

# WARD

THE CAPE AND THE  
KAFFIRS: A DIARY OF  
FIVE YEARS' RESIDENCE  
IN KAFFIRLAND

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Five Years' Residence in Kaffirland**

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# **Harriet Ward**

## **The Cape and the Kaffirs: A Diary of Five Years' Residence in Kaffirland**

### **Dedication**

My dear Colonel Somerset,

My work on Kaffirland, which I had the honour to dedicate to you in 1848, having gone through two editions, I should consider this abstract narrative incomplete without your name. Permit me, then, to inscribe this little book to you, in testimony of that admiration for your public services which all must feel who have benefited by them, as well as in remembrance of much kindness to

Your obliged and faithful friend,

Harriet Ward.

Dover, *March*, 1851.

Note. Since this was written Colonel Somerset has been awarded the local rank of Major-General by Sir Harry Smith.

## Prologue

Much of the following work has already appeared, and has been favourably received by the public under the title of “Five Years in Kaffirland.” Its price, however, having necessarily limited its circulation, I have been induced to remodel it, and I now bring it forward in its present shape, with some little alteration and abridgment, and with the addition of much that appeared to me likely to render it serviceable to such of my countrymen as may be meditating an attempt to improve their circumstances by emigration, particularly if their views of where best to go are either undecided, or point in the direction of Southern Africa.

I have passed five eventful years in that country, and in what I have said of it I speak from personal experience, without any prejudices to gratify, or any party to serve, but actuated, I trust, by a sincere desire to be of service.

It is true that a cloud has again gathered over the land, but I feel justified in venturing the opinion that, under Providence, it will be dispersed by the judgment and energy of Sir Harry Smith.

The tide of emigration having lately set strongly in the direction of Natal, I have thought it necessary to give some account of that district, but as I have no personal knowledge of it, I have confined myself to the information supplied by published official reports.

## Part 1

### Chapter I. British Possessions in Southern Africa

The British possessions in Southern Africa, at the present day, consist of what has long been known as the Cape Colony, or the country extending from the extreme southern point of the continent to the 29th degree of south latitude; of a district adjoining on the east, called British Kaffraria; and a detached territory, called Natal, lying far removed from the rest, on the eastern coast, and bordering on the country called Delagoa, of which the possession is claimed by the Portuguese. In so large an extent of country there is, of course, much diversity of soil and general appearance, but it is unquestionable that the parts best adapted, on the whole, to European settlement, are the eastern districts, including Natal. The extent and population of each of these divisions may be roughly stated at—Cape Colony and British Kaffraria, 150,000 square miles, and 200,000 inhabitants; Natal, 18,000 square miles, and 20,000 inhabitants. In the Cape Colony the white and the coloured population are of about equal amount,<sup>1</sup> but in British Kaffraria and Natal the number of white inhabitants is as yet but small. Among the white inhabitants, those of Dutch origin greatly predominate, as is shown by a Government return of the various religious persuasions, in 1846, where, out of 70,310 white Christians, no less than 51,848 belong to the Dutch Reformed Church.

Southern Africa may be described as consisting of a series of terraces rising one above the other as they recede from the sea, and then declining towards the great Orange River, which, after a long course, generally from east to west, falls into the Atlantic Ocean about 500 miles north of the Cape. On the sea-shore is a belt of land, consisting of a level plain, from 10 to 30 miles in breadth, with some gentle hills, generally fertile, and enjoying a mild climate, but backed by a chain of low mountains called the Lange Kloof, or Long Pass, which support a wide table-land, or karroo, as it is termed, consisting generally of barren plains, yet well adapted to sheep-farming. Beyond, rises another mountain-chain called the Zwaarte Bergen, or Black Mountains, and further north a still wider table-land, called the Great Karroo, which is by some travellers compared to the steppes of Tartary; rain seldom falls here; the climate is rigorous at one season and excessively hot at another, and even sheep-farming can hardly be carried on. But further north, as the land slopes towards the Orange River, the climate is more equal, and the land increases in fertility, so that large herds of cattle are reared.

A somewhat similar series of terraces is found on the western coast, but their direction is north and south.

Of the rivers, much the largest is the Orange River, but from its remoteness from the settled portions of the country little use has yet been made of it. The Olifant's, or Elephant River, and the Great Berg River, fall into the sea on the west coast; the Broad River and the Knysna on the south coast while the east coast is watered by the Sunday River, which falls into Algoa Bay; the Great Fish River, the Keiskama, the Kei, and many smaller streams. In the vicinity of the district of Natal are found the Umzimkulu, the Umlazi, and many others, of which even the names are hardly known to Europeans.

The produce of Southern Africa is mainly agricultural. In the districts in the neighbourhood of Cape Town wine is produced, while the more remote parts furnish corn and wheat. The chief exports

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<sup>1</sup> In the Blue Book for 1847, the latest published account, the numbers stand, 71,113 white, and 75,977 coloured; but this leaves more than 21,000 of the total unaccounted for.

are wine and wool, with hides, tallow, and salted beef, goat-skins, corn, and butter. The provisions are sent chiefly to the Mauritius and South America.

The exports of wool are increasing rapidly, those of wine decreasing. In 1827, only 44,441 pounds of wool were exported: in 1846, 3,000,000 pounds; while the wine had decreased in same period from 740,000 to 185,000 gallons. The white fishery, which was formerly pursued with success, has now declined, but the amount of shipping belonging to the Colony has more than doubled in the last ten years.

The Cape Colony is divided into the thirteen districts the Cape, Stellenbosch, Worcester, and Clanwilliam, in western part; Swellendam, George, and Uitenhage, in the south; Albany, in the east; and Beaufort, Graaf Reinet, Colesberg, Cradock, and Somerset, in the interior.

Cape Town, on the southern shore of Table Bay, and about thirty miles to the north of the Cape of Good Hope, is a well-built place, the streets laid out in regular lines, and some are shaded by trees. The houses are mostly of respectable size, and have a kind of terrace before the door. It is spoken of as having a more English appearance than most colonial capitals, the whole being extremely clean, and the public edifices numerous and substantial, including the Government House, the Stadthuis, or Municipality, several handsome churches, an exchange, and an observatory. The population is nearly 30,000. Immediately behind the town rises the Table Mountain, and to the south is a district in which are found many elegant villas, surrounded by vineyards and thriving plantations.

The town next in importance is Graham's Town, in the Albany district. This is the capital of the eastern district of the Colony. It has a population of about 7,000, and is 650 miles distant from Cape Town. It was only founded in the year 1810, by Colonel Graham, but it has many good buildings, and its merchants and traders are considered as particularly active and enterprising. Thirty-five miles off, at the mouth of the Kowie River, is the rising settlement of Port Frances.

Of the other towns, it may be sufficient to remark, that Swellendam, Uitenhage, and Graaf Reinet, are Dutch towns, and the latter occupies a most picturesque situation among gardens and orchards. George and Port Elizabeth are more English in appearance; the latter is the port town of Algoa Bay, and its commerce is rapidly increasing. Worcester Beaufort, Cradock, and Somerset, are mere villages.

The importance of the Cape as a naval and military station has been often dwelt on by abler pens than mine. The desirableness of fully occupying the country with a white population is also fully admitted; and as it is certain that the most fertile and valuable districts are those which yet remain to be settled, namely, the eastern ports, it is to be hoped that thousands who now struggle for a precarious existence at home, will annually take up their abode there, and that their well-directed industry will tenfold increase the value of the country of their adoption.

As regards the district of Natal, the following reports, abridged, from Mr Stanger, the Surveyor-General, Mr Shepstone, the Diplomatic Agent, and Lieutenant Gibb, of the Royal Engineers, will suffice to give a very favourable idea of its capabilities. They are dated December 28, 1847.

The Commissioners state that they have divided the territory into the six districts of D'Urban, Pietermaritzburg, Umvoti, Impafane, Upper Tukela, and Umzinyati, (from the native names of the principal rivers running through them), and then proceed to describe each in detail.

*D'Urban.*—“This division is well adapted to sustain a dense population; it includes the Bay of Natal, and the township of D'Urban, the port of the district. Cotton has been planted in the vicinity of the bay, and yields superior and abundant produce. Sugar-cane and indigo-plants thrive there, as well as elsewhere in the district, and the coffee-tree has lately been introduced and grows well; but what success will attend its cultivation, will require time to show. The soil is rich, and favourable to the growth of barley, oats, etc, as well as beans and most descriptions of vegetables. (Beans form a valuable article of export to the Mauritius.) It is, throughout, well supplied with water; being in its present state unfit for pasture-ground. It appears to us desirable that the land should be laid out in



small lots, in order to encourage the settler, as much as possible, to cultivate it. At present only the small Zulu cattle can be kept there, and those not with advantage.

“With the exception of mangrove, scarcely any timber adapted for building purposes is found in this division: in a few localities valuable waggon-wood is obtained.

“A considerable part of this division is occupied by natives, inhabiting the ground apportioned for them in the Umlazi and Inanda locations, and the majority of white colonists will necessarily be north of the Umgeni River, where a few are already located. It is of great and immediate importance that a bridge should be constructed over this river, separating, as it does, the seat of magistracy and the port, not only from the most populous part of the division, but from the whole of that of the Umvoti.”

*Pietermaritzburg*.—“This division includes the seat of government, and head-quarters of the military.

“It is a good grazing and a superior agricultural division; it is abundantly watered, and capable of irrigation to almost any extent. Vegetation is very rapid in this, as in all the other districts, and consequently the grass grows rank and strong, so as generally only to admit of the larger description of stock, such as cattle and horses, being depastured upon it with advantage in summer. Valuable timber, adapted for building purposes and furniture, grows in several parts of this division.

“At present, Her Majesty’s troops stationed at Pietermaritzburg procure all their supplies of corn and meal from Cape Town, at a great cost to the military chest. This evil may be remedied by the industrious cultivation of the neighbouring farms (which have hitherto been very generally neglected), and the lands that appear to us to be available for this purpose around Pietermaritzburg, which might, at some future period, be marked off in lots of from 50 to 500 acres, and disposed of to practical agriculturists.

“Pietermaritzburg being the seat of government, it is of paramount importance that bridges or other certain means of passage should be constructed over the Umgeni river, so as to secure free communication as well to the northern and north-western divisions of the district, as to that part of this division that lies beyond the Umgeni.

“This portion of country includes the native location of the Zwartkop, as also the one contemplated on the banks of the Unkomanzi.”

*Umvoti*.—“This division comprises some of the finest land in this part of South Africa, either for grazing or agricultural purposes; the capabilities of the south-eastern portion of it are similar to those of D’Urban, but cattle thrive better, and the upper portion of it is considered much more favourable to the grazier than the division of Pietermaritzburg; it is abundantly supplied with water, and some good timber is found in it. The laying out and making a shorter road to the mouth of the Tukela from the township, is a matter of importance, seeing it is the high-road from the capital of the district to the Zulu country.

“The site proposed for the township (the Umvoti Waggon Drift, high-road from Pietermaritzburg to the Zulu country, *viâ* the mouth of the Tukela,) is an eligible position at which to station a military force, to serve at once as a protection to that portion of the district, a rallying-point for the colonists and native subjects, and to impart confidence, in the event of any hostile demonstration by the Zulu nation.

“The native location of the Umvoti is comprised in this division; and natives, in considerable numbers, reside along its northern boundary, whose location we have not as yet been enabled to report upon.”

*Impafane*.—“This tract of country contains land which has been the most thickly populated portion of the country by the Boers, before they quitted the district, and crossed the Kahlamba; and has always been regarded by them as healthier for cattle than either of the three former divisions. Sheep have also thrived well in some parts of it; and, although not generally so well watered, and, therefore, perhaps not so capable of maintaining over its whole surface so dense a population as the other three divisions, yet it is equally able to do so in localities, and at the village of Weenen, and

along the banks of the Mooi River, and particularly Bushman's River. Wheat and oats have been grown largely, and with success. The soil at the village of Weenen is especially fertile, excellent garden land, the vine, fruit trees, vegetables, etc, thriving well; but the place being situated in a basin, and the approach to it on all sides being by miserable roads, that will require considerable outlay and work to make good, and being situated off the main road, have retarded the prosperity of the village, and will be likely to do so. Small quantities of coal, of inferior quality, have been found along the banks of the Bushman's River, near the surface. Some building timber is obtained at the base of the Kahlamba mountains.

"The site recommended for a township on the Bushman's River is well adapted for the station of a military party, and to form the head-quarters of the upper portion of the district; it is sixty-three miles distant from Pietermaritzburg. There is not, however, much available government land about it.

"An objection has been raised to this site, that the Little Bushman's River, from which the water would be led for the supply of the town, fails in very dry seasons; and another spot has been proposed in its stead, a few miles lower down the river. We are not sufficiently acquainted with this site to be able to report on the eligibility at present.

"It is highly important that bridges, or other permanent means of communication, across the Bushman's and Mooi Rivers, should be constructed."

*Upper Tukela.*—"Cattle thrive well in this division, and sheep in the lower part of it. Its general capabilities, nature of the soil, etc, are the same as those of the Impafane. Yellow-wood abounds under the Kahlamba mountains, and coal of a fair quality occurs in the hills on the north side of the Tukela.

"Some natives are resident under the Kahlamba: their location has not yet been reported upon.

"At Lombaard's Drift a small party of military might be stationed with advantage, as also at Venter's Spruit, to guard Bezuidenhout's Pass over the Kahlamba, to keep up the communication with the country over the Kahlamba, and road to the old Colony, *via* Colesberg."

*Umzintyati.*—"This division has been esteemed as particularly favourable for sheep and cattle; it has also been largely cultivated by the Boers. Anthracitic coal is found near the Washbank's and Sunday's Rivers, and in abundance and of excellent quality in the ravines between the Biggar's Berg and the Umzinyati River. Excellent timber may be obtained in this division.

"A spot has been selected by the late Volks Raad, for a town on the Sunday's River, which has lately been occupied by Andries Spies, as a farm; but the disturbed state of this division prevents us from reporting definitely upon the capabilities, from personal observation.

"Considerable numbers of natives are resident in the south-east portion of this division: their location we have not yet been able to report upon.

"The formation of each town and village must, of course, depend almost entirely upon the nature of the ground upon which it is to be traced, and that of its immediate vicinity. But it seems to us most important that each of these settlements should have some means of defence within itself;—some rallying-point for its inhabitants and adjacent farmers, in cases of emergency; and for this purpose we would recommend that the Government should erect a church, school, and magistrate's office, with a lock-up room, placed in a defensible position; perhaps, when the ground will admit, which, in most cases we think it will, according to one or other of the annexed plans, which includes a cattle kraal in one part of the market-square, the whole to be surrounded by a fence, and flanking enclosures, to be constructed either of stone, brick, or palisades: the remaining portion of enclosures might at first be made by a ditch and mud wall, to be replaced hereafter by a more durable material.

