

## CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

### MESSAGE from HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, with ENCLOSURES, relative to AFFAIRS in the NORTH- WESTERN DISTRICTS of the COLONY.

Printed for the House of Assembly by order of Mr. Speaker.

16TH JUNE, 1863.

Message from His Excellency the Governor to the Honourable the House of  
Assembly.

P. E. WODEHOUSE, Governor.

*Message No. 29.*

The Governor takes this occasion of laying before the Honourable House reports which have been received from Mr. L. Anthing, which will be found to contain matter relating to the state of affairs in the north-western districts of the colony, which demand their most serious consideration.

It will be found that, in the autumn of 1861, depositions were laid before the Attorney-General, which excited a very strong suspicion that, for some years past, large numbers of the Bushmen living in the direction of the Orange River had, with their wives and families, been cruelly destroyed by the settlers of different races, who had made their way into the country.

The Attorney-General very properly came to the conclusion that such a state of things could not be tolerated in a country which had been, nominally at any rate, brought under British rule; and, at his suggestion, Mr. Anthing was dispatched by the Government in the beginning of last year, with instructions to make a searching investigation into the past, and to ascertain what steps it would be advisable to take for the suppression of these evils.

That gentleman applied himself most diligently to the task, and, from time to time, submitted reports affording the strongest justification for the course that had been adopted, and showing that a system of retaliation had already commenced. A general report reviewing the whole transaction, together with a letter dated the 29th ultimo, is submitted for the information of the Honourable House.

In dealing with the case as now presented, the Government is not prepared to advise any further inquiry into the transactions of the past—transactions which have occurred beyond the reach of any legal control; but they feel that they should greatly fail in their duty if they did not apply to Parliament for its sanction, and for the means necessary for protecting the remnant of the Bushmen still inhabiting the country, and for enforcing general obedience to the laws.

The Governor therefore hopes to receive from Parliament authority to incur the expense necessary for establishing a magistracy at a convenient spot on the south side of the Orange River, and will, at the proper time, direct application to be made to the Honourable House for a vote sufficient to cover the expenditure which would in such case have to be incurred before the close of the year.

Government-house, 16th June, 1863.

[A. 39—'63.]



Cape Town, 21st April, 1863.

To the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Cape Town.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit herewith a report of my proceedings in connection with the service in which I have been for some time engaged.

I started from Springbokfontein on the 12th of February of last year, in compliance with the instructions conveyed to me by your letter of the 10th of the previous month.

The object of my expedition was to take proceedings against persons who, it had been alleged, had at various times killed numerous parties of Bushmen, with their families, in the tract of country known as Bushmanland.

A correspondence had passed between the Attorney-General and myself on the subject; and a reference to the same will show what were the views entertained by Mr. Porter, and what were his directions to me, directions which your letter already alluded to confirmed.

The party consisted at starting of myself, six European constables, besides drivers and a boy in charge of loose horses; and we travelled with two wagons, carrying, besides the men and myself, forage and provisions.

We went in the first instance beyond the boundary, to Nisbet Bath, and thence by Blydeverwacht back to the colony. There were several reasons for making this detour. In the first place, I expected to obtain some important evidence from persons resident across the river, and, secondly, it was essential to the success of my proceedings that the parties who might be implicated should not be forewarned of my purpose, which the taking of a direct route into Bushmanland would have done.

There were also some matters to settle with the chief of the Bondelswarts, which could be conveniently attended to in the same excursion; and I accordingly resolved to visit him in the first instance.

It will be unnecessary here to give a repetition of my proceedings at Nisbet Bath with the chief alluded to. These were referred to in my letter to you of the 1st of April of last year.

After taking the evidence required of persons resident on the northern side of the Orange River, I recrossed that river on the 13th of March, and proceeded towards the Hartbeest River in Bushmanland, where the remainder of the Bushman race were said to be, and in the vicinity of which some of the persons alleged to have been implicated in the transactions which were to form the subject of investigation had taken up their abode.

On my way I met Mr. J. Nicholson, of Hondeklip Bay, from whom I ascertained further particulars bearing upon the subject of my inquiry. Mr. Nicholson informed me that he had made trading excursions into that part of the country during several years past; that from his observation he was led to believe that a system of extermination had been practised upon the aborigines (Bushman) by the colonists and others during a period of ten or twelve years then past, in all the tract between the Orange River on the north and the vicinity of the town of Beaufort, southward; and that the same system was carried on even at the very time when he, Mr. N., was making these statements to me.

