
Diary of a Journey made by Governor SIMON VAN DER STELL, to the country of the Amaquas, in the year 1685. Translated from the Dutch by W. L. VON BUCHENRODER, Esq. Member of the South African Institution.

[Continued from p. 48.]

Sunday, 16th.—We made preparations for conveying our baggage over the Olifants River; but on account of the rain it could not be effected, and we were therefore obliged to

remain. In this River a fish is caught resembling in shape the Carp of Holland; in taste, the Salmon, and is of the size of a common Cod fish.

During our stay, we found that the Olifants River receives a streamlet which springs out of the Griqua mountains, and along which the Sonquas above-mentioned reside. From inquiry we found that Sonqua signified the same as pauper does in Europe; and that each tribe of Hottentots had their own, employed to give notice if they perceived any strange tribe. They never plunder from the Kraals of the persons in whose service they are; but do from others, and that as well in time of peace, as in war; because (as has been related before,) they possess nothing but what they obtain in that way.

Monday, 17th.—The Colonists who had conveyed us thus far with their wagons, took leave at break of day; and upon their request, the Commander gave permission to them to shoot Sea-cows, Rhinoceroses, and Elands, for their own use. In consequence of a continuation of the rain, we were to-day also prevented from conveying our baggage over the river. Our latitude was $31^{\circ} 15'$, and longitude $38^{\circ} 13'$.

Tuesday, 18th.—The weather being fine, we carried our baggage over the river; and in the afternoon at 2 o'Clock, we departed from the ford, directing our road towards a height, which had a fine moist soil as far as the mountain. We then entered a valley at the river, where we encamped, and where the grass and wild oats were knee high. One of our people shot a hare, resembling much the European one, with the exception of the ears, which were as large as those of a common ass.

Wednesday, 19th.—We proceeded in the morning, with misty weather, towards a height, and, after reaching it, we came to a stream which appeared to discharge its water into the Olifants river. We then changed our direction to circumvent the windings of the river, and after passing another streamlet, reached a plain overgrown so thickly with wild oats, that it seemed like an European cultivated field. After passing that plain, we ascended through a small kloof, and on descending again continued our road over some low ground along the river, till we came to the Bavians Berg, (so named on account of the Baboons which inhabit the caverns thereof,) where we pitched our tents. Our resting place had a clayey soil and was well provided with grass and wood. We found in this country great numbers of Quails, resembling in call, size, and plumage, those of Europe.

The Hottentots which we had with us, went to the chase, each with a Karric* in his hand, and arranged in an extended line, in

* A Karric is a stick generally with a knob.

which, they beat along the fields; and if a Quail appeared, they hit it, in its flight with great expertness. They hunted Partridges, Hares, and other small game in the same manner.

We found a Scorpion, as large as one of the Craw-fish that are found in the Rhine, of a greenish colour, its nipper overgrown with long hairs, and it appeared very poisonous.

We travelled this day three miles. Our latitude was $31^{\circ} 1'$.

Thursday, 20th.—We left Bavians Berg with misty weather, and had frequently to change the direction of our course, on account of the many little hills that lay in our way. These hills had a sandy and stony soil, and were over grown with shrubs. Arriving at a valley, we found a rivulet with fine water; but which was usually dry, except in very rainy seasons: at this time there were about three feet of water in it. Along its banks grew thorn trees and fine grass, and it discharged itself into the Olifants river. We proceeded along its edge for a quarter of a mile, in order to find a place where we could ford it. After effecting this, we ascended a height, and travelled over a plain, with mostly a clayey soil, and came again to the Olifants river, which runs at that spot between high and rocky mountains, in a S. W. direction. We continued our journey over a high sand-hill, and then directed it N. W. to a valley called Backeley Plaats, which is situated so as to have on the one side the river, and on the other side the mountains; in the last-mentioned of which is found, metallic minerals, and here we pitched our tents at a place that was well provided with grass. The distance advanced to-day was five miles and a half, which required us six miles and twenty-one minutes travelling. Our latitude was $30^{\circ} 56'$, the longitude $38^{\circ} 15'$.

