

## R J Gordon: Letter to Hendrik Fagel

Translator: R H Pfeiffer

[Translator's note: The division into paragraphs is my own and does not occur in the text, which runs on from beginning to end. Punctuation in the manuscript has been altered slightly to assist reading. Proper names have been provided with initial capitals throughout. Place, river and mountain names have been retained in Gordon's spelling of them.]

*Manuscript page 1*

Most Honourable Sir

I hope that Your Hon. has received, in perfect health, my last letter, sent from here, with some seeds, in May 1778 with Capt van Gennip; and that Your Hon., as well as your respected family continue to enjoy such well-being. I returned on the 25th January ult. from my journey, in good health, having departed from here last August.

The Hon. Governor wished to see the Colony for himself, and I thus accompanied his Honour for the greatest part of the journey, and over the Sneeuwbergen, right up to the river which in 1777 I named after his Hon. 's name, thereafter as far as the Caffer nation, until he turned back towards the Cape along the South Coast. After which I returned to the Sneeuwbergen where I had left my boat, intending to resume my projected journey. Reaching those mountains I fell ill, and having stayed here for some days I decided not to cross the Oranjes Rivier this year but, having before me a large unvisited land between the 33rd and 29th deg. before I could reach the west coast, to cross those regions, as I gradually felt better, as far as the sea, or if worse, to approach the Cape.

Nature saved itself in that I was interrupted in my work only for a few days, in that the illness became so serious that I thought I should never reach the Cape again, but I became suddenly, in spite of the burning sun and the strenuous lifestyle, as healthy and strong as before. Thus I carried out my intended plan with much satisfaction, and discovered in the event that this misfortune had been greatly to my advantage, as I now have the concatenation of the land, for my map, also an accurate idea of its height and well-founded estimations about its formation. Also, I at last had the good fortune to have talks with some of the inland tribes, and to establish a close friendship with them, which augurs well for much good. They provided me with plenty of elucidation on various matters and I was delighted with their friendly treatment of myself and by the brotherly manner of life amongst themselves. I found them at approximately the 30th deg. lat. and two east of the Cape.

I shall recount to Your Hon. some incidents and observations concerning my journey, but I shall have to make another journey before I can put everything joined up into a proper order.

When the Hon. Governor reached the back of the Sneeuberg the savages set fire to the veld all over and fled, so that we did not see one of them. We brought our retinue, which now consisted of a good escort, somewhat more north-easterly than where I reached the river last year; also, they shot within a few hours 21 hippopotamuses, and I obtained

pardon for the rest. During that season of the year this river hardly flowed, but it had large water-holes. I would gladly have followed its course n.e. and north, up to where it flows into the Oranjes Rivier, but the Hon. Governor had no time. That it must flow into this river is certain, otherwise I should have had to pass it last year on my journey northwards, behind the Caffers, as far as the Oranjes Rivier. We left behind a stone with an inscription and travelled back over the Sneeuwbergen.

The Hon. Governor here had the pleasure of passing three huge male lions who were chasing a large herd of gnus. Two of them ran away but the third ambled on leisurely, keeping his eyes on the retinue. Some of the party shot at him from a great distance, upon which he slammed his claw on the place where the bullet had struck the ground near him, and jumping round, he chased after the hunters, who were on horseback, for about 50 paces, and then resumed his stately gait. This shooting was repeated a few times so that the lion became angry, lay down on his stomach and with his tail beat the dust from the ground, and when a bullet struck close by he furiously chased the hunters for a while, but seeing them fleeing he marched forth on his previous way and they let him go. I observed all this from a hill, having passed the lions without them bothering me; and I have learnt through experience to leave them in peace.

Having re-passed the Sneeuwbergen, we set out course e.se. as far as the Caffers. On our borders they told the Hon. Governor that that nation intended to attack us with all their might, but when I went to them alone, to reconnoitre, I found that people had been telling them the same about us, so I promptly put them into a good mood, and one of their chiefs, with a troop of his men, went with me to the Governor, who received them cordially and presented them with beads and other trinkets. The next day he was cordially received by the Caffers; concluded an everlasting friendship with them, and ratified the borders as they were regulated last year. After which the Hon. Governor returned to the Cape along the south coast and I to the Sneeuwbergen.

When I left the Caffers I was much intrigued by a ceremony which I had not seen last year. They encircled me from all sides, and even their chiefs kissed my hands, even though I tried to withdraw them. I then travelled s.w and n.w and reached the western sea on 4 January, north of the mouth of the northern [*Manuscript page 2*] Oliphants Rivier and can thus make the following observations with certainty.

On the 32<sup>nd</sup> deg. south. latitude, there is right through a precipice, south of a high northerly land which, as far as I have been into Cafferland, runs through from the east to the west, up to one degree longitude from the western sea, where this precipice shoots up northwards, i.e. parallel to the sea; whereas to the south it is parallel to the southern sea, and there it is two degrees latitude from the sea, with large bays, turned towards the sea-side of each coast, and as if churned out by the water. A part of this ridge we call Sneeuwberg, Nieuwe veld, Roggeveld etc; there are also — 2 to 3 miles from the edge — elevations which are often flat on top and of which the height is not more than 6000 English feet above sea-level, whereas the ridge is mostly 3 to 4000 feet high. In these heights all the large rivers which issue on the south coast have their origins; all the water which flows on the northern side of these heights slowly sloping down towards the far northerly land, flows into the Oranjes Rivier, except the Tarka which comes out of the high mountains north of the Caffers, and, as if through an opening in this high land, the so-called Groote Vis Rivier, issues on the south coast. This Vis Rivier is the Rio Infant, on the map of D'apres, according to the Portuguese nomenclature. Thus, the distance

between the origins of these south coast **0** rivers and the sea not being more than two degrees lat. is the reason for their weak flow, except during the rains, when they become torrents, while Oranjes + Rivier, at least seven deg. longitude, from the east, already flows strongly, and then, before it issues into the western ocean, receives a great deal of supply.

The horizontal situation of the above-named highland, which rises and falls gradually, with low, stony hills here and there, and also some solitary low mountains of which the strata lie regularly horizontally, causes a big change in the climate, namely cold and snow (which however does not fall thickly and does not remain on the ground for long) in our rainy monsoon and heavy thunder showers in the Cape dry season.

But before I illustrate this matter any further I shall describe the further situation of the land, between the afore-mentioned southern and western precipices (which nevertheless have many good acclivities) and the seas.

On the southern side, on the 32<sup>nd</sup> deg. latitude, of these precipices, heights, follows then a low, mostly flat land, though sloping down somewhat toward the sea side, approximately 1700 feet high, in Hottentots charò, meaning low, hard land, in some regions also named Coùp, flat veld. This flatland one can consider, starting on the afore-mentioned parallel, one and a half degrees east longitude from the Cape, to be the sinking away or erosion of the highland; and to continue as far as the entrance to Caffer land; but the highland there running closer to the sea, about one half degree lat., the plain between the sea and it is much more uneven.

