

An Historical Account of the Formation, Progress, and present State of the European Colony at the Cape of Good Hope. By the Rev. Mr. M. BORCHERDS, V.D.M. Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Stellenbosch, and Corresponding Member of the South African Institution.

[Read at the South African Institution.]

THE European settlement at this remarkable point of Southern Africa, has, from the period of its formation, caused great interest in Europe; more especially amongst the nations which have excelled in the arts of navigation and commerce, or which, from their power, have been enabled to maintain dominion on the seas; and from that circumstance its history will not be viewed as divested of interest. It shall therefore be my object in the following details, to illustrate that, by tracing the formation and progress of the Colony, and in doing so, I shall principally depend upon public records, official documents, and other authentic statements to which I have had access.

CHAP. I.

April, 1652.—The occurrences which took place upon the arrival of Van Riebeck, in 1652, must necessarily commence the detail; and that the reader may become acquainted with the circumstances which first gave rise to the formation of a settlement at this Cape, I shall insert, verbatim, the Resolution* of the Council held on board the principal vessel, immediately before the expedition sent out for that purpose, landed:

“Tuesday, 8th April, 1652.

“Having now, by the Grace of God, whose name be praised,
 “safely arrived with the ships Dromedary, Heron, and Good
 “Hope, in the roads of Table Bay, at Cabo de Boa Esperance,
 “on the 6th and 7th instant, for the purpose of establishing
 “a general rendezvous, according to the orders received from
 “our superiors the Directors of the General Chartered Dutch
 “East India Company, and for the attainment of that object,
 “to build a defensive fort or castle, in order, under its pro-
 “tection, to take possession of such lands as may be best
 “suited for cultivation and cattle-breeding, for the refreshment
 “of the Company’s vessels both home and outward bound,
 “and for such other services as the interests of the Company
 “may require; for which purpose, the vessels afore-mentioned

* Records of Council, No. 1, An, 1652–1673,

“ have been laden with materials, and the commanders thereof
 “ directed to use their utmost endeavours to carry this plan
 “ into immediate effect.

“ The Council being assembled by the Senior Merchant,
 “ Jan van Riebeck, having maturely deliberated and well
 “ considered the subject, have ordered and directed:

“ That, in the first place, the said Jan van Riebeck, accom-
 “ panied by the Commanders of the said Ships, David Coning,
 “ Johan Hoegsaet, and Symon Turver, shall land with some
 “ armed soldiers, to inspect and measure (as was provisionally
 “ done yesterday), a place fitted for the erection of a fort;
 “ and having fixed upon the same, shall immediately mark
 “ out the plan, so that no time may be lost in commencing the
 “ work, and the ships be enabled to pursue their voyage to
 “ Batavia with as little delay as possible.

“ And that every thing may be done with regularity,
 “ and quickly finished, it has been further resolved to leave
 “ no more than 36 men in each of the ships Dromedary and
 “ Heron, and 11 men in the yacht Good Hope, making
 “ together 83 men, to land the materials and procure water,
 “ ballast, &c. These men shall also be employed, when con-
 “ venient, in fishing, so that the persons on shore may not
 “ be taken from their work; it being, at the same time,
 “ understood, that the fish shall be divided amongst all, in
 “ such manner however as they may think proper.

“ That 50 men of the Dromedary, 39 of the Heron, and 5
 “ of the Good Hope, amounting with the cooks and carpenters,
 “ to 100 men, exclusive of the officers, clerks, and surgeons,
 “ shall work on shore. And, that the business may be carried
 “ on with despatch, the carpenters of the three ships shall
 “ land forthwith, and erect with all speed, within the
 “ boundaries of the fort, a convenient store and dwelling
 “ house, according to a plan to be furnished them.

“ That with regard to food, a cook shall be sent on shore
 “ from each ship, and the people supplied twice a day; and
 “ each man shall be allowed three quarters of wine daily,
 “ so that no distinction be made, and dissatisfaction be
 “ prevented.

“ Relative to the guards it is to be understood, that both
 “ day and night watches shall be equally divided between the
 “ soldiers and sailors, and include even the carpenters,
 “ without any exception whatever; so that no person may
 “ have reason to complain of having more duty to perform
 “ than another. For this purpose, the sailors shall be supplied
 “ with 8 muskets from the Dromedary and 6 from the Heron,
 “ together with pouches and cutlasses. The soldiers being
 “ already armed.

“ And, lastly, to maintain these and other Regulations

“ which have been resolved upon, a Placaat, of which the
“ draft has been prepared, shall be published on board all the
“ vessels, and afterwards affixed at the proper place on shore ;
“ which will appear from our Placaat Book of this date.*

“ Thus resolved and done, on board the ship Dromedary,
“ on the day and year above-mentioned.

(Signed,) “ JAN VAN RIEBECK, 1652,
“ DAVID CONING,
“ JAN HOOGSAET,
“ SYMON TURVER,
“ P. VAN HELM, Secretary.”

* This Placaat was published on the 9th April, 1652, and was as follows :

“ JAN VAN RIEBECK, Senior Merchant, and Commanding on behalf of the Honourable Directors of the General Chartered Dutch East India Company, the Fort which they have directed to be built, Ships, and what appertaineth thereto, and of the Territories which they may hereafter take into possession, at the Cape of Good Hope, with the concurrence of his Council, hereby maketh known :

“ THAT whereas we have been ordered by the Honourable Directors before-mentioned, to build for them, with the assistance of the ships Dromedary, Heron, and Hope, which are for the purpose intended, at the Cape of Good Hope, such fort and fortification as shall be found necessary for the defence of the territory which is to be taken possession of, on behalf of the Company.