"The size of the square and dimensions of the building, etc, must, of course, be regulated according to the importance of the proposed village or town.

"Thus would be formed a commencement, round which the settlers might gather with confidence, which we believe to be essential to the prosperity of such settlements, the more particularly at their first formation; one of them, such as the Umvoti, we recommend to be established

at once, by being laid out and surveyed, the necessary buildings erected, and a magistrate and clergyman appointed, in order to prepare the way for settlers.

“We are of opinion that each township should have a portion of its town lands appropriated to the use of such natives as are engaged in the service of the inhabitants as daily labourers. The want of such an appropriation at D’Urban is very seriously felt, especially by such of the inhabitants as are engaged in the shipping business; and we beg to recommend that at this, as well as at the other established townships, such appropriations be at once made.

“We do not at present anticipate that any difficulty will arise from the necessity of compensating any claims to the lands suggested as the sites for towns and villages, as the sites recommended do not interfere with any lands now occupied. And the details of compensating the claimants of unoccupied lands, as well as of the extent of land available for dense population around its township, and of the number of emigrants that may be accommodated in and around each town, will form the subject of future inquiry.

“Having thus endeavoured to comply with his Honour’s instructions to the extent of our ability, it now only remains for us to offer such observations upon the present state and future prospects of this district, as well as its general capabilities, as appear to us desirable, in order that the Lieutenant-Governor may have before him all the information we are capable of imparting, while deliberating on the important subjects so slightly sketched in the Report.

“The continued emigration of the Boers from this district to the country beyond the boundaries, that has been going on ever since it was taken possession of in 1842, by Her Majesty’s troops, has, as is well-known, almost denuded it of its white inhabitants, and discouraged the few that remain. It is also evident that there is no prospect of filling up any portion of it with Boers, and little by any removals from the old Colony; the only effective remedy to this evil appears to us to consist in an extensive emigration from the United Kingdom; without this the resources of the district, confessedly great, and in our opinion equal, if not superior, to any other British colony, both as respects fertility of soil and abundance of water, will remain undeveloped.

“The climate is most healthy, and subject to none of the epidemics that are incidental to other parts of Africa.

“By emigrants we would be understood to imply not so much an exclusively labouring population, as practical farmers possessed of small capital, say 200 pounds to 500 pounds. Men of this class could bring out their own labourers; and as an encouragement for them to do so, we should recommend that they should receive an equivalent in land, to the amount that they have necessarily expended in the outfit and passage of themselves, families, and servants. An arrangement of this nature would enable a man possessing capital to the extent we have mentioned, to commence farming with advantage, the moment of his arrival in the district; while, without it, the means of a most valuable class of colonists would be swallowed up in expenses, and upon their landing here, emigrants with limited capital, would find themselves very little better off than before they left their native land.

“Could the fertility of the country and salubrity of its climate be pointed out, together with advantages such as those we have mentioned, we doubt not that numbers of the class we allude to, would be found willing, and even anxious to avail themselves of the facilities which this district in particular promises to emigrants.

“Any delay occurring in their obtaining suitable land immediately on their arrival, would of course prove fatal to the success of the undertaking. To obviate such a misfortune, we would recommend that a considerable number of plots of ground be surveyed and ready for selection by the emigrants, and that every facility be afforded them immediately to obtain the spots thus chosen, either by public sale or otherwise, as shall be deemed most advisable by his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

“By a more extensive emigration than this appears to contemplate, or rather by the simultaneous emigration of persons sufficient in number, and suitable in character for forming communities of

themselves, the towns and villages might be peopled, and the adjacent lands brought under cultivation. After a few of these shall be thus established, the remaining intervals of country will speedily be filled up, and the more so when each township shall be provided with its magistrate, minister of religion, the requisite public buildings, and the means of defence.

“Most of the associations connected in the mind of an European with the name of Kaffir, have been formed upon the represented bad character and conduct of the nation so called, now engaged in a serious and expensive war with the old Colony; and are consequently highly unfavourable to any people bearing a name which, by common consent, attributes all the cunning faithlessness of the savage, with an admixture of many of the depravities of civilised life, to its bearer.

“In our Report of the 30th of March last, we pointed out the peculiar position and character of the natives inhabiting the district; it will, therefore, be unnecessary for us to say more on this, than that they are widely different from those on the frontier of the old colony, and are valuable and indispensable assistants to the white settler. We take occasion to make these remarks, because we are of opinion that when the recommendations we have made in our General Report shall have been carried out, the presence of so many natives, most of them available as labourers, should be an inducement to emigrants selecting this district as the land of their adoption, rather than operate prejudicially.

“The future prospects of the district of Natal as a colony, depend very materially, if not exclusively, upon the filling up of the unoccupied intervals of the district with emigrants from the United Kingdom, and the efficient management and control of the native population within it. Its general capabilities, as we have already represented, are of the highest class, either for agricultural or grazing purposes. It contains an area of 18,000 square miles, within which is found every material for improvement and prosperity a colony can be favoured with, and requires but an intelligent white population to develop its immense and fertile resources.

“Building stone of a very good quality is found all over its surface; and in some localities a superior description of free-stone is found in abundance. Iron ore is found in great abundance in the district, and has been used by the natives for their assegais and agricultural implements, and is said to be of a very superior quality.

“The prices realised in England for the first exportation of cotton grown in this district, exhibited under all the disadvantageous circumstances connected with the utter inexperience on the part of the grower, of 7.25 pence per pound, warrants an inference highly favourable to the quality of the article, when it shall have received the treatment that experience has taught to be necessary in cotton-growing countries.

“We are of opinion that this district inhabited by an industrious white population, will produce valuable exports, both in amount and quality, and is capable of maintaining a denser population than the colony of the Cape of Good Hope; and we trust that its resources and advantages may not become lost to the subjects of the British crown, from their not being represented as their high merits appear to us to deserve.

“In this Report,” Mr Stanger remarks, “I shall not enter fully into the geography of the interior of the district, reserving that for a future time, as I shall have a good opportunity of continuing the same kind of observations, and thus fixing more points than at present I have been able to do, during the proposed enquiry as to the location of the natives; but shall describe, as far as I am able, the boundary and extent of the district of Natal.

“The Umzinyati rises at the base of the Draakberg, in latitude 27 degrees 46 minutes and longitude 20 degrees 25 minutes; from this its course is about E.S.E., until it falls into the Utukela (incorrectly called the Tukela.) From all the information I can obtain, (not having yet visited this part of the district) this is below the confluence of the Mooi River and the Utukela, and therefore not very far from the mouth of the latter, which from the maps appears to be in latitude 29 degrees 16

minutes South and longitude 31 degrees 30 minutes East; thus forming the north-eastern boundary of the district.

“The country below the rise of the Umzinyati, and for the distance of about twenty miles, is for the most part flat and undulating, with little or no wood, but covered with sweet grass, and from what I can ascertain is considered a good tract for country sheep.

“The river, when I saw it (in February, 1847), was about sixty yards wide, it being then full of water; below this, and during its whole course, I understand it runs through a broken and thick bushy country.

“The Draakberg, instead of being considered as one continuous chain of mountains, may be more correctly divided into two, of different geological structure, and having different directions: the one forming the north-western boundary I shall call the Great Draakberg; and the other, forming the western boundary, the Small Draakberg.

“The north-western portion of the Draakberg is of the average altitude of five thousand feet above the sea, and about fifteen hundred feet above the general level of the country at its base.

“The outline is in general round and soft, presenting some remarkable features, and occasionally high table-lands with precipitous sides. These mountains are composed of beds of sandstone, cut through by veins of trap, and diminish in height as they advance to the north-east, until at some distance beyond the source of the Umzinyati they appear to terminate in low hills. They are passable almost at any part by horses and cattle; but there are only three passes in use by the Boers, one near Bezuidenhout's Farm, in latitude 28 degrees 33 minutes South and longitude 28 degrees 44 minutes East; and one at De Beer's, in latitude 28 degrees 20 minutes South and longitude 28 degrees 52 minutes East, and another a little more to the south-west of Bezuidenhout's. The two former are in constant use; the latter rarely.

“Timber abounds in the kloofs on the south-eastern side of the mountain. On the north-west the country is much higher, being a plain of great elevation.

“The Great Draakberg, or that portion of it which forms the western boundary, has a direction N.N.W. and S.S.E. The junction of this with the former, or Small Draakberg, is ten or twelve miles to the S.W. of Bezuidenhout's Pass:—from this part the Utukela rises.

“These mountains are much higher than the others, and are quite impassable, presenting a rugged outline and bold and precipitous escarpments. From a distant view, from the nature of the outline (not having been near them) I infer that they are granitic.

“The area of this district, from the ascertained and assumed boundaries will be much greater than has hitherto been supposed. It cannot, I imagine, be less than 13,500 instead of 10,000 square miles. At the same time it must be remembered, that if I find by my future observations, (which I think will very probably be the case) the same amount of error, and in the same direction in the southern portion of the district, of which at present I know nothing, as I have found in the northern, the area will be increased by a great quantity, and may not fall far short of 16,000 square miles, as a small deviation in the assigned direction of the Great Draakberg will easily make that quantity.

“The district is everywhere covered with vegetation, either in the form of luxuriant grass, which grows to a great height, or thorns and low bushes. Timber trees only grow in kloofs on sides of hills, excepting a belt which runs along the sea-coast.

“Water abounds in every part, and flowing streams cross the path at intervals of only a few miles. In the winter some of these become dry, but then water may always be obtained at moderate distances.

“The soil is in all cases well adapted for cultivation, and on the alluvial lands near rivers particularly so, producing much larger crops than are ever grown in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope.

“The rocks which occur in the district, as far as I have yet seen, are granite, basalt, and members of the trap family, slate, sandstone, and shale.

“Coal containing but little bituminous matter occurs in in beds in the sandstone. In a kloof near the drift of the Bushman’s River, there is a bed nine inches thick. This is the nearest locality I am aware of to Pietermaritzburg; it is distant about sixty-three miles. It is more abundant to the north-west, and I observed it in a small river near Biggar’s Berg, in about latitude 28 degrees 7 minutes South, and longitude 29 degrees 25 minutes East, in a bed six feet thick, and of good quality; it is here cut through by a vein of trap.”

## Chapter II. Information for Emigrants

As it is my wish to put nothing but trustworthy information into the hands of those who may be meditating so very important a step as removing themselves and all that they value far from their native land, I have carefully abstracted the following statements from the last *Colonisation Circular*, issued (March, 1850) by Her Majesty's Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners.

“The Government Emigration Officers in the United Kingdom, are:—London: Lieut. Lean, R.N., Office, 70, Lower Thames-Street. Liverpool: Lieut. Hodder, R.N., Stanley Buildings. Plymouth: Lieut. Carew, R.N. Glasgow and Greenock: Capt. Patey, R.N. Dublin: Lieut. Henry, R.N. Cork: Lieut. Friend, R.N. Belfast: Lieut. Stark, R.N. Limerick: Mr Lynch, R.N. Sligo, Donegal, Ballina etc: Lieut. Shuttleworth, R.N.; Lieut. Moriarty, R.N. Londonderry: Lieut. Ramsay, R.N. Waterford and New Res. Comm. Ellis, R.N.

“These officers act under the immediate directions of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, and the following is a summary of their duties:

“They procure and give gratuitously information as to the sailing of ships, and means of accommodation for emigrants, and whenever applied to for that purpose, they see that any agreements between shipowners, agents or masters, and intending emigrants are duly performed. They also see that the provisions of the Passengers' Act are strictly complied with, viz., that passenger-vessels are sea-worthy, that they have on board a sufficient supply of provisions, water, medicines, etc, and that they sail with proper punctuality.

“They attend personally at their offices on every week-day and afford gratuitously all the assistance in their power to protect intending emigrants against fraud and imposition, and to obtain redress where oppression or injury has been practised on them.

“The Government Immigration Agents at the Cape of Good Hope, are—Cape Town: R. Southey, Esq. Port Elizabeth: D.P. Francis, Esq.

“The duties of these officers are to afford gratuitously to emigrants every assistance in their power by way of advice and information as to the districts where employment can be obtained most readily, and upon the most advantageous terms, and also as to the best modes of reaching such districts.

“The rate of passage in private ships to the Cape of Good Hope and Natal is:

	CABIN.		INTERMEDIATE.		STEERAGE	
	Including Provisions.		With Provisions.	Without Provisions.	With full allowance for Provisions.	
	From	To	From	To	From	To
	£	£	£	£	£	£
From London ....	25	50	19	25	10	15
Liverpool ....	35	40	25	—	14	15
Ports in the						
Clyde ....	30	50	—	—	15	20
Cork ....	Same as in London.					

“At the Cape of Good Hope, persons of the following classes, if of good character and ability in their callings, are stated to be in demand; viz. agricultural labourers, shepherds, female domestic

and farm servants, and a few country mechanics, such as blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters, and masons.”

Of the rates of wages the Commissioners give the following Tables from the latest official returns in their possession:

Districts.	Domestic.	Farm.	Trades.
	Per Month.	Per Month.	Per Day.
Cape Town .... {	15s. to 60s. average 37s. 6d.	{ 43s. 9d.	5s. 3d.
Cape Division ....	15s.	15s.	4s.*
Stellenbosch ....	18s.	12s.	3s. 9d.
Worcester ....	15s.	9s.	3s. 9d.
Clanwilliam ....	6s.	6s.	2s. 6d.
Swellendam.... {	12s. to 20s. males 7s. 6d. to 12s. females	{ 10s.	{ 5s.† to 7s. 6d. 6s. 3d. av.
Beaufort .... {	6s. 11d. males 3s. 8d. females	{ 7s. 7d.	6s.
Uitenhage ....	12s.	15s.	4s. 6d.
Albany :—			
Graham's Town {	25s. to 45s. males 18s. to 30s. females	....	{ 6s.
Other parts of the division . }	12s. to 20s. females	{ 20s. to 60s. 40s. average	
George.... ....	20s.	30s.	4s. 6d.
Somerset ....	9s.	4s. 6d.	6s.
Cradock ....	45s.	45s.	6s. 6d.
Graaff Reinet . {	10s. males 9s. females	{ 10s.	7s.
Colesberg .... }	18s. males 7s. 6d. females	{ 2s. per day	7s. 6d.

