

barometrical observations carefully made, and the dip and succession of strata were as carefully noted as could be done in such an exploratory journey, with a view to preserving a section of these interesting mountain districts.

Nearly at the same time as the latter part of this journey was performed, Colonel Chesney accomplished his last arduous and dangerous task of taking a mail from the Persian Gulf by Zobeir across the great desert to Baïrút, which he did unaccompanied by any European.

II.—*Latest Intelligence from CAPTAIN ALEXANDER.*

THE following extracts will give the latest intelligence received by the Geographical Society from Captain Alexander, who, it may be recollected, left Cape Town in September, 1836, on a visit to the Dámaras, on the western side of South Africa.

“Clan William, 27th September, 1836.

“I left Cape Town on the 10th September, and the first week we had many difficulties to contend against, but they afforded us excellent lessons: the waggon was very heavy; much rain fell, and the roads were full of mud holes: in Zwaartland we remained two nights in one hole, stuck fast. I had an order from his Excellency the Governor to demand assistance from the field cornets, and by this means was enabled to hire an extra waggon. After many accidents and delays with swollen rivers, &c., we crossed the Berg River, and since that have got on smoothly. Besides the party I formerly described (three white attendants and three coloured), the driver of the waggon added to our strength his wife, who proves very useful as a cook; and Mr. Cook, the Wesleyan missionary, lately arrived in Cape Town from the Warm Bath, very kindly gave me as a guide Jantjies, a great Namaqua, related to the chief Abraham, of the Bundlezwaart tribe, under whose protection we shall first be.

“I have visited the Cedar Mount in this neighbourhood, and am about to inspect a bushman’s cave with rude drawings in it. I also intend to see the mouths of the Oliphant and Orange Rivers, and one or two undescribed bays on this side the Orange River mouth, as the proper season for leaving the Warm Bath is January and February, and I have some time to spare.”

“Lily Fountain, Kamies or Lion Mountain,
12th November, 1836.

“My last communication was from Clan William, and I now beg to give a summary of my proceedings subsequent to leaving that place.

“I went first to the Rhenish Missionary Institution of Ebenezer, on the south bank of the Oliphant River, and about twenty miles from its mouth. The institution is yet in its infancy, and has 108 Hottentots on the books. On an average the river overflows once in three or four years, (though it has not done so for the last three,) and then the return

of corn is one hundred fold! The missionaries propose, as soon as they can, to lead out the water.

"Having swam my waggon across the river, and carried over the goods in it in a boat, I left my people to proceed northwards, and galloped down to the mouth of the river to inspect it. I found that it divided itself into two branches, enclosing an island, before entering the sea, and that there were many rocks at the mouth, but that with some expense, and by making a cut, ships might enter the river.

"The rise of tide is sometimes three feet, but often six: the soundings in my sketch map are at low water. I saw a farmer from near Clan William fishing at the mouth of the river with a boat and seine—he caught 'hurders' and 'springers.'

"At the Heer Lodgement, on my way to the river, under an overhanging rock where were many names, I saw carved

F. VAILANT, 1783.

Passing through a barren and uninteresting country covered with shrubby plants, and the water brackish, I reached the Green River, on the banks of which I found a boor in a circular house of mats with his family, on his winter grazing ground; for four months in the year, July, August, September, and October, the boors in this part of the colony are in the field. Near the Green River some of my people were severely stung in attacking a nest of rock bees. One of them was put to flight by a snake with a very large head.

"On the 10th of October we ascended the Kamies Mountain, and reached this place. The houses of this missionary institution are delightfully situated on a plain between the peaks of the Great Mountain: the highest summit is 5000 feet above the level of the South Atlantic, which is seen at the distance of sixty or seventy miles. There are 800 Namaquas on the books of this excellent Wesleyan establishment, and I was quite surprised with the quantity of ground under cultivation in the mountain valleys. A muid is 200 lbs., and 1500 muids are usually raised by the people, 100 muids being commonly sown. Mr. Edwards, then absent at Cape Town, has charge of the institution, which was founded in 1816.

"I now despatched a trusty Namaqua with presents and a message to the chiefs Abram of the Bondlezwaart Namaquas, Warm Bath, and Whit-boy of the Bastards of Pella, to announce that I was coming, and to ask if either of them would be willing to accompany me through their country and into the interior.