“ And as in such the business which we are to commence, it is necessary that we should act with great caution, and be particularly circumspect towards the savages of the said country, who are exceedingly uncivilized, so that we may be on our guard in every thing, and in a state of defence; and that no cause of dissatisfaction may be given by us, or our people, to that nation; but that, on the contrary, every kind of indulgence may be shewn them, and thus, by our friendly behaviour, to give them an inclination to trade with us, in order by this method to obtain a great supply of cattle, and to suffer less from them in our plantations, and that we may thus be able to cultivate and grow such things as may be required for the refreshment of the Company's homeward and outward bound ships, which is the first and principal object of our employers; and whatever else may in the course of time be considered necessary for the service of the Company.

“ In order, therefore, to prevent all ill consequences, and to promote the said objects, as well as for the preservation of good order and discipline amongst the common people, who have acted with but little dignity, we have resolved, for the above purpose, as was done by Resolution dated the 8th April, 1652, to draw up the following Articles in the form of a Placaat, and, after reconsideration and approbation of the Council, to publish and affix the same at this place, together with some parts of the General Artikel-brief, which may be serviceable to them, namely :

“ In the first place, that each and every person on board the three aforesaid ships, as well sailors as soldiers, engaged in the service of the Company upon oath of the General Artikel-brief, shall, upon our order, be prepared and willing to go on shore with such implements, and to do such work as shall be pointed out to him, in order to complete the fort which is about to be built, &c. and to work at the same with the greatest industry, and to see that others do so likewise, as every honest servant is in duty bound, without any deception, whether on the part of any soldier or sailor, or whomsoever it may be.

“ And that no one may have reason to complain that he has more to do than another, all the guards shall be divided equally, as well amongst the soldiers as the sailors, without any one being excepted; unprejudiced, however, the right of the Commander, should he be pleased to go and make dis-

It is, therefore, from the date of this Resolution that our history actually commences. It appears, however, from the

coveries in the interior, to choose such soldiers and sailors for his escort and guards, as he may consider necessary.

"And as this wild nation is somewhat impudent, thievish, and not at all to be trusted, every one will take care that his musket and tools, and every thing of value belonging to him, be well secured, so that they may not be stolen by the savages, as we do not, by any means, or upon any consideration, wish that these people should for such reason be pursued, struck, or frightened, without our previous knowledge and consent, but the musket or tool stolen from any one shall be put to his account, as a fine, and he shall be scourged at a post with 50 lashes for his negligence, and shall, moreover, lose his ration of wine for eight days, or receive such other more severe punishment as the nature of the case may require. And whosoever, for such reason, ill uses, strikes, or pushes any one of the natives, whether he is in the right or not, he shall receive 50 lashes in the presence of such native, so that they may thus perceive that such treatment is against our desire, and that we are inclined to act towards them with the greatest kindness and indulgence according to the orders and intentions of our employers. On which account, all the guards are, by these presents, expressly directed to look also to this, and if they allow any harm to be done to the savages in their presence, they will be liable to the same punishment as the persons who did it.

"And for that purpose, every one is seriously exhorted and ordered to shew them every kindness and attention, so that they may in course of time, by our friendly behaviour, become more accustomed and attached to us, and we may thus fulfil the intentions of our employers.

"Notwithstanding which, however, every one should be so much upon his guard, as not to trust himself so far amongst them, that they may overcome, massacre, or carry away any of us. Wherefore, every one is also expressly and particularly prohibited from leaving the places where they are ordered to work, or to guard, either alone or many in a company, either by night or during the day, whether under the pretence of fishing, or under any other pretext whatsoever, or whosoever he may be, unless with the special consent and approbation of the Commander, upon pain of being severely punished.

"We, therefore do, by these presents, order and enjoin all the advanced guards also to observe this, so that no one may go from the place or beyond the furthest guard, or in case of neglect or oversight in that respect, such guard shall also be considered liable to punishment.

"And he who does not pay proper attention to the work allotted to him, or to the place which he is ordered to guard, or who shall there be found sleeping, shall, for the first time, be punished with 50 lashes, and lose his ration of wine for eight days; and such ration shall be given to him who informs against the person who slept or was idle; but if found sleeping for the second time or oftener, he shall receive such severer punishment as is customary according to martial law.

"That the work may upon the whole be better executed, and be done sooner, every one shall obey such persons as shall be put over them during the absence of the principal officers, upon pain as aforesaid.

"In like manner no fish shall be caught, or nets drawn for the purpose, without the previous knowledge and consent as aforesaid, according to the order on that head established, and about to be established by the advice of the Council.

"It is, also, hereby expressly prohibited and forbidden to every one, whosoever or of whatsoever rank he may be, to engage, without the previous knowledge and consent of the Commander and Council, in the least barter, trade, or otherwise, with the inhabitants, either for cattle, refreshments, or of whatever nature or description it may be, so that they may not put a higher price upon them, and become proud of their cattle and other property, by the avidity and thoughtlessness of the common people, and the goods of the Company be brought into disrepute, and made less valuable; and whosoever shall act against this order, shall be proceeded against, according to the General Artikel-brief, in the most rigorous and exemplary

Records and other documents, that the design of forming a Settlement at this place had its rise from two memorials; * the first of which, dated 26th June, 1649, was signed by Leeudert Jansz and M. Proost; and the second, referring to the former, was written by Jan van Riebeck, in June, 1651.

Both these documents are too prolix to be inserted here; although they contain several remarkable passages, and shew the real cause for establishing a fort and garden at this place; besides other circumstances connected with the history of that period.†

The memorialists represented to the Directors of the General Chartered Dutch East India Company, the benefits and advantages which their outward and homeward bound vessels might derive from such an establishment, more particularly with regard to the health of the crews. They contain remarks on the climate, situation, shape, and appearance of the Table-valley;‡ and describe it as a waste plain overrun with brush-wood.

The first memorialists, who, being wrecked in the *Haerlem*, East Indiaman, had spent several months here,§ gave a favorable account of the character of the natives, and refuted the notion of their being cannibals; but Van Riebeck himself, had a less favorable opinion. Both memorials, however, expressed hopes, that, in addition to the temporal advantages which might arise from forming a Settlement, the moral improvement of the Aborigines || would be promoted by the diffusion of Christian principles.

manner, by the loss of his rank and pay, and be sent home without salary, situation, or any thing else; and the cattle so bartered or traded for, be forfeited to the Company, the which in this respect is of the greatest importance.