**0** Cape Infant is our Potteberg and lies 8 miles east of Cape Anguillas; the Brede Rivier, on the east side of the same, runs into the Struisbaai, which is the first one following on it, by which Rio Infanta is fully 8 deg. longitude from the Cape.

**+** This river, even in our rain monsoon becomes very low on account of the change in climate, and fordable in many places.

This low Caro land is terminated on the 33<sup>rd</sup> deg latitude by a concatenation of mountains, parallel to the high land and the sea, and gradually peters out toward the east where the said Caro begins to become hilly, and stretching to the west to the start of the Caro to a mountain mass, of which the direction is parallel to the west sea (and is also closer to it).

This mountain range is not level, with much soil and rich in grass, like the steep edge of the highland, but presents itself with rounded protuberances, is mostly stone and although the strata, as far as possible lie parallel to each other, they have lost, their original horizontal position which they seem to have had naturally, as a result of subsidence, erosions and shocks. This concatenation is on the whole fairly even in height, the height being about 4 to 5000 feet above sea level. The latitude of this mountain mass is 4 and 5 miles north and south, and not one single chain as they appear on the southern and northern sides, but irregular in between with high confuse mountains **++** criss-cross as if knotted together. The incline remains toward the seaward side, namely toward s.e. In general the rivers take their course along this coast s.e. into the sea receiving much water from these mountains.

Three or 4 miles to the south of this mountain mass, on the seaward side is again lower land, but also becoming hilly

(parallel to the lastly described Swartebergen, as they are called by our farmers (who live along both banks and inside in the open bowls formed by the different inner mountains, because they have sufficient water there, the rivers from the high land running through it), and determined by a link which arises suddenly about 5\_ deg. east longitude from the Cape two to three miles from the sea, fairly high. The beginning, or end, of this link is Cape das Serras, named thus by one of the first Portuguese navigators, Manuel Pestrello; but although there are many other true things written in his journal # , like any other, about this coast, he sometimes errs greatly in his distances, since it is impossible, in view of the strong currents, for the best navigator to enter on a chart along this coast anything reasonable with regard to the distances.

I have observed that they flow very rapidly along the west and s.w., at least during our south- east monsoon, and I cannot determine whether they do so, the same course, during the other monsoon, due to the fact that in that season I have not been there. Thus, when I found a river, filled after the rains and a s. easterly wind was blowing, even though it caused a huge swell on the coast and gushed this into the mouths of the river, the river fell quite suddenly. And with n. westerly, being in that area the wind which blows away from the coast, the rivers stayed full for longer, seeing that the stream in the other sea at the Cape had to be held back by the wind.

# From his description I recognised Cape das Serras lying more southerly.

++ But no higher than 5000 feet. The flanks on both sides of the chains are much lower.

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This link from Cape das Serras + is then generally 3 and 9000 ft above sea level, is mostly only half a mile wide, and only from Cape das Serras one and a half degrees westward regularly double, of steadfast height and width: distance between the two links, a quarter of a mile. We named these districts Cromme rivier and Lange cloof. §

This chain runs then singly westwards, up to approximately 2 deg east of the Cape at our village of Swellendam † , and then runs on n. westerly until blocked by the aforementioned mountain mass, where they meet the Swartebergen. As far as these mountains are double, they are rich in grass, and on the side between themselves and the sea full of fine forests, with excellent timber. For the rest they are very rocky and are dentated, round, at the top along the whole stretch; and the stratas somewhat more regularly horizontal than Swarte Berg. Neither on these mountains nor on the high land are there any forests, until, on the south side of the high land, near Caffer land, one again finds heavy forests with comparable timber, but always on the steep inclines of the mountains and not on the plains, which there is overgrown with grass and thorn-trees.

Then there begins, very low, a chain of mountains round about Cape Anguillas; these run west and form Cape Falso. ⊥ Thereafter, in the north it joins the aforementioned mass. (These are the mountains which one sees from the anchorage). Thereafter it runs

northwards in a triple branch, the one shooting along the western precipice of the high land; and the other ending suddenly as steep as the Table Mountain, 10 miles s. west from the place where I went down that steep incline.

This western Caro has an elevation of only 2 to 300 ft (*sic*) above the sea, but at a distance of 5 miles from the sea the land becomes more mountainous. Near the Koperbergen there is another small link parallel to the sea, 4000 ft high (these are the mountains which have been determined at a distance of 46 days' travel). Further north I cannot report on, not having been there, but I think that the land towards the sea would be rows of mountains, parallel to the ones mentioned and then after a low land, an incline of a high land, and that the further one goes into the country, possibly as far as the Line, one would find higher land.

The Tafelberg is the highest and flat northerly termination of a chain which begins low at the Caap De Goede Hoop. Its height I have measured again, and found La Caillies return to be accurate; being 3353 feet: Rhineland. However, at the Plettenberg's river, on the flat land, we were 1000 ft higher.

↑ A confusion of several rows, the tops or stratas, having sagged forward, therefore stand up at an angle.

§ and are situated about 2000 feet high

┓ of only four houses, but the landdrost of this extensive... (*words missing*)

+ Meaning Saw on account of the serrated appearance

┓ 3 to 4000 ft high

The mass which all the links run up to is about 12 miles n.east of the Cape and most irregular in the stratas, its serrated dentated peaks are the highest which I have seen in this country, but not fully 6000 feet. They are covered with snow almost all the year round. (The highest tip of the Sneeuwgeberqte I did not measure, because I was not feeling well, but it should have a height of 6000 feet, although, there lay no snow on it). The degree of heat which the snow endures, amazed me, and showed that if it had been black, it would not have remained on the ground for so long. The snow lay 5 to 6 feet deep, as if blown together. Near the snow at midday, very bright weather and east. cool wind, the thermometer Fahrenheit scale stood at 76 deg. and after being buried in the snow for five minutes, 50 deg.; again outside the snow 76 deg., on top of the snow 74. Below the mountains the greatest heat on that day was 94 deg.

Having indicated the situation of the land and the inclination of the mountains, I shall try to explain to your Most Hon Exc. the substance which they consist of as far as I have been able to establish up to now, and in the first instance report that I have nowhere found any volcanic products or the remains of volcanoes. Last year I found at a warm bath ° a piece of rock which I thought to be lava, but on closer examination proved not to be such. Thus everything here seems to have been in a weak (*possibly "non-solid"-translator*) state, was solidified by the water and petrified underhand.

The soil of this country is, so to speak, pure clay ° of different colour and viscosity. The rocks of which the mountains are constituted are also mostly of this nature, these therefore belong under the cotes; the parisian experiment to make out of well kneaded clay a cobblestone strengthens me in these thoughts. Also, I find on the highest mountains the hardest rock and where air and water have not been able to penetrate very well, the clay was still half-rock, even though having the configuration of it; also only the figure, while still completely clay. Rock science still being in a very imperfect state I shall comment that giving off sparks and to ferment it with aqua fortis ("strong water") are not sufficient proofs. One finds here often that the same stone gives off sparks on the one side and ferments on the other, even almost on the very same spot; that is a sign that the same stone contains widely differing components, and not as Forster assures us, to be homogenous here.

Furthermore, the cos here is often interspersed with small quartz pieces and also with large pieces of quartz. Has much mica and

°° I have tried out fully eight different ones of these, most of them much iron. Some however, none, and only selenitique.

° Sand one finds along the coast and at a few spots where it seems to have been washed up by the water, the basis of clay and stones seemingly having been pulverised.

iron parts, the colour is mostly greyish and reddish as a result of the strong iron presence. One finds rough rock crystals, seldom clear, also quadrate stones which contain iron and sulphur, and much quartz.

The most important of the matter is that one finds sufficient stone here for use. In the high land the stratas lie more horizontal, and one there finds large even plates for building purposes, the stone here is also more homogenous; where the stratas lie confused one has to look for such with difficulty.

The stone masons here complain only about the irregularity of the hardness in working the stone. Here and there they make millstones, but for the aforesaid reasons, not as good as in Europe.

#### *Manuscript page 4*

In Baay Fals one finds, between some layers of cos, a bank of reddish stone, of the nature of marble, with patches of off-white here and there, the same takes on a fine polished shine and is even used for small tables. Not far from there one finds a white, sandy stone of which they make floor tiles.

On Robben Eiland one finds close to the sea a heavy. blue stone of the nature of schistus from which one makes floor tiles and basins of a very good quality for all kinds of use. In our Leewestaart the stone is almost of the same nature and is used in the town's buildings.

In the valleys of the whole of this country the stratas lie perpendicular or aslant, running mostly s.e. and n.w. Everything points to a sagging in the south. What it is like far on the

northern side along the west coast I cannot say as yet; in a few mountains the layers lie singularly: horizontal on perpendicular. I have found cos on top and at the foot of a mountain, and in the middle schistus, or slate-like, everything in horizontal layers.

In the Caroos one finds much schistus. I have found no precious stones, which I know very well in their rough state.

In Oranjes Rivier one finds many transparent pyrites, looking much like agate, and also opaque whitish, which by some of the wild are put at the front of their arrows, who therefore also bear the name Coeraep einas meaning the white stone nations. These stones give strong fire and are an object of trade amongst them. I have as yet found no gold or silver, even gold dust, in the rivers, and no other ore except iron ore aplenty. I have not been to the copper mountains yet, but have seen rich ore of that metal from there. The inhabitants do not know about melting ore and know no gold dust as far as I have been, or have understood from them. They have copper rings of great flexibility and different colours, which, as far as I can discover, entered the country from hand to hand from the region of Rio la Goa, from the Portuguese and other nations trading there. I repeat that although the inhabitants melt the copper, they do not do such from ore.

What else there is, however, under the ground, one cannot decide. It is mostly discovered by chance, as it is impossible to dig everywhere. But I do believe that in a country as this one which is rich in iron parts, not much gold will have been found before one goes more toward the Line.

I am not at all systematic, totally convinced of the inadequacy of our powers of understanding to follow the works of the great Creator: thus I have long hesitated to decide whether the sea has left direct signs that it has been on the highest places of this land, or not. Although the downward slope from the high land toward the sea, with the hollows which present themselves to that side like bays churned out by the sea, caused me to surmise such, I could nevertheless not find any shells, neither inside nor outside the rocks, or elsewhere. And also nothing that resembled sea products. At the Cape I had found a sea shell (about one third of Tafelbergs height, close to a rock (of a nature similar to those one finds in, at the edge, and close to the sea; also about one third of the height of the mountains between the Cape flats and the Tafelberg, and, nowhere higher, nor up-country). It sat in the crevice of a rock, but could have been brought there by humans or birds or even by the rain.

But a few weeks earlier, while investigating whether a landing could be carried out between the Leeuweberg and the Houtbaay, or whether there was the possibility of a retreat in case we were overpowered and were enclosed in the Cape, which is situated in a bowl, I found in a path which had been carved into the mountainside three to four hundred feet above the sea-level, a large bank of sea-shells, which lay deposited in all directions. They had mixed with the hard, stony clay soil, thus had been brought there in a natural way and not by humans.

Afterwards, at another site, I found very undamaged shells of sea animals, in sandy stone, half petrified, but not as high above the sea, but yet in a place where it could not have come with the heaviest of storms.

About these matters I shall take down sworn statements, with the idea that such is necessary in all cases of this nature, to erase all doubt. Thus the sea was higher than it is at present, and the first mountain link of which the Tafelberg forms the northerly end must have been an island, even if the sea had not gone higher than where the bank of sea-shells lies.

If Your Hon. should study the drawing of the Cape which I have the honour to send attached hereto to his Illustrious Highness, Your Hon. would see that the stratas of the Leeuwekop and of the Tafelberg commence at an equal height, that the opening between both, and the living rock lies open, as by flooding; the edge seems to indicate, and also the afore-mentioned round rocks formed by the sea, that the water, after having caused a heavy shock over the land, + remained motionless for a certain amount of time, to have been able to form the same.

+ the sinking seems to have been the southernmost pole

Whether the sea still drops lower, year by year, through the depths being more and more churned up, or whether it is regular as a result of the easterly and daily forward and over rolling surf, winning westwards and losing eastward, is, as a result of the scant reliable observations, absolutely impossible to determine. I shall set up, on both seaboard and on Robben Eiland, different signs, on different positions of the moon: then one can make a firm judgement over a few hundred years. This should be done at various points on the earth.

That the earth after the regular formation out of the chaos,

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underwent a further great change, appears with certainty from certain shells, and the crocodile from St Petersberg at Mastrigt.

They should have had these phenomena, which I have seen, properly attested to.

I shall now attempt to demonstrate to Your Hon. the change in the climates caused by the above-mentioned situation of the country. When, then, the sun is in the northern tropics, you have here the winter or rain monsoon. The rain clouds come with a storm from the sea, the wind turning from the n.n.w. to the s.w. through the west, then it again subsides as soon as the wind reaches south of s.w. (In Europe it is to the contrary, the storms moving from the s.w. to the n.w. and through the north they subside.) The clouds are pushed up against the land, and lose in the first low-lying areas much water, being forced over the mountain ridges, and coming from the west, they find a free passage along those ridges which stretch east and west + thus it rains heavily there during the monsoon. But the remaining clouds then rise high into the air, and as a result of the cold, change into snow before they reach over into the high land. Thus it is there then real winter, with snow and frost.