"Having time to spare before the rains of January (which fall on the north side of the Great River, and render the country then fit to be traversed) I remained a fortnight, alone, on the Kamies Mountain, wandering about its summits, collecting plants, preserving bird skins, &c.; and not expecting the messenger's return till the beginning of November, I left my people and set out on horseback to learn the truth of a rumour I had heard of the existence of an excellent bay W.S.W. of this, and then, in compliance with the wish of his Excellency the Governor, to visit the mouth of the Orange River.

"Having descended the mountain, on my way to the coast, I fell in with a merchant captain, Mr. Anderson, who had just been to the bay

before mentioned: he gave me the soundings, which he had taken with a boat, and a slight sketch of the bay.

"The depth and breadth of the bay is not, apparently, much short of a mile: it is sheltered from the prevailing winds (S.E. and N.W.), which blow across the entrance. There is only one danger, viz. a rock, near the entrance. Good anchorage, with sand and shells, in six fathoms in the middle of the bay. High water, at full and change, at four A. M.; and two excellent sandy beaches, for hauling the seine. If made available, this bay will be of the greatest use to this part of the colony, which at present has no market or outlet for produce.

"We make out Rove Wall Bay to be forty miles south of the Zwaartlinjies River. As the admiral on the station (Sir Patrick Campbell) has kindly promised to send up a ship of war to look after the expedition in March or April, I have requested that she may call at Rove Wall, on her way to Walwich Bay, &c.; so that a better account may be given of it than the above sketch.

"I was two days at the London Mission station of Comaggas, between the Kousie and Zwaartlinjies rivers, and a short distance from the sea, and then set out in a horse waggon for the Orange river.

"I found the bed of the Kousie (the boundary) dry; only two good fountains in four stages between the Kousie and Orange rivers: the country very mountainous and hilly, the plains sandy, and everywhere covered with low bushes and shrubby plants;* 800 Namaquas and some Bastards live scattered between Comaggas and the Orange under the care of the worthy old German missionary, Mr. Schmelen, by whom and by two Rhenish missionaries, looking out for a new station, I was accompanied.

"We arrived at Aris, twenty miles from the mouth of the Orange. Here, under the trees of the river, we found a small Namaqua kraal of mat huts; the men in karosses, or skin mantles, and trousers; the women in karosses and petticoats. They had flocks and herds, but no gardens. A great part of the year these people (when together they are about 300 in the tribe) live on dried seals' flesh. Of Seal island I had not before heard: it is about half-way between the Orange and Kousie rivers: 400 seals are killed there on an average, in November, the breeding season. A trader, Archer, has bought the skins from the people lately for two or three rix-dollars; they sell at the Cape for twelve rix-dollars, and, I believe, in England for three guineas.

"The Orange was now (on the 31st of October) 450 yards across, at Aris, and I waded over to Great Namaqua Land. We then went through heavy sand to the mouth of the Orange river.

"Three miles from the mouth, I found a wooden landmark, on which the name of De Graaff was carved; he was landrost of Tulbagh in 1809. The Orange river has long been desired as the boundary of the colony; and half a dozen farmers pay taxes, though living beyond the Kousie. I found great flocks of wild geese, wild ducks, teal, flamingoes, sand-larks, gulls, Namaqua partridges, &c., at the mouth of the river.

* There were flocks of ostriches and many steinboks in the plains.—Zebras are also frequently seen.

“ The main current of the river is on the north side. Drift-wood in great quantities (carried down by the flood after the beginning of the year) lay far from the water everywhere. There is good grazing west of the Beacon. I found the mouth apparently deep enough for a schooner to enter: no rocks or dangers of any kind. Two spits of sand enclosed the entrance, which seemed about 170 yards across. Inside was a lake about four miles across.

“ I inquired of the Hottentot guide if he knew of any bays about the mouth of the river; and he said he could take me to one. We accordingly rode south about two miles, and found a good bay (500 yards by 250) for small craft; and a good beach at the bottom of it, for hauling the seine. The Hottentot also reported the existence of other sheltered places in the direction of the Twin Mountain.