Friday, 21st.—We remained at our resting place in order to refresh the people who had been fatigued a little, and also to cure all such as found themselves indisposed, according to an established custom on arrival at this spot. From its having been reported to the Commander that a kraal of Hottentots, belonging to the Gregriqua nation, resided about this place, three men were dispatched to find them out, and to prevail on them to come with their huts and cattle to us; but when they arrived, they found that the Gregriquas had departed the preceding evening, from a fear that we would take their cattle, because they had rebelled against their Captains, (who had been appointed by the Honorable Company, and carried Batoons marked with its arms,) and had taken away their cattle, because they did not like to barter them.

That they entertained a belief that we would seize their cattle, appeared from the circumstance, that they came themselves, about thirty in number, with a few sheep, in the evening of this day, as it seemed for the purpose to find out if any thing was contemplated against them; and from not perceiving any

reason to believe such, and from the marks of friendship shewn to them through presents of tobacco and brandy, they resolved to send that same evening some of their number to fetch their wives, huts, and cattle.

Saturday, 22nd.—We were compelled to remain for the arrival of the kraal, in order to barter some cattle and milk for tobacco. In the afternoon, part thereof arrived, and located near us; and shortly afterwards they brought their milk, together with some cattle, to us for barter. His Honor the Commander feasted them with mutton and rice, and presented them with some brandy, by means of which they regaled themselves during the whole night.

Sunday, 23d.—We still remained, because they, (the Gregriquas) requested us yesterday to remain another day, and they would bring more cattle for barter, which they did towards noon.

In the mean while the Commander endeavoured to settle the afore mentioned quarrel of the Gregriquas, who were partly here assembled, earnestly recommending it to them, by the use of a great deal of advice and argument; that this would be their best course, because they were but a small tribe, and that it was bad to war among themselves, because other tribes would find it easier then to rob them of their cattle. Upon this they promised at last to restore the cattle, which for the sake of greater satisfaction, His Honor the Commander paid for, piece by piece with tobacco. The Captains before mentioned, agreed to live together for the future in peace.

In the afternoon, His Honor paid a visit to the kraal, and when he arrived, they killed a sheep for a parting feast to one of their Captains, a Chief, who was to accompany us on our journey. The operation of slaughtering was performed in the following manner:—the sheep was laid on its back, upon which the operator ripped open its belly, introduced his hand into it, and took out the intestines, while the animal was alive. The skin was then removed in a slovenly manner on the one side, and also the flesh of the shoulder. The ribs of one side were then broken from the back bone, and separated from the flesh, one by one. Their reason for not killing the animal as we do, is their anxiety to preserve the blood, which they collect carefully, cook, and eat; nay, in times of want, even the skin is roasted and eaten by them, so that of a sheep nothing but the excrements are thrown away.

Monday, 24th.—We departed at 9 o'clock, A. M. with rainy weather from the Backeley Plaats, and went on through a kloof; we then passed over an extensive plain, and at its termination came to a rivulet running with great rapidity, in which other travellers at an earlier season had found very little or no water, while it was now nearly three feet deep, but brack.

It took us about two hours to convey our wagons and carts over it, on account of its steep banks, which we were obliged to cut down to a slope. We then proceeded three quarters of a mile further to a pit with water, where we stopped, as no other was to be found for the next six or seven miles. This spot, as well as the whole country we passed this day, was scantily provided with grass, and was a desert wild country. We had on both sides of us several large hills, amongst which was one containing a metallic mineral. The advance of this day was a mile and a half. The latitude was guessed to be $30^{\circ} 50'$, the longitude $38^{\circ} 14'$.

Tuesday, 25th.—We broke up at 7 o'clock, A. M. and advanced between two hills, in a direction N. by E. for two fifths of a mile, after which we changed our course several times in order to pass a kloof which required us to make many circuits. All the hills around us contained ores, both of copper and iron as could be seen externally. We then came to a spot called Hooge Kraal, where we found an ore resembling that among the Amaquas. Further on, we passed through another kloof and came at last to a temporary stream, with good water, where we pitched our tents. This spot had very little or no grass, but was overgrown with green bushes, which the cattle had to eat, and which served also for fire-wood.

