

their ships. They threw every obstacle in the way of its becoming a flourishing settlement ; allowed no trade whatsoever but what passed through the hands of their own servants, and made it dependent on the Governor-General of Batavia ; concluding, that the settlers would thus be made equally submissive to their orders from Europe, and from the seat of their influence and wealth in the East. It foresaw, perhaps, that a spirit of industry, if encouraged on a mild and temperate climate, and on a fertile soil, might one day produce a society impatient of the shackles it might wish to impose upon it. A decree was therefore passed, that in the country districts the farm-houses should not be erected at a nearer distance from each other than three miles ; with a view, probably, by preventing a ready intercourse, of counteracting more effectually any design they might be inclined to adopt for securing their independence.

A colony, in such a state, on the decline of their commercial establishments in the East, became a burden and an expence too heavy for them to bear ; and little doubt was entertained of their willingness to dispose of it for a moderate sum of money, just before the French revolution and its destructive consequences unsettled the affairs of all Europe. As it never produced any surplus revenue, but, on the contrary, was attended with considerable expence ; and, as they never applied it to any other use themselves, but that of refreshing their ships, which they could always do, in time of peace, just as well in the hands of any other power, it could not be supposed they would be averse to part with it ; and, accordingly, overtures to this effect were intended to be made by England about the time when the above unfortunate event took place.

Having shewn the necessity that the ships of most of the maritime powers of Europe are under of refreshing at the Cape, it is obviously the interest of all those powers that it should remain in the hands of that nation which would have the least motive for imposing restrictions on foreign visitors ; and it is scarcely necessary to observe that, from the general policy of England, and the favourable circumstances in which her commerce and navigation are now placed, there would be a greater security of the Cape, when in her possession, being open to foreign shipping, and of refreshments being supplied to them on equal terms as to her own, than if left in the hands of any other power.

I have stated its vast importance to England in a military point of view : it now remains to consider it as a naval station. First, as a port for refreshing and refitting the ships of the East India Company : secondly, as a station for ships of war, commanding the entrance into the Indian seas ; and, thirdly, as affording, by its geographical position, a ready communication with every part of the globe. After which, I shall endeavour to point out the disadvantages that may result to the East India Company, in the present war, if the French or Dutch are suffered to retain possession of the Cape.

If, in the first place, the advantages resulting from the possession of this settlement were confined to the furnishing of refreshments for the shipping of the East India Company, either on their outward or their homeward-bound voyage, I am will-

ing to suppose the importance of them, however great even in this point of view, might be considered as inadequate to counterbalance the expence of keeping up the necessary establishment, although I have shewn that, under a prudent administration of the revenues, this expence would be reduced to a mere trifle. The Directors, indeed, thought they had sufficiently proved, by the measures they adopