, to be kept in your mouth to sweeten the bitter beverage as it passes. When their tea and coffee are exhausted, a succedaneum is found in roasted grain, prepared in the same way as Hunt's *radical coffee*, which, if not very palatable, is nevertheless a refreshment to a thirsty and weary traveller. They never think of asking you to eat unless at meal-time ; but then you are expected to draw in your chair, and help yourself, without invitation, in the same easy manner as one of the family. The dishes consist for the most part of mutton stewed in sheep's tail fat, or boiled to rags ; sometimes with very palatable soup, and a dish of boiled corn, maize, or pumpkin. Cayenne pepper, vinegar, and a few home-made pickles, are also usually produced to relish the simple fare, which, served up twice a day, forms, with tea-water and the *soopie*, or dram of Cape brandy, the amount of their luxuries. In this quarter of the Colony, however, I found everywhere excellent bread ; and, upon the whole, the farmers of

Bruintjes-Hoogte and the Sneeuwberg appeared to be in much more independent and comfortable circumstances than those along the coast.

31.—Being moonlight, we proposed to proceed at three o'clock, A. M.; but a storm of snow and hail raging at that hour, we delayed *inspanning* till it had blown past, the horses being in the meanwhile put loose into an outhouse. At day-break, however, we found that they had all disappeared. The boy who had charge of them had laid himself down across the open door-way, and soon falling fast asleep, the horses had escaped by stepping over his body. All our people were instantly dispatched in search of them; and it was soon discovered by their traces that they had gone off towards Graaff-Reinet. We waited with the peevish patience which travellers usually muster on such occasions, until one o'clock, when the Landdrost joined us; and two hours afterwards our messengers returned with them, having had to follow them to a farm within a few miles of the Drostdy, where they usually grazed.

At length, about half-past three o'clock, we got again in motion, and continued our journey long

after nightfall, which at this season is about five o'clock, with a very brief twilight. Notwithstanding the darkness of the beclouded and boisterous night, it was surprising to see with what dexterity our swarthy coachmen drove on at a great rate on a road scarcely discernible, and in many places narrow and broken by rocks and gullies. I really could not see the fore horses. Yet, on we dashed, one of our drivers holding the reins and guiding the horses, the other smacking and lashing them up with his gigantic whip. This driving would astonish the best coachman in England, and shake the nerves of even our first four-in-hand men, till they got accustomed to it.

After passing through a dismal ravine, which I found was the bed of a *riviertje* or rivulet, we reached a boor's house, where we took up our quarters for the night.

June 1.—This morning opened clear and frosty, and the air, free from vapours, was bracing, and gave an exhilaration to the spirits which I had not felt for some time, although the scenery around our road through these lofty regions looked bleak and uninteresting. At seven we

took leave of our talkative, but hospitable host, who, by the bye, was in his own opinion, and that of his countrymen, a great doctor—in our's a great quack—but a mighty harmless sort of a fellow withal. As we proceeded we saw the lofty Compass-berg (or Spitskop) towering on our left. This mountain received its present appellation from the late Colonel Gordon, who estimated its height to be 6500 feet above the level of the sea. It is considered the highest point in the whole Colony, unless the Winterberg, on the eastern frontier, should be found, as some think, to equal or surpass it: the height of the latter has not yet been scientifically ascertained. From the Compass-berg, on the south side, flows the principal source of the Great Fish River; and on its north side is the source of the Zeekoe River, a large branch of the Gariiep, or Orange River; so that its waters flow equally into the Atlantic and Indian oceans.

After resting and feeding our horses at a farmhouse named Zuur-plaatz, we proceeded over the highest part of the Sneeuwberg range, where we felt the air very keen and piercing; but the

fleecy clouds rolling around the mountain peaks, and gilded by the declining sun, had a gorgeous and agreeable effect. From this part of the road we had a very extensive prospect. The Bambus-Bergen, or Bamboo mountains, and the country called New Hantam, which form the north-eastern extremity of the Colony, lay far to our right. A few days' journey from the Bambus-berg is the residence of one of the Tambookie chiefs, whose people frequently visit the colonists in that quarter, and live on friendly terms with them—unlike their Caffer countrymen near the coast.