Mr. N. said that in the tract of the Hartbeest River there had resided no colonists until three years previously (*i.e.*, 1859); that the year before that he had travelled through that part of the country and had found only Bushmen of whom there were a great many; that he (Mr. N.) had with him a number of sheep and oxen, and that the Bushmen in no way attempted to interfere with or injure him; that the following year he again visited the same part, when he found the colonists there (Bastards and Europeans), and he found but very few Bushmen, and that he was aware that between the time of the advance of the colonists to the Hartbeest River in 1859, and the time of our conference (March, 1862), the practice of hunting and killing the Bushmen had been pursued by the intruders in those parts.



For further particulars I beg to refer to Mr. Nicholson's deposition taken at the time.

I should add that Mr. N. gave his statement reluctantly, and the use I now make of it is doubtless not in accordance with his wishes. But the circumstances necessitate my so doing.

I took further evidence from Bushmen as I proceeded, which went fully to corroborate what Mr. N. had stated. It appeared from this that the deeds which the Attorney-General determined to prosecute were not confined to the particular cases already brought to his notice, but that they were of every-day occurrence, and that Mr. Nicholson had truly stated that during the last ten years a wholesale system of extermination of the Bushman people had been practised. Corannas from the Orange River, Kafirs from Schietfontein, coloured and European farmers from Namaqualand, Bokkeveld, Hantam, Roggeveld, the districts of Fraserburg and Victoria, and doubtless Hope Town too, all shared in the destruction of these people.

Upon ascertaining these matters, I referred to you by letter of 1st April, 1862, for further instructions.

I recommended,

1. The establishment of a magistracy in that part of the country.
2. The forming of locations for the remnant of the Bushman race, and the sale of some of the land for the purpose of providing these people, who had been deprived of their means of subsistence, with some stock.
3. I asked instructions as to the prosecutions with which I had been charged, but which, under the circumstances of the disclosures, showing that such a large number of persons had been engaged in similar acts, had been stayed by me.

I wrote to you again, under date of 8th May, confirming my previous statements and informing you of certain occurrences which seemed to indicate that the Bushmen were becoming desperate, whilst the colonists were only restrained from pursuing their hostile course by my threatening them with serious consequences. I had gone to Springbokfontein, to meet your expected reply to my communication of the 1st of April, so as to be able to make the arrangements which that reply might render necessary.

I received at Springbokfontein your letter of the 2nd of May, stating that His Excellency had proceeded to the Kafir frontier without coming to a decision on the matters submitted. I then went back to the Hartebeest River, where I had left my party. In the uncertainty what might be His Excellency's decision, I was unable to act in any way.

In the mean time events did not remain in abeyance. On the 22nd of June I received a note from a coloured farmer, who was squatting about fifteen miles from our post, informing me that his two grandsons had been killed by Bushmen. I rode at once to the spot and inspected the bodies, which had just been brought in. I found them pierced with arrows. The deceased were young men of the ages of nineteen and twenty. They had been out with the cattle, and the first intimation of what had befallen them was the arrival of the cattle without them. The cattle had not been touched.

I could not view the deed as an insolent act of crime, which needed but to be treated as crimes are treated in an ordinary condition of society. All the attendant circumstances, and amongst them, the fact of the cattle having been left untouched, appeared to me to indicate a state of things from which more mischief might be expected. It was said that the Bushmen were desperate, and that a large band of them were associated for the purposes of mischief.

My first step was to call together a number of armed men (coloured and European farmers), and with these and some constables I went to arrest the murderers of the two young men alluded to. After some fruitless search, however, I dismissed the commando, perceiving unmistakable indications of an intention on their part to thwart my plans for inducing the Bushmen to surrender, and to massacre the whole party whenever they should be fallen in with.



I was determined to endeavour to avoid such a catastrophe. After the dismissal of the commando, I employed certain Bushmen with whom I had become acquainted, and desired them to use their influence to bring the hostile band to reason, and to arrest the two of their number charged with the murders. This was eventually effected, and I took the two prisoners into custody at Kenhart. The band, upon the assurance that I had been sent to do justice to all, dispersed, relinquishing all plans of further hostilities.

In the mean time, another murder upon a Damara (or Kafir, as the black races are there indiscriminately called) was committed by other Bushmen in the same vicinity. The murderers in this case have not, to this day, been apprehended.

After the capture of the prisoners already mentioned and the dispersion of the band,—events which occupied some time and afforded us considerable anxiety and labour, the country in the vicinity of the Hartebeest River was restored to quiet; the measures we had taken to arrest only the actual murderers and to pacify the other Bushmen having had the desired effect.

I had in the meantime (on the 2nd of June) received your two letters of the 6th of June, the one informing me that it had been determined to waive the prosecutions against the colonists, and that the efforts of the Government would be directed to the preservation of the remnant of the Bushman people and the amelioration of their condition, and that His Excellency approved of my suggestion to establish a magistracy in that part of the country; the other forwarding correspondence with the magistrate of Victoria and the resident justice of the peace at Schietfontein, relative to the murder of a farmer, named Lourens, with some members of his family, by Bushmen, and the flight of the murderers, with the sheep and cattle and horses of the murdered man, in the direction of the Hartebeest River. The Bushmen accused, as also a Bastard, who, according to later evidence, appeared to have instigated and led the whole affair, were captured and brought in to our station at Kenhart, and the examinations were subsequently held there.