The clouds coming from sea but which pass by the Cape, are carried back along the coast by the southern winds which blow after the storm, thus it often rains there from the s.e., which happens very seldom at the Cape.



When the sun is in the southern tropics we have the dry season at the Cape with violent s.e. wind. That wind, also coming off the sea, is forced by the mountains along the coast towards the Cape, and that is why it blows there so violently, with gusts, especially if it is forced over high mountains like the Tafelberg. Thus this wind does not blow in all parts of the country so that the vapours, which have been caused to rise by the fierce heat, are there not driven away, causing heavy thunderstorms with whirlwinds, heavy rain and hail: often not of long duration, because of the flat land, but daily, the atmosphere seldom enduring more than 92 degr. heat.

+ The attraction of the clouds by the mountains may clearly be observed here: coming close to a mountain mass, they change their direction, even against the wind, attaching themselves to the mountains.

The greatest heat (which generally is two hours after midday) which I have observed, was 103 deg. in the shade; the plenteous rocks and hard clay soil causing a strong reverberation; that was on 5 Jan. of this year. This is then the rainy season in these regions. And everything suddenly grows. However, when the thunder rain in some years stays away, or does not bring along enough moisture, the veld remains hard and scorched. The snow which falls there is not enough to soften the soil. The thunder begins in the north and travels through the west to the s. east, where it dissipates itself as rain; but often one also has thunder with little or no moisture.

In general one can say of the country, as far as I have been, that it is very fertile, if it has enough water, notwithstanding the large number of rocks, which may rightly cause it to be called Rocky Africa. If only rain would fall there, be the layer of earth ever so thin, everything suddenly grows, the soil being as a whole all clay of different viscosity and colour, # and this country could feed millions of people, even in the before-mentioned Caro which is very sparsely populated excepting here and there near the mountains, on account of the water, if one could make reservoirs which could catch and store the water during the rainy seasons, which one could then lead over the land, as at present has to happen with little streams and springs which retain water otherwise everything in those regions would mostly wither. Those reservoirs should be made very deep on account of the heavy evaporation.

Furthermore, the soil is generally filled with very many particles of salt °° so that one finds, with the evaporation of the water, that the same is often unusable or very brackish, and at the dried-out rivers gather salt for daily use. Near the sea and also on the highland there are natural pans which fill up during the rainy season, and deliver up abundant salt after the evaporation in the dry season, which is, however, inferior to refined salt, as there remains in it a soil-like basis. Whether now industry, aroused by necessity, will undertake something difficult, without profit accompanying it, I do not believe.

As a result of the above-shown situation of mountains, extensiveness and no rivers which could be made navigable, it is clear that this interior land is not suitable to any commerce.

Nevertheless one should keep an eye on a few bays on the south coast, and although this country does by far not come up to the expectations which are mostly held about it all over, it is all the same of great importance to the Republic.

°° the brackishness of the soil in many places hinders the growth of the trees. The high interior and the Caro are denuded of wood to such an extent that one has difficulty in finding shrubs to light a fire. This is fortunate for the stumps, otherwise it would go just as in Surinamen.

# with which many iron particles are mixed. Some proofs regarding the basis of sulphur have as yet not properly dissolved the acid of ... (*unclear — transl.*)

It becomes clear from the situation of the Cape that should one be unable to prevent an enemy landing and forming up, and that they, by means of the all-commanding foot of the Duivelsberg should rapidly reduce a fortress, there would remain nothing except an extremely difficult road, over many rocks, where one could not take along any cannon, as a retreat to Hout Baay to join the outside residents. But if this was known to the enemy, it could be rapidly prevented by occupying the height of Hout Baay on the eastern side of the mountains.

*Manuscript page 6*

Had all other factors been equally advantageous, one should have situated the town on the eastern side of Duivels Berg; then one could have defended it with a fortress, and always retain a retreat. But the site where it is at present, was laid on in order to provide water for the place, also on account of less wind and to be nearer the ships. One should therefore not consider this city or town to be the only resource, and in the event of the capture of the same consider the whole colony to be lost; but in case of war, one should build a redoute over the Soute Rivier, three quarters of an hour's journey east of the Cape, to cut off the enemy's advance and to tire them.

Always in such times all the draught oxen should be kept close by, for the transport of everything that could be of any use to the enemy whatsoever. See to it in time that all ammunition of war is not kept solely in the Cape; and by virtue of the fact that I do not consider any enemy audacious enough to penetrate deeply into this arid land they should be content with the occupation of the Cape and Baay Fals, in order, by doing so, to withhold the necessary refreshments from our vessels.

Then the afore-mentioned bays should come into use; in these one should keep a few light, fast-sailing vessels, to spread news and to bring tidings. The best are Mosselbaay and Plettenberg Baay, being the most sheltered ones; the former is situated 40 and the other 54 German miles east of the Cape.

This latter one I reported to this Government in the year 1773, at that time still unknown, as a good bay from which to obtain wood. The hooker Catwyk aan Ryn, having last year been blown past the Cape in a storm, stayed over in this bay. Fifteen miles to the east there is another bay, Cromme Rivier Baay, approximately at Cape das Serras, and approximately 10 miles further east, Baay de la Goa; this is to be distinguished from Rio la Goa. There are no further bays, and as far as Bay de la Goa there are at present some of our farmers on the coast; and some miles further on - so that the necessary could be provided for them, and thus an enemy would not have any advantage from this country as he would have to bring all his provisions across the sea, while during our

stormy season he would run into peril, and we would constantly harass him, and in case of relief, attack him from both flanks.

Rio la Goa, situated on the 26 degree latitude of this east coast has for the present been taken into possession for the Roman Emperor by the famous Bols; I always had my eye on it, in case I should have been able to ascertain from the inlanders whether there was anything more to be had than ivory in those regions. There is a nation which is black, which in our regions are called Birinas by the Bushmen ("bosjemans") and Namaquas; they are found about the latitude of Rio la Goa, and they must be much more civilised than the nations hereabouts, and the Bushmen have much to tell about them. The Caffers of Rio la Goa speak of Hottentots west of them who trade with them, so those must be the Birinas.

I shall now submit to Your Hon. the extent of our Colony, the number of our Colonists, and some remarks concerning the increase of the same; then Your Hon. will see how people mislead themselves in the descriptions; and how the learned remarks of Forster, on wrong data, should cause a traveller to be on his guard, and how the reader can believe one who notes everything in haste.