“ We returned to Aris; after which, I think I made rather an important discovery. I was asking everywhere for ores, as there is a rumour of the Orange flowing over golden sands, and I thought it likely that, in this otherwise unproductive country, great mineral treasures might be found. We have long known that there was copper on the west coast, but so far inland, and at such a distance from water carriage, as to be of no use. The Society will, perhaps, be gratified to learn, that by means of a Bastard* I have found out the position of a very rich mass of copper ore (specimens of which, now in my possession, shall be forwarded by an early opportunity) close to the Orange river. In longitude 17°, and twenty miles south of the river, is where the copper is found in great abundance on the surface of the ground, and other ores *may* also be not far off.

“ A waggon road could be made to descend from the copper along the beds of two dry rivulets, as marked in the sketch. On the river is abundance of excellent black ebony, black bass and doorn (*mimosa*, both used in tanning), willow, and other trees of considerable size, which might be employed in smelting the copper, or the pounded ore could be carried to the mouth, at almost all times of the year, in flat-bottomed boats. Saw-mills would do well on the Great River, and there is plenty of shell lime along the coast, immense beds of muscles, &c. Suppose ‘an Orange River Wood and Mining Company’ was established, the natives and speculators might both be benefited.

“ In returning to the colony we were three days without milk, bread, sugar, or salt: and at a halt in the dry bed of the Kousie, the thermometer was 103°, with a hot north wind, on the 6th of November, and we scooped out holes in the sand with our hands, to get at fetid and brackish water.

“ I arrived here on the 8th, and found Mr. Edwards returned from Cape Town: from him I have received every civility and assistance. I also found the Namaqua chief, *Abram*, waiting for me: he is very well disposed, will accompany me through his country, and has gone on before to assist me through the Great River. His Excellency ordered twelve boors to conduct me to the river, to produce a good effect on the natives, and we leave this on the 16th; I hope to reach the Warm Bath on the 26th of November.

* The leader, in 1792, of Van Reenen's waggon, whose journal I translated and sent to the Royal Geographical Society lately.

“ I shall lose no time in getting out by Walwich Bay, or will steer eastward as I see the way open. There is a vast deal to describe beyond the Orange, and I shall take every means to collect as much as I possibly can.”

“ Nabees (Warm Bath), Great Namaqua Land,
January 1, 1837.

“ After the despatch of my last letter from the Kamiesberg, in which I mention the discovery of a new bay forty miles south of the Zwaartlinjies river, of a seal island between the Orange and Kousie rivers, of a very rich mass of copper near the Orange river, in longitude 17°, and my visit to the mouth of the Orange, I left the Kamies Mountain on the 16th of November, escorted, by his Excellency the Governor’s order, by a field cornet and twelve mounted boors; not that we feared any danger in coming to this place, but to show the Namaquas that the expedition was a Government one. We had likewise an extra waggon; and what, with fifty bullocks, fifty horses, and fifty sheep, we had a good-sized caravan. Guns have now become plenty in Namaqua Land. We cannot depend on game for support, so I was forced to buy a flock of sheep for my people.

“ Of all the countries I ever saw, that between the delightful mountain of Kamies and the Orange river is the most barren—I hardly except Arabia. We traversed stony and grey plains, with low shrubby plants scattered over them, and rocky and bare hills on which were seen only an occasional cocker-broom, of which the bushmen make their quivers. This region seemed accursed. I was forced to buy another horse from a Dutchman, for one of my Cape chargers was totally unable to walk from sheer starvation; the other got sooner into the way of eating bushes. Grass there was none, though after rain scattered tufts are here and there found.

“ In a week, without a halt, we arrived safe and well at the Orange river, all except my poor horse. Our route was by Silver Fountain, Byzondermeid, Henkries, &c. At Byzondermeid I found an old missionary of the London Society, Mr. Wimmer, aged 74, living in a reed hut, and surrounded with half a dozen other huts containing nomadic Namaquas. Mr. Wimmer had not tasted bread for a whole year, or salt for six months; he regaled me on dried beef and some bush tea. His wife, a Hottentot woman of forty, had a child at the breast.

“ At the Orange river, near the mouth of the Giep of the map, but ’Hoom (with an initial click) of the Namaquas, we found the chief Abram, of the Bondlezwaart tribe ready to assist us across, with sixteen of his best swimmers. Mr. Jackson, a Wesleyan missionary, also accompanied him. Abram throughout has behaved exceedingly well; first in coming to see me at Kamiesberg from the Warm Baths, and again in going before to assist us across the dangerous Orange. Fortunately the river was only half full: we crossed without difficulty, and it rose immediately after with rains in the Bushman’s Land beyond Pella.