“We therefore desire all officers holding or who may hold any high or inferior command over the soldiers or sailors, for the fulfilment of our orders, as well on board as on shore, to take proper care that this our Ordinance be promptly obeyed and put in force in such manner as shall be found serviceable to the Company; and whosoever is negligent or idle therein, shall be declared incapable of holding any situation, and shall be punished further in such manner as the exigency of the case may require, therefore let every one guard against loss and dishonour.

“Whosoever may act improperly in other matters not herein provided for, shall be punished as circumstances may require, according to the General Artikel-brief.

“And that no one may have reason to plead ignorance hereof, we have ordered this, together with some Sections out of the General Artikel-brief, to be read to the people on board of all the ships, and also to be affixed to a post at the most convenient place:

“Thus done by the General Council, on board the ship *Dromedary*, on the 9th April, 1652.

(Signed) “JAN VAN RIEBECK.”

* Book of Letters received 1652—1660.

† Their description of St. Helena also deserves notice.

‡ In which Cape Town is now situated.

§ Or according to Van Riebeck a whole season.

|| Now known by the name of Hottentots.

The first memorial expresses itself on this subject as follows :

“ That the natives are capable of learning the Dutch language is sufficiently evident; for, when the first Mate, Jacob Claatz Haek, had been on shore for six or eight weeks, attending the sick, they were accustomed daily to fetch wood for culinary purposes, and could distinctly say, *Eerst hout halen dan eaten* (first fetch wood and then eat). They could repeat the names of most of the persons belonging to the Haerlem, and could also speak a few words, so that there is no doubt they would learn to speak our language.

“ By living upon good terms with them, it is probable their children may become useful servants; and if educated in the Christian Faith, should the Almighty grant His blessings, as at Tayouan and Formosa, many souls may be brought to a knowledge of religion and saved to God. Therefore, the formation of the said fort and garden will not only tend to the advantage of the East India Company, but, what is of more consequence, may also be the means of preserving many souls to the praise of God’s most Holy Name, and to the propagation of His Holy Gospel; for which your undertakings throughout India will, without doubt, be more and more blessed.”

And Van Riebeck preferring the same request in 1651, expresses himself in the following words :

“ With regard to the assertion of Leendert Jansz, that the natives are capable of learning the Dutch language, it merits consideration as being in itself an advantage. And the more so, as it affords hope for the propagation of our religion. In such case, if you could reconcile yourselves to the expense, a good minister would be of the greatest service, were it only for the further edification of your servants who might be established there, &c.”

In consequence of these representations, the Company finally resolved upon the Settlement. The instructions for the officers who were to proceed hither, having been already drawn up on the 25th March, 1651, by the Board of XVII, at Amsterdam, a copy thereof, duly certified on the 12th December following, by D. Pruys, Advocate of the said Company, was accordingly delivered to them.

By these instructions it was directed, that the works should be commenced and carried on without opposition or hinderance to any of those nations in alliance or neutrality with their High Mightinesses the States General, whose ships might touch here for refreshments, with the exception, however, of the Portuguese, who were then considered as enemies.

Jan van Riebeck, who was appointed Commander, and those who were to assist, or in case of need to succeed him in the service, were directed to survey the lands offering the

greatest capabilities for carrying the Company's intentions into effect; to erect signs of having taken possession, and afterwards form a chart as a proof thereof. It was likewise directed, that the ships Dromedary and Heron should, as speedily as possible, continue their voyage to Batavia, leaving only the yacht Good Hope with the Commander Van Riebeck.

Thus prepared, this enterprising man undertook his interesting voyage to this country; and on the 23d Dec. 1651, left the Texel*. He assembled his Council three times during the voyage; namely, on the 30th December, 1651; on the 20th January, 1652, in 18° 30' north; and on the 29th March, in 34° south latitude; and, by their advice, he determined to touch at this promontory†. The records of the last Meeting conclude with the following concise and pious wish; "In which may the Almighty grant us His holy guidance and prosperity. Amen."

It may not be deemed irrelevant to remark, that it was his constant practice, and appears to have formed a prominent feature in his character, never to enter upon business at any Meeting, without imploring the Divine blessing; and in the first page of the Records of Council we find the following Prayer.

"O merciful and gracious God, our Heavenly Father, since
"it has pleased Thee to call us to the Government of the
"affairs of the General Chartered East India Company, at the
"Cape of Good Hope; and as we have assembled in Council
"to advise and take such measures as may best tend to
"promote the interests of the Company; to maintain Justice;
"and, if possible, to plant and propagate the true Reformed
"Christian doctrine amongst those wild and savage people,
"for the praise and honor of thy holy name, and for the
"benefit of our employers; and being, without thy gracious
"assistance, unable to effect these purposes, we pray, O most
"merciful Father, that it may please Thee to preside at this
"Assembly, and with thy heavenly wisdom, so to enlighten
"our hearts, that all perverse passions, misunderstandings,
"and other similar defects, may be removed from amongst us;
"our hearts cleansed from all human weakness, and our
"minds so composed, that we in our deliberations, may not
"propose nor resolve any thing which will not tend to the
"praise and glory of thy most holy name, and to the service
"of our master; without considering in the least our own
"personal advantage or profit. These and such other
"blessings as may be necessary to promote the service

* See Zuid Afrikaansch Tydschrift, vol. 1, page 105.

† It had been merely decided to form a Settlement at the Cape, the selection of the spot, and the mode of carrying the plan into execution, was left to Van Riebeck and his Council.

“ intrusted to us, and for our eternal salvation, we most humbly pray and entreat, in the name of thy beloved Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has taught and commanded us to say,—Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, &c.”

In this manner was the Settlement commenced; and on the 19th of April, Van Riebeck, in compliance with the Resolution of the second Council held on board the Dromedary after their arrival at this place, informed the Directors of these proceedings, by the homeward bound ship Salamander. The last meeting of Council on board the Dromedary took place on the 11th May, 1652.