Our Colony, then, stretches for approximately 7 degrees longitude along the south coast; and from the sea up to 2 degrees latitude, towards the interior. Along the west coast there is less water; thus our colonists north of the Piquetberg on the 33rd degr. latitude are very thinly spread out; nevertheless there already are 12 cattle farms from the northern Oliphants Rivier to the Oranjes Rivier which runs into the Western sea at the 29th deg. latitude. Thus our Colony forms a rectangle around the high interior, some living on the southern edge.

Last year this extensive land found itself inhabited by 9991, men, women and children all together; the Company servants excepted, who, with the garrison, constitute about 900 persons. In the year 1768 there were 7722; thus the increase in ten years was very small seeing that, in addition, Europeans were accepted every year as colonists. During those 10 years there was no infectious disease of smallpox. These 9991 colonists consist of 2798 men, 1857 women, 2667 sons, 2678 daughters. Thus it is clear that more men than women are born. Thus the observation is faulty. Even amongst the slaves, which one can see in the children. They consist of 7380 (male) slaves; 2171 (female) slaves; 75 boys; 761 girls. Of this whole number there are, only in the town the Caab and its district, which does not extend far, 986 men, 723 women, 806 boys, 889 girls; 3479 male slaves, 1050 female slaves, 381 boys, 361 girls. Thus in this town there is about one third of the total number, and half of the slaves. In the town of Stellenbos and the Paarl there is a considerable number living together, and so Your Hon. can easily imagine how singularly widely scattered the rest are.

The distant ones come up once a year with cattle, butter and soap, and return home again with coarse clothes, gunpowder and lead, tobacco, and some liquor, the journey to and fro taking about two months. The butchers also travel around in those areas to buy cattle. However, one hardly ever sees money there.

In the Colony there are 11798 horses; 61961 head of cattle; 376433 sheep; 233 pigs; 645 firelocks; 1550 pistols; 2645 daggers. But the sheep and cattle may well be estimated at twice as many on account thereof that tax has to be paid on them.

I shall not tread deeper into the politics of this land, and only note that the rebellion of North America has evil influence, and that it would be desirable that education of the children, and a religious service for the distant colonists might be provided for.

Now, as far as the Hottentots are concerned: someone who reads the latest descriptions of the Cape must be more convinced of the deficiency of these books and be made more averse to the reading of travel descriptions.

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I can assure Your Hon. that of all the nations the Hessequas, Coopmans, Gris-grisquas, Gantouwens etc., none any longer exists; that in the whole extensiveness of our colony there is not one Hottentot nation; that at a small number of the Company's farms merely a few families have been left over, and a few live with the distant farmers; and here and there form a single little kraal of one or two families, but without any thought of a government or name of a nation. They live on the farms, which is not approved of by our farmers and sometimes hire themselves out to them.

The only one which one can still call a tribe, lies on our borders with Caffer land. They are the Gounaquas, though strongly intermarried with Caffers. Their chief is good man, called Ruyter by our people and Cosjoo by the Caffers. His Hottentot name cannot be written with our letters. He still has with him about 200 — men, women and children. The Kleine Namacquas, between northern Oliphants Rivier and Oranjes, have also almost totally melted away. Thus the Namacqua tribes and those of the people of the interior, generally called Bosjemans, are the only ones who deserve the name of tribes. The aforementioned tribes of Kolben no longer exist, nor have they mixed themselves with their nearest neighbours (as was my opinion originally) but only individuals from the tribes did that. But he, Kolben, did in general exaggerate everything greatly, and dressed it up in a style of wonderment, and mentioned nations which consisted of but a few families.

The smallpox in the vicinity of the Cape claimed many victims, but that illness did not penetrate far into the country. Dominating Europeans will always cause the natural inhabitants of the countries which they invade to dissolve. Therefore — that string I shall not play on any further, and continue by stating that up to the present I know of only two completely different peoples in these regions, which are divided into different tribes according to the distance, situation of their regions (which to a large extent regulates their manner of life) human caprices, hazards etc.; differ amongst themselves in dialect and various matters. Nevertheless everything points in the direction that they are of one origin.#

# I meant for a long time, two different nations, and not as if they did not descend from a pair of humans. I find much more difference between animals which we know for certain to have descended from one pair than between humans. It strikes someone travelling amongst different wild (tribes), that he finds the same human person even though it may seem different at the first glance. Doing moral as well as physical ( ... *words missing*) one should make all writers travel over such matters. I am certain that Rousseau, notwithstanding his ingrained attachment to his

feelings, would in many respects have changed, because I consider him a thinker of integrity.

These are then the Hottentots and the Caffers. They both have very curly hair on the head, but the Caffers generally thicker. Also one finds more beard in the case of the Caffers, although not as much by far as in the case of Europeans. (This shows that monsieur d'Pauw, on America, goes too far when he ascribes all that to the moist climate). There could be no drier land in the world than this, but the inhabitants, without pulling it out, generally have beard, but on the body hairless. A Hottentot is yellow and reddish of colour; those on the highland, even many, an unhealthy white. The Caffer is pitch black. The Hottentot has such a flat nose that one sees, even in profile, a concave contour of the face. The Caffer does indeed have broad nose, and not so prominent as an European, but also not flat. I have seen children shortly after birth and can give the assurance that the flat nose is natural and does not come from being pressed flat.

I have observed in several Hottentots born amongst our farmers without any mixing, that their noses are less flat, and their features starting to resemble those of us. This has often given a lead to thoughts which I shall not hazard to express here. A Hottentot has a small and thin figure, with small hands and feet, the head also more angular. A Caffer is big, fully fleshed, round of head and face, with large eyes which stand more lively, + more meaningful, the whites brighter as well, larger feet and hands. (One does not find any blue eyes here, certainly brownish-grey ones, but mostly black.)

A Hottentot has five or six different clicks with the tongue, together with the other sounds in his language, which makes it the most singular language that I know, and it has no word that remotely resembles the Caffer language. The Caffer language is soft, sonorous, full of vowels. Some of the Caffers had some clicks with the tongue with a few of their words, others pronounced the words without a click, therefore it derives from the Gounaguas.

The Caffers have come along the coast toward us in the Hottentots land and I find a great resemblance between them and all the slaves which we obtain from this east Coast up to even close to the Line: not only in posture but in very many words — many are completely the same. Yet they differ amongst themselves, in the different tribes; for the same reasons as do the Hottentots, whether it be Chinese, Bosjemans, Namaquas etc. amongst themselves.