It was stated in the course of these examinations that the Bastard alluded to had expressed himself as intending to kill all the European farmers in those parts.

After these events, reports came in from another part of the country—the Ezelberg, near to the Orange River—of robberies committed by Bushmen upon the colonists, who had recently advanced to that part. Some of these Bushmen, it subsequently appeared, had formerly lived near the Hartebeest River, but had fled from there in consequence of the aggressions of the colonists.

At this time I wrote to you my letters dated 10th of August, repeating my suggestions as to the measures that seemed called for to remedy the state of things I found existing. I enclosed with those letters a communication addressed to me by parties resident near the Orange River, reporting the depredations committed by the Bushmen in those parts, and requested your instructions.

The evidence I had obtained respecting the past and existing state of things was, that the colonists had intruded into that part of the country which borders on the Hartebeest and Orange Rivers some years before, and that they had from time to time killed numbers of Bushmen resident there; that in some cases the latter had stolen cattle from the intruders, but that the killing of the Bushmen was not confined to the avenging or punishing of such thefts, but that, with or without provocation, Bushmen were killed,—sometimes by hunting parties, at other times by commandos going out for the express purpose. That in consequence of the colonists having guns and horses, and their being expert hunters (the pursuit of game being their daily occupation), the wild game of the country had become scarce, and almost inaccessible to the Bushman, whose weapon is the bow and arrow, having a comparatively short range. That ostrich eggs, honey, grass-seed, and roots had all become exceedingly scarce, the ostriches being destroyed by hunters, the seed and roots in consequence of the intrusion of the colonists' flocks. From these various causes, the Bushman's subsistence failed him, and in many cases they died from hunger. Those who went into the service of the new



comers did not find their condition thereby improved. Harsh treatment, an insufficient allowance of food, and continued injuries inflicted on their kinsmen are alleged as having driven them back into the bush, from whence hunger again led them to invade the flocks and herds of the intruders, regardless of the consequences, and resigning themselves, as they say, to the thought of being shot in preference to death from starvation. But I cannot hear of a single instance of murder committed by the independent Bushmen living in their native land during the twenty-five years preceding 1862, though during that period many hundreds of their people were killed, though their country was invaded and taken from them, and they deprived of their means of subsistence. Whether it was that they were so cowed by the wholesale destruction of their people, or whether it was that the survivors after an attack were so few that they could effect nothing, it seems pretty certain that in the part of the country to which I am now alluding the facts are as I have stated them.

But at the very time that we were in the country, and whilst I was awaiting His Excellency's answers to my letter of the 1st of April, that career of desperation, which resulted in the murders already alluded to, was entered upon.

The tragedy of the murder of Mr. Lourens and his son and daughter, committed in a different part of the country by Bushmen who had not been living as independent tribes, but who had been all their lives in the service of the farmers is a distinct affair, having no immediate connection with the occurrences in the part of the country to which I have been alluding. I have already mentioned that a Bastard, a person who a year or two before had engaged in certain intrigues for enticing the class known as the Bastards from their allegiance to the Crown, whose subjects they are, and for handing the country over to the Griqua Chief Waterboer, had, as alleged, persuaded these Bushmen, residing near to Lourens, to aid him in killing the latter. Whatever other causes may have contributed to the consummation of that melancholy deed, the independent Bushmen living on the Hartbeest River are not responsible for it.

To the causes which I have mentioned seems to be attributable the hostile attitude taken up by the band of independent Bushmen, who, under the leadership of one Hercules, commenced their career of vengeance by the murder of the two young men already mentioned. It was told me that they had intended, if an accident had not interfered with my reaching their kraal, as stated in my letter to you of the 8th May, to have killed me, as a great deed of revenge for their alleged wrongs. Whether that really was their intention is now immaterial. As already stated, we succeeded in disarming their animosity, contenting ourselves with the arrest of the two who had actually committed the murders, and telling the others that a colonial magistrate would in future reside in the country, to do justice to colonists and Bushmen alike and to afford protection to all.

I had scarcely succeeded in dispersing this body near the Hartbeest River, before the other band of whom I have already spoken, on the banks of the Orange River, gave me cause of uneasiness by committing the depredations which I reported to you in my letter of the 10th of August. I had not yet come in contact with this band, and I was anxiously looking forward to further communications from Government to guide me as to the course to be pursued with regard to them.