In the course of the afternoon we overtook our bullock-waggons at the place of a rich boor,—whose entertainment, however, we found so indifferent, (unlike the frank hospitality of his countrymen in general,) that we preferred proceeding; and at sunset *outspanned* (unyoked) in the wilds, and pitched our tent, with a large fire in front of it, which kept us tolerably comfortable. The night was starlight but very cold. We had eight Hottentots in our party, who seemed to enjoy the fire exceedingly; and it was pleasing to see them smoking, and cracking their jokes all the

evening, unchecked by the presence of their masters. At nine o'clock we retired to sleep in the tent, the Hottentots stretching themselves, wrapped up in their sheepskin *carosses* (blankets), around the fire.

CHAPTER V.

Lions.—Deserted Dwellings.—Zeekoe River.—Bushmen.—
Back Settlers.—The Cradock River.

AT break of day we found the country covered with a thick white rime, or hoar frost, and the ice on the pools half an inch thick. At this time the thermometer stood at 26° , six degrees below the freezing point. After refreshing ourselves with a cup of warm coffee, we proceeded. Passed a boor's place, where an immense dunghill had been set on fire, as the only mode of removing it. It had already been burning for nine months, and would yet require double that period to burn out. An instance was mentioned to me of one of those masses of manure which had burned for seven years!

Since passing the heights of the Sneeuwberg we had been continually descending. Our road now followed the course of the Zeekoe River—as yet only a rill, with scarcely any stream in it. The country gradually became more open, and the plains spread out covered with game. At noon we overtook the bullock-waggon which we had dispatched, as usual, several hours before we started ourselves in the morning. The horse-waggon travels at the average rate of six miles per hour, while the ox-waggon only goes at half that rate, or a little more if the road is good and level.

When we had *outspanned* at mid-day, and were busy cooking a mutton chop for dinner, we were startled by the appearance of two lions, which passing within 400 yards of the waggons, proceeded to a neighbouring height that overlooked our encampment, and there lay down and gazed at us. This was the first sight I had had of those magnificent animals roving in power and freedom over their native plains. During our repast we kept a watchful eye upon them, having our

fire-arms all ready for action in case of an attack. They remained, however, perfectly quiet, and in about an hour we proceeded, leaving them undisturbed.