Our road during the whole day was either between, or over high, stony, and sandy hills, all of which were barren, and formed the haunt of wild horses, many of which we saw running upon them, and appeared from a distance to be ash gray. Our day's journey was very fatiguing, as we were in motion till nearly the evening. We called this spot Goede Hoop, from having found water here, which had never happened to others, and we hoped to find it also on our return. We had advanced five miles and a quarter. Our latitude was $30^{\circ} 41'$, the longitude $38^{\circ} 3'$.

Wednesday, 26th.—We commenced our journey at half-past 7 o'clock, A. M. and arrived, after travelling one-eighth of a mile, at a valley called the Eerste-modder-kuil, (first muddy pit) and after one third of a mile more, to the Tweede-modder-kuil. They are so named because early travellers found there water which was very brack and muddy. After this we advanced till we came to the base of Meerhofs Kasteel, which is a mountain so called after a person who had travelled there. In it is a large cavern formed by nature like an archway. His Honor ascended it, and found that the hill extended in the form of a high ridge, five miles in length, having on one side a vein of fine white alabaster, and on the other some veins of marble, of which some were white and red, some brown and white, some grey and white, and others quite white.

Having had this day a fatiguing and difficult march, on account of several very high hills, and unexpected swampy

valleys, which we had to cross and pass; our cattle were so much exhausted, that it was considered advisable to rest here. This spot was scantily provided with grass, and the surface of the valley was very stony, and was watered by a little rivulet which had not been seen before this, and the water of which, although a little brackish, was fit for use. As no trees were to be seen, we were obliged to use shrubs and rushes for fuel.

We advanced this day two miles and three quarters, in a N. N. W. direction.

Thursday, 27th.—We departed from Meerhofs Kasteel at half past 8 o'clock, A. M. with rainy weather, and directed our road through a kloof between two stony hills, and ascended a height, where we were obliged to remain on account of the troublesome stony and swampy roads, in which our wagons and carts stuck frequently fast, by which our cattle had become so much exhausted that they were not able to draw any more that day. This plain, as well as the country which we had passed, was badly provided with grass, but overgrown with different sorts of useless herbs and shrubs. We found here a small rivulet, which, as well as several we had passed, were all somewhat brackish, which was supposed to depend upon the nitrous soil. The country had a desert appearance, because, in whatever direction the eye was turned it met no tree; nor was it inhabited except by Sonquas, who rove over it, and subsist themselves with the game, of which, however, there was found here but little. These Sonquas are in the service of, and employed by, the Amaquas, to which nation they also belong.

We travelled this day two miles and a quarter. Our latitude was $30^{\circ} 38'$, and longitude $37^{\circ} 51'$.

Friday, 28th.—We took our departure, with fine weather, at 7 o'clock, and in order to avoid the heights which occurred, we often changed the direction of our course, till we came to the Laaste-modder-kuil, so called on account of the before-mentioned reasons; and as it was quite overgrown with weeds, the Commander ordered it to be cleared, so that we might find water on our return, because there was no other in the neighbourhood, except some in a small hole situated under a rock, and which was both brackish and small in quantity. The running water which we found in this vicinity was very salt, and emitted a smell like pickle. After the weeds were removed, we proceeded in a north direction three quarters of a mile further, where we found it advisable to halt upon a large plain, because we found tolerably good water and a scanty supply of grass. We had advanced two miles and three quarters.

Saturday, 29th.—We advanced at 7 o'clock, A. M. and ascended a height, from whence we saw before us a hill, the top of which was flat and table like; and also a number of

mountains of uncommon height. We left the former to our right. The country between our resting place and this hill, was chiefly sandy and full of small hillocks, which we had to cross. At that time a running rivulet meandered through it, the water of which was tolerably good. Leaving that, we passed along the foot of the afore-mentioned hill, and through a kloof between high sandy hills, when we came to a river called Kleine-doornbosch-rivier, from the thorn trees which grow on its banks. Earlier travellers found here very little or no water, though at this time, in many places, it was three feet deep, and running with great rapidity. We then travelled for a third of a mile along this river, upon the foot of a very rocky mountain, supplied with a few trees, and after that we crossed the river and halted.