+ (*Footnote not found*)

As far as I have understood from the Bushmen ("Bosjemans") the black nations start around the Tropics. The Birnas are black, speak without clicks, but they use poisonous arrows like the Hottentots, which the Caffers do not, using on a thin throwing spear 5 or 6 feet long and an oval shield of cow's hide, with a longest diameter of 3 feet. Beyond the Namaquas tribes there begins around the Tropics a black nation, called Damnassen, also armed with bow and arrow. The Caffers from the Coast of Sofala, in all respects originally the same people as our Caffers, also use bow and arrow, but differ from the Hottentots: the furthest yellow Hottentot nation (tribe) of whom I have been informed by the Bushmen call themselves Soeroenoecoe o.

They can speak with the aforesaid and live in the same manner. They lie between the Naucaap and the Ein, these being two more large streams, the first of which comes from the north-east, the other from the n.e.e., and run into the Oranjes Rivier near the Namacquas. These Soeroenoekoes lie s.e. from the Birinas.

Having referred to the difference between all Hottentot tribes and the aforesaid Caffers, which (from around the Line and possibly further along the east Coast), I have since very long held to be racially two different peoples (the Caffers also maintaining that they had proceeded from the coast), I shall now refer to some of their bizarre customs insofar as I have seen them, and know them to be the truth.

Firstly, as far as I know, the Hottentots call themselves quoi, queuna, differing, however, in the dialect of some. For quena some say queina and eina. This means literally human being, human beings; quena being the plural of quoi. They call us oehoe orhoenqueina, the first syllable being pronounced with a hissing stroke of the tongue against the teeth. I have not been able to discover what that meant. In addition every tribe called themselves after the nearest fountain, river, or any particular feature where they were staying. Thus taan eina: grassland people; coeroepe einas white stone people (coeroep, the first syllable pronounced with a hard click of the tongue, was the word for the previously mentioned white firestone). Eineina or einiqua is the people or the river Ein; qua or coe being sometimes used as a plural in naming the tribes.

Their government, if it can be called that, is patriarchal under a sort of Chief, and uncomplicated; the elders and those who own the most cattle have an influence on the rest. Sometimes, as in the case of a Chief who is more courageous or wiser than the rest, it passes to his son but never as a matter of course.

The Bushmen and inlanders live by hunting, dig for roots, also eat ants, ostrich eggs, locusts, a kind of grass seed, in one word everything that they find edible whatsoever. These mostly have the bravest and most dextrous as a sort of chief. This illustrates the progression in the formation of states according to the measure in which the tribe consists of one or various families or is more populous, or according to how much necessity demands bonding themselves to the bravest and most dextrous.

*o (Footnote not found on photo-copy)*

For the rest they live as equals. But amongst those who have cattle, each family keeps its own cattle. People have called the Hottentots with pretty descriptions only a peuple pasteur. Nothing is more incorrect, the inlanders have never had cattle and neither have several of the others. Those who had and still have cattle, keep it mostly for the milk, and seldom, if ever, slaughter e.g. for ceremonies, namely, marriage, man-making and a few others. They eat their cattle when it dies, otherwise they live on hunting etc. As the others do.

At birth some make a small cut on the back of their children (others do not). The inlanders' knives are split reeds, and sharpened stones.

When a girl reaches puberty she is kept in a separate hut, and jollification is held there, and a sheep or something else which they may have, is slaughtered and eaten: always with dancing and by the light of the moon, even though it may not be full. This the

Caffers also do. If a youth is made man, which they call *doro*, a few men urinate on his body, and rub him, and he rubs himself, and again there is slaughtering and dancing.

Their marriage is, just as amongst the Caffers, a purchase with cattle, and those, such as the inlanders, who do not have such, do it for fox skins, bows and arrows, white stones, beads of ostrich egg shells and further whatever may serve them as barter, ↔ and all those ceremonies end up with eating and drinking. Just like all other nations.

↔ (*Footnote not found on photo-copy*)

They make a drink from honey and water, which they cause to ferment strongly by the addition of a root. This drink becomes very strong and they seldom stop before it is finished. I have never attended their wedding ceremony, but have heard it unanimously contradicted that they urinate on the couple. The killing of one of a pair of twins — I can say that it is not national; amongst those whom I know, it happens in the same way as with us. And the same with their aged — they displayed aversion when I enquired about it, saying that they lamented it bitterly when they lost their aged. They tie their dead in the skin which they wore during their lifetime and set them down on their haunches in the grave, after which they cover them with a huge heap of stones, five or six feet above the ground, and the same in circumference, laying his bow and some arrows on top of it, and abandon the hut and the place where he died.

The excision of one testicle is, amongst all the inlanders and those I know, untrue; but there are individuals amongst the Namacquas who do this. If one asks why, they say that it has been done because of illness. This answer one also receives when one enquires about the reason for cutting off some members of the fingers, as in use with some individuals. The former I know to be true, without having seen it and the latter I have seen. They pierce holes through the septum of the nose and the ears, wearing rings and small sticks in them (the Caffers never wear anything in the nose) but not all of them do it. They consider it pretty that their women paint their faces with red and black lines. The Caffers do this often — both men and women — and puncture themselves, which the Hottentots do not do. These, however, make little cuts in their skins for each animal they kill; the wives sometimes do it for each child that they bear.

The so-called intestines (which they, the women, wear around the leg, the men around the arm)

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are rings which they make from the fresh skin of animals, and which are worn by the women as stockings and by the men as feats of the hunt. When cattle are slaughtered during their ceremonies, those to whom it is applicable wear the intestine only for some time around the neck. The caul, which I have the honour of sending Yr Hon under separate cover, is worn by the inlanders like a scarf around the body; they use it to carry their meat which they have shot in the hunt or that which they find, carrying it then over the shoulder. # They make the cord out of sinews and plait it with the fingers. This amazed me greatly, as these tribes where I encountered the nets had never seen any Europeans.

# If they do not catch anything during the hunt they eat the caul, through hunger, as I have seen. They have small dogs with pointed ears which seldom bark and look like foxes.

The inlanders use only half-round huts, open toward the sun, consisting only of mats plaited from reeds, hung over sticks; sometimes also of skins. § They bake pots from sticky clay\*, in which they cook. Their favourite spoon is a brush such as that of our painters.

§ In order to be able to move suddenly according to the departure of the game, or in accordance with the presence of water.

\* One finds plenty of good bolus in this country.

All of them use poisoned arrows, of different grades of strength. From a flower bulb, amarillis; for the hunt, snake poison; and from the juice of a tree which I have not seen, for their enemies. By throwing a branch of this tree into the water, it can be poisoned in a short while to such an extent that anyone drinking of it dies within a few minutes. Whatsoever is poisonous or edible they know through experience. To such an extent does exigency teach them these things that my little koerikei, who was taken from his country at a very early age has never once make a mistake in this respect.