“ Steering north-east, we arrived here in three days, about 450 miles from Cape Town.

“ I dismissed the boors, who had never seen the Great Orange before, and were constantly dreaming of bushmen, lions, and devils. They

have reason to fear in Namaqua Land, for there are many of their late slaves in it, who had left them from bad usage, and who would not at all scruple to shoot their former severe taskmasters.

"The kraal of the chief Abram is in the midst of a great plain, with conical hills of 100 or 200 feet elevation rising here and there in it. The huts, of matting, are on both sides of the 'Hoom river, in whose dry bed (filled with water only two or three times a year) are dubbee boom, mimosa trees, &c. The huts number sixty, and each may contain ten souls. The men wear karosses, or mantles of sheep-skin, or leather jackets and trowsers, with a hat or handkerchief on their heads: the women are all in karosses, skin aprons long behind and short in front, and ornamented with a long fringe nearly touching the ground.

"There are lions, steinboks, ostriches, zebras, jackals, &c., all about us. The chief shot a lion within half a mile of where I now write, and presented me with the skin. I have employed my people, whilst we are waiting for the thunder rains of this month, to make the grass grow, in training my oxen for the pack-saddle, in preparing birds' skins, and in putting our equipments in order for our progress northward.*

"To-day I returned from a week's excursion to Africaners' kraal, sixty miles east of this, going and returning by different roads, as the Africaners and Bondlezwaarts had a fight there some time ago, in which they lost three or four men each side.

"The chief Whitboy of Pella has behaved strangely to me. I sent him two messages; and he neither sends answers nor comes himself. He was recommended to me as the best companion I could have on my journey towards Walwich Bay. But Abram goes three weeks to the north with me, and then we may get Wilhelm, or Amral, to go farther; if not, my own men profess their entire willingness to go anywhere I choose.

"The people of Abram are unwilling, of course, to go among the Damaras with me, for I see many Damara cattle among them. But this plundering of the Damaras must be put an end to, if possible, by our opening a trade with them at Walwich Bay, and offering them protection against their southern enemies. Great store of ivory, of hides, horns, gum, wax, &c. is to be obtained from the Damaras.

"I hear strange tales of mountains north of this, composed entirely of iron; of giants, with feet as broad as elephants', and who are strong enough to carry off an ostrich on their shoulders; of two-legged serpents of great size, which pursue women, and kill half a dozen cameleopards at once; of wild horses living in the hills of the interior, with one horn on their foreheads, &c. Doubtless, if, by the Divine favour, we are spared, we shall see much, though not a phoenix or such wonders as the above.

"Since I engaged Robert Ripp, the sailor I formerly mentioned, who had lived for years among the Namaquas, I hired an interpreter, Abram, a smart young Namaqua, who understands Dutch (which I

* The warm spring, which I cleared out with my people, is usually 103°; the stream from it six inches broad by one and a half deep. The Namaqua men constantly bathe in it.

studied in the colony). I have now, therefore, got four Europeans and four coloured men with me. To two of the Europeans I give 3*l.* a month each: to the soldier double pay."

"Banks of the Kaamop, three days east of the Great Fish River, and about 170 miles north of the Warm Bath, Great Namaqua Land. Feb. 18, 1837.

"I had the pleasure of writing to you about a month ago, before I left the Warm Bath, and now having, unexpectedly, an opportunity of sending letters to the Cape, by three Namaquas who brought me here merchandize, (shirts, cotton handkerchiefs, brass wire, and buttons) of which I stood in need, I beg to give you a short account of my proceedings during my journey so far in the direction of Walwich Bay, &c.

"I left the Bath on the 18th of January, having waited in vain till then for rain, and for the above-mentioned goods. Fortunately, immediately after I left the Bath I had abundance of thunder rain. I have had no want of water or grass on my way hitherward. I hear also, that since I left the Bath no rain has fallen there; so it was as well that I risked leaving that place.