Your letter of the 6th of June had spoken in general terms of the desire of the Government to take measures for the preservation and amelioration of the remnant of the Bushman people, but I was not warranted by it to hold out any definite prospects to them, so that I preferred to await your further instructions before communicating with those not in my immediate vicinity. I feared, too, that I might find complications and encounter difficulties if I attempted to interfere in affairs on the Orange River, in consequence of the encroachments of the colonists upon land claimed by the Corannas, in regard to which I had no authority to act and no indication of the views of the Government.

Your letters of the 6th September and 31st October conveyed the further instructions for which I was anxious. A reference to them shows that the views



expressed in your letter of the 6th of June had not been, as yet, acted upon, and that they were, apparently, not likely to be immediately carried into effect.

In the meantime, before the receipt of the first-mentioned of these letters, matters, in so far as related to the Bushmen on the Orange River, had taken a course which called for my active interference. A report reached me, to the effect that one Jan Symon's cattle-post had been attacked by the Bushmen, a shower of arrows having been shot amongst the party belonging to the post, which, however, had not hit anybody, and all the cattle, sheep, and horses, besides a gun, shot-belts, and powder-horns, having been carried off by the assailants. Upon this I sent word that I would not interfere without instructions from Government, but that I advised all the colonial people to go back to a more protected part of the colony.

A week afterwards, however, I again received a report of an attack upon another post, that of Mr. Berning, a trader from Cape Town, on which occasion a shower of arrows had again been shot amongst the assembled persons, without, however, hitting any one; but a gun-shot (evidently from the gun taken at Symon's) had mortally wounded one of the party. The cattle had remained safe, in consequence, probably, of the persons belonging to the post having taken refuge amongst the cattle, for the double purpose of protecting these and sheltering themselves.

Upon my remonstrating with the parties for not having followed my instructions to retire to a more protected part of the colony, they answered that the drought and the exigencies of trade necessitated their going to the Orange River, and that as it was Government ground they considered they had a right to do so.

I now thought it necessary that I should act. It will be remembered that your letter of the 6th of June was the last I had at that time from you. I was in ignorance of the subsequent instructions which desired me to withdraw.

Your letter of the 6th of June seemed to me to make it clear that I should use measures to preserve the peace of the country. Indeed, my being there at all involved the natural obligation of an interference in case of a disturbance of the peace. I accordingly proceeded to the scene of these occurrences, but before I reached it the Bushmen had made another inroad upon the cattle of some other persons and had swept off some forty head, twenty of which were subsequently recovered; and a commando had gone to attack the Bushmen, but were obliged to retire after a little skirmishing, in which one of the commando party was slightly wounded by an arrow, whilst two of the Bushwomen received bullet wounds.

Although it was generally believed that the Bushmen, of whose probable number I got rather exaggerated accounts, would refuse to surrender and would offer a desperate resistance, it turned out otherwise. I sent word to them, as in the former case, that I was a magistrate, come to administer justice to all alike, which had the effect of bringing them to surrender without a resort to force.

I shall not lengthen this communication by giving the details of our proceedings. Suffice it that I marched all the prisoners, eighty in number (including women and children), to Kenhart, where I completed the examinations and forwarded these to the Acting Attorney-General by letters dated 17th of October.

I had now a hundred prisoners, who had to be guarded by night and day by armed men, the gaol which we had commenced building not having been completed. In spite of the guard, eight of the prisoners, those who were in arrest for the murders of the Lourenses and of the two young men near the Hartebeest River, and who were kept chained and handcuffed, effected their escape, and we had great trouble in getting them back.

I may mention that four of these escaped prisoners, murderers of the Lourenses, were, after a fruitless search of about fourteen days by a patrol I had sent out, eventually brought in by other Bushmen, their own kinsmen, who had at first supplied them with weapons, as they had been informed by the prisoners that they had been released, but who, upon learning that they had escaped from



custody, sought them again in the desert, and there, where no white man was present to prompt them, but merely for the sake of justice, disarmed and arrested the fugitives and brought them back to me. I mention the circumstance as showing the influence which the report of our proceedings and our professions was spreading amongst the so-called intractable Bushmen.

In the midst of these proceedings, I received your letter of the 6th of September and confidential note of 29th August, and subsequently your letter of 31st October. The latter desired me to leave Kenhart, to send any prisoners to Springbokfontein, and to leave some constables at the former place. This letter had evidently been written in ignorance of my later proceedings as reported by me to the Acting Attorney-General by my letters of 17th October, which I requested that officer to forward to you for your information. I therefore felt it to be my duty to await answers to these later letters as to the disposal of the various prisoners, and the more so because the letter of 31st October had evidently been written under a misapprehension. The prisoners, being captured in the Beaufort circuit, would have to be brought to trial at Beaufort, not Clanwilliam, so that the order to send them to Springbokfontein appeared to me to be a mistake.