As very many persons who would be most useful in the Colonies have no means of their own for proceeding thither, various provisions have been made to assist them. Thus the Emigration Commissioners “grant passages to those Colonies (only) which provide the necessary funds for the purpose. These funds, which in the Australian Colonies are derived from sales or rents of crown lands, are intended not for the purposes of relief to persons in this country, but to supply the colonists with the particular description of labour of which they stand most in need. New South Wales, South Australia, and the Cape of Good Hope, are at present the only Colonies which supply the means for emigration.”

The Poor Law Commissioners, too, are enabled to assist in emigration, and the guardians of the poor in parishes are by them allowed to raise sums of money for the purpose, of which they “may expend a sum not exceeding 3 pence a mile in conveying each emigrant above seven years of age to the port of embarkation, and a sum not exceeding 1.5 pence a mile in conveying each child under seven years of age.

“The guardians may give to each emigrant proceeding to the Cape of Good Hope, clothing to the value of 2 pounds, and may expend a sum not exceeding 1 pound for each person above fourteen, and 10 shillings for every child above one and under fourteen years of age, and in cases of free emigration, 2 pounds for every single man above eighteen years of age, in the purchase of bedding and utensils for the voyage.”

The following are the regulations and conditions under which emigrants are selected by the Emigration Commissioners for passages to the Cape of Good Hope:

“Description of Emigrants.



“1. The emigrants must consist principally of married couples, not above forty years of age. All the adults must be capable of labour, and must be going out to work for wages. The candidates most acceptable are young married couples without children.

“2. The separation of husbands from wives, and of parents from children under sixteen will in no case be allowed.

“3. Except in special cases, single women under eighteen are not eligible, unless they are emigrating with their parents, or under the immediate care of some near married relatives.

“4. Young men under eighteen, not accompanying their parents, are admissible only on payment of the sum in third class of the scale.

“5. No emigrants, whether adults or children can be accepted unless they have been vaccinated, or have had the smallpox.

“6. Persons intending to buy land in the colony, or to invest capital in trade there, are not eligible for a passage.

“7. Persons in the habitual receipt of parish relief cannot be taken. Temporary inmates of workhouses, or persons not in the habitual receipt of parish relief, will be charged under the third class.

“8. No applicant will be accepted without decisive certificates of good character, and of proficiency in his professed trade or calling.

“These rules will also apply generally to emigrants to Natal in case they be proposed for a passage by purchasers of land, or in case funds should be provided for carrying on emigration at the public expense. The persons eligible for passages to Natal would be agricultural labourers, mechanics, skilled labourers, and small farmers accustomed to some manual labour, and intending to work for their subsistence. Deposits to the credit of the Commissioners do not exempt the depositors from the payment of survey fees.

*“Application and Approval.*

“9. Applications must be made in a form to be obtained at the office of the Commissioners, which must be duly filled up and attested, as explained in the form itself, and then forwarded to this office, with certificates of birth and marriage of the applicants. It must, however, be distinctly understood, that the filling up of the form confers no claim to a passage; and that the Commissioners do not pledge themselves to accept any candidates, though apparently within the regulations, unless they are deemed desirable for the colony, and can be accepted consistently with the Board's arrangements at the time the application is under consideration.

“10. If approved of, the emigrants will receive a passage as soon as the arrangements of the Commissioners will admit. But no preparations must on any account be made by the applicants, either by withdrawing from employment or otherwise, until the decision of the Board has been communicated to them. Those who fail to attend to this warning will do so at their own risk, and will have no claim whatever on the Commissioners.

“Before an embarkation order is issued, the following payments will be required from all persons of fourteen years and upwards.

	Between the Ages of		50 and upwards.
	14 and 40.	40 and 50.	
	£	£	£
From agricultural labourers, shepherds, herdsmen, and female domestic servants ... ..	1	5	10
From blacksmiths, bricklayers, carpenters, masons, coopers, wheelwrights, millwrights, and bakers ... ..	4	7	10
From all other persons of the labouring class ... ..	6	8	10

“All children under fourteen will pay 10 shillings each; and if any family contains, at the time of embarkation, more than two children under fourteen years of age, for each such child 5 shillings additional must be paid.

“Wives to pay the same sums as their husbands, in the several classes.

“Out of the above payments, bedding and mess utensils for the use of the emigrants during the voyage, will be provided by the Commissioners.

“The mode of making these payments to the Commissioners will be pointed out in the deposit circular. The Commissioners’ selecting agents are not employed by the Commissioners to receive money.”

Any attempted fraud with regard to the signatures of the requisite certificates, or misrepresentation as to trade, number in family, will be held to disqualify the party for a passage. The emigrants must repair to the appointed port at their own expense, and if they fail to do so at the proper time, they will lose their passage and be liable to a forfeiture of 2 pounds for each adult, and 1 pound for each child, unless they give to the Commissioners timely notice, and a satisfactory explanation of their inability to proceed.

“Clothing.—The lowest quantity that can be admitted for emigrants to the Cape is as follows:—”

For Males.	For Females.
Four shirts.	Six shifts.
Four pairs stockings.	Two flannel petticoats.
Two pairs shoes.	Four pairs stockings.
Two complete suits of exterior clothing.	Two pairs shoes.
	Two gowns.

“For use on the voyage, shoes or slippers are much more convenient than boots. The following is a cheap and excellent composition for preserving leather from the bad effects of sea-water; linseed oil, one gill; spirit of turpentine, one ounce; bees’-wax, one ounce; Burgundy pitch, half ounce; to be well melted together, and kept covered in a gallipot; lay it on boots or shoes, rubbing it in well, and set them in a hot sun, or before the fire.

“The usual length of the voyage to the Cape of Good Hope is about seventy days.

“The whole quantity of baggage for each adult emigrant must not measure more than twenty cubic or solid feet, nor exceed half a ton in weight. It must be divided into two or three boxes, the contents of which must be closely packed, so as to save space in the ship. Large packages and extra baggage will not be taken unless paid for, and then only in case there be room in the ship.

“Each family will be allowed to take only its own luggage. Any violation of this rule will subject the party to a forfeiture of his passage.

“On arrival in the colony the emigrants will be at perfect liberty to engage themselves to any one willing to employ them, and to make their own bargain for wages. No repayment or service is required from them for the passage out. The only return expected is, a strict observance on board of the regulations framed with a view to their health and comfort during the voyage, and general good conduct and industrious habits in the colony.

“Letters, etc, should be addressed, post paid, to Stephen Walcott, Esq, Secretary to the Board of Emigration, Number 9, Park Street, Westminster.”

By a recent Act of Parliament known as the “Passenger Act,” some most valuable provisions are made for the protection of emigrants on their voyage. The Act applies to foreign as well as British ships, and it provides for the inspection of the ships by competent surveyors; for carrying a certain number of boats; for a proper supply of medicine; and for preventing drunkenness. It further directs that “in addition to any provisions which the passengers may themselves bring, the following quantities at least of pure water and wholesome provisions must be supplied to each passenger by the master during the voyage, including the time of detention at any place:—”

3 quarts of water daily.

And per week. To be issued in advance, and not less often than twice a week:

2.5 lbs. of bread or biscuit (not inferior to navy biscuit)

1 lb. wheaten flour

5 lbs. oatmeal

2 lbs. rice

2 oz. tea

1 lb. sugar

1 lb. molasses.

“Five pounds of good potatoes may at the option of the master be substituted for one pound of oatmeal or rice, and in ships sailing from Liverpool, or from Irish or Scotch ports, oatmeal may be substituted in equal quantities for the whole or any part of the issues of rice. The Emigration Commissioners, with the authority of the Secretary of State, may substitute other articles of food.—Sec. 24 and 25.

“Vessels carrying as many as 100 passengers must be provided with a seafaring person to act as passengers’ cook, and also with a proper cooking apparatus. A convenient place must be set apart on deck for cooking, and a proper supply of food shipped for the voyage. The whole to be subject to the approval of the Emigration Officer.—Sec. 26.

“If the ship does not sail on the appointed day, and the passengers are ready to embark, they are entitled to recover from the owner, charterer, or master of the ship, subsistence-money after the rate of 1 shilling per day for each passenger. But if the ship be unavoidably detained by wind or weather, and the passengers be maintained on board in the same manner as if the voyage had commenced, no subsistence-money is payable.—Sec. 33.

“Passengers are not to be landed against their consent at any place other than the one contracted for, and they are entitled to sleep and to be maintained on board for forty-eight hours after arrival, unless the ship in the prosecution of her voyage quits the port sooner.—Sec. 35 and 36.

“Ships detained in port after clearance more than seven days, or putting into any port in the United Kingdom, must under a penalty not exceeding 100 pounds, replenish their provisions, water, and medical stores before they can be allowed to proceed on their voyage. Masters of passenger ships putting back must, under a penalty not exceeding 10 pounds, within twenty-four hours report their arrival, and the cause of putting back, and the condition of the ship’s stores to the Emigration Officer, and produce the official list of passengers.—Sec. 38.

“Such regulations as may be prescribed by order of the Queen in Council are to be enforced by the surgeon, aided and assisted by the master, or in the absence of a surgeon, by the master. Any person neglecting or refusing to obey them will be liable to a penalty of 2 pounds; and any person obstructing the master or surgeon in the execution of any duty imposed on him by the Order in Council, will be liable to the same penalty, and moreover to one month's imprisonment at the end of the voyage.—Sec. 39 and 40.

“Two copies of the Act, with such abstracts of it, and of any Order in Council relating thereto, as the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners may prepare, are to be delivered to the master, who is bound, under a penalty not exceeding 40 shillings per diem, to post up previous to the embarkation of the passengers, and to keep posted up in at least two conspicuous places between the decks, such copies of such abstracts so long as any passengers are entitled to remain on board. Any person displacing or defacing this abstract is liable to a penalty not exceeding 40 shillings.—Sec. 41.

“The requirements of the Act are enforced by penalties on the master not exceeding 50 pounds except in cases where other penalties are specifically imposed. All penalties are to be sued for before two or more justices of the peace, to the use of Her Majesty. They can only be recovered in the United Kingdom by the Emigration Officers, or by the officers of Her Majesty's Customs; and in the British possessions abroad, by those officers, or by any other person duly authorised for the purpose by the Governor of the colony. Sec. 50 and 52.

“Passengers themselves, however, or the Emigration Officers on their behalf, may recover, by a similar process, any sum of money made recoverable by the Act, to their own use, as return of passage-money, subsistence-money, or compensation; and, in such cases, the passengers are not to be deemed incompetent witnesses.—Sec. 53 and 56.

“The right of passengers to proceed at law for any breach of contract is not abridged by proceedings taken under this Act.—Sec. 37.”

For the use of the more opulent classes, the Commissioners have published the following summary of the terms upon which land may be purchased in Southern Africa.

“1. The unappropriated Crown lands at the Cape of Good Hope, and Natal, are sold in freehold, and by public auction only.

“2. Unless it is otherwise notified, the upset price will be at the Cape, two shillings per acre, (one acre is about half a morgen), and at Natal four shillings per acre, but the Governor, for the time being, will have the power to fix such higher upset price as the locality, or other circumstances, may render expedient, of which due notice will always be publicly given. Lands not sold at auction may afterwards be purchased at the upset price on payment of the whole purchase money.

“3. Persons desirous of becoming purchasers will apply, in writing, to the Secretary to Government respecting the land they wish to have put up for sale; stating in what division it is situated, and as far as practicable, its position, boundaries, and probable extent.

“These applications, after being recorded in the Colonial Office, will be transmitted to the Surveyor-General, who, if he sees no objection to the land being disposed of, will call upon the applicant to deposit with him the probable expense of the survey; which expense will be calculated upon the following tariff, and be borne by the eventual purchaser.

	£	s.	d.
For a piece of ground, and dividing the same into small lots, or erven, for the first four lots, each . . . . .	0	12	0
For any beyond that number . . . . .	0	9	0
For the measurement of any piece of land up to 10 morgen . . . . .	0	12	0
For every morgen above 10 up to 100, per morgen . . . . .	0	0	3
For 100 morgen . . . . .	1	14	6
For every morgen above 100, as far as 500, per morgen . . . . .	0	0	1½
For 500 morgen . . . . .	4	4	6
For every morgen above 500, per morgen . . . . .	0	0	1
For 3,000 morgen . . . . .	14	12	10
For every morgen above the same . . . . .	0	0	1
For every diagram . . . . .	0	12	0

“4. Should the applicant not become the purchaser, the amount deposited by him will be refunded when paid by the eventual purchaser; but should no sale take place, no refund can be made.

“5. Lands offered for sale will be advertised for two months in the ‘Government Gazette,’ at the expiration of which time they will be sold by public auction.

“6. Ten per cent of the purchase money must be paid at the time of sale, and the balance, (with the expenses of the survey, if the purchaser did not make the deposit), within one calendar month from the day of sale: in default of which, the ten per cent so paid, will be forfeited to the Colonial Treasury.

“7. Persons desirous of acquiring Crown lands at the Cape of Natal, will be at liberty to make deposits at the Bank of England to the credit of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, upon the same conditions, and with the like privileges as are prescribed in the case of the Australian colonies<sup>2</sup>, with this exception, that for every hundred pound so paid in, the depositor will be allowed to name for a free passage to the colony seven, instead of five properly qualified emigrants.

“Officers of the Army and Navy, whether on full or half pay, who may wish to settle at the Cape of Good Hope, are allowed a remission of the purchase money varying from 600 pounds to 200 pounds according to their rank and length of service.

“Military chaplains, commissariat officers, and officers of any of the civil departments of the army; pursers, chaplains, midshipmen, warrant officers of every description, and officers of any of the civil departments of the navy, are not allowed any privileges in respect of land. Although members of these classes may have been admitted formerly, and under different circumstances, they are now excluded. Mates in the royal navy rank with ensigns in the army, and mates of three years standing with lieutenants in the army, and are entitled respectively to corresponding privileges in the acquisition of lands.”

<sup>2</sup> “Persons will be at liberty to make payments for colonial lands in this country, for which payment or deposit they will receive an order for credit to the same amount in any purchase of land they may effect in the colony, and will have the privilege of naming a proportionate number of emigrants for a free passage, as explained in the next article. The deposits must be made in one or more sums of 100 pounds each at the Bank of England, to the account of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners; and the depositor must state at the time the colony in which the land is to be selected, and give notice to the Commissioners of the deposit. Upon production of the Bank’s receipt for the money, the Commissioners will furnish the depositor with a certificate, stating the amount which he has paid, and entitling him to obtain credit for that sum in any purchase which he may effect in the colony, subject to all rules and regulations in force in the colony at the time such purchase may be made. “For every sum of 100 pounds deposited as above, the depositor will be entitled, for six months from the date of payment, to name a number of properly qualified emigrants, equal to five adults, for a free passage. Two children between one and fourteen are to be reckoned as one adult. The emigrants are required to be chosen from the class of mechanics and handicraftsmen, agricultural labourers, or domestic servants, and must be going out with the intention to work for wages. They are to be subject to the approval of the Commissioners, and must, in all respects, fall within their general regulations on the selection of labourers. The purchaser and his family cannot receive a free passage under this privilege.”