"The Captain of the Bundlezwaart Namaquas (Abram) accompanied me with sixteen armed men on pack oxen. On the second day I was joined by the petty chief Daniel, and three men; which last chief I had engaged to accompany me all the way to Walwich Bay, under the promise of supplying him with powder and lead to shoot elephants on his way back. I also agreed to try to obtain for him, by negotiation, the property of which he had been robbed by Henrick, a petty chief of Abram's, lying fifty miles out of our road.

"With my waggon and pack oxen I travelled up the 'Hoom (the river which runs past the Bath), nearly north, for six days; and leaving the waggon on its banks with a guard of twelve men, I set out with two white men, the two chiefs, and eleven Namaquas, for the kraal of the robber Henrick. We travelled fifty miles, N.N.E., with horses and oxen, and got among the 'Caras, or rugged Mountains—a range of various heights, from 300 feet to about 2000, flat topped, and composed of clink stone, principally arranged in horizontal strata.

"Springboks in large flocks were seen, many ostriches and zebras, a cameleopard, and the *spoor* of a lion. The weather was very hot, both day and night—95° at mid-day, commonly, and 80° at sunrise.

"We found Henrick in a rocky glen, very difficult of access. He refused, to his own chief, to deliver up Daniel's property, which he had seized (*viz.*, thirty cows and forty goats), because a year before, on a hunting party, Daniel's *brother-in-law* had *accidentally* shot Henrick's father. Henrick also prepared his people before us, to the number of thirty-three, armed with guns, to take Daniel's life, because he could not get that of his brother-in-law. We defied Henrick to take Daniel from us, or to kill him. Kept strict watch all night, and brought off Daniel in safety next day. Henrick would not listen to the proposal I made him, of receiving a fine for the life of his father: he and his mother both cried—"Blood for blood!"

"We rejoined the waggon, and I let Abram leave us, with his people, that he might force Henrick to restore Daniel's property, and thus pre-

vent war in the land, for Daniel threatens to raise a commando of the people of Amral and the Africaners, and to go against Henrick.

"After travelling a degree farther north, I arrived at the Kaap River, a branch of the Great Fish: there we saw a good deal of honey-beer drinking and dancing. We stayed for some days at Daniel's kraal; and, having been assisted with eight pair of oxen, came on here, to a kraal of the Great Captain's, William Zwaartboy (the Namaquas adopt Dutch names—*i. e.*, those of any note). Here we have been staying to fortify ourselves with an *abattis* of bushes round the tent and waggon, for we hear that Henrick has come with a commando against Daniel's kraal again, fifty miles south of us, and that he is likely to attack us too; but we are quite ready for him: however, if Zwaartboy comes first from the Fish River to see us, there will probably be no fight.

"Before the rain, on the 16th, the heat was 110°, now it is 80°, and the river is running briskly. I have fallen in with a man here, who was at Walwich Bay three years ago, and he says that our route will probably be to Zwaartmorass, one day and a half; to the Fish River, one day and a half; up it, six days; to Buffels Poort (through a field abounding with lions, cameleopards, rhinoceroses, bucks, &c.), ten days; to the Kooisip, three days; to the Bay, eight days—beyond that on the Squakop (Somerset?), the Damaras abound.

"The other day I bought a young Damara negro (a boy), ten years old, for about 4*s.*—that is, for two cotton handkerchiefs and two strings of glass beads. His mistress was a Namaqua woman. The boy was half starved, and he is now well fed and clothed, and is my shepherd.

"We see many Damara slaves among the Namaquas. My medicine chest is in great request;—we have the usual annoyances of heat, dust—and very stony roads, if roads they may be called, where no waggon ever passed before—disputes to settle, bargaining for horses, sheep and cattle, &c.; but we manage to keep a good heart, and though they sometimes try to frighten us, we will go as far as we possibly can—human nature can do no more."

III.—*Journal of an Expedition up the River Cuyuny, in British Guayana, in March, 1837.* By William Hilhouse, Esq.,
Corr. Mem. R. G. S.

HAVING long laboured under the most distressing biliary symptoms, which had reduced me to a state of great debility, I resolved this month to try what the air of the mountains would do towards the restoration of my health. This Journal may, therefore, be termed the Diary of an Invalid, as I made no observations, took no instruments but a watch and Schmalcalder's compass, and divested myself of every scientific pretension but the collection of such granitic orchidæ as might fall in my way. I reached the Calicoon Creek in Massaroony River on the 1st March, and had to return to George Town for craft and supplies, as