From such small beginnings has this extensive Colony risen. The population, which in the commencement only consisted of 100 persons, has, in about 175 years, increased in different ways, to more than as many thousands, and the pious prayer of our forefathers, with respect to Religion, has been visibly fulfilled.

CHAP. II.

April, 1652.—Amongst the documents which have been preserved relative to this Settlement, the Instructions for the Officers who were to proceed hither first, merit consideration.*

This document comprises, principally, the following directions and remarks:

That the Board of XVII. representing the whole of the General Chartered Dutch East India Company, had, for the benefit and protection of their trade, resolved to form, at the Cape of Good Hope, an establishment for the refreshment of their ships.

That on the arrival of the expedition, a part of the people should land and erect a temporary building of wood, for shelter; and wherein they might deposit their tools.

That they should, further, construct a small defensive fort at the Sweet River,† according to a plan already prepared. That it should be called the Good Hope; and should be sufficiently extensive to lodge from 70 to 80 Men.

That this being effected, they should select the best grounds for gardens, and the land most adapted to pasture, for the purpose of breeding cattle.

That each individual should consider himself called upon, in the most impressive manner, not to molest the natives, nor

* These Instructions are referred to in the preceding Chapter, p. 9, but are here more fully considered.

† What is here called the Sweet or Fresh River, is the stream flowing from the Table Mountain, from which the Town is now supplied with water. It ran into the sea near the wharf.

take away their cattle; but, on the contrary, to gain their confidence by kind and friendly behaviour.

That as the main object in establishing this fort, was to obtain a place for refreshment, and to enable vessels to pass St. Helena, it should be particularly observed, what description of fruits could be best cultivated consistently with climate and seasons.

That the people should be governed according to the General Artikel-Brief,* to which they had sworn. And that they should not be allowed to waste their time in idleness.

That the Commander should keep a journal; and endeavour to discover some means for defraying the expenses which might be incurred.

That as soon as the fort was in a state of defence, 70 men, and the boats, should be taken from the ships to assist in building and other necessary work; particularly in making a wooden beacon, or something of that description, to point out the anchorage to vessels entering the bay. And that they should also plant 4 pieces of cannon upon each point of the fort†.

The further execution of the plan was left to their own judgment and ability. But they were recommended to be diligent in keeping correct memoranda of every thing that passed; and in corresponding with the Company.

Furnished with these instructions, Van Riebeck set out on his undertaking, and arriving in Table Bay on the 7th of April, 1652, he slept on shore the same night.

In compliance with the above-mentioned directions, he commenced his diary; and as it was probably kept with the knowledge and approbation of his Council, his principal observations and the several vicissitudes of his fortune cannot be better ascertained than by following that document.‡

The first acts of the Founder of this Settlement, upon whose measures the future happiness or misery of so many thousands of human beings was destined to depend, shew, in a remarkable manner, his restless assiduity and anxious desire to effect the desired end with promptitude.

Three days after his arrival he superintended the people at work on the ground he had already marked out for his favourite project, the erection of the fort "Good Hope."

No impediments could weary his inexhaustible patience: no dangers could daunt his determined spirit. Before the expiration of the month, he had, by several excursions, made

* A collection of Instructions for the Officers and others of the Company's vessels; and various other regulations for the government of their servants, by sea and land.

† This is more circumstantially detailed in the diary of Van Riebeck, inserted in the *Zuid Afrikaansch Tydschrift*, vol. I, p. 114.

‡ *Zuid Afrikaansch Tydschrift*, vol. I, p. 103.

himself acquainted with the surrounding country. On the 21st he visited the Table Mountain; the Lion's Hill on the 27th; and on the 28th the back of the Table Mountain. And, by means of the Captains Hoogsaet and Turver, with other persons, on whom he could rely, he had obtained information respecting the country as far as the Salt River.

He was much delighted with the pleasing idea, that this country, which to his glowing imagination appeared so fertile, might hereafter be cultivated by Chinese or other people of colour, or even by Europeans; and with this feeling, on the last day of the month, he writes,—“On this day, we, with the Captain Hoogsaet, laid the first stone of the walls upon which the rafters of the dwelling house and store are to be placed.”

It is worthy of remark, that Van Riebeck, true to the religion of his forefathers, had, from his arrival at this place, caused Divine Service to be performed every Lord's day, and a sermon to be read to him and his people, by the Chaplain;* this he generally styled “Het Sermoen.” Daily, morning and evening prayer seems also to have been customary.

On the 24th, Van Riebeck and his family, left the Ship, and resided in a temporary wooden hut, the better to attend to the progress of the work.

Little else of consequence happened this month. The transactions with the natives were few; and the killing of a hippopotamus, by his people, during the night of the 24th, appears the most remarkable occurrence. He describes this animal as being “about the weight of two fat oxen, having a very ugly monstrous head, with several sharp pointed tusks, the longest of which were about $\frac{7}{8}$ of an ell; a short neck and legs; the feet resembling those of a rhinoceros in shape, but divided into four parts. It was very wild and savage; and although wounded by several shots behind the ear, yet, as the skin was an inch thick, and so hard that in some places a musket shot could not penetrate, it was only at length killed by a ball striking it in the forehead. It was given to the people and was found to be well flavoured. Milk also ran out of the udder.” From this account we may suppose that the animal here described was a hippopotamus; and probably the first ever killed by Europeans at this place.

May.—The second month of Van Riebeck's residence here, passed in similar occupations; and by his continual presence, the work advanced more to his satisfaction. He received much information respecting the surrounding country, from

* In the original, Krankbezoeker, a person in the Dutch Church whose duty it is to visit and pray with the sick; but who, however, is not ordained, nor can exercise any other clerical function. There appears to have usually been one on board each ship.

parties sent out for that purpose; particularly from Van der Helm and Verberg, who with two other persons, penetrated about 18 miles* behind the Table Mountain, going through the pass† between that and the Lion's Head. They made a very favorable report of having discovered immense forests of large trees, and a great number of deer, steenboks, and other game, and also civet cats.