## Chapter III. History of the Cape Colony

The renowned promontory of the Cape was first doubled by the Portuguese navigator, Bartholomew Diaz, in the year 1487, but the discovery was not looked on as of any other importance than as opening the maritime route to India which that nation had so long sought after. Ten years later De Gama passed along the southern and eastern coast of Africa, and coming in sight of a fertile, pleasant country on Christmas day, he gave it the name of the Land of the Nativity, (Terra Natal) whence the appellation by which it is now known. In 1620, two of the officers of the English Merchant Adventurers landed in Saldanha Bay, and took formal possession of the country, in the name of James the First, but no European, settlement was attempted until the year 1650, when the Dutch India Company, at the recommendation of a surgeon of one of their ships, named Van Riebeck, placed a colony on the shore of Table Bay, further southward, for the purpose of affording supplies to their fleets.

Though the colony was at first composed, as was usual in those days, of persons of abandoned character, it grew and prospered, and in the course of about thirty years it received an accession of population of admirable character in the persons of French and German Protestant refugees, whom the atrocious proceedings of Louis the Fourteenth, in revoking the Edict of Nantes, and ravaging the Palatinate with fire and sword, had rendered homeless. These estimable exiles introduced the culture of the vine and other improvements, and the colony gradually spread itself along the belt of level land which extends itself eastward between the Lange Kloof and the sea.

About the same time Natal was visited by order of the Governor, and some idea was entertained of forming a settlement there, but, for some reason not now known, the project was abandoned.

The Dutch continued in peaceable possession of the colony for more than one hundred years longer, and had gradually spread themselves either as settlers or elephant hunters almost to the borders of the Orange River, when in 1795, a small English force, under General Craig and Sir Alured Clarke appeared, and the whole territory was at once surrendered. At the peace of Amiens, in 1802, it was restored to Holland; but in 1806 it again came into the hands of England, and was finally ceded to us in 1814.<sup>3</sup>

From the period of our establishment in the colony in 1806 till 1827 (with the exception of a change in the currency very displeasing to the Dutch), we were contented to stand by the laws by which it had been governed, with only such occasional amendments and modifications as the change of circumstances required. In that year, however, after three or four years' notice and consideration, a code of English laws (not exactly the laws of England) was adopted. As, from their non-acquaintance with our language, it was impossible to make the Dutch thoroughly conversant with the principles upon which these laws were framed, they soon became discontented. The clerks in the public offices, to whom they applied occasionally for information, were unable to give their time to listen to their grievances; and, had they been inclined to enlighten them, their ignorance of the Dutch language rendered it impracticable. Previously to this, every district had been governed by a magistrate, or Landrost. He had to assist him a council of eight individuals, called Hemraaden, chosen from among the most respectable and influential landholders, who informed the inhabitants of all events and changes occurring in the colony and its laws, explained all difficulties, heard all complaints, and

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<sup>3</sup> The Boers, however, had little liking for this arrangement, which severed them from their parent country, and their hearts yearned towards a reunion with it. Of this I had a positive assurance before it was my fate to visit the colony myself. In the year 1838 I had the honour of making the acquaintance of H.R.H. Prince William Henry of Orange, who was on his voyage home in the "Bellona" frigate from Java, *viâ* Saint Helena. He dwelt with great pleasure on the circumstance of several Dutch families having travelled many miles from the interior to meet him at Cape Town, when he touched there. Aged men and women, who had scarcely moved out of their farm sitting-room for years, hastened to meet a Prince from their beloved Fatherland.

were, in short, the medium of communication between the people and the authorities. The English Laws completely superseded these arrangements, and the utter want of education among the Dutch, particularly the scattered farmers, rendered them jealous and suspicious of their new legislators, whose system (practically or theoretically) they could not understand.

It is true that the bad condition, and, in many cases, the ill-usage of the Hottentots, called for investigation and amendment; but many attempts that were made to ameliorate their condition proved vain, from being as defective as they were ill-executed. General Bourke passed an ordinance, freeing the Hottentot race from all those restraints which are found absolutely necessary for the preservation of social order in all civilised communities. The consequence of this ill-advised decree is manifested to this day, for it is the cause of the gradual self-extinction (so to speak) of the race. The mischief, however, was done, and as a remedy the location of a number of them as an agricultural community on the Kit River was tried. A few respectable individuals are still to be found among them there, and in some other localities, but these are a mixed race, and it may be said that the original Hottentot race has been gradually but surely dwindling away since the enactment of the above-mentioned 50th Ordinance.

Just as matters stood a chance of finding their level, the farmer beginning to try to accustom himself to bear the inconveniences arising from the Hottentot's freedom from all restraint, and consequent contempt of servitude (for on the enactment of the 50th Ordinance they had taken to a life of vagrancy, spurning all work), the Kaffirs sounded their war-cry, and burst upon the colony. This was in 1834. It arose thus.

From the depredations and encroachments of the Kaffirs on the Hottentot location in the Kat River settlement, the authorities ordered the expulsion of the Kaffir chief, Charlie, (so called by the express desire of his father, Gaika, after Lord Charles Somerset), from a portion of the neutral territory<sup>4</sup> which he had been allowed to occupy on sufferance during good behaviour. This indulgence he had clearly forfeited, the depredations being almost invariably traced to his locality. Though, on solemn promise of amendment, he had been subsequently permitted to resume his position, yet, from the natural ingratitude of his race, and the pains taken by his *soi-disant* and injudicious European friends to persuade him how ill he had been treated by his original expulsion,—after a few months of smothered ill-will, the volcano burst, and these savages poured, *en masse*, into the colony; fire, devastation, and the murderous blade marking their progress throughout this astonished, peaceable, and, with trifling exceptions, unprotected frontier, to the ruin of thousands—a ruin from which many have never recovered, notwithstanding the strenuous exertions of their best friend, Sir Benjamin D'Urban. Under his able governments—crippled as it was by a change in the Ministry—the colony, after the war, resumed the appearance and probability of peace, when another great event altered the face of everything. Suddenly there was a voice, which went through all the countries of the known earth, crying aloud, “Let the slave be free!”

The Dutch were quite ready to listen to the voice that cried shame at the idea of seizing our fellow-creatures, packing them like herrings in slave-ships, and bartering for them in the market. Every one of good feeling revolted at the custom, and looked for the remedy. But how to set about the remedy should have been considered. The chain was broken, and the people of England hurraed to their heart's content. And the slave! What, in the meanwhile, became of him? If he was young and vicious, away he went—he was his own master. He was at liberty to walk to and fro upon the earth, “seeking whom he might devour.” He was free—he had the world before him where to choose, though, squatted beside the Kaffir's fire, probably thinking his meal of parched corn but poor stuff

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<sup>4</sup> Shortly after Lord Charles Somerset succeeded to the government of the Cape, in 1817, Graham's Town being attacked by Makanna, the pretended Kaffir prophet, a witch-doctor, Colonel, now Major-General Sir Thomas Wiltshire, after defeating a horde of these savages, followed up his success by pursuing them into their own country, where he forced them to sue for peace. This was granted, on condition of their surrendering Makanna, and giving up in atonement for their past, and as security against future offences, that tract of country lying between the Fish and Kat Rivers on the one side, and the Tyumie and Keiskama on the other.

after the palatable dishes he had been permitted to cook for himself in the Boer's, or tradesman's kitchen. But he was fain to like it—he could get nothing else, and this was earned at the expense of his own soul; for it was given him as an inducement to teach the Kaffir the easiest mode of plundering his ancient master. If inclined to work, he had no certain prospect of employment, and the Dutch, losing so much by the sudden Emancipation Act, resolved on working for themselves. So the virtuous redeemed slave had too many temptations to remain virtuous. He was hungry—so was his wife—so were his children; and he must feed them. How? No matter.

And the aged slave! He sat himself down on the hearth to which he had been accustomed, but he had no longer a right to the shelter of the roof-tree under which he had lived and his children had been born. He, too, must beg for food; but he was so old he could hardly crawl. He grew sick; there was none to take care of him but the charitable; and, fortunately for the poor, the aged, and the sick, there *was* charity in the land. Of what availed the slave's freedom, under such circumstances? Still, some were harmless. It was the vicious negro who rejoiced in his freedom, and taught the Kaffir how best to rob and murder, till most probably the Kaffir murdered him, or made him toil harder than he had ever done under the Boer.

Then, the Dutch grumbled not so much at the emancipation, as at the manner of it. Even when they were willing to hire those who had been their slaves, they hesitated to receive as servants those over whom the law gave no control. As an indemnification for the loss of their slaves, the owners obtained, on the average, about one-third of the value of them. From their not being paid their compensation-money in the colony, but being obliged to draw it from England, their loss by agencies and misunderstanding was very great.

The discontented Dutch, who had been gradually irritated by these proceedings, now began to migrate with their families over various branches of the Orange River, to the north-east of the colony. They were forbidden to take their apprentices with them; but in many instances they disregarded this order, and parties of military being sent after them, to bring the apprentices back to the colony, this measure increased the feelings of resentment already excited in the minds of the Dutch towards the English, and the commanders of such military parties ran imminent risks of their lives in the execution of these duties. Having established themselves in various localities beyond the north-eastern boundary, and having no legal executive among themselves, the Boers occasionally returned to the colony when any appeal to justice was required; but, by degrees, the stream of emigration having set steadily outwards, it swelled to such an extent that it called for more room in its progress, and, spreading itself beyond the limits of British jurisdiction or restraint, at length reached Natal. The most determined emigrants came to a resolution to establish for themselves, in the neighbourhood of that port, a colony totally independent of British rule, and regulated by their own laws. Meanwhile the Kaffir war had been, by the energy and decision of Sir Benjamin D'Urban and Colonel Smith (now Sir Harry Smith, the hero of Aliwal, and the Governor of the Cape), brought to an end. The aggressors were driven from the colony, and also from a neighbouring district between the Keiskama and the Kei, which was erected into a province called Adelaide, and stringent measures taken to prevent their again bursting into the colony. But these measures were disapproved of by Lord Glenelg, then the Colonial Secretary, the new district was abandoned, Sir Benjamin D'Urban resigned, and, under the auspices of Sir Andries Stockenstrom, the Lieutenant-Governor of the eastern province, new treaties, since known by his name, were formed, which public opinion in Africa almost universally condemns as the real cause of the late deplorable warfare. Since then, the policy that framed them has been abandoned, and the statesmanlike views of Sir Benjamin are at the present day being carried out by his former coadjutor, Sir Harry Smith.

About the year 1841 the settlement of the emigrant Boers had attained something like the appearance of a regular state. They had, partly by force and partly by purchase, obtained possession of a considerable tract of country, and had founded a town, which they called Pietermaritzburg, and after some correspondence with the Government at the Cape, they declared themselves independent.



On this a small British force was despatched to Port Natal, but it was unable to effect anything against them until the arrival of reinforcements, when the Boers promised submission to the Queen's authority; but soon after they began again to move onward, under their general, Pretorius, and it was not until Sir Harry Smith came among them, at the close of the Kaffir war, that they could be considered as fully under the control of the British Government. Even up to the present time their position with regard to it is anything but satisfactory, as the following extract from a letter recently received from the Cape (September 14, 1850), will show:—"Matters have looked a little portentous over the Orange River. The Boers, far beyond Bloem Fontein, under Pretorius, are determined that no one shall pass through their territory to the newly-discovered lake (Lake Ngami), and have already fined some severely. The lake will be easy of access down the Limpopo (river), which runs through the Boers' country into it, as is believed; all other ways, as far as is known, are through deserts, and the ignorant people (Boers) will not suffer the missionaries to teach the natives about them. It would be unsafe to send any expedition under seven hundred men there, as Pretorius is more than 250 miles beyond any military station."

## Chapter IV. The Kaffirs and the Aborigines

Though the publications on the Cape colony are already so numerous, and they all more or less profess to describe the native inhabitants, it is certain that we yet know very little of their real character; more especially of the character of the Kaffirs. These are often painted as an aboriginal race, “a pastoral and gentle people.” They are neither the one nor the other. They are intruders on the lands that they occupy; their habits are the most savage imaginable;<sup>5</sup> their treachery is well-known to all who have been unfortunate enough to come in contact with them, and the conversions among them in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred have no other existence than in the warm imaginations of the well-meaning but ill-informed members of Missionary Societies. What converts there are, are principally from the despised slaves of the haughty Kaffirs, the Fingoes.

There are some missionary stations within a ride of Fort Peddie,—one of them, D’Urban, being scarcely a mile from the post. I rode over there one day, to see a Fingo congregation. Among them, indeed, were some Kaffirs; in foot, it was composed of many shades of colour, the pale-faced Englishman, the dingy children of fair-haired mothers and dusky fathers, the sallow, stunted Hottentot, the merry-eyed Fingo, and the more dignified Kaffir. On our approach to the building, we distinguished a loud monotonous voice holding forth in the Kaffir language, without the smallest attention to intonation, or emphasis. This was the interpreter. In the missionary’s absence, an assistant preached in Dutch, which was translated, sentence by sentence, into Kaffir. The unconcerned air of the interpreter, and his reckless bawl, were much at variance with the wrapt air of attention bestowed on the exhortations by the congregation. Some of the Kaffirs and Fingoes were well-dressed, in homely costume, indeed, but clean and neat, consisting of moleskin or fustian jackets and trousers, felt hats, like those worn by English waggoners, and strong shoes. Others reclined on the floor, with their blankets, or karosses, draped round them, and ornamented with strings of beads, whose gaudy colours contrasted finely with their dark skins. Another day, I witnessed the baptism of fourteen Fingoes. Both men and women seemed to feel the solemnity of their position, the women particularly evinced extraordinary emotion. Some were unable to restrain their sobs, and one aged being affected me much by the manner in which she sought to subdue her feelings, wiping the tears quietly away as they followed each other down her dark cheek. All were decently clothed, and particularly intelligent in their appearance.