Although they mostly live with the greatest unanimity amongst themselves, they sometimes conduct war with other tribes; with some of them they are irreconcilable. The hunter Hottentots are the bravest. Their war is to surprise, and cruel. Making peace and slaughtering is the same word: à with a loud click of the tongue, so that they slaughter at the peacemaking.

Those who have heard of us take us to be monsters whose hair is like that of the mane of a lion. They call us "the heavy people", also "bad white spirit".

I won't say much about the Hottentot language. It is surely the most singular, as far as I know, by virtue of the five or six different clicks of the tongue which totally change the meaning of this same word. Thus aw is, depending on the click, blood, poison, and three or four more words; and in order to avoid ambiguities, they are in view of the plainness of their language, compelled and accustomed to use many expressive gestures.

Here is an example of their language. No clicks appear in it, otherwise there would be no possibility of giving the right sound to the word by means of writing: tiri thats tabeca ma, thats tiri dow mare a. This means literally: tiri ik. thats you. tabeca tobacco. maqeven. thats you tiri ik dow de weg. mare. qeef. o sien. or I shall give you tobacco if you show me the way. Dow mare means both 'show me the way' and 'get out of the way'. Their reckoning of time is according to dry and rainy seasons: also with moons, but not systematically, so that they do not know how old they are.

Lastly I can relate their ideas about religious matters with certainty: they believe in good and evil spirits, and about these they have confused conceptions, and hold certain small worms, butterflies or locusts etc. the one for suiquas benevolent spirits, and the other for gouvanas (the gou with a click of the teeth) or evil. And sometimes the sorcerer sees these and nobody else does. Some of the Hottentots who live with the farmers have



learned how to simplify these confused ideas and say tuiqua for God and gouwna or downa for the devil. They do not believe in any other life, and do not fear anything but to be tormented by the gowanas bodily, or by way of anything belonging to them, or even being killed. The aforesaid sorcerer, of which there is mostly one with every tribe, wards off the evil spirit and sometimes beats him to death.

If a jackal (our fox) or any other animal cries by night, he is the messenger of the sorcerer, or brings tidings either from other sorcerers or of something else. They know how to change humans into lions etc. to harass others. This sorcerer is sometimes a male sometimes female and often old people, and is feared and beloved by them. But if something of great import happens or if the sorcerer is suspected of having done serious wrong by his sorcery, they find a way of overpowering him and sometimes beat him to death. They learn it in a dream or from other sorcerers. He is their doctor, but the remedy is mostly by way of sorcery, † but they also use ointments, herbs etc and a decoction of food from the stomach content of ruminating animals; this they drink as an antidote and it causes them to vomit strongly. I have heard that some have managed to treat themselves with poison in such a way that it no longer has any effect on them. I cannot vouch for this; they also suck out the poison.

† This is the person which has been called priest

I have seen the following at one of the inland Bosjemans tribes. A day or so before, we had been on the hunt in severe heat. A young fellow fell ill from it. His mother was the sorcerer of the tribe. She laid her son naked on his back, and, without paying any attention to me, said that an evil spirit had lodged in his body and went and lay on top of him, with some women sitting around. She covered herself with her animal skin and began, her flat nose between the thumb and first finger, keeping the flat hand on his body, to snort, from slowly until into a fury, turning and writhing as with the greatest effort, which the patient accompanied with a groaning sound. Sometimes she pressed his body, his chest, head and abdomen, then once more applying her nose to his body she snorted as hard. After this had lasted about a quarter of an hour, her nose bled (if the nose bleeds, they are the strongest sorcerers). She then jumped up, as did all the other women, and walked away as if drunk. One held her under the arm and another fetched a stick. Then she walked by herself and struck the ground several times. And screaming all the time she, she returned to her son, who had remained lying down. I asked what she had done. She said she had removed the evil spirit from her son's body and had beaten it to death; that she had carried it away in the nose and that it had bled for that reason. I said that I had not seen him and received as answer that she was the only one who could see such things. Enquiring about the form of the spirit — he had resembled a cobra. She smeared her son some boeqhoe (a dry aromatic herb) in the nose and also the other females, and with that the ceremony was over. I gave her some beads and she was well pleased.

I have seen it once more, almost in the same way, by a man, but he snorted out some beetles (which he gave to me) as qouwanas, and thereafter sang, sitting next to the patient (rattling, in time, a pipe quiver filled with stones) a furious magic song. They reap some benefit from it; nevertheless I believe that they, even for the greater part, believe these absurd things.

Some Hottentots brought up amongst us have all kinds of singular tales. Thus one of my companions told me that he was struggling with the question whether he would live again somewhere once he had died. He said that the moon had once upon a time said to the people: As I die and am renewed, so you too will live again after death. But the grey steenbok (being a small gazelle of this country) said: that is not so; when I die I remain dead, and when Man dies he also remains dead, and the steenbok became so angry at the moon that he jumped up and scratched him in the face: those are still the patches on the moon. ¶

¶ During an eclipse they say that sun and moon are fighting and in the end he sun chases away the moon by means of the heat.

Tiqua, being God, came to a great water, found a horse standing there, grazing, and said: bring me over? The horse said: wait a moment! I have to eat first. Tiqua went on and found an ox, asked the same of him, and was carried over. Then Tiqua said to the horse: now you will never be able to eat enough, and stripped him of his horns as ornaments or defence.

Punishment exercises I have never seen amongst them, but I know that they seldom have need of it amongst themselves, and that it mostly goes according to the law of retribution.

The long uncertain tabielje of the women, as Buffon calls it, will be evident to Yr Hon from the drawing; and that it is country-wide, I can vouch for, but longer in one case than in another, and not as they have described it up to now. In as far as I have seen this on a female Caffer, she also had it, but in the case of that one, not so strongly. Herewith I shall leave off about the Hottentots and relate some things about the Caffers.

They call themselves, up to about 30 hours away \*: Cosaas or amma  
Cosa: Amma means people. East of the Cosaas the Caffers call themselves Tamboenas and north-east of Rio de la Goa the Caffers called us Malonqo or Mlonqo. And, as I have mentioned, all these people are of one type of person, having spread themselves just like the bees, which divide themselves into swarms. This is the best image for all tribes, Caffers as well as Hottentots. I don't know whether any of these names mean something.

\* They are richer in numbers, appearing to procreate more than the Hottentots

These Cosaas a few years ago still had a great chieftain who was called Palo or Paro (often they conform the r with the l). They still swear and confirm a matter by his name. This Palo reigned over all the Cosaas, but I have not been able to ascertain whether he did the same with the Tamboenas.