He received at this time a reinforcement of 50 men, by two ships from Holland; and the Minister Boukerius having arrived in the ship *Whale*, Van Riebeck had, on Sunday, the 12th of this month, the gratification "of hearing the first sermon preached, and of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper being administered, in an uncovered part of the house in the square of the intended fort."

Having held his last Council, called the General Council,‡ on board the *Dromedary*, at which all the Captains were present; he, on the following day, in obedience to the orders of his employers, gave to the four bulworks or points of this little fort, the names of the ships which were then at anchor. The south point was called the *Dromedary*; the east, the *Whale*; the west, the *Elephant*; and that to the northward was named the *Heron*. The yacht, which was to remain here, had already given her name, "*The Good Hope*" to the whole fort.

Some days afterwards, he visited the wreck of the ship *Haerlem*,§ the loss of which, as appears from the memorials or representations mentioned in the first chapter, gave rise to the establishment of this Settlement. But the vessel, with her guns, were too deeply sunk in the sand for him to turn them to any advantage at that time; although the benefit which he might subsequently derive, did not escape his prospective genius.

Towards the end of this month, a disease called by him the red dysentery or Bloody Flux, made great ravages amongst his people;—lost five before the month was out; besides a soldier who died on board the *Hof van Zeeland*, and was buried here.

Nothing further remarkable happened, except the taking of a young hippopotamus, the flesh of which had the flavour of veal, and being distributed amongst the sick, whose number was daily increasing, tended, in some measure, to their comfort.

June.—The month of June proved still more discouraging. In the first five days alone, three of his men died; and it appears from other remarks in his diary, that fevers, flux, and

* Or 6 Dutch miles,—each being equal to about 3 English.

† Usually called the 'Kloof' from the Dutch.

‡ Records of Council under date 11th May, 1652.

§ This vessel was wrecked on the eastern side of Table Bay (*Oostwal*).

painful griping, caused and increased by cold and other concurrent circumstances, had not, out of 116 labourers, left more than 60 in tolerable health. In addition to these disasters, extraordinary high winds, heavy rains, and hail storms, occasionally accompanied by violent peals of thunder; the spoiling of his bread and other dry provisions; the weak state of his people, who made but little progress, caused him to write in his diary, "that if the Almighty were not pleased to stay his chastising hand, it was evident that their labour would be tedious and of little profit; but that, however, he still relied upon God's gracious assistance." His wife was also attacked by the same disorder; and in a short time he had scarcely 50 men sufficiently healthy to work. He could give the sick but little relief. One cow and a calf were all he had been able to obtain from the natives; and he now found it, "a poor and miserable life, as one after the other was attacked by this destructive malady, to which also many fell a sacrifice." And on the 10th he adds, "if the Almighty be not pleased soon to relieve us from this calamity, we see very little probability of completing our work, as many of our people die, and the greater part of the remainder are sick."

In the midst of these adversities, a thatcher was found, and by his expertness Van Riebeck's house was soon finished. Several native vegetables, such as asparagus, trefoil and other sorrels, were discovered; and he had already, Dutch lettuce and cress for himself and the sick. Many whales were seen in the bay, which gave him hopes that, before long, much profit might be derived from establishing a fishery. And towards the end of the month he had a plentiful draught of small fish.

Meanwhile six more of his people died; but likewise, the first child was born in the fort Good Hope, on the 6th. The mother, who was the Chaplain's wife,* had, in the beginning of the month, been put in possession of the first lodging in the fort, whilst Van Riebeck and the rest, still lived in huts, in the expectation of soon occupying better residences.

July.—In this manner did the Commander reach the fourth month of his stay here. His next undertaking was to visit Robben Island in one of the small Biscay boats, to examine the island, and to observe whether seals could not be caught there. But this first attempt was unfortunate: he was in danger of losing his life; and mentions in his diary that, "by the blessing of God, and the visible guidance of Providence," he had, that evening, "returned in safety from as great peril as had ever been experienced in the world."

The weather beginning to clear up, he sowed wheat and

* The Ziekentroster, comforter of the sick; the same as Krankbezoeker. see Note, page 258.

barley, as also carrot seed, as an experiment to know if they would grow at that season.

But he was disturbed in the midst of these occupations, by complaints against Jan Blank; who was accused, "of having been guilty of gross insolence towards the Commander of the Yacht;" and, being tried, was sentenced "to be dropped from the yard-arm into the sea, and to be afterwards further punished with 50 lashes." * Van Riebeck refers on this occasion to the Sentence-book, in which, as this was the first case of crime subject to corporal punishment, it is probable the reasons for the sentence were mentioned, and the constitution of the Court described. And he adds, that it would be found in the said book "*Largo*," which was his usual expression for more full and circumstantial details. A second case of the same nature followed immediately after.

He had, however, the gratification of seeing his wheat spring up on the 10th. About the middle of the month he perceived for the first time, that ice had been formed during the night. A large quantity of game of every description, particularly elands and other deer, appeared near his residence: he laid snares for them, but was unsuccessful. He was much pleased to see his vegetables thrive; and he began to hope that, "under God's blessings," he should be able to refresh the ships touching here on their way from India. But, before the month had expired, his expectations were, in a great measure, frustrated by heavy rains and consequent inundations. Several parts of the mountains were, for five or six days, covered with snow; and a considerable number of baboons ran along the foot of Table Mountain.

Three deaths occurred this month; and the cold wet weather occasioned the illness of 8 or 10 more of his people. With the exception of some warm wine, he had nothing for their refreshment; but he was not without hope that the Saldanhians would soon arrive with cattle, and that he might then obtain a large quantity for his people and for the ships which were expected.