At the close of the service, the missionary permits any of his congregation to ask questions concerning such sacred matters as they may at first find difficult to understand. Some of their arguments evince a singular disposition to subtle reasoning, and prove how arduous a task is undertaken by those who endeavour to convert these poor savages to Christianity. One day, after the missionary had dwelt on the misery arising from sin, and had expatiated on the natural proneness of man to vice rather than virtue, and on the dreadful consequences of disobedience manifested in the fall of our first parents, and its terrible results, ameliorated only by the hope of heaven through the merits of a Redeemer, in whose power to save and mediate we alone can trust, a Kaffir, who had given his whole attention to the discussion, begged leave to ask a few questions. It was granted, and he began.

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<sup>5</sup> Even in their hunting expeditions, the Kaffirs exhibit a peculiarity which goes far to prove that the sight of blood renders them unnaturally ferocious. At the death of a jackal, a buck, or any large game which, they have run down, each hunter presses on to give a last stab at the victim, even after death. I observed this also among the Fingoes, in their war-dance, as afterwards described. Captain Harris alludes to it in his “Sporting Expedition in Africa,” when he so graphically describes the death of a young eland. “The savages came up,” he says, “and in spite of my remonstrances, proceeded with cold-blooded ferocity to stab the unfortunate animal, stirring up the blood, and shouting with barbarous exultation as it issued from each newly-inflicted wound.”

“You tell us,” said he, in the measured and gentle tone peculiar to his language, “that all the world is wicked—dreadfully wicked; that man is condemned to punishment, except he be redeemed by faith. You tell us that every one is wrong, and God alone is right?”

“Certainly,” replied the missionary; “except we believe in and obey God, we cannot be saved.”

“And you are sure,” continued the Kaffir, “that man is very wicked, and God alone is good?”

“Quite sure,” replied the missionary.

“And there have been thousands—millions of men, and many, many countries far away and beyond the waters,” pursued the savage, “full of sin, who cannot be saved, except they love and fear God, and believe in him and in all these mysteries which none of us can understand, and which you yourself even cannot explain?”

“It is but too true,” said the missionary.

“And there is but one God?” pursued the Kaffir, in a tone of inquiry.

“But one God,” was the solemn answer.

The savage pondered some minutes, and then observed, “What proof have you that God is right, and men are wrong? Has no one ever doubted that One being wise and the other being weak and sinful? How strange that the word of your One God should be allowed to weigh against the will and inclination of the whole world! Your cause is hardly a good one, when hundreds and millions are opposed in deed and opinion to one! I must consider your arguments on Christianity well before I decide on adopting your creed.”

Another remark of one of these natural logicians equally illustrates their determination not to be persuaded to anything without having their own reasons for it. Wherever their inclination leads them, they possess such an art of defending themselves as would be an invaluable addition to the talents of a special pleader in a criminal court. One Kaffir who had become a Christian, at least apparently so (for I doubt the decided conversion of any, except the Chief, Kama)—was striving, for reasons of his own, to bring others to the creed he had adopted. After much argument, one, who grew tired of it, closed it by observing that “since such punishments were in reserve for those who neglected the laws of the Master whom they engaged to serve, he preferred enjoying the world as much as he could while living, rather than becoming a subject of one whose laws were irksome, and whose punishments were so terrible.”

This art of reasoning, however it may lead them into discussions as full of sophistry as ingenuity, may be the means of converting some of them to Christianity. It makes them keen listeners; and, since the Word of God is so plain, that “he who runs may read,” may not these poor people be persuaded to that which must teach them that wisdom and power, and mercy, and unbounded benevolence, are the attributes of that God whom they are invited to worship? Sometimes, I hope this, and then some proof of Kaffir treachery makes me wonder how I can ever form such a hope.

I should say, with Fingoes, Kaffirs and Hottentots, persuasion and quiet reasoning would work the will of God before all the threats relative to that dreadful world where sinners are described as in everlasting torment. This is hardly the place for such discussion, but I cannot help saying, that I think the creed of many who profess to explain the Word of God, a fearful one: instead of holding up our beneficent Creator as a Being worthy to be served for love, they dwell too much on the punishment of sin, rather than on the reward of virtue. It is by some deemed wiser to frighten the ignorant into serving God, than to lead them by gentle means to love Him, to honour and to put their whole trust in Him. What a mistake! I have often pondered on the difference (if I may so express it) of the two sources of religion—the one proceeding from fear of our great spiritual enemy (and which, after all, is a fallacious kind of worship)—and the other from love of the Almighty!

Tell the savage that God is infinitely wise and powerful, and good to those who serve Him, and he will at least listen further; by which means much may be done. Talk to him of a dreadful place of punishment, he will turn his back on you, and refuse to enlist under the banners of those whose chief arguments are based on such threats. Begin with reference to God as merciful, as well as just, and

the savage will soon acknowledge the necessity of punishment for evil deeds in an equal degree with rewards for virtue. It is right he should know that eternal suffering awaits the sinner, but, before he is thus threatened, teach him “the beauty of holiness,” and “praise God as one worthy to be praised.”

On my journey into Kaffirland, our road one day lay through a pleasant country, where the grass was green, and the mimosas bright with their golden clusters of flowers. At the spot where we outspanned, a waggon, driven by Fingoes, had halted: it was drawn close up to a bush, and the party in charge of it, consisting of two men, three women, and their children, were seated in the shade. To our surprise, we observed that one man was reading aloud to the party; and, anxious to hear the language, which is peculiarly soft and liquid, we walked up to the group. Our surprise was increased when we found that the book occupying their attention was the Bible, translated into the Kaffir language, which, by the way, scarcely differs from the Fingo. The sight of this dusky group so employed, had a strange effect, and the flowing ease and beauty of the language in which the Word of God was explained to the attentive listeners, increased the interest we felt in the scene. None of them could speak English; but the reader, pointing to the book, uttered the single word “Good” impressively.

It is singular enough that Barrow and other travellers do not allude to the race of Fingoes; this oversight is probably owing to their having been, till of late years, the slaves of the Kaffirs.<sup>6</sup> The following account of them I have gathered from a work compiled by the editor of the “Graham’s Town Journal,” and published in 1836:—

“It appears that the term ‘Fingo’ is not their national appellation, but a reproachful epithet, denoting extreme poverty or misery,—person having no claim to justice, mercy, or even life. They are the remnants of eight powerful nations, which have been destroyed or driven out of their country by the destructive wars carried on amongst the natives of the interior. Five of these nations were destroyed by the cruel Matawana, and the rest by the notorious Zoola Chief, Chaka, or some of the tribes tributary to them. The names of these nations were:

“1. The Amalubi,—signifying a people who tear and pull off.

“2. The Amazizi,—a people who bring. About twenty years ago, they, as a powerful nation, inhabited the country on the north-east of Natal.

“3. The Amabile,—people of mercy.

“4. The Amazabizembi,—axe-vendors.

“5. The Abasaekunene,—right-hand people.

“6. The Amantozakive,—people whose things are their own.

“7. The Amarelidwani,—no definite meaning.

“8. Abashwawo,—revilers or reproachers.

“These nations being broken up and dispersed, many of those who escaped flew westward, and thus came into collision with the Amakosa Kaffirs, but principally with the tribes of the late Hintza, whose death is graphically described by Sir James Alexander, 14th regiment, in his account of the last Kaffir irruption in 1834 and 1835. They became slaves, herds, ‘hewers of wood, and drawers of water,’ as well as tillers of the ground. They were oppressed in every way; when by industry they had gathered together a few head of cattle, they were either forcibly taken away from them, or, being accused of witchcraft, their property was confiscated. In short, their lives and property were held on the same precarious tenure, the mere will of their capricious, cruel and avaricious taskmasters.

“This state of bondage at last became utterly intolerable, and its victims only looked for an opportunity to throw off the yoke. Their attention had been anxiously turned towards the colony, and communications had been made to the frontier authorities long before the irruption in 1834, urgently praying for an asylum within our boundary: but this application was kept a profound secret, from a

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<sup>6</sup> The term “Kaffir,” is by no means recognised by the Kaffirs themselves. It was bestowed on them by the Portuguese. The word is from the Arabic, and signifies “Infidel.”

conviction that were their intentions known to the Kaffirs, the indiscriminate massacre of the poor Fingoes would be the consequence.”

The war, of which many histories are given, delivered these poor creatures from their bondage, and they are now a happy people, with their own independent possessions of cattle, Sir James Alexander supplies an interesting description of their deliverance from captivity.

They are a fine muscular race, bearing a great resemblance to the Kaffirs, yet easily distinguishable from them: unlike the Kaffirs, they are a cheerful race. The moonlight nights seem their seasons of festivity; and their wild chant, now rising loud and shrill, from the huts opposite Fort Peddie, and now felling into a low muttered chorus, now led by a single voice, and again sinking into indistinctness, has a singular effect on civilised ears, not the less extraordinary from its being sometimes united with a running accompaniment of wolves howling about the cattle-kraals, and dogs yelling after them. At such times, the wild chorus generally ceases, lights are carried to and fro in the kraal<sup>7</sup>, or hamlet, and there is a sound of a hunt, such as one might fancy would be ably illustrated by Retzsch's wondrous pencil. After successive shouts from the Fingoes, and yells from the dogs, the yelp of the wolf is heard further off, and changes to a smothered whine, till it ceases altogether. The dogs continue barking for some time, the torches are extinguished, and, as all again becomes quiet, the strange chant recommences. Sometimes the noise of clapping of hands, resembling, from the distance at which it is heard, the sound of the tom-tom, or rude drum, may be distinguished, marking time probably to the steps of the untiring dancers, for their revelry generally lasts till morning's dawn.

Neither Fingoes nor Kaffirs seem to take much note of time: they sing and dance when they are merry, sleep when fatigued, eat and drink when hungry and thirsty. Days, weeks, months, and years pass by unnoticed, and uncounted. If in want of comforts which must be purchased, they work to earn money; if well provided, they will do nothing. In cold weather, they will not leave their huts even to milk their cows.

One of the most interesting anecdotes I have heard, was told me one day, relative to a Fingo man, tallying well with the scene I have alluded to of the group reading the Bible under the shade of the mimosa-bush. A poor Fingo had made several applications, from Graham's Town, to a missionary nearly fifty miles off, for a Bible; but for some time there had not been a sufficient number printed to meet the devout wishes of those “who would become Christians.” Two years elapsed from the time this man first asked for the Bible. At last one day, he suddenly appeared at the station, and asked the missionary for one. The latter replied, that he was afraid he yet had none to spare; “but,” said he to the Fingo, “if you will do what business you may have on hand in the neighbourhood, and come to me before you leave it, I will endeavour to procure you one, if such a thing is to be had;” but the poor traveller surprised the missionary when he said he had no business to transact there, save the one thing which had brought him so far. He had come all the way from Graham's Town, on foot, for the Bible; he would wait till one was found, or even printed for him. So the missionary was constrained to seek for one immediately, which he succeeded in obtaining; and the Fingo then offering 2 shillings 6 pence (the price of the book being 1 shilling 6 pence), the missionary offered the 1 shilling in change, but the traveller waited not. With the precious book which had cost him so much toil to obtain, in one hand, and his knob-kiurrie (war-club) in the other, away he trudged, light of foot, and certainly light of heart. He evidently considered his prize as more to be “desired than gold, yea than fine gold.” Such instances of sincere conversion are very rare.

There seems little doubt that Barrow's idea of the origin of the Kaffir tribes in this country is a just one. He imagines them to be the descendants of those Arabs known to us by the name Bedouin. “These people” says he, “penetrated into every part of Africa. Colonies of them have found their way into the islands of Southern Africa, where more difficulties would occur than in an overland journey to the Cape of Good Hope. By skirting the Red Sea, and turning to the southward, the great desert

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<sup>7</sup> The word “kraal” applies either to the group of huts forming a village, to a single hut, or the fold for the cattle.

of sand, which divides Africa into two parts, would be avoided, and the passage lies over a country inhabited, as far as is known, in every part.” The circumstance of their having short hair, would seem to militate against their Arabic origin; but their intermixture with the Hottentots and other nations along the coast may have produced this. Barrow adds, “Their skill in music is not above the level of the Hottentots.”

The latter have a most perfect ear for music, and cannot resist dancing and chorussing to a tune that pleases them. I have never heard the Kaffirs evince any disposition to sing, unless I except the monotonous drawl which the women utter for the men to dance to. Of the Fingo evensong, I shall have occasion to speak by and by.

It is already well-known that the Bosjemen and Hottentots are the aborigines of the whole of this part of South Africa. As one great proof of this, we find the names of the rivers are in the Hottentot language, between which and the Kaffir there is no affinity. It may, by the bye, be observed, that the Bosjeman and Kaffir languages have one thing in common,—a singular click, varying in its sound according to the letter pronounced: thus, C, T, R, and Q, appear to be the letters uttered in clicks—T is uttered between the teeth, like *teh*; the R also resembles T in its pronunciation; Q is produced by a click nearer the front of the teeth than is requisite for the pronunciation of the C, which in its turn resembles the noise made in imitation of drawing a cork, and when two Kaffirs, Fingoes, or Bushmen, are conversing together on any subject that excites them to unusual rapidity of speech or gesticulation, the effect is extraordinary.

I desire not to lengthen my work with long quotations from other writers, though to do so with that experience which a residence in the country must give, would be to compile a useful and entertaining chapter; but by here and there comparing what I see of these wild people with what I have read, much may be gathered together that will throw a light on matters connected with them in their present domestic state, if such a term may be applied to a who are not yet tamed, and who, I doubt, never will be so. Like the lion, the tiger, the panther, and all the roaming tenants of the bush, the mountain, or the kloof, the Kaffir has become identified with the country to which he now belongs; and, though here and there one or two may be brought to understand the meaning of good principle, as a body, the Kaffirs will fulfil the destiny of their great progenitor, Ishmael, of whom it has been decreed by God, that his descendants shall “have their hands against every man, and every man’s hand against them.” Even though a man be brought up among Christians from his youth, and accustomed to his dress by day, and his bed by night, in manhood he will most joyfully return to his kraal, his kaross, and his mat. The daughter of Cobus Congo (Konky) is a striking instance of this. Educated in the house of an excellent missionary, taught the value of principle, Konky is now married to a chief who has many other wives; she wears the kaross, and rides an unsaddled horse, after the same fashion as her husband and his cortège. If, however, the missionaries fail generally in the one grand object of converting the Kaffirs and Fingoes to Christianity, many among them may be brought to some degree of civilisation. Already those who have been prevailed upon to learn to read (the difficulty lies in getting them to learn at all,) are diligent, and thirst for knowledge; as they progress in this, their communion with Europeans becomes more intimate, gradually they may acquire a wish to be clothed, and this may be of consequence to our manufactories. Already the English blanket, greased till it becomes the colour of ochre, begins to supersede the skin kaross; and the common brown coverlid is another favourite drapery of the Kaffir. A printing press is established at D’Urban (a missionary station near Fort Peddie); and, besides the translation of the Bible, a periodical is published monthly, containing articles suited to the taste, comprehension, and habits of the native.