He left behind several sons. The eldest was Gareka, the second Gaggabe etc. Palo died and Gareka and Gaggabe quarrelled, and the tribes split; towards the sea — all under Gareka and towards the land side under Gaggabe, who since then lived in great enmity. They held Gareka only as a lesser chief, although he was the elder. Furthermore, Gaggabe is held to have been a tyrannic, cruel person. Gareka held Gaggabe to be a bastard Tamboena, because his mother belonged to those tribes. This remained the

situation until last year when Gareka died. Then Gaggabe (also called Tambushi) came and robbed much cattle from Cauta the son of Gareka. However, he had to withdraw again, due to Cauta's people loving him, five to six hundred Caffers guarding him every night. I do not know whether they always do this.

Then there is an adopted son of Paro's called Mahoti, and he has many sons, all of whom in turn are chieftains or incoos over smaller tribes.

Thus are these peoples like the Jews in olden times, having in their songs much of the Jewish way of singing. They are very obedient to their chiefs and are in everything more civilised than the Hottentots. Their women are masculine in features, not big but strongly shaped; they till the lands with a kind of wooden spade, sitting on their haunches; and all the agriculture is their concern.

The men, who constitute a large, merry and handsome nation, tend the cattle and go hunting, of which they are the greatest of devotees, and will always exchange an ox for a dog. Their horned cattle is altogether tame by virtue of the fact that they always socialise with them, whistling for them and talking to them. They set their horns, from an early age, in all kinds of curves and forms, cutting the skins from their ears and head — quite exceptional. They have large herds of cattle, but no sheep, but the Tamboes do; these also keep chickens.

Their wheat they call semi. It grows 7 to 8 feet high like cane, with limbs 6 to 7 inches thick; one foot long, at the top, appears a bunch like barley, the corns small and somewhat three-sided like buckwheat. It produces a very good flour from which they bake bread, or rather cakes which they call ammasimba. But they do not use it as we do our bread, with all our food.

Furthermore they plant beans, pumpkins, watermelons and tobacco like ours. Their milk they put into leather bags and use it sour. From their wheat they make a drink which they call pons. When this is old it becomes strong and almost resembles buttermilk.

Each family has their own hut, made somewhat more regular than those of the Hottentots, yet also like a beehive; each one has his own cattle and is his own craftsman. They forge their assagaaijs very well on rocks, making bellows out of two bags. Iron and copper they have from other nations, as do the Hottentots, and value iron above all else.

The insignia of distinction amongst them are; The Chief: six ivory rings around the left arm above the elbow. The heads of the tribe have five, four and three, but not so firmly regulated into ranks. The sons of the chief become chief in turn, and from their youth are esteemed by the others.

Their religion, if one may call it that, turns out to be like that of the Hottentots. At the death of Gareka they beat to death several sorcerers, their doctors, because they had not healed him. † In their burial rites they differ totally from the Hottentots. The nearest heir must drag the corpse into the veld with a thong around its neck and has to leave it lying like that without doing anything further to it; or he has to hire someone else for a few heads of cattle, who will do such in his stead. Also, they leave the place where he has died. A chief is left lying in his hut, and they leave the place.

‡ I saw only a few of their ceremonies. They are less willing than the Hottentots to show these to a stranger.

They carry out circumcision on their boys when they are eight to ten years old, and this the sorcerer doctor does. (They know precious little amongst themselves, both men and women, about covering up the private parts.) As reason for the circumcision I have heard it given that they are braver in the war. Their marriage, girls' puberty and male initiation rites are as with the Hottentots, but I have never heard about being urinated on. Also, all these ceremonies are celebrated with slaughtering, eating and drinking. Like the Hottentots they slaughter in a singular manner. They throw the animal on the ground with thongs, cut open the abdomen, put their hand in and pull apart a big vein, so that it thus dies slowly.

Their dancing is much more attractive than amongst the Hottentots; also their singing; but the latter are superior in musical instruments. They have mostly more wives than the Hottentots, namely their chiefs. Small pox and venereal disease are as unknown amongst them as amongst the Hottentots. Like that nation they eat the stomach and first intestines of the animals, only squeezing out by hand the half-digested material, but cooked.

One of their chiefs saw me in the morning, washing my hands with water; he ordered his body-guard, who attends him, to bring him fresh cow's dung, and rubbed his hands with it, as if he was washing them, without any water. Their clothes are worked cattle skins, somewhat like our chamois leather. They do not smear themselves like the Hottentots, walk about bare-headed, binding around it a garland of animal hair or two and three tufts round the same. They hate all poisons, and fear the Hottentots' arrows but fight in the same manner namely by surprise.

For the time being I shall leave it at that. And add something about the observation of heights by way of the barometer. As far as I remember I last year put the average height of the mercury at sea level here at 29 inches and six lines. But the same has been found, by repeated observation, to be 30 inches according to Ramsden's scale; and the greatest difference is one inch and two lines, as far as I have observed it up to now. If one, in making one's readings,

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takes the proper precautions one, has to, when a tube has been used several times, add two lines to the mercury when it rises. Experience has taught me that. Then one knows the altitude to within 2 to 300 feet. Thus someone wishing to measure a height and not minding a foot or two, will take it geometrically, and someone travelling through a country will do so with the barometer, the difference being one of no import and the quackery of learned people.

I have the honour to despatch to Your Hon. to hand over to His Most Illustrious Highness the perspectives and plans of the Cape and Baay Fals. The drawings of the hippopotamus and rhinoceros were delivered by the Hon Governor, apart from the sheets, thus the remaining drawings are for Professor Allamand, excepting the Caffers and Hottentots. May I request Your Hon. to send the drawing of the Hottentots to the Professor of Anatomy at Leiden.

I hope that everything will cross in good state, and that I will be informed of such by a brieflet, seeing that I am retaining one copy for myself, which, in case of mishap I shall send over. I am sending, with these ships, to the Hon. advocate Boers a copy of the perspectives and plans, for the Secret Commission (Geheime Commissie). And during the time that my presence at the Cape is not immediately necessary, as the chief of the troops is remaining here, I am going, the exercises having ended today, midway through next month, on my last distant journey, and on my return shall inform Your Hon. about it.

The sheep from Spain I have for many reasons put on Robben Island. They are well and are already breeding having already two lovely lambs, which points to a better breed than the original. That the climate is not adverse to the wool, I shall show to the Association by means of the fleece of a particular breed of sheep of this country.

Likewise I am sending Your Hon. some seed and wool of a type of wolboom, which grows plentifully on the northern Oliphants Rivier.

I request that my humble compliments be brought over to Milady the widow Fagel, Mr Dierkens, the guard Mclean, and further good friends, and having commended myself to Your Hon.'s protection I have the honour, with my greatest esteem to sign,

Most Honourable Sire

Your Honour's most humble and obedient servant

R J Gordon

Cape of Good Hope

24 April 1779