We had this day uncommonly warm weather, in consequence of which we were much plagued by a sort of flies called *Blinde Vliegen*. They wound by a sting with which their head is armed, to the great annoyance both of man and beast. They are yellow and black, and according to the information obtained from the Hottentots, they are found here till a sort of yellow flowers, resembling the marigold of Europe, begin to fade, when they entirely disappear. Our resting place was but scantily provided with grass, the principal vegetation being rushes (*ruigte*), which were unfit for the use of the cattle. Our advance this day was three miles and a half. Our latitude was $30^{\circ} 5'$; and longitude $37^{\circ} 39\frac{1}{2}'$.

Sunday, 30th.—We departed at seven o'clock with fine weather, and ascended a height, after which, rounded another hill, and ascended a third, then a fourth, still higher, from whence we saw the sea in the direction of W.S.W. and at the distance of about six miles. After that we changed the direction of our route several times, till we came to a little rivulet, along the banks of which we marched one third of a mile, and then crossed it, and passed over two other hills to the Groote Doornbosch-rivier, where we stopped. We were obliged to change the direction of our route so frequently to-day, on account of the high mountains, which it was impossible to cross over, and which consequently we were forced to pass by such kloofs and valleys as were practicable. The mountains and the road we travelled to-day were stony and sandy, without any appearance of a tree. Our resting place was provided scantily with grass, but plentifully with fuel. Our advance this day was four miles, but we did not obtain the latitude.

Monday, 1st October.—We started with fine weather, and travelled along the afore-mentioned river for half a mile, when we crossed it. After proceeding two-fifths of a mile we re-crossed it, and upon having advanced about half a mile further, we were again obliged to cross it. The reasons which induced us to cross the river so often were, in

the first instance, the number of large rocks with which I was beset on both sides; and secondly, its very serpentine course between the hills. From the many rivulets that descend from the mountains and make the roads deep and unfit for travelling, several of our carts became disabled, and had been repaired with a great deal of trouble, only so far as that they reached the resting place. The short distance we travelled took us from an early hour in the morning till three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time we struck off from the river, leaving it on our right. We proceeded on our route, passing first between mountains, then ascended a sandy height, and continued along its ridge; after which we came again to the river, along whose banks we continued our journey for another mile, and then encamped. We had a high peaked mountain to the N.N.E. The mountains which we passed and saw this day were hardly any thing but massive rocks. The Doornbosch-rivier before-mentioned, is called so on account of the many thorn-trees which grow on its banks. We found here that that river sprung out of the mountains which lay in a N. direction from us, and was increased by many streamlets which fell into it from the mountains on both sides, and that it discharged itself into the sea. Former travellers found no water in that river, except in some holes and deep parts of its bed, while on the contrary it was when we passed, very deep and rapid. In the evening we perceived a fire, upon which His Honor the Commander ordered a sergeant with ten men, and some of the Hottentots we had with us, to go and ascertain from whence it arose. He returned, after an absence of three hours, bringing with him an Amaqua Sonqua, and reported "that he had seen as many as twenty of them together, towards whom he had sent one of his Hottentots to request them (according to the instructions of His Honor the Commander,) to come to us, and to assure them that they should not receive any harm; but as soon as they saw him, they ran away in great consternation, leaving behind, all their arms, viz: bows, arrows, and assagays, although he called out to them to remain. Upon seeing this he immediately followed them, and ordered his Hottentots, if possible, to seize one; which they did, and that was the one they brought." His Honor the Commander caused him to be well received, and to be asked why he had fled, but he was so much terrified that he would not speak a word, in consequence of which we kept him that night. We advanced this day two miles and forty-five minutes in the direction of N.E.