I have imagined that if some profitable employment were set on foot among them it would have a beneficial effect; but I understand that wool-combing was tried, which would have added to their cattle flocks of sheep, besides promoting habits of industry; but this failed,—their idleness is incorrigible. The principal articles of our manufacture coveted by them are fire-arms. There was before the late war some ill-devised and worse-executed law for the prevention of the sale of these, but

it was of small effect. Even assegais made in England have been sent out here, but the Kaffirs object to our manufacture of iron, as being too malleable, preferring that prepared at their own primitive forges. I have heard it remarked that the bellows they use in forging are proof of their having sprung from a race more skilled in the arts of civilisation than themselves. Two pieces of hide are sown together in the form of a pointed bag; the wide part at top is stretched open by two sticks; in the point at the bottom, also open, is inserted a bullock's horn, filed at the point, through which passes the air, which is admitted by opening and shutting the bellows at the wide end.

To enter upon a minute description of Kaffir habits, customs, ceremonials, and superstitions, would be to exceed my limits. I prefer confining myself to the results of my personal observations, which, however, from my long residence in Kaffirland, will embrace many points left unnoticed by writers who have merely travelled through the country.

## **Chapter V.**

### **The Kaffirs—their Superstitions**

The Kaffirs have no idea of a future state, and many can hardly be taught to believe that there are countries beyond their own. Some have a crude idea that Europeans, particularly the English, live on the waters in ships. Even to their own chiefs, and people who have been in England, they will give no credence. A Kaffir believes only what he sees. Latterly, they have become more inquisitive, and ask questions, wondering “if the Queen of England is like other human beings!”

They are so exceedingly superstitious that the more cunning members of their community take advantage of a weakness common to all, but possessed in a greater degree by some than by others. The system of “eating-up,” as it is called, arises from the prevalence of superstition, and may be thus described. A man, who, from his knowledge of herbs and practice among the sick, is considered and denominated a doctor, entertains, perhaps, a spite against some individual. He hears that another is sick,—if a chief so much the better for his purpose,—or perhaps he may employ some nefarious means to injure the health of a man by whom he intends to be employed. The chief, then, falls sick, naturally, or by foul means; meanwhile, the “doctor” has not been idle, he has carried to some hiding-place some herbs, skin, or something of this kind, and has buried it in a nook. Soon after comes the summons for him. He goes. The patient is suffering, and the mode of questioning the sick man is singular enough. With a grave face and solemn air, the doctor begins his inquiries,—“Does his head ache?” “No.” “Has he a sore throat?” “No.” “Pain in the shoulders?” “No.” “In the chest?” “No.” “In the arms?” “No.” And so on, till the part affected is touched. Then the pain is acknowledged, and there is a long pause. No one ventures to speak, save the doctor and the patient. At last, the former asks the invalid who has bewitched him? All disease is looked upon as the effect of magic, from their total ignorance of a Providence. The patient replies, he does not know. It is not improbable, indeed, he may be leagued with the doctor; or, if he be a chief, that he may have resolved on possessing himself of some poor dependent’s cattle, and therefore bribes the doctor to assist him in his scheme. All the inhabitants of the kraal are summoned. They come. Perhaps, they expect a feast, unless they are aware of the chief’s illness. The doctor moves through the assembly, examines the countenances of this man and that, retires, deliberates, returns, and at last points out the unfortunate man who has already been devoted to ruin. The victim protests his innocence. It is of no avail. The wise doctor can prove where he has hidden the charm which works the mischief. He goes to the nook where he himself has concealed it. The people follow. Wonderful;—he discovers it—brings it to the chief, who orders the victim to pay so many head of cattle, the tax imposed being always so heavy as to injure the unfortunate creature beyond redemption. Frequently, he is condemned to death, and frightful cruelties are to this day practised on men and women accused of witchcraft, who, with their heads smeared with honey, are bound down on an ant-hill, and at their feet a blazing fire. Unable to move, they lie for days enduring this torture, till they are released or die. In the former case even, they are crippled for life. A case came to my knowledge, in which a rain-maker, a character similar to that of the doctor, but whose business is curing the weather, caused a poor creature to be put to death; and, strange to say, on the following day, though we had not had a drop of rain for nearly four months, and were very short of water, the torrents which fell deluged the country, and filled the tanks and rivers beyond what had been seen for a considerable time.

I confess that, as I have ridden through the kraals, and seen the groups of Fingoes, or Kaffirs, sitting about the fires, surrounded by their children, cooking their corn, chattering and laughing, while at a little distance young boys basked in the sun, playing with pebbles at some game, or, lying on the grass, idle, and happy in their idleness, without a thought beyond the present, any more than the herd that cropped the green herbage round them, I have said to my companions, “How can we expect these happy wretches to be other than savages?” The earth yields them food, and their cattle, milk



and clothing. Trees provide them wood for the frame-work of their huts, and their fires, and the clay on which they sit is shaped into utensils for their use. Wise in their own conceit, they must be but too happy and independent to change their condition of their own free will. They have no idea of the sin of a theft, or a lie, being equal to the folly which permits it to be found out.

I shall have occasion by and by to describe a council at which I was present, wherein Umhala, a Kaffir chief, was summoned by the Lieutenant-Governor, to show cause why he had threatened to “eat up” Gasella, another chief, his step-brother. The secret of the threat was said to lie in Gasella’s friendly feeling towards the English, and his consequent determination to prevent the inroads of the Kaffirs upon the colony, for the purpose of abstracting cattle; but I strongly doubt the existence of such a feeling in any Kaffir whatever. The constant thefts of cattle give rise to “Commandos” to recover them, and after a successful one, a military party in charge of cattle, conducting them into Graham’s Town, is not an unamusing sight. How would some aristocratic papas and mammas be horrified at seeing their gentlemanlike sons heading the party, and playing the part of principal herdsman on the redoubtable occasion! Such expeditions require the utmost caution, and are frequently attended with danger; and, though it would be no addition to the soldier’s wreath of glory to be assegaied, or shot, in the execution of such a duty as that of driving cattle, he would be not the less killed “for a’ that,”—dead,—lost to his sorrowing friends and his unsympathising country for ever.

The restless desire for plunder among the Kaffirs speaks much in favour of their Arab origin. So do their tent-shaped huts, their riches consisting in herds of cattle, and their wandering habits. The Kaffirs’ principal instrument of war is the spear, or assegai. Such, a weapon is now in especial use among the Arabs. The poising and hurling this spear constitute a trial of dexterity which they love to exhibit; and there could not be a finer subject for a painter than a tall Kaffir, majestically formed, with one foot firmly planted before him, his head thrown back, his kaross draped round him, leaving the right arm and foot free and unfettered, in the act of poising an assegai before he sends it flashing through the sunlit air. Their wearing clothes will be an excellent thing for our manufactories, but will help to enervate the savage.

I cannot avoid reverting to the fact that writers have never, in their descriptions, separated the Fingoes from the Kaffirs. There is no doubt that they once formed one vast nation, but are now not only distinct but opposed to each other. In advertisements relative to servants, and setting forth Government ordinances, mention is made of all the tribes of Kaffirs to the utmost limits of the known territory, also of Hottentots and Bushmen, but no reference is made to Fingoes, who differ from the Kaffirs in appearance as well as in habits.

Mr Shepstone, the Government agent, has kindly written down, from what he has gathered from them in conversation, the idea of the Kaffirs respecting their own origin. He says—

“The traditions among the native tribes on the south-eastern coast of Africa, which essay to describe the origin of the human race, are as various as the tribes themselves. Perhaps, the one most curious in its detail is the following:—It assumes the pre-existence of the sun, moon, and stars, etc, as also of our earth, with everything in it as it at present exists, with the exception of men and cattle. It then describes two chasms in the earth, from one of which emerged three descriptions of men; first, the Kaffir; second, the Bushman (the original Hottentot); and third, the white man. These are the fathers of mankind. Out of the other chasm came cattle; the greatest part of these were given to the Kaffir, and he was told they should be ‘his life and his children’s.’ The Bushman ‘was given the honey-bird,’<sup>8</sup> and was desired to follow it, as its fortunes should be ‘*his* life and *his* children’s.’ The white man was shown the sea, and was told to ‘try everything.’ Another account represents the white man as having been incited by curiosity to explore the chasm whence had issued the cattle; that, after he had entered it, the mouth closed up; but that by extraordinary exertions he cleared his way out, which explains the cause of his descendants possessing such persevering ingenuity. Their

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<sup>8</sup> A small bird, which, attracting the notice of travellers by its cry, guides them to the wild bees’ nests in trees, or clefts of rocks.

different callings being thus defined, they were permitted to increase and multiply, and live in love with one another. This injunction was followed for a considerable period, when one morning, when the sun shone as brightly as usual in the heavens, one of their number was discovered motionless! speechless! cold! The utmost dismay was the consequence; all assembled to endeavour to ascertain the cause, and remedy what was felt to be a serious evil; some ran with water, to sprinkle the lifeless form; others hastened with broad-spreading leaves, to fan the rigid countenance, and every effort was made to restore their companion so far as to be able to tell the cause of such fearful apathy. All was in vain—not a ray of hope was left—despair took possession of their breasts. The form of their friend and fellow creature began to moulder.—Nothing remained at last but the more substantial parts of the person once familiar to them. Then a voice came and named it ‘Death!’ It is curious to observe,” remarks Mr Shepstone, “in all this the recognition of a superintending and benevolent power, independent of man; whereas, in every other tradition, the fortunes of the human race are represented as under the control of the good and evil spirits of their forefathers, whichever may, circumstances, predominate at the time.”—Fort Peddie, May 19th, 1843.

## Part 2

### Chapter I. Five Years in Kaffirland—The Voyage Out

There was nothing very pleasant in the prospect before me of leaving England just as summer was opening her gates, and exhibiting her flower-strewn paths and fragrant hedgerows. My health was not good, and to my mode of travelling I looked forward as anything but agreeable; since a troopship can never be considered as affording even convenient accommodation for a lady, and the miseries of a sea-life must of necessity be enhanced by being shared with a crowd of fellow-sufferers of various classes.

Nevertheless, on reaching Ireland, (land of green spots and generous hearts!) my spirits rallied; my soul could not but respond to kindly sympathies and disinterested hospitality, and by the time the troopship, “Abercrombie Robinson,” arrived in Kingstown Harbour, whence we were to embark (in all upwards of 700 souls) for the Cape of Good Hope, I had shaken off my unavailing regrets in a great degree, and was prepared to meet my destiny with a fortitude worthy of a soldier’s wife,—a fortitude, indeed, earned by experience in my encounter with “perils by sea and land.”

But people now don't care for rhymes romantic,  
And I must cease to think of former years.  
This, my third trip across the vast Atlantic,  
Hath taught me to subdue a world of tears;  
For worse than idle, on a joyous track,  
Were the vain sorrow earned by looking back! – *My Journal*.

The inhabitants of Dublin, “in the merry month of May,” 1842, emigrated by instalments to visit the “Abercrombie Robinson,”—a ship of 1400 tons being rarely seen in Kingstown Harbour. A few short months after, she lay a wreck upon the sands of Africa, a true type of the littleness of man’s works, and of the power of Him who “blew with his winds and they were scattered.”

We embarked, and for a day or two enjoyed the balmy breezes of the summer sea as we lay in harbour. His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant came on board in the barge, to see the ship, the barge being steered by the agent, Lieutenant J.R. Black, R.N. The guns saluted, the yards were manned, bands were playing, colours flying, soldiers cheering, etc, etc. The Lord Lieutenant congratulated us on our fine prospects, and drank our healths, wishing us prosperity (and I am sure he was in earnest); and his Aides-de-Camp looked as civil as they could, considering they were very much bored: and, when we had all played at company and propriety for a given time, his Excellency left the ship, steered as before, and there was a repetition of guns firing, soldiers shouting, etc; and the people on the shore, no doubt, thought it very fine indeed.

We were better off with regard to accommodation than we had been as inmates of a transport on a former occasion, when we went to Saint Helena. Our ship was strong, apparently, as a castle, and our accommodation very superior. With the first favourable breeze we spread our canvass, and sailed out of Kingstown Harbour, hundreds cheering us from the shores of green Ireland, while our men responded to their shouts.

The voyage was dull enough, only varied by a due quantity of parades, roll-calls, mustering of watches, with a running accompaniment of bugles, bagpipes, and drums. Our party, in general, was an agreeable one; the average quantity of ill-humour being small in proportion to our number, and

therefore falling harmlessly enough on those who were willing to make the best of every thing. We paid by the way a visit to Madeira.

The view of this beautiful island (or rather of Funchal, the principal town) in some magazine, is the best representation of it I have seen. The town is prettily situated, but deplorably spoiled by the narrowness of its streets.<sup>9</sup> I was, unfortunately, too much indisposed,—suffering as I was from the effects of a species of scarlet fever,—to visit the interior of the island; but even the outskirts of the town were most refreshing. There was a sound of running waters, a waving of green boughs, scenting the air with their fragrance, and making me imagine myself, in my weak state, fanned by the kindly wings of unseen angels. The last fortnight on shipboard had been passed in great discomfort: heavy sickness at all times is a severe tax on our patience, but at sea, in a narrow cabin, where one's weak voice is often drowned by the creaking of masts, the dashing of the waves, and the hoarse calls of the seamen, it is beyond all conception to those who have not similarly suffered. My little tour in my tiny palanquin at Madeira was, therefore, most delicious. First I lingered in the square, under the trees, looking at the 11th regiment of Portuguese troops on parade. Well-dressed, well drilled, well appointed, and withal well looking, they had every appearance of being an efficient body of men. Then their harmonious band (no one instrument being heard distinctly above another) exceeded in sweetness any regimental band I ever heard in our service. The big drum, instead of being struck with violence, merely swelled in accompaniment; and, when the fifes took up the strain, the brazen instruments lowered their tone in perfect unison with the powers of the lesser ones. This over, I was carried onwards through alleys green with the foliage of the graceful vine; the distant hills made me long for refreshing landscapes and “spicy gales,” but these were denied me, and my bearers carried me into a garden adjoining a house which we understood belonged to the English Consul, but which we found was tenanted by Lady Harriet D—, who was residing at Madeira for the benefit of her children's health. On learning this, as we were about to retire, a man-servant followed, begging us, in his lady's name, to proceed. We did so, and under a group of trees we discovered Lady Harriet, surrounded by books and work, and apparently intent on the instruction of two sable pupils. The sound of her voice as she rose to meet me, bespoke her pity for my pale looks and exhausted frame, and the refreshment we accepted at her ladyship's hospitable hands enabled me to endure the fatigue of returning to the town better than I should otherwise have done.