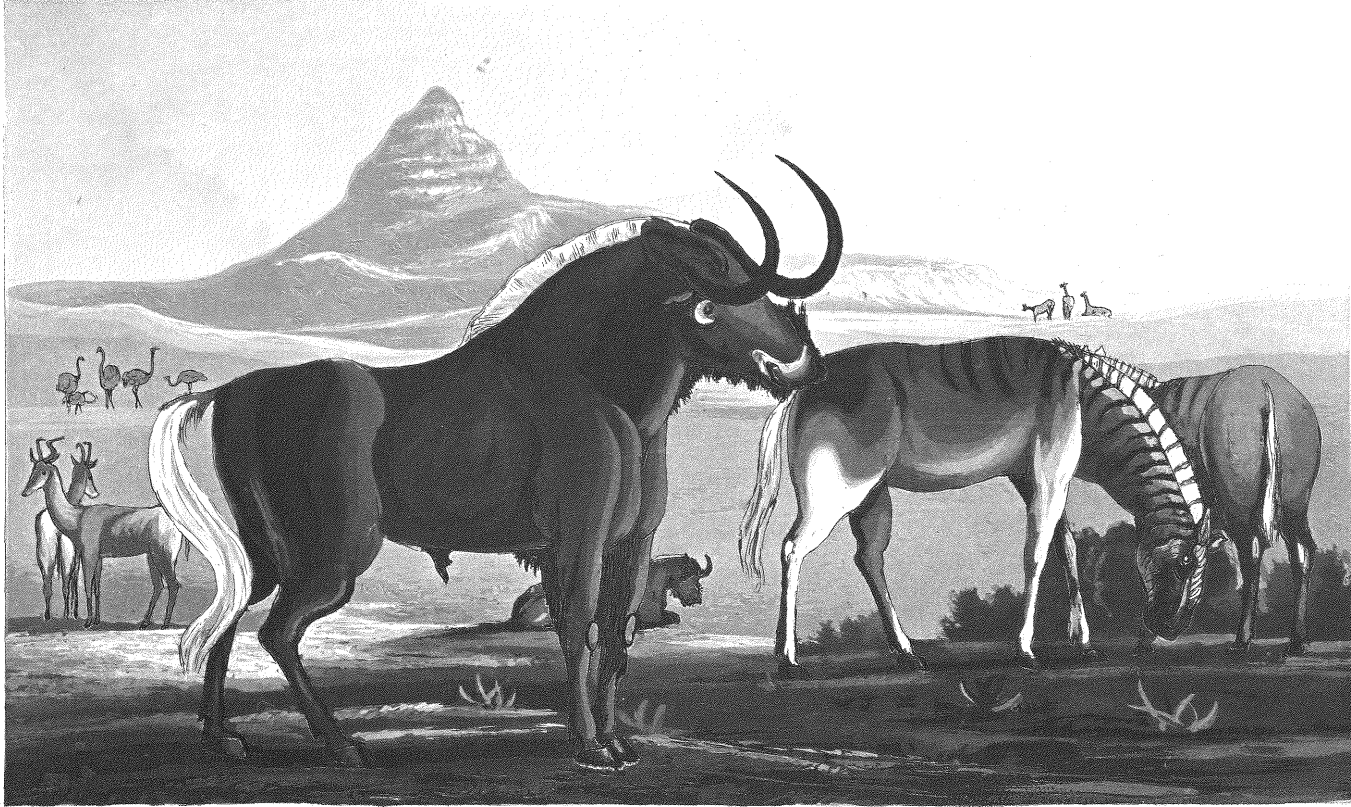
The lions in this quarter of the Colony are often very destructive to the property of the farmers, especially to horses, of which they appear to be particularly fond. They are, therefore, often hunted by the boors in self-defence, and the following is the method described to me as usually pursued :

Ten or twelve colonists, mounted, and armed with their large guns, go out; and having, with the assistance of their dogs or Hottentots, ascertained where the spoiler lies, approach within a moderate distance, and then alighting, make fast the horses to each other by their bridles and halters. They then advance to within about thirty paces, backing the horses before them, knowing that the lion will not spring till within half that distance, and being aware from his aspect and motions whether he is likely to anticipate their attack. As they advance, the lion at first surveys

them calmly, and wags his tail as if in a pleased or playful humour; but when they approach nearer, he begins to growl, and draws his hind parts under his breast till almost nothing of him is seen except his bushy bristling mane, and his eyes of living fire gleaming fiercely from the midst of it. He is now fully enraged, and only measuring his distance, in act to spring upon his audacious assailants. This is the critical moment, and the signal is given for half the party to fire. If they are not successful in killing him at the first volley, he springs like a thunderbolt upon the horses. The rest of the party then pour in their fire upon him, which seldom fails to finish his career, though, perhaps, with the loss of one or more horses; and sometimes, though more rarely, some even of the huntsmen are destroyed in these dangerous encounters.

As we proceeded along the plains gently declining from the Sneeuwberg, we discovered thousands of antelopes, quaghas, and gnoos.* This

* The two latter animals are accurately represented in the annexed plate, with other varieties of wild game, scattered over the plains, and the curious mountain called Bush-



G. Thompson. Esq. del.

THE GNU & QUAGGA.

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was the first time I had seen the last-named curious animal, which has been minutely described by Barrow, Lichtenstein, and Burchell. Hundreds of them were now playing round us, and ever and anon a troop of these fantastic animals would join a herd of quaghas, and all bound off helter-skelter across the plains, throwing up clouds of dust from the arid ground, which is here quite a karroo, and miserably parched and poor. The numbers and variety of the game formed, indeed, the only feature of animation and interest throughout this desolate region. Among the antelopes I observed a species only found in this quarter, and called the *bles-bok*. It much resembles the *bontè-bok*, which is found in the vicinity of Swellendam.