Tuesday, 2d.—We remained in order to repair our broken carts and wagons, for which a good opportunity was offered here, because the trees were heavy enough to serve for axle-trees, tongs, and whatever else was required,

The Sonqua afore-mentioned, whom we kept last night with

us. was sent, together with one of our Hottentots, by His Honor the Commander to see if he could find his comrades who had fled, and if so to bring them to us. We gave him some tobacco, in order to present it to them as a token of friendship. A short time after his departure we saw three fires on the other side of the river, upon which our Hottentots immediately took up their bows, arrows, and assagays, and proceeded to examine who were there. The moment that they ascended the hill, the people that were at the fires, namely, five of the said Sonquas, took to flight, but by calling out "that no harm should be done to them," they at last stopt, and resolved upon coming to us. In the meanwhile those we had sent out returned, bringing with them the rest of the Sonquas. They were all of them very lean, and of a slender make, which is the consequence of the great hunger and hardships they suffer. They have no food, except the bulbs of plants which they call uyentjes, tortoises, a sort of large caterpillars, and locusts, which are found here in great numbers. His Honor the Commander ordered a sheep to be killed and cooked, with which, in addition to rice and bread, they were feasted, and which they consumed so greedily that it seemed as if they would never have been satiated. He then presented them with some brandy, with which they made themselves merry, and danced, sung, and shouted in a strange manner, so as to resemble a herd of calves which were let loose for the first time from their place of confinement. It was without doubt, and according to their own acknowledgement, that this had been the only merry day they had had in their life time. Our latitude was $29^{\circ} 49'$, longitude $37^{\circ} 51'$.

Wednesday, 3d.—In the morning we left our resting place, which we called Keertweeder (turn back), because former travellers had here commenced their return; first, as the mountains which we saw before us could not be travelled over, and secondly, because they were ignorant of the route, as the tribes would not point it out.

We directed our course N.W. by W. for one-fifth of a mile through a kloof between high rocky mountains, part of which we rounded, and then ascended for half a mile a high and very rocky hill; the valleys between the mountains being nothing but swamps where wagons and carts sunk to the axletrees.

After arriving at the ridge of the mountain, we travelled in a N. direction for one-eighth of a mile, and N.W. by N. one-tenth of a mile, and then descended to a valley which was also somewhat swampy. We were obliged to stop here as there was good water and tolerable grass, and because it was already four o'clock p.m.

Those mountains which we had marched over, produce here and there aloe-trees, and according to the information from

the Sonquas, most of the mountains are overgrown with these trees, some of them being as high as 15 and 16 feet. During the time that we were on the road the Sonquas before-mentioned, who had parted this morning from us, joined us again with their wives and children. His Honor the Commander caused them to be well treated, the same as the night before, in consequence of which not less shouting and singing took place than last night. We had travelled the distance of one mile and three quarters.

Thursday, 4th.—At half-past seven A.M. we departed from this place, directing our course due N. to the top of a hill where we encamped. This spot was well provided with grass and good water. We remained there because we had been informed by the Sonquas that there were some kraals of Amaquas near it. His Honor the Commander sent immediately four of our Hottentots in search of these kraals, and gave pipes and tobacco to them as presents to the Captains, and an order to invite them at the same time to come to us. Towards evening some Namaquas arrived, among which was also the son of a certain Nonce, whose kraal they stated to be situated close by. They said also that five other kraals of different Captains were situated together further inland, and who had said, that if we came to their country they would attack us and take all our cattle. His Honor the Commander received these Amaquas very civilly, feasting them with brandy, tobacco, and victuals, and so they spent the whole night. We had proceeded one mile in the direction of N. The latitude was $29^{\circ} 36'$ the longitude $37^{\circ} 41'$.

Friday, 5th.—We remained here for the Hottentots we had sent out; and the Amaquas afore-mentioned returned to their kraal. In the afternoon Captain Nonce came himself, and with him a great party of his attendants, together with some of their wives and children. He rode on a pack-ox, and had with him eleven milk-cows and another pack-ox, which carried his baggage. He proceeded to the tent of His Honor the Commander, in order to present a sheep and a jug of milk, on which His Honor asked "if he was willing to barter?" he answered, "that he had no cattle, and that he was a poor devil." His Honor replied, "that in that case he should keep his sheep and milk, that our nation was of that description which would not receive anything from the poor, but rather gave to them, and that we would therefore regale them with our sheep." On this reply he stood quite amazed, not knowing what to say. He then caused six sheep immediately to be brought to the tent to present to us, which were also refused; upon which he entreated that the Commander would accept them, saying "that he had abundance of cattle for barter, and that he was not one of those who had intended to go to war;" adding, however, "that *he was mas-*

ter here, and His Honor the Commander at the Cape;" on which a feigned attempt was made by us to break up our encampment and march to his kraal, in order to see *who should be master*. Upon these words he became quite astounded, and commenced speaking with much more civility, saying "that the other Captains had said so, but not he." He sent his son to his kraal to order it to break up and to come to us. His Honor caused him and all his people to be well feasted, with which they were much pleased, and pretended to have great affection for us.