The gun from the “Abercrombie” announced her being under weigh, and we were obliged to depart in haste, the heavy surf and constant swell of the sea at Madeira rendering the passage from the shore to the ship always tedious and more or less difficult.

Almost every one has heard of Clementina, the beautiful nun, at the Convent at Madeira. Her name has been so often before the public that there can be no possible harm in relating a singular incident of which she was the heroine, and which occurred while we were there. A large party (from the English frigate lying like ourselves at anchor) landed and paid a visit to the convent. Among the group assembled in front of the grafting, behind which the nuns appear to receive visitors, was a Mr H. As Clementina advanced she caught sight of this gentleman, and had no sooner done so than with a sudden scream she fainted. Every one was amazed, Mr H as much so as any. On recovering her senses, the fair nun inquired if the gentleman who had caused her emotion bore the name of H? On being answered in the affirmative, she almost relapsed into a state of insensibility; but on recovering herself, she begged further to know if he was the Mr H with whom she had formerly eloped from the convent? It was explained that the Mr H she now saw was the cousin of her lover, to whom he bore an extraordinary resemblance. On learning this, she requested him to be the bearer of a letter from her to his cousin, which she afterwards forwarded to him, and then the curtain dropping between the nuns and the visitors closed this singular and romantic interview.

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<sup>9</sup> An inhabitant of Madeira gave an excellent reason for this apparent fault, viz, that the houses being built closely together afforded a shade from the sun that wide streets would not have done.

Again we set sail, and the same monotonous routine continued with little variation. Occasionally, we fell in with a passing ship looking like a thing of life upon the solitary world of waters, which brought us the consolation of being able to write homewards. Homeward letters! Ah! what eager hearts at home were wishing for those letters! How much of affection, and sorrow, and anxiety, and prayerful love was in them I thought, as the bag, ere the boat departed for the “Homeward bound” lay at my feet upon the senseless deck! It is the habit of tracing the common things of life back to their sources, be they sad or sweet, which has sometimes given me pleasure, oftener pain. There moved off the gallant ship, there rang the cheers of our soldiers, there sounded the reckless voices of the young, the gay, the heartless, and the high-spirited, and while they perhaps were little thinking of the parents, the friends, the sisters, to whom they had sent home letters, my eyes were filling as:

“Eager memories rushed upon the heart  
And burst oblivion’s cloud.”

On the 22nd of August there was a cry of “land!” and, on the following morning, the vast mountains forming the boundary of part of the south-western coast of Africa, lay stretched before us. Then Table Mountain and its smaller companions reared their cloud-capped crests; and the white villas at Green Point tantalised us with their proximity, from which, owing to the wind, we were obliged to bear away constantly. For two days we hovered in the offing, but on the evening of the 25th, we hailed the sound of our anchor-chains. It was a most lovely night, the unclouded moon illuminating the white houses in Cape Town, and the lofty mountains standing out in strong relief against the clear sky; while our bugles, drums, and fifes, made merry music on the poop of our gallant ship. How we lingered about, unwilling to retire to rest, so anxious were we for the morning! It came at last, and the commanding officer went ashore to report in due form our arrival to the Governor. On his return in a few hours, we learned that all of us, except the Colonel and the Major, were to proceed, by way of Algoa Bay, to the frontier. The flank companies and the band were to be brought from thence to Cape Town, and the three companies expected from Saint Helena were to be detained there on their arrival. Many of our party, especially the gentlemen, rejoiced at this; liking the prospect of an active and sporting life infinitely better than that which would be merely varied by lounging about Cape Town, attempting races, or philandering at the balls. We were to remain in harbour about five days for water and provisions, (our stock being quite exhausted) then to proceed on our voyage.

On Saturday morning, the 27th of August, all the officers not for duty obtained permission to go on shore; the command of the troops on board devolving on Captain Gordon, 91st regiment. All landed but six; my husband was one of those to remain, consequently I did not accept the kind invitation of a friend to accompany him with my little girl to his house near Cape Town. Afterwards, in the hour of danger, and in the time of extreme terror, I had a strange undefinable satisfaction in having remained, though the sight of my child made me wish I had sent her on shore in the morning. Towards evening, the wind increased considerably; but, though there was a heavy sea and every prospect of a gale, our captain depended on his anchors. The Agent, Lieutenant Black, R.N., had gone on shore on duty at four o’clock in the evening, and being invited to dine with the Governor at seven o’clock, was in consequence prevented, by the impossibility of boats getting off, from returning on board. The whole responsibility, therefore, devolved on the Master, Mr John Young. The wind and sea rising caused at first but little alarm; at twelve o’clock, however, the ship shivered; apparently from being struck by a heavy sea. She trembled in every joint, and the same sensation being almost immediately after felt again, it was evident the vessel touched the bottom and with some violence. I rose from my bed, and dressing my child and myself, we proceeded with my husband to the cuddy, where some of the officers were assembled round the stove, the night being bitterly cold. The captain, still depending on the strength of his anchor-chains, saw no great cause of alarm, and having put my child to sleep on a chair, which Captain Gordon kindly prepared for her, I retired again to my berth, and being

quite worn out, soon fell fast asleep. I was awoke by my husband bidding me rise and come on deck immediately, the anchor-chains having both snapped one after the other. My little Isabel stood beside her father partly dressed, and pale and silent. I have no distinct recollection of what happened for the first half hour after this awful intelligence. I remember hearing the water splashing about my cabin, and seeing our little lamp swinging violently backwards and forwards. I remember being dragged in unshod feet along the wet deck, up the steerage hatchway, while my husband carried my child. I can remember, too, her little voice issuing from my bed, into which she had crept to fasten on her warm boots, and begging me not to be frightened.

“How calm she is!” said I, to my husband.

“Poor thing!” he whispered, “she does not know her danger.”

“Yes, I do,” she answered, overhearing us; “but mamma has often told me that God Almighty can take care of us if He pleases; and I keep saying that to myself, and then I am not half so frightened.”

I remember the very height of the storm, when the noise of the thunder could scarcely be distinguished from the roar of the waters, and the torrents of rain,—when the elements in fact howled wildly and angrily at one another,—when the lightning pouring, as one may call it, on our decks, blazed in at the fore windows of the cuddy, being horror-stricken at the ghastly faces assembled under the uncertain and flickering light of a broken lamp. I can remember when the water rose up to my knees, being carried between decks with my child, through rows of shrieking women and silent soldiers. The conduct of our men was beyond all praise.

For some time, I sat on a chest with my child, near the fore-hatch, the ship continuing to drive, every moment striking against the sand, and our only hopes resting on the coming of the dawn, which would show us where we were, the floods of rain preventing the lightning—vivid as it was—from doing this distinctly. About six in the morning, the master came down among us with some comfort, saying he hoped the ship was making a bed for herself in the sand. In truth, she had been all night like some great creature scratching her way through it with restless impatience. The rudder had been carried away from the first, the stern cabins knocked into one, and the sea bubbling up like a fountain in the after part of the ship. We were yet uncertain of our safety, for there were rocks not many hundred yards from us on which the “Waterloo” convict ship had already struck; but of her anon. Meanwhile, our people attaching a rope to a shot, fired it on shore, but in vain. All night the guns from the fort and other vessels had been giving awful warnings to the town, while the constant roll of musketry onboard the convict ship, led us to imagine that the convicts were mutinous. This was, however, discovered afterwards not to be the case; they had been loosened from their bonds on the first alarm, and desired to make use of the first possible means of escape.

At length, as we neared the coast, which for some time had been crowded with spectators, we were enabled, through God’s mercy, to get a boat on shore with a rope attached to the ship, and afterwards fastened to an anchor driven in the sand. As the surf-boats put off, the first of which brought Lieutenant Black, the Agent, on board, our men gave nine hearty cheers, and in a few minutes we commenced our disembarkation; the women and children being lowered into the boats first: I waited for the third boat. Such a noble example had been shown by the officers to their men, and its effects on the latter had been so important, that, in spite of my anxiety to land, I felt unwilling to exhibit it by hurrying from the ship to the shore, and thus creating unnecessary fears among the poor uneducated women, whose terrors I had witnessed during the awful hours of the night. As I was carried between decks, I had been struck, in spite of my fears, with the scene that met my view there. Pale women, with dishevelled hair, stretched themselves from their beds, wringing their hands, and imploring me to comfort them. Some prayed aloud; others, Roman Catholics, called on the Virgin and their favourite saints to help them in their peril; and many bent in silent but eloquent agony over their unconscious infants. One woman who had, during the whole voyage, been considered as dying of deep decline, sat up in the hammock which had been carefully slung for her, and with a calm voice,

which was yet distinguishable from the noise around her, imparted a certain confidence in the power of the Almighty to all who were willing to listen to her, or at least prepared them to view their possibly approaching fate with more resignation. That calm, steady voice sounded strangely amid the cries of fearful women, the hoarse voices of reckless sailors, and the crashing of timbers; while, above all, still rolled on the sound of musketry from the convict ship, “Waterloo,” now beating violently against the rocks, and beyond immediate help; while the appearance of hundreds on the beach striving, some to get their boats off, and others with daring spirit urging their horses through the surf, formed a scene difficult to describe, even by the pen of a mere looker-on.

Our ship was a stout vessel, and held well together. I embarked at last in a surf-boat with my child (my husband of course waited for his company), and with a heart full of earnest gratitude to the Almighty, I approached the land. Had I dreamt of the awful calamity which afterwards befell our unfortunate neighbour, the “Waterloo,” I should not have felt the exhilaration of spirit I did as the Lascars bore me from the boat to the shore through the surf, while Mr Dalzell, of the 27th, carried my child gallantly through it before him on his saddle. Mr Jenkins’ carriage stood waiting for us on the beach; and having had the satisfaction of witnessing my husband’s disembarkation with his men, we started for our kind friend’s charming villa, in the neighbourhood of Cape Town. As we drove on, the sight of the “Waterloo’s” inverted flag, half-mast high, made me shudder; but, as the tide was falling (which, by-the-by, increased the danger of her position, but of this I was unaware), I trusted the boats might be enabled to reach her, and thus hoped for the best. In half an hour afterwards, her mainmast fell over her side, the ship parted in four different places, and in less than ten minutes upwards of 200 unfortunate beings were precipitated into the raging surf. About 70 escaped by swimming on shore; among them Mr Leigh, of the 99th regiment; many were crushed beneath the falling spars; ghastly faces gleamed up from the boiling waters, and with outstretched arms implored help from the shore. Eyes, glazed with agony and despair, burst from their sockets as the rising heads of the sufferers got jammed between floating timbers; and mothers, with infants clinging to their bosoms, were washed off the rafts to which they vainly strove to cling, whilst:

”—The bubbling cry  
Of some strong swimmer in his agony,”

rose above the roar of the elements, and in a moment was smothered by the dash of the raging waters over his helpless limbs. Only one woman was saved: she, poor creature, had seen her husband and child swept away before her; On being brought into the barrack square at Cape Town, where the Governor and his Staff were assembled, the unfortunate woman flung herself at the feet of the former, and embracing his knees exclaimed, “Can you not help me? you have power here; can you not give me back my husband and my child? you look a good man; can you do nothing for me? Ah! I know you will help me. Sir, I beseech you to give me back my husband and my child!” And this was only one of many scenes of distress.

Great praise was afterwards deservedly bestowed on our men for their steady conduct and ready obedience to their officers. The detachments of the 27th and Cape Mounted Riflemen deserved equal praise. Young men, too, they were—the average age of the battalion being scarcely more than twenty-one years. Many of them had never been drilled—never even had arms in their hands;—almost all the rest were volunteers from different regiments, and consequently little known to their superiors. The real cause, however, may be traced in the example shown them by their officers; and too much praise cannot be bestowed on Captain Bertie Gordon, to whose charge they fell on the senior officer’s leaving the ship. Young in years, and comparatively so in experience, he acted with a calmness, decision, and judgment, that give high promise of future good. Much more could I say on this subject, but that (as is the case with all high and generous spirits) he who most deserves praise is always the most unwilling

to have it blazed abroad. All, however, must have esteemed themselves fortunate in falling under the command of one so able to do his duty under such trying circumstances.

It may not be irrelevant to say a word or two here on the subject of the frequent wrecks in Table Bay during the winter months, viz, in May, June, July, and August. Ships during these months are ordered to go round to Simon's Bay, but this cannot always be done, as in our case. There had been a great deal of sickness on board during the whole of our voyage; three days before we made the land, three men belonging to the 91st regiment had died of typhus fever in the short space of thirty-one hours and a half, their bodies and their bedding being committed to the deep without one moment's unnecessary delay. Fresh provisions and vegetables were thus most desirable, especially for the invalids. Simon's Bay being between forty and fifty miles by sea, and twenty-three by land, from Cape Town, it was a point of great importance to disembark the troops if possible at the latter place. It must be remembered that it was only on arriving in Table Bay, when the commanding officer communicated with the Governor, that we learned we were to proceed to the frontier. It was also necessary to take in fresh stock. Furthermore, the wind (after we had been beating about the offing for three days in a calm) became favourable for entering Table Bay, the weather was remarkably fine, and the winter season at its close.

Our vessel was one of Soames' finest ships, and for nearly a month after the wreck lay firmly imbedded in the sand; but the pieces of the hull of the "Waterloo" which were picked up on the beach, crumbled to dust in the hands of those who tried their strength. I have said thus much of ourselves, and I have said it impartially, because, in cases of shipwreck, the captain is frequently blamed for what he cannot help—for what, in fact, is a visitation of the Almighty. To the master of the troopship, as well as to Lieutenant Black, R.N., we were indebted, during the whole of the voyage, for the utmost attention and kindness; the more so as, from the unanimity subsisting between them, they were enabled to act together for the benefit of us all; and I think I cannot close this part of my narrative better than by publishing a letter written to Captain Young a few days after the wreck by Captain Bertie Gordon. (One equally complimentary was written to our esteemed friend Lieutenant Black.)

"Main Barracks, Cape Town, August 31, 1842.