After some time, not hearing from the Attorney-General, and as the expense of keeping so many prisoners was very great, I discharged them, retaining only the murderers of the Lourens family, those of the two young men near the Hartbeest River, and the one whose shot in the attack on Berning's post, at the Orange River, had taken fatal effect.

Not having received answers to my letters, I resolved, towards the end of December, to go to Cape Town for instructions, and after a protracted journey in consequence of the bad state of the veld, reached this on the 9th February last.

Arrangements have since been made for forwarding the prisoners accused of the murder of the Lourenses, who are to be prosecuted, to Beaufort, for trial; and it now remains to give instructions as to the further steps to be taken in regard to the affairs of Bushmanland.

The Bushmen are now all quiet, and the country, so far as the influence of our proceedings has extended, is peaceful, and life and property secure. But as regards the prospects of the remains of the aboriginal tribes, unless something be done to provide them with means of subsistence, they must either steal or perish. As a consequence of the influx of the colonists into their country, they have, as already stated, lost those means of subsistence which had until that time sufficed for their wants. I believe that many of them will undergo a great extent of suffering before they will again touch the flocks of the farmers. Indeed, I think there are amongst them those who will *perish rather than steal*. They are very grateful for our interference on their behalf. They have submitted themselves wholly, and they look to us with the utmost confidence to save them from impending destruction. But hunger is a terrible prompter. Some may starve, but others will doubtless steal; and troubles cannot but, in that event, be looked for. They will then feel that they have broken faith with us, and they will expect no mercy.

If I may be permitted to do so, I would again venture to repeat the recommendation, which I have already submitted, namely,

1. To locate the Bush-people on certain places to be set apart for that purpose in the lands which their tribes have for many generations occupied.
2. To sell so much of these lands as may be sufficient to provide for the purchase of stock and some other necessities for their future support.

The advantages of such a measure would be manifold. We should save from perishing the remnant of a poor and weak race of people, whose land has been appropriated by us, who have thereby been deprived of their all, and who have never received anything in return for what they have lost, and have never had anything done for them. We should, at the same time, give greater security to the occupation of the rest of the district, and thereby render the land more valuable.



I estimate the total number of the Bush-people at five hundred souls. A sum of five thousand pounds would probably be sufficient to carry out the purpose of forming a location and providing for their wants. Perhaps a smaller sum would suffice. Land to the required amount might be sold, there being plenty of it suitable for farms. The only difficulty would be that, whilst the necessary measures were being taken to sell the land, the Bushmen might starve. If the amount could be advanced on the security of the sales, that difficulty would be removed. I would advise that an upset price of something like five hundred pounds should be fixed upon the places to be sold.

The next measure to be considered is that of the establishment of a magistracy in that part of the country. Considering the number of the present population, the prospects of a large increase to that population (for there is a steady influx of people from the adjoining districts), and considering the great distance of the parts in question from the neighbouring magistrates (two hundred to three hundred miles), and also the probable increase in the value of the land if there be proper protection, I cannot but again recommend this matter for adoption. The place where we fixed our temporary station on the Hartebeest River might be as well retained for the purpose. Not that I would not, perhaps, if I had to make a selection again, give the preference to an adjoining place which lies higher and more open; but, as we have erected the necessary buildings at Kenhart, there would be no occasion to make further provision for these beyond a small sum for the doors and windows. It would be advisable that the magistrate should also be a civil commissioner, as the arranging of land questions would be an important part of his duties.

There are other matters which it may be advisable to mention here. Bushmanland, or that which is now known as such, is a very large tract, extending from the measured farms of the Namaqualand division to those of the division of Hope Town, and from the measured farms of the Calvinia, Fraserburg, and Victoria divisions to the Orange River, or within, perhaps, a mile of that river. As such, it extends about three hundred miles from east to west and about one hundred and fifty miles from north to south.

The present mode of occupancy of a great portion of this large tract of country is a very unsatisfactory one. Being left open, as is alleged, for the poor who have no farms, and also for the wealthy who require the use of the pasture at certain seasons when that of their own farms is withered, it affords at the same time a refuge for the idlers of all classes, gives scope for endless broils and acts of injustice, and permits only of a minimum degree of benefit being derived from the soil.

If this tract, instead of being occupied as a commonage, were subdivided, so as to allow of individual holdings, there can be no doubt that great advantage would accrue. Under the present system, there is little inducement for making improvements; people prefer to resort to natural pools after thunder showers to expending labour and money upon wells; there is absolutely no cultivation of the soil; great inconvenience is occasioned by overcrowding at particular spots which possess any natural advantages, and the pasturage is consequently abused, to the serious injury of all.