August.—In the mean time, however, his main work was proceeding, and on the 3d of August, every one left the beach to reside in the fort, the north point of which, the Heron, was already 16 feet in height, and in a complete state of defence. Many whales were again seen. Some days were clear and fine, but the nights and mornings were extremely cold;

Provisions began to be stale and scarce, and, on the 13th of this month, he assembled his Council in the fort for the first time,† when it was resolved, to request from the ships expected

* This sentence was carried into effect on the following day.

† Records of Council of that date.

from Holland, assistance in men, &c. and in case of such being refused by the Commanders, "to protest against them, in equity, for all costs, hinderances, damages, and inconveniences," which the Company might sustain from their unwillingness and refusal. And to take such further steps as might be found necessary for the service of their employers.

He again sowed wheat and other things, and planted medlar and quince seeds; and, for the third time, ate turnips from the seed sown on his arrival. At the end of this month, however, he suffered from heavy rains, and hail storms, and saw the whole country almost deluged with water; perceiving, at the same time, the utility of a bank thrown up for the protection of his garden.

September.—The commencement of September was favourable, and Van Riebeck had the satisfaction of enjoying some of the vegetables sown as an experiment on his arrival.

But his peace was disturbed by a very disagreeable occurrence with a corporal named Joost van der Laak, who, in a fit of drunkenness, insulted him.—This man affords, thus early in our history, a remarkable instance of the consequences of intemperance. On the 13th of the preceding month, he sat in Council with Van Riebeck, and signed his name to the Resolutions they had taken; and on the 4th of this month, the Records of the Council begin thus:

"As the corporal Joost van der Laak has, for bad conduct, opposition, &c. been placed in arrest by our Council, and his situation has, in consequence, become vacant," it was resolved to appoint in his place, the volunteer Paulus Petkouw, a native of Daatziek, to whom, therefore, the halberd was ordered to be given, in presence of the people, as a sign of authority. And four persons, namely, Symon Turver, Commander of the yacht, as President; Gerrit Abels, his Mate; and the provisional corporals Paulus Petkouw, and Jan van Gulyk, were delegated as Judges, to decide this difference between the Commander and Joost van der Laak; and P. van den Helm was directed to act provisionally as Fiscal. The depositions of several witnesses in this case, are found from page 1 to 7 of the Attestation Book (from 1652 to 1671). It is from Van Riebeck's diary, however, we learn, "that Van der Laak, for having been guilty of insolence, &c. was suspended from actual service, as might be more fully seen in the Records and final sentence;" probably in the Sentence Book.

Besides this, Van Riebeck's chief occupation was a trip to Robben Island in the yacht, to acquire a more accurate knowledge of it, and to ascertain if a whale fishery could be established, and seals killed there, for the benefit of his employers. And, as his store of pearl-barley and dried pease, began to fail, he brought back a great number of plungecons

(duykers,) and some hundred of penguins and eggs for his people.

This enterprising and industrious man, walked, with his carpenters, to the back of the Table Mountain, to inspect the woods growing there, about four miles and a half from the fort. He found that the favorable reports which had been made to him, were not without foundation; and the size and height of the trees exceeded his expectations. He remarked, at the same time, that the ciphers of the years 1604, 1620, and 1622 were cut upon some of the trees; shewing that these forests had long before been visited by Europeans, but of what nation, or under what circumstances, he could not discover. He was also an eye-witness to the astonishing quantity of game and wild fowl which then frequented this part of the country; but it does not appear that he was able to kill any.

On the 24th, it was resolved in Council, to send the yacht on a voyage of discovery to Saldanha and St. Helena Bays,* that his information respecting those places and the coast might be increased; and that he might judge, what could be done in more distant parts for the service of the Company.

The end of this month, however, was marked by fresh difficulties: four men deserted under the direction of Jan Blank. This appears to have given Van Riebeck great uneasiness; and as suspicion immediately fell upon one Petrus Janssen Brackenier, he was accordingly placed in confinement.

The provisions were now nearly consumed; and could not, at the most, last more than two months. His people were discontented; and he heard murmurs on all sides. To preserve, therefore, the public piece,—so necessary to the success of the undertaking,—it became a point of consideration, to allow them, under certain conditions, a small sum in addition to their daily pay. One of his volunteers, also, for mutinous language, was, as an example to others, condemned to be punished with 100 lashes. But the case of Brackenier was left undecided till further information could be obtained.

Nothing else remarkable happened this month, except that two of his clerks, and some other Europeans, accompanied by a Hottentot named Harry, who could speak a little English, ascended the Table Mountain for the first time; and reported "that the top was flat, with a little verdure, and about three times as broad as the dam at Amsterdam; and that there were, also, some small pools of fresh water."

October.—Although the desertion of four men may now appear a very trifling occurrence, yet, in this account of the first year of Van Riebeck's government, it is an important event; and commanded the attention of himself and his people. And, with the exception of carrying the boilers for train-oil to the

* Records of Council of that date.

Salt river, and the erection of a small turf fort, this affair, and every thing connected with it, occupied the whole of the Commander's thoughts, and formed the special object of all his exertions.

Brackenier having been condemned to be dropped three times from the yard into the sea, and to receive 100 lashes before the mast, the sentence was put into execution on the 3d of this month; and to prevent his raising further disturbances amongst the people, he was employed on board the yacht. Shortly afterwards, the four deserters returned to the fort, begging for mercy and forgiveness. Jan Blank had kept a journal with red chalk, from the day of their departure, the 24th of September, to the 30th of the same month, which is deserving of notice, this being the first journey towards the interior of the settlement.

It is singular enough that the writer began it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* He states, "that on the 24th September, they, being four in number, set out for the purpose of proceeding to Mosambique, having with them four swords, two pistols, and a dog. On the 25th, they took flight from a rhinoceros, when they lost one sword and a hat: their dog was also severely wounded by a porcupine. The following day, they kept along the beach, in the direction of Cape L'Aguillas, subsisting upon young birds and shell fish. On the 27th they came to a high mountain, close to the sea shore, and laid themselves down to rest. On the 28th, they supplied themselves with food and water, with the intention of crossing the mountain; and on the 29th, they set out for that purpose, but two of them had already begun to repent. They, however, pursued their journey till the next day, when they resolved to return to the fort, hoping for mercy and pardon in the name of God."