"My dear Sir,

"As commanding the reserve battalion of the 91st Regiment at the time of the wreck of the transport 'Abercrombie Robinson' in Table Bay, I feel myself authorised to express my sense of your coolness, intrepidity, and readiness of resource, during those anxious hours of responsibility, when, from eleven o'clock on the night of the 27th of August, to daylight on the morning of the 28th, the lives of seven hundred souls depended, under God, on your firmness and seamanship. They are qualities essential in the commander of a ship at all times, and must be more than ever necessary when several hundred soldiers, women, and children, crowd his decks.

"They conspicuously distinguished your conduct throughout that night, whose scenes were too full of danger not to have impressed every one with the near possibility of destruction.

"The question of life or death seemed often to hang on each minute's duration; but, through God's mercy, your able conduct brought us safely through a host of perils.

"On the part of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers of the reserve battalion 91st Regiment, and of the detachments of the 27th Regiment and Cape Mounted Riflemen, then on board, I beg to offer our united acknowledgments of the praise and gratitude which your exertions so highly merited.

"I remain, my dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"Bertie E.M. Gordon, Capt. 91st Regt.

"The undersigned officers of the 91st Regiment, on board the 'Abercrombie' at the time of her being driven ashore on the morning of the 29th of August, beg to subscribe their names to the above letter of thanks.



“J. Ward, Captain 91st Regt.

“J.C. Cahill, Paym. Res. Batt. 91st Regt.

“J.H.E. Stubbs, M.D., Asst.-Surg. 91st Regt.

“J. McInroy, Ensign 91st Regt.

“Robt. Lavers, Ensign 91st Regt.”

## Chapter II.

### March to Graham's Town

After six months' residence at the Cape, at last we were suddenly hurried on board a transport for Algoa Bay, on the afternoon of the 24th of February, 1843; The agent, for the transport declared her quite ready for sea, but such proved not to be the case, and we were detained in harbour for three days, subject to many most unnecessary expenses and annoyances, as will appear from a few extracts from the journal that I began on shipboard.

"February 24th,—Hurried on board, in consequence of the signal for sailing being fired, and the agent for the owner of the ship sending us word she was ready for sea, and would sail in the afternoon. The heat quite overpowering, a hot wind prevailing—what a day for embarking at half-past two p.m.! The troops have already been on board four-and-twenty hours. Wind quite fair for getting out of harbour, with the prospect of a north-wester, which would suit us exactly if we were once out at sea. Much disappointed at not finding the Captain on board, and no prospect of even getting up the anchor. Asked the agent why he had fired the signal for sailing in the morning; he replied, 'Because the ship and the troops were quite ready for sea.' The 'Malabar' has just got under weigh, and is clearing the harbour with a fine breeze.

"Sunday, February 26th.—Cold and wet—the ship shockingly dirty. No prospect of the Captain. Some of the officers have got leave to go on shore. A wretched day, a heavy sea prevailing. Many people sick, especially on the lower decks, which are dark, crowded, and ill ventilated.

"A violent north-west gale all day and all night. I spent many hours of terror in remembering our wreck in Table Bay, in the 'Abercrombie Robinson,' in August. Ships should not be detained in Harbour in Table Bay without efficient reasons, especially troopships, containing hundreds crowded together.

"Monday, February 27th.—A man found dead on the lower deck, suffocated from the effects of drunkenness. Had we sailed when we ought to have done so, he would have had little chance of procuring liquor. The Captain of the ship, and the officers who obtained leave to go on shore yesterday, have come on board. Some prospect of sailing. Dead soldier sent on shore to be buried.

"Sailed at one o'clock.

"March the 1st.—We observed this evening a singular streak of light in the sky; no one able to account for it; it bore north-west from our position, steering as we were along the coast to the eastward.

"March 2nd.—The meteoric light greatly increased in size and brilliancy.

"March 4th.—Anchored in Algoa Bay, at eleven o'clock, a.m. The meteoric light, which has puzzled us all so much, turns out to be a comet, and increases in brilliancy every evening. Landed in the evening, in a private boat. The troops will land to-morrow, in surf-boats. We have reached the shore by the jetty, which reminds me of the one at Herne Bay, only that it is on a smaller scale, but is exceedingly creditable to the place, and a proof of its prosperity in trade."<sup>10</sup>

"March 5th.—The single inn much crowded. The regiment has landed, and the little encampment formed on the green opposite the windows is very picturesque. How strangely the wild, dusky-looking savages contrast with the soldiers; the latter busy in their preparations for their comforts, the former lounging idly in their skins and blankets, draped not ungracefully round their dark forms!"

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<sup>10</sup> This fine jetty was destroyed in a gale of wind, in 1847, by a ship, which, having broken from her moorings, was driven, stern foremost, right through the fabric. The unfortunate crew, jumping from the ship to the lower end of the jetty, had congratulated themselves on their escape from the raging waves, when another vessel coming in contact with the wood-work, carried the whole of it away with its unhappy and ill-starred freight into the boiling surge beneath!

On Tuesday, the 7th of March, we started from Port Elizabeth for Graham's Town.

The evening before we departed, I accompanied my husband into the Commissariat Yard, to see the waggon which was to be the abode, by day, of my little girl and myself for nearly a week. I was already all the worse for having been condemned, with my husband and child, to a cabin on board the vessel, certainly not more than *nine feet by five, if so large*. On seeing the huge machine in which we were to travel, I could not help remarking to the Commissary, who was so good as to point it out to me, that there were but two alternatives to decide between, ere the bugles sounded in the morning, and the tents were struck, preparatory to the troops moving off—these being suicide, or mirth. In a state of quiescence the thing looked “horrible, most horrible;” but the “start,” between the disposition to laugh, and the inclination to cry at the discomfort, was enough to make any one hysterical; and the remembrance of friends at home, who could never by any possibility be brought to comprehend the miseries one undergoes here, was strangely blended in my mind with the sights and sounds of outward objects; with the bellowing of oxen, the shouts of Hottentot drivers, the screams of children and scolding voices of their mothers in the neighbouring waggons, and the mingled oaths and laughter of the soldiers, as they picked up stray baskets, tin mugs, puppies, and babies, the latter animating the scene by occasionally tumbling off the waggons.

We left Port Elizabeth at eleven o'clock a.m. The first day of the march was fine, yet cool; the sky remaining overcast, yet without symptoms of rain. The first thing we approached worth notice was a salt-pan, looking more like a frozen lake upon which snow-heaps had been scattered, than anything else. It is not to my purpose to describe these singular works of nature here; I mention this one, lying about four miles from Port Elizabeth, to call the attention of travellers to the sight; as, being rather below the road, it often escapes the observation of those who are enclosed within that “narrow receptacle for the living,” a bullock-waggon.

We reached the Zwart-kops, the spot appointed for our out-spanning for the night, (unyoking the oxen and turning them out to graze) at about five o'clock. The scene was certainly very beautiful. Imagine a vast plain of fair green meadow-land, intersected, and in fact divided into parterres, by tall thick bushes, which here and there grew in clumps and copses, giving the ground the appearance of a vast park laid out with a great deal of taste,—an amphitheatre of hills and mountains rising one behind another, till the summits in the distance blended with the clouds, gorgeously illuminated by the rays of the declining sun, whose glory was soon succeeded by the milder light of the “gentle moon,” beside which the comet, in strange contrast, spread its long and fiery tail. One by one the tents had risen “side by side in beautiful array.” Arms were now piled; the younger soldiers, tired with their first march, lounged on the ground in clusters, till roused by the older and more experienced men, who despatched them to gather wood and fetch water; and more than a hundred fires soon lit up the camp.

In a short time our own preparations for comfort, refreshment, and repose had been made. The tent was pitched, the fire lit in the nearest bush, and the kettle and gridiron put on. We had brought with us an Indian kitchen (Jones's Patent Indian Kitchen), a most compact thing; but, unfortunately, it had been packed up in a chest too securely to be got at without much trouble; and, as we were only a party of three, we resolved on doing without it as long as we could. For any number of persons it is invaluable, but for two or three a gridiron, kettle, and saucepan are, or ought to be, enough. Our servant had also put away the bellows and the hatchet; and, though the wind sometimes served us in lieu of the one, we were frequently obliged to borrow the other, when we halted. Having cold fowls, tongue, bacon, bread, butter, tea, sugar, and a bottle of milk<sup>11</sup>, and good store of wine, in our provision-basket, we did uncommonly well, roasting our potatoes in the ashes, comforting ourselves on the cold grass (not having thought of a tent-mat or table), with some warm negus. A piece of string wound round the pole of the tent, held a wax candle, but the wind rendering its light flickering and

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<sup>11</sup> It is very unsafe, when travelling in Southern Africa, to trust to procuring *anything* on the road; such a chance is very uncertain. Milk, boiled with plenty of white sugar, will keep good if bottled, for three days at least.

uncertain, we stuck a bayonet in the ground, and it made a very convenient and certainly characteristic candlestick. The meal and its fragments having been cleared away, our beds were made in the tent, which had been comfortably pitched (by an old soldier of the 27th, long used to the colony), with its back to the wind; we were thus screened from that, and could not well be inconvenienced by a shower.

Comparative quiet and much order now reigned in the camp. Every tent became more clearly defined as the evening advanced, and the sky formed a darker background for the moon, the stars, and the refulgent comet. Round the fires were assembled groups of soldiers, women resting themselves, as they called it, poor creatures, with babies on their knees,—Hottentots playing their rude violins, and merry voices joining in the chorus, led by neighbouring singers. Sounds of mirth issued from the tents of others; and the steam of savoury soup gave evidence of the proximity of the mess-tent and the talents of “little Paddy Farrell,”—the incomparable cook. Dinner there was always late, the officers never sitting down to solace themselves with good cheer till their men had been well cared for, and their different positions established for the night. Now and then the brazen tongue of a bugle intruded its call upon the stillness of the hour, and helped to disperse the groups gathered round the fire for a time, till the duty to which it had summoned them being done, they either returned to the social circle they had left, or secured a corner in a tent “licensed to hold fifteen inside” to sleep in. Gradually, the voices of the singers became mute; the feeble cries of sleepy infants superseded the monotonous tones of the Hottentot fiddles. Snoring “matches” seemed to be “got up,” as it were, between sundry waggon-drivers and their neighbours, they having their mats spread under the waggons; the peals of laughter among the revellers became less frequent, and at length ceased altogether. The fires grew dim, and the moon and her companions in the sky alone lit up the scene; tents were closed and the sound of the last bugle died away in the hushed night air, leaving all silent, peaceful, and at rest.

Although only fifteen miles from Port Elizabeth, I had been led to expect that I should hear the distant cry of the jackal, and the howl of the wolf; but, in spite of the bed being spread upon nothing but grass, in spite of the more than “whispers of the night breeze” which would be heard from under the flap of the tent, I never slept so soundly in my life.

I was up and dressed with my child, ready for the march, at half-past five. The scene of that morning, though of a different character, almost equalled in beauty the one we had so much admired on the preceding evening. The regiment was drawn up on a natural parade of smooth green turf, bounded by bush, and the background of the eastern hills was glowing at the approach of the sun, who, as he advanced in radiant majesty, tipped with gold the glittering arms and appointments of the soldiers, and shed an acceptable warmth upon us as we left the dewy grass, for the rough and stony mountain road before us. Up this hill the regiment wound, preceding the waggons,—now presenting a glittering cluster of arms, and now being altogether lost to the sight in the thick bush with which the ascent was clothed. A long line of nineteen waggons brought up the rear, and, as we proceeded, four hundred men in advance—women, children, and baggage, wending their way slowly and steadily after them, I could not but commune in my own mind on the ways of that inscrutable and unquestionable Providence, by the working of whose will, England, from her original state of ignorance, insignificance, and barbarism, is now the chief ruling power in the world, and sendeth her ships and her soldiers, (in defiance of what to other countries would perhaps be insurmountable obstacles, when we consider the dangers and difficulties arising from climates and localities ill-suited to European habits and constitutions), “even to the uttermost parts of the earth.”

The day (March 8) became dreadfully hot; towards noon the sun had full sway. Not a cloud shaded the heavens; and, though the country we passed through was rich in bush, there were no shady trees, and water was extremely scarce.

The men being much fatigued with the previous day's march, it was determined to divide the next long march of thirty-two miles into two; and such an arrangement was not only merciful but absolutely necessary, as man by man fell by the roadside overpowered with the heat, foot-tired and faint for want of water. About one hour before we halted on the second day, we came suddenly upon

a pool, where a large herd of sheep and goats (the property of a neighbouring farmer) were drinking. The men shouted aloud joyfully; and rushing precipitately to the pool, put their lips to the element, (which, though muddy, was to them most grateful), and drank copiously of the unwholesome draught. Several became ill after doing so; and, instead of being refreshed by it, were rendered less capable of proceeding than before. Fifteen stragglers fell out of one company, and were probably only induced to crawl after the battalion that evening by the dread of wild beasts. On reaching Sunday River, we learned that such a fear was not without a foundation, as five lions had, within the last few days, been seen drinking at the river side. Most gladly did I find, on reaching the "Outspan," that a bed could be obtained at the snug, small house of Mr Rose, the Field-Cornet, close to the encampment: there, too, we obtained fresh butter, a leg of mutton, and some good English ale and porter, but rejoiced most in copious ablutions and clean bedding. My companions laughed much at my increased admiration of an encampment by moonlight that night, as I left it for a comfortable roof. "It certainly," said I, "is a very pretty sighted—*at a distance*."

We were up with the dawn next morning, and crossed the beautiful ford of the Sunday River, at sunrise. "Who would imagine," thought I, "that such a scene of peace and beauty should be one of the fastnesses for wild beasts?" Green boughs met each other across the stream. Down such a pleasant-looking river I had often glided in "merry England," singing, by the way, with young companions, to the gay music of our guitars, while the plash of oars kept time to the measure of our happy voices. There, in our own happy land, no lions prowled in our neighbourhood, no panthers could we fancy glaring on us from the bush, no venomous reptiles awaited our feet as we stepped upon the green sod from the boat. A South African climate is beautiful all the year round, except when visited by terrific thunderstorms, with their usual accompaniments of hail, rain, and lightning. Ah! that word "except;"—"except" for our dark November days and painful frosts, England would be an unexceptionable residence; still, even with these outward discomforts, look at our fire-sides!

But why go dreaming back from the brimming, shady Sunday River to the "stately homes of England!" On, on! and let us be thankful, that so far from home there is yet so much to be thankful for, and to enjoy. Oh! for the blessed philosophy which teaches us to make light of every thing! Truly, content is riches! In a moral point of view, may it not be considered as bearing an analogy to the story of the philosopher's stone, (always remembering the one to be theory, the other practicable), which was supposed to possess the gift of transmuting whatever the possessor of it touched into gold?

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