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HISTORY OF THE COLONY

OF THE

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

FROM ITS DISCOVERY TO THE YEAR 1819

BY

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FROM 1820 TO 1868

BY

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P R E F A C E.

THE History of the Cape Colony has hitherto appeared only in fragmentary portions illustrative of some particular period, and never in one consecutive form. The object, therefore, of the present compilers was to supply the deficiency in as far as materials were available; how far they have succeeded in doing so must be left to the judgment of the reader. They are themselves perfectly conscious that after all the time and care bestowed, the present is only a "pioneer" work, with, no doubt, some omissions and inaccuracies, for which they crave favourable consideration. They are prepared to give every attention to kindly criticism, however adverse, and should their Volume ever reach another edition, will take advantage to add to or correct what may be wanting or erroneous. With these few words they now submit their joint labour to (what they hope to find) an indulgent Public.

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HISTORY OF THE CAPE COLONY.

CHAPTER I.

Legends regarding the Ancient Circumnavigation of Africa—Discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese—Bartholomew Diaz—Vasco Da Gama—Visits of Early Navigators—Disastrous Shipwrecks—English East India Company—Possession of the Cape taken by Captains Shillinge and Fitzherbert—Sir Thomas Herbert's Account of the Country and the Natives.

THE history of the Cape Colony, to a comparatively recent period, is, in truth, the history of South Africa; and a narrative of the progress of civilization in this vast region cannot fail to be fraught with interest. Nearly 400 years have elapsed since Diaz formally declared Southern Africa an appanage of the Portuguese Crown, and since then events so numerous and interesting have occurred, that it does not seem too much to assert that the history of no other British Settlement is so worthy of attention as that of the Cape Colony. The visits of early navigators, and the labours of pioneer travellers, merit a chronicle, and the contest between the Dutch and English for the possession of the Cape, as well as the mode of government adopted by each, deserve our notice. Honesty of purpose, and the exercise of much labour and patience is required, and the road is rugged because only partially travelled. However, so many portions of it have now been explored by able and trustworthy pioneers, that the work is much less arduous than formerly, and it may be hoped that a connected narrative of some interest can be compiled.

A strange legend exists concerning the circumnavigation of Africa by the Egyptians, which Major Rennell, Professor

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Heeren, and Mr. Grote deem credible, but which is disbelieved by Dr. Vincent, Ukert, and Forbiger. It is to the effect that several vessels, manned by Phœnicians, commenced their voyage from the Red Sea, and sailed round Africa, so as to reach Egypt by the straits of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean.* A writer in *Notes and Queries* refers to a passage in Strabo relating to this voyage, and states that Eudoxus, in the reign of Ptolemy Euergetes the Second (170—117 B.C.) is reported to have made the attempt. Sir Thomas Herbert in his *Travels* learnedly descants upon this subject, and quotes “a like tradition of two Carthaginians, who at their return reported that they sailed from some part of India to the Atlantique Sea.” If such voyages really did take place, it is quite clear that little gain to geographical knowledge was reaped from them, as we find Strabo describing the entire African Continent as less than Europe, and shaped like a right-angled triangle, the base being the distance of Egypt from the Pillars of Hercules. But it is to be observed that, even in the beginning of the seventeenth century, absurd and incorrect ideas of South African geography were entertained. Samuel Purchas, in his *Pilgrimage* (published in 1611†), says that the Cape “hath three

* The following passage in Herodotus (Melpomene iv. 42) should render us more disposed to believe that Africa was circumnavigated. Speaking of the adventurers sent out by Neco, King of Egypt, from the Red Sea, he says:—“When two years had thus passed, in the third, having doubled the Pillars of Hercules, they arrived in Egypt, and related what to me does not seem credible, but may to others, that as they sailed round Libya they had the sun on their right hand. Thus was Libya first known.” The ancients knew well that—

“A time will come, in ages now remote,
When the vast barrier, by the ocean formed,
May yield a passage; when new continents
And other worlds, beyond the sea’s expanse,
May be explored; when Thule’s distant shore
May not be deemed the last abode of man.”

SENECA MEDEA, l. 375.

† The following curious anecdote is related by this author:—“James Bottellier, a Portugal, to recover the favour of his Prince, John the Third, by the first bringing news of a happy accident that then befell