A difficulty in the way of the alienation of the ground will be the circumstance of the inability of a number of the coloured farmers, those of mixed European and Hottentot descent, to purchase land, their means not being sufficient for the purpose. Provision has to some extent been made for these people at the missionary institutions of Amandelboom and Schietfontein, and by the grant of the place Luriesfontein, in the Calvinia division. But it is alleged that the lands thus granted to them are insufficient for depasturing their flocks, and they have, in consequence, moved in considerable numbers to the open tract of Bushmanland, where they have, as has been shown, come in collision with and taken a large share in the destruction of the original inhabitants.

Possibly, the plan which I proposed in my letter to you of the 1st of April, 1862, of leasing the lands for a term of years, might meet the case; on the other



hand, it is possible that the competition might be considerable, and might place this also beyond the reach of the parties in question.

Whether it might be expedient to make some other provision for these people, if not because of the recognition of any claim to it on their part, but to prevent the possibility of their becoming a disaffected and dangerous class, is a question which I think it right to submit for consideration.

But whatever the reality of this difficulty may be, it must become greater the longer the measure is deferred by which they may become settled occupants of the ground, and by which a limit would be placed to pretensions and claims which will inevitably increase with the increase of their numbers.

Another hindrance in the way of the alienation of the ground is the objections raised by the Bokkeveld and Hantam farmers. Many of them, however, who formerly urged these objections have altered their views on the subject. But, independently of this, there really seem to be no valid grounds for their objections. The sale of that portion which is the original trekveld would give all of them an opportunity of obtaining a place there, and they all admit that if each had a separate slice they would be much better off than under the present system. One of the principal objectors, Mr. J. Nel, told me that he had thought it was intended to exclude the European farmers from purchasing; but that, if it should be open to all to buy, he desired to see the ground sold.

The plan I have mooted of leasing land for a term of years was not meant by me to apply to the portion bordering on the Bokkeveld and Hantam.

To give an idea of the disadvantages of allowing the land to lie open, I may mention that on the banks of the Zak River not a grain of seed is put into the ground, whilst thousands of muids of wheat might be sown there with almost a certainty of a splendid return, the river overflowing its banks every year. Travellers, traders, and persons driving cattle and sheep to the Cape market have the greatest difficulty in getting through for wherever there is water, there the grass has been eaten off by the flocks of the squatter, who can send his sheep to a distance to graze, which those who are merely passing through cannot do.

I have touched upon this subject because it naturally came under my observation during my recent tour; and it is also, to some extent, connected with the other matters submitted in this letter.

There is yet another suggestion which I venture to submit, namely, that of making some experiments, from public funds, with a boring machine, in different parts of Bushmanland. It is of such great extent, and the pastures are so good, that if such experiments should be successful, the gain in the increased quantity of land which might be occupied would be very large. Bushmanland can at present be only partially occupied because of the absence of water in some parts of it. Wells have been sunk in different directions with considerable success; but with the present commonage right there is no great inducement to undertake such works; and, in any case, individuals can never be expected to incur any large expenditure, such as a boring apparatus would involve, for experimental objects. A sum of five hundred pounds would permit of a good deal being done.

The expenditure on account of the service on which I have been engaged, for transport, wages, provisions, maintenance of prisoners, witnesses' expenses, &c., amounts to nearly four thousand pounds. Against this there are some horses, oxen, and other property, which, if realized, will probably return about eight hundred pounds. There are also three buildings which we erected at the station at Kenhart, which require doors and windows before they can be occupied. One of them we used latterly (with temporary doors and windows) as a gaol, for which it was intended; another we used as a store; and the third was intended, when finished, to be used for an office and magistrate's residence. I built these houses at times when our men could be spared from other duty; and if it had not been that the wood which I ordered was never sent, they would probably have been finished long before this.

The unfavourable circumstances under which we had to perform the service



in Bushmanland, the drought, and the necessity of dragging all supplies from a great distance, have added somewhat to its cost.

Great prominence is given in this report to the certain acts of violence committed by the Bushmen at the time when they had entered upon that career of desperation which, but for our appearance on the scene, might doubtless have led to very serious results. On the other hand, the acts committed by the colonists which preceded them are only mentioned in general terms. It would not be proper, I imagine, to publish now the depositions relative to these acts of the colonists which were taken by me before it was determined to waive the prosecution, as individuals are therein alluded to by name as having taken part in such transactions. But it may be as well to mention a few of the cases brought to my notice.

It appears that some seven or eight years ago a commando, consisting of European farmers from the Hantam, Bokkeveld, and Roggeveld, and a number of Bastards, or coloured farmers, proceeded into Bushmanland to punish the Bushmen for alleged thefts. The commando was formed into two divisions,—the left division composed of the Europeans, proceeding to the vicinity of Hartebeest River, the right division, composing the Bastards, taking the direction of the Karreebergen.