Taking all these circumstances into consideration, it is probable these men did not proceed farther than the Fish Hoek and the mountains of Hottentots Holland; yet, from this event, was derived the first knowledge of the country in an easterly direction.

The inquiry respecting the misconduct and the intentions of these persons, and several others who were implicated in this business, was carried on till the 10th of the month, when Van Riebeck and his Council, who resolved also "In God's name" to terminate this case, sentenced the runaways to be punished as follows:—"Jan van Leyden, as having first instigated the others to desert, to be bound to a stake, and (he, as well as Jan Blank, being by the intercession of many persons, absolved from the punishment of death,) to have a ball fired over his head. And, Jan Blank, as leader or guide, to be keel-haled,

* See Zuid Afrikaansche Tydschrift, vol. 1, page 463.

and to receive 150 lashes; and moreover, together with Jan van Leyden, to serve for two years in chains, like slaves, at the public and most common works."

Their two companions, Willem Huytjens and Gerrit Dirkse, were only condemned to work for two years in chains; and two other persons, suspected of being concerned with them, were absolved for want of proof, and set at liberty. The sentences were carried into execution on the following day.

In the mean time the Saldanhians began to shew themselves more frequently, and the Commander soon had the satisfaction of obtaining from them, 3 cows, for copper and tobacco to the value of 21 stivers 12 pennings, for each; 4 sheep, at the rate of 10 stivers and $1\frac{1}{2}$ penning each; 2 lambs, at 5 stivers and 10 pennings; 3 elephants' teeth, for 2 stivers 8 pennings; (all calculated in copper and tobacco;) and, finally, 2 young ostriches for $\frac{1}{8}$ of a pound of tobacco.

He spared no means in his power to conciliate these people. The Hottentot Harry, was employed in this negotiation as interpreter, and broker or barterer, but Van Riebeck much doubted his honesty and good faith.

The work of his labourers now prospered. Their number seems to have been at this time about 100, and by the supply of meat procured from the natives, and by other means, every one set about his work in good spirits, and consequently their prospects began to improve.

The yacht was sent to St. Helena and Saldanha Bays on the 21st of this month, in order to trade according to certain instructions which Van Riebeck had given.*

A monstrous animal, supposed to be a hippopotamus, which the Commander saw playing in the bay, close to the shore, was shot at from the north or Heron point of the fort. The beast was wounded by the cannon ball, but as it was not killed, it remained uncertain whether it had been a hippopotamus or some other animal.

The Saldanhians promised to return soon in great numbers, and with a large quantity of cattle; but the Dutch provisions were nearly consumed.

November.—The month of November had now arrived, and, with it, the violent south-east wind, which, to his mortification, did great damage to the fruits of the fields and gardens, and to his newly erected buildings. Not less than 24 persons lay sick in the hospital before the middle of this month. His only fishing net, a seine, was almost worn out. And he wrote,

* These Instructions are to be found in the Letter Book, under date 14th Oct. 1652; where the object of this expedition is explained. In the list of papers given at the same time, mention is made of the journal of the Dutch Admiral Joris Spilbergen, for the month of Nov. 1601. Further instructions were issued on 27th Nov. 1652.

about this time, in his diary, — “If the Lord God be not pleased to grant soon some relief, either by the Saldanhians bringing their cattle, or by the arrival of ships from the mother-country, we have little hope of being able to proceed with our work;” but, that they did not, however, entirely despair.

In the midst of these pressing circumstances, Van Riebeck continued to extend his local knowledge, which he felt to be of so much importance. He conversed, at meals, with the Hottentot Harry, respecting the nature and situation of the country; and learned from him, that there were three sorts of natives, which he described in his broken English, as the Watermen, the Saldanha-men, and the Fishmen. The Commander also obtained information respecting their numbers, manner of living, and whatever else might assist his views; but as he looked upon this man as a necessary, although a deceitful and dangerous instrument, he kept him in doubt, by evasive answers, whenever he suggested any treacherous, bloody, or violent measures, for obtaining possession of their persons or property.

About the middle of this month, the yacht returned with a cargo of 2700 seal skins; and the captain gave him a written report of every thing observed during the voyage. The most remarkable circumstances in this report are, an account of his having discovered that a French ship had been sealing there, and a description of the islands and bays which he had visited, together with some insignificant meetings with the natives, who had shewn themselves here and there on the coast. It is also mentioned, on this occasion, that Joris Spelbergen, a Dutch admiral, had visited the coast in the year 1601, and had given the name of Elizabeth Isle to what is now called Dassen Island.

At this time the Saldanhians began again to bring their cattle, and Van Riebeck had hopes of being more successful in his trade with them. He endeavoured, by friendly treatment, to increase their attachment towards his people; and observed their manners and dispositions. They carried their milk in large leathern bags, and caused their children to suck the udders of the sheep, the mothers laying them between the hind legs for that purpose. Upon the whole, they found this tribe to be naturally kind and timorous.

Harry's suspicious conduct increased, and Van Riebeck was inclined to send him and the other watermen to Robben Island. He, however, postponed his intentions till he had obtained further proof. Before the end of this month, he possessed several cows and sheep.

December.—The last month of the first and most remarkable year of Van Riebeck's government, now commenced. His circumstances began to improve; and the cattle trade and good understanding with the Saldanhians, continued to increase. He also received from them 12 ducks and 42 other beautiful

birds. He was, however, obliged thus early, on account of the many thefts and other crimes committed by his own people, to appoint one Michiel Gleeve, public executioner,* who was soon required to exercise his functions upon Jan Pieter Soenwater.

His people were at this time 92, to which, adding himself and some inferior servants, there were 100 men; and with the women and children on board the yacht, the whole European population amounted to 125 souls; and he possessed 89 head of cattle and 284 sheep. But the wild animals sometimes attacked the cattle during the dark nights, and the want of hands, was a great drawback.