Since leaving Graaff-Reinet, I had not observed a tree or bush; the country both in the Sneeuw-berg and the northern plains being altogether naked and sterile-looking. The farmers suffer much from the scarcity of fuel in these barren regions, and are obliged to burn either some very small shrubs, or the dry dung of their cattle.

man's Kop, in the background. The Quagha (or Quagga,) is the wild ass of South Africa.

The feathered tribes seemed also to have deserted these barren and shelterless tracks. I saw only a few of the larger and more hardy species, such as the ostrich; the *pouw*, which is a sort of large bustard, and very delicate eating; the *korhaan*, a smaller sort of bustard, also prized by epicures; cranes, Namaqua partridges, and white-necked crows.

After a journey of about forty miles this day, we reached a boor's residence, at a place called Elands-Kloof. The house was locked up and deserted; the family having gone, like many other inhabitants of the higher country, to spend their winter with their flocks and herds in the more genial climate down the Zeekoe River. We took the liberty, however, of breaking into the house, and took up our quarters there for the night. We found a large quantity of the herb called *dacha*, a species of hemp,* hung up on the rafters. The leaves of this plant are eagerly sought after by the slaves and Hottentots to smoke, either mixed with tobacco or alone. It possesses much more powerfully stimulating qualities than tobacco, and speedily intoxicates those

who smoke it profusely, sometimes rendering them for a time quite mad. This inebriating effect is in fact the quality for which these poor creatures prize it. But the free use of it, just like opium, and all such powerful stimulants, is exceedingly pernicious, and gives the appearance of old age in a few years to its victims. It is, therefore, the more extraordinary, that the whites, who seldom use the *dacha* themselves, should cultivate it for their servants. But it is, I believe, as an inducement to retain the wild Bushmen in their service, whom they have made captives at an early age in their commandoes,—most of these people being extremely addicted to the smoking of *dacha*.

3.—This morning was very cold. On looking back towards the Sneeuwberg, we perceived that all the mountains were covered with snow, and congratulated ourselves on having got through with fair weather. After breakfast, prosecuted our journey through the same description of country as formerly, and frequented by the same sort of animals. Passed the skeletons of several gnoos and quaghas which had recently fallen victims to the lions. The country still declining to-

wards the north with many insulated hills dispersed over it. These appeared often so close in front, that there seemed no passage except over a ridge of mountains, yet on approaching, we always found that they stood quite detached, the plain spreading around and between them, while they rose abrupt and separate, like sugar-loaves placed upon a table.

At noon, reached a deserted boor's house, where we outspanned to refresh. Near this we discovered a Bushman and his family in a small hut of rushes. These were some of the race who live on friendly terms with the colonists. They were miserable, poor-looking objects, being almost entirely destitute of clothing, in these cold regions, which scarcely afford even the means of kindling a fire to warm them. They seemed not to be in the boor's service, but enjoying their freedom undisturbed. The man had just killed a gnoo with his poisoned arrows. The part pierced by the arrows he had cut out and thrown away; the rest of the carcass he and his family had carried to their hut, and were busy feasting on it.

We were now fast approaching the country

of these bandit tribes, or rather we were at present traversing wilds from which they had been partially expelled by the gradual encroachments of the colonists towards the north. Of their astonishing powers of sustaining hunger Captain Stockenstrom mentioned a remarkable instance to me. He had once found a Bushman in the wilderness, who had subsisted *fourteen days* without any other sustenance than water and salt. The poor creature seemed almost exhausted, and wasted to skin and bone, and it was feared that if allowed to eat freely, he might injure himself. However, it was at length agreed to let him have his own way, and before many hours had elapsed, he had nearly eat up half the carcase of a sheep. Next day the fellow appeared in excellent plight, and as rotund as an alderman. These people appear, indeed, to have acquired from habit, powers of stomach similar to the beasts of prey, both in voracity, and in supporting hunger. But I shall have occasion to revert again to their condition more fully.

In the evening we reached another boor's house, also deserted, into which, as usual, we