The left division attacked the Bushmen at a place called Boschduif, and killed all, with the exception of one man who managed to escape, and either one or two little children, who were found alive and were taken by the farmers. They then proceeded to a smaller kraal and killed every soul. From what I can learn, upwards of two hundred must have been killed in these operations by the left wing.

The right wing came upon the Bushmen at a place which has since then borne the name of the Bushmanskol. They allured the Bushmen to their wagons with professions of peace, and then massacred them, only two women escaping. The number killed by the right wing is said to have been more than that killed by the left wing.

At Boschliis, in the southern portion of Western Bushmanland, at Namies, in the north-western part, and other places, similar occurrences took place about the same period. Hundreds must have been killed in each of these affairs. The words of one of the witnesses are these: "They surrounded the place during the night, spying the Bushmen's fires. At daybreak the firing commenced, and it lasted until the sun was up a little way. The commando party loaded and fired, and reloaded many times before they had finished. A great many people (women and children) were killed that day. The men were absent. Only a few little children escaped, and they were distributed amongst the people composing the commando. The women threw up their arms, crying for mercy, but no mercy was shown them. Great sin was perpetrated that day. I was taken by my master to hold his horses. I did not join in the shooting. I had no gun."

The particulars of smaller affairs are equally horrible. Instance one or two. A Bushman had stolen a cow from a Bastard. The Bastard told the thief to find him another cow within a specified time; when that time arrived the Bushman had not delivered a cow, whereupon the Bastard shot him. The Bushman's wife witnessed the act, and ran in fright to the house of the Bastard's parents-in-law, and remained there till evening arrived, when the murderer, assisted by a servant, led her into the veld and killed her and her baby. They took one gun, with which the master first shot her, but as she was not dead the gun was reloaded, and the servant dispatched her.

Here is another. A Bushman had charge of some rams belonging to a Bastard. He ate the rams, alleging they had died from other causes. His employer told him to bring feathers in payment, which the Bushman did. The feathers were taken, but he was told they were not enough, whereupon he went home. The same day a party of six men—two Bastards, two Europeans, and two Hottentots—proceeded to the Bushman's place of abode, with the avowed intention of killing him. They surrounded his hut during the night, and at day



break shot him and his wife and child, leaving the bodies to be devoured by wild animals.

My informant said that he was sure that the Bushman had eaten the rams, though, doubtless, from hunger, not having enough to eat.

In the cases here mentioned there was certainly some provocation or cause which led to these dreadful deeds; but I am assured that many Bushmen have been killed without any pretext whatever. The evidence I have taken states that parties were in the habit of going out to hunt and shoot any Bushmen they might find. And from all I have heard I have no reason to doubt this.

It was only a few days ago that a person mentioned to me that he had had conversations with a Roggeveld farmer, who had told him how, in his younger days, he and other young farmers were in the habit of going out to shoot parties of Bushpeople "for the fun of the thing." On one occasion, three Bushmen whom they had met, and who were quietly pursuing their way, were deliberately shot when their backs were turned to them. This is only hearsay. But I have no reason to doubt my informant's veracity. And there is every reason to believe that in the same manner has the process of extermination gone on throughout, until at last there are only the small number of the race remaining whose final destruction was stayed by the proceedings taken in the beginning of last year.

I will yet mention one other instance, which will show what causes led to the desperation of the Bushmen at the time we came amongst them. I have mentioned one Hercules as being at the head of one of the bands. This man's parents and brothers and sisters, with the exception of one brother, who, with himself, had gone out hunting, had been killed in the affair at Boschduif. The smaller kraal which had been attacked by the same commando was that of his wife's parents. So that he had lost all his own and his wife's relatives and friends, with the exception of the one brother, in those massacres. Yet all this does not appear to have driven him to any act of revenge. Probably his spirit was broken by the destruction of the whole of his clan. At all events, he worked for the Bastards after this, and he worked hard, but, by all accounts (not his own) he fared very badly in that service. However, he worked on faithfully until it occurred one day that his son and two other young Bushmen stole, or, by their account, took some sheep which they found straying in the veld. The young men were pursued. One escaped with a bullet wound in the neck; the two others, of whom Hercules's son was one, were killed. Hercules told me that his son had crept into a hole after being wounded, and had afterwards been dragged out and ripped open whilst he was still alive. This then drove the man to desperation. He ran away from his master and went into the bush, where he was joined by others, and they then resolved to resent their grievances. It was whilst they were in this frame of mind that we came into the country, and it was by his second son, a youngster of about eleven or twelve years of age, and another young Bushman that the two young Bastards were killed as I have related.

When Hercules was eventually persuaded by other Bushmen to give himself up and I met him, near to our station, coming in with his little son,—after listening to what I had to say to him, he showed me a little hair clotted with blood which he carried near his heart, and said that that had belonged to his finest boy who had been killed, and that it was that which had led him to the course he had been pursuing.