During this month he attentively observed the course of a comet, and seems, by some remnant of superstition, to have feared, that the appearance of this wandering body portended some ill; without reflecting that his bible says, "Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven."†

The Saldanbians, who had fought with the fishermen and killed four of them, endeavoured to instigate him to make common cause against that horde, which they represented to be nothing but robbers. But the Commander rejected their proposal, as he had before done the suggestions of Harry, and declared his desire to live with all the natives in peace and amity.

He obtained more cattle by barter; and towards the end of the month, after so much care and anxiety, he had the pleasure of writing in his diary, "We are, thank God, so far advanced, that the sick can be supplied with milk, butter-milk, and eggs;—the fowls are breeding well; but the pigs and pigeons do not appear to thrive, inasmuch that the pigs have not yet brought any young, and from 8 pigeons no more than 7 have been produced, so that we have but 15 in all." Nevertheless, before the month was over, he discovered, on counting his sheep, that 18 were missing; a circumstance at that time, so important to him, that he instituted a serious inquiry; and having ascertained that the loss was occasioned by the carelessness and neglect of his herdsmen, he made them suffer the consequences, by charging their accounts with two rix-dollars for every sheep so lost. However, the gathering of seed from several sorts of vegetables, succeeded according to his wishes, and we find the first Governor of this Colony congratulating himself, "that the cabbages begin to close, and the carrots to increase in size; that he and all his people ate mutton daily; that the churn was going on tolerably well, so that he made six pounds of butter, and could sometimes give his people buckets of butter milk, which would prove no small refreshment to the persons on board the ships touching here; and that he only wanted utensils to

* Records of Council, 5th Dec, 1652.

† Jeremiah x. 2.

make cheese, as matters relating to the cattle had so much improved, that he could eat fresh butter daily, leaving his Dutch butter for cooking and baking bread from his new wheat."

He had already taken measures to offer refreshments to the ships expected here; and hoped thus to evince, that the object of his mission had been attained in so short a time; and that he had, by his diligence and industry, not only succeeded in the outset, in establishing a place for refreshment here, but also it might be confidently expected that the wants of the Company's vessels would in future be better supplied.

Finally, a favorable report, that about 500 Saldanhians, with a large quantity of cattle, were at Hout Bay, at the back of the Table Mountain, about 12 or 15 miles from the fort, and appeared inclined to continue the trade with him, closed the last day of this memorable year.

From the various circumstances above related, we may form some idea of the satisfaction with which the "Patriarch Van Riebeck," called to mind the events of the past year; more especially those of the last nine months, since he had commenced his undertakings at this place; upon the success or failure of which, the fortunes of so many thousands of human beings, were in the great chain of events destined to depend. It was with justice, that the earliest European inhabitants of this country, bestowed upon him the honorable appellation of the "Patriarch Van Riebeck."* For, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his character, the dropping from the yard into the sea, the floggings, and other punishments, which clearly show he was not infallible, we must admire his prudence, perseverance, and piety; but above all, his unshaken fidelity in the service of those to whom he had solemnly pledged himself.

In addition to the occurrences which have been narrated, we find, from the Records, that during the said period, his mind was occupied with other important projects; the principal of which were, the intention to introduce slavery, as a necessary evil, arising from the want of a labouring class;† and different commercial speculations to obtain gold, ambergris, musk, seal skins, whale oil, furs, elephants' teeth, ostrich feathers, salt, and other articles for trade. Also the erection of a small redoubt, called Traanenborg,‡ at the mouth of the Salt River, where the blubber of the whales were to be melted, may be noticed as not the least remarkable.

His official letters to Batavia, and more particularly those to the Directors in Holland,‡ afford as complete and distinct an

* He was to them what the excellent Penn was to the Pennsylvanians.

† Letter to the Directors, dated 14th April, 1653.

‡ Book of Letters despatched from 1652 to 1661. Letters to Batavia 25th and 30th May, 14th October, and 27th Nov. 1652; 3d Feb. and 9th, 15th, and

idea of the situation of himself and his companions, as could be wished; and convey clear views of his operations. But we may, at the same time, perceive, that, wearied out by numerous troubles, he was already anxious to be relieved from the command of the Fort Good Hope; and, writing on this subject, he styles his wished-for successor, "a Deliverer," and his desired departure for Batavia, "a deliverance."

On concluding this Chapter, if we review the uncommon variety of his views and plans, and the disappointments, cares, fatigues, and other labours, mental and bodily, which this extraordinary man endured in the year, 1652, the words of an old poet, "*Tantæ molis erat Romanum condere urbem*," (so much trouble did it cost to build Rome,) will not be entirely inapplicable here, though my readers will agree that many changes would be necessary ere Cape Town could become the Rome of the southern hemisphere.

(To be continued.)

Remarks on the Geology of South Africa. By GEORGE THOM, D. D. Minister of Tulbagh, Honorary Member of the Bombay Literary Society, and Corresponding Member of the South African Institution.

[*Read at the South African Institution.*]

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON ORGANIC REMAINS.

"These physical researches elevate the mind above objects simply material: they inculcate great moral truths."—URE.

SEVERAL writers on this Colony have given little encouragement to suppose, that, it could afford any remarkable facts to enrich our knowledge of geological phenomena; particularly, that monuments of a former world could be found in Organic Remains.* Private persons have, however, made observations on the peculiar appearances of hill and dale which have led to the discovery of fossils of various, numerous, and distinct characters in shells; while some crustaceous deposits are very obscure, which only time and further discovery can fully unravel.

Our inland plains, and undulations beyond the Tulbagh, Worcester, Swellendam, and George high primitive mountain range, chiefly present these on their surfaces, or slightly imbedded in argillaceous schist; while the continuation of the same chain northward from Tulbagh Village, forms the barrier

26th April, 1653. And Despatches to the Directors of the 14th and 15th of April, 1652.

* Professor Lichtenstein, of Berlin, is, I believe, the only writer who observed at a Fountain in the Hantam, impressions on Schist.