Saturday, 6th.—The son of Captain Nonce came again to us, pretending that the kraal to which he had been in order to fetch it could not come, on account of the great swamps which were on the road, which was quite at variance with what he had stated the day before; namely, "that it was a road quite practicable for us to go with our wagons and carts," from which it could be perceived that he intended some roguery towards us, particularly as he had shewn ill-treatment to former travellers: he is commonly called Jonker. He evinced by all his acts that he had not the least respect towards his father, who required to be silent when he commenced to speak. His Honor the Commander remarking this, ordered him to be silent, and to let his father speak; on which he replied "that *he* and not his father was Captain." In consequence of this and some irregular conduct which we remarked in him, His Honor the Commander caused him to be apprehended, together with another of the same kraal called Rabi, who was also one of the ringleaders. It was considered advisable to send on the following day a sergeant with twenty men to the kraal, to see if they would come by fair means, but to compel them by force if they refused.

Sunday, 7th.—With break of day the sergeant departed with his men to seek the kraal, and returned in the afternoon with it, the people were well provided with milk cows, but indifferently with oxen and sheep. The sergeant reported, that when he arrived at the kraal many took to flight, on which he sent word by the Hottentots that he had with him, that no harm would be done to them if they would go voluntarily with him. He seized their arms in the mean time, and they, seeing themselves overpowered, broke up their kraal and proceeded quietly. It was found to be true that the roads were impassible for wagons and carts, in consequence of which they had been compelled to unpack several oxen which had been loaded with the chattels of their kraal. His Honor the Commander caused the fore-mentioned Jonker to be brought to him in the tent, and asked what reason he had to point out to us a wrong road? He denied having ever said any thing about it, whilst his people on the contrary acknow

ledged it in his presence, and asserted, that he had not come to the kraal to fetch it, but to give orders that they should prepare to march away; and that he had sent some of his people to the other kraals, in order to induce them not to break up and to come to us, pretending to know that we had no good intentions towards them. From all this it appeared clearly that he had formed the resolution to mislead us, and detain us, in consequence of which he was kept prisoner, with threats of heavy punishment, and his father on the contrary presented to the people of the kraal, in order that they should acknowledge him again as their Captain, and no one else; with which they were not inclined to comply, but were compelled at last by threats to do.

Monday, 8th.—We were obliged to remain here in consequence of the Hottentots which we had sent out not having yet returned, and because they were directed to meet us at this spot. In the mean while Captain Nonce came with cattle, sheep, and milk, to barter with us. He also sent two people of his kraal, to inquire why the other Captains remained so long, and to tell them also that no harm had been done to his people, wherefore they might also come to us without fear or apprehension.

Tuesday, 9th.—Captain Nonce came again with cattle and milk to barter, and seemed to be quite pleased. Towards evening the Hottentots we had sent out came back, bringing with them five Captains, called Oedeson, Harramac, Otwa, Haby, and Aoe, who welcomed His Honor the Commander after their manner, and shewed much joy at his arrival, particularly Captain Oedeson, who stroked His Honor several times over, clapped him on the shoulders, and pointed to his breast, by which he meant to testify the good heart he bore towards him. The Captains being now all together, they were made acquainted with the bad acts of the foresaid Jonker and Rabi, and asked what punishment they thought they deserved; on which they deliberated a long while together, and requested at last that Jonker might be acquitted this time, and that they would prescribe rules to him in presence of His Honor, agreeable to which he would have to conduct himself, which request was granted to them, and he (Jonker) made acquainted, that he should not any longer have the name of Captain, but should be contented to be simply a *Soldier*. Also that he should not attempt any thing against the Honorable Company; and further, that he should acknowledge his father as Captain, and give due respect to him; and that in case he should transgress any of these points, they, the Captains, would join, and punish him with death. Upon pledging themselves to an adherence thereto, he was discharged.

(To be continued.)