I have only to state, in conclusion, that I brought with me to Cape Town Hercules's son, and the other one who had killed the two young Bastards, and also Hercules himself and the young Bushmen who had been wounded at the time when the farmer's eldest son had been killed. My object in bringing them was two-fold. There were constant rumours of an intention on the part of Hercules, who was at large, to attack our post, as, it was said, he was determined to have back his boy who was our prisoner. I never believed this, but to make sure that such an event should not happen during my absence I resolved upon taking the prisoners to town with me, and Hercules too. I allowed them to be loose and



unguarded on the road, so that they had ample opportunity either to run away or to take our own guns and kill us whilst we were asleep. The result has justified my confidence. The other object I had in view was that if the prisoners were to be brought to trial it might, perhaps, be most conveniently done in the Supreme Court, and I hoped to be in time for the February session. The Acting Attorney-General has, however, waived the prosecution.

I also brought two other Bushmen of those I had arrested near the Orange River. My object in this was that if it should, perhaps, be proposed to bring the Bushpeople into this part of the colony as servants these two might be able to give their countrymen an account of the country they would be asked to go to.

I fear, however, that they would not thrive away from their native land. They seem to have pined whilst they were here, and to have lost their strength and vivacity. One, he who had witnessed the killing of Hercules's son, has died.

For my proceedings with the Corannas I beg to refer to my letter of the 17th February last (No. 2), which I beg may be annexed to this report. I beg also to refer to my letter (No. 3) of the 17th February last, on the subject of the leasing of crown lands in the Fraserburg and Victoria divisions. I beg further to annex hereto a letter from the civil commissioner of Calvinia to myself on the subject referred to in this communication.

I have, &c.,

L. ANTHING.

Calvinia, 29th May, 1863.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

SIR,—Referring to my report upon the condition of affairs in Bushmanland, I have the honour to suggest that, should His Excellency desire to have any evidence in connection with the several matters which form the subject of my communication, Mr. Floris Steenkamp, of Brakfontein, Onder Roggeveld, district of Calvinia, should be requested to attend in Cape Town for the purpose.

I met this person to-day, and he entered into conversation with me on the subject. He said that he was perfectly acquainted with all the facts; that he had taken part in all the commandoes, composed of European farmers, against the Bushmen, from the time of his boyhood until the one under Deputy Field-cornet G. Nel and Field-cornets Casper Nieuwoudt, Van der Merwe, &c., which operated against the Bushmen at Boschduif; and that he was cognizant of many other matters bearing upon the treatment of the Bushman race by the border colonists.

Mr. Steenkamp said that he was much impressed with the wrongs of that unfortunate people, and with the sinfulness of the proceedings of the colonists. He said that he knew that parties of Bushmen who had never done any harm had been wantonly and treacherously massacred; that other Bushmen with whom he had been personally acquainted, and who had done him and others many kind services, had shared a similar fate; that the Bushman people had been hunted down and exterminated; that commandoes with which he was present had shot down men, women, and children when these had begged that the firing might cease so that they might surrender, and that he, Steenkamp, had been upbraided by the field-cornet for interceding on behalf of the women and children; that on occasions there had been no necessity at all for violence, as the Bushmen would in all probability have surrendered.

Mr. Steenkamp said further that doubtless Bushmen did in several instances steal, but that they were driven to it by the encroachment of the colonists into their land, by the consequent loss of their means of subsistence, and by the treatment generally which they received from us. That there were times when a different policy was pursued by frontier commandants, who were humane and just men, who would not allow the colonists to go across the Zak River (the former



boundary) to hunt without making recompense to the Bushmen ; but that these humane counsels have not always prevailed ; that our people coveted the land, and indulged in their reckless practices, because the unfortunate people in question were weak and comparatively defenceless.

Mr. S. said that he always regarded it as unjust and unfair that no provision should be made for the Bush-people, that everybody was helped to land at their expense, and that no one ever inquired what was to become of them.

He gives the following testimony to the character of these people. They are, by his account, the most faithful, honest, kindhearted people he (Mr. S.) is acquainted with. He says he has experienced great kindness from them, and that he would most unhesitatingly trust his life and his property in their keeping.

Mr. S. mentioned all this quite of his own accord, and said I might communicate it to the Government, and he would be quite ready, if called, to go to Cape Town to state all this in person, and, he added, even more than he had told me.

I therefore consider it my duty to mention this, as the subject is now receiving His Excellency's consideration.

I know nothing of Mr. Steenkamp, and this is the first occasion of my meeting him ; but I am told that he is a respectable farmer of this district.

I have, &c.,

L. ANTHING.

P.S.—I have not thought it necessary to employ a milder form of expression than that made use of by Mr. S. I should, however, state that he said the Bastards were the worst in these atrocious proceedings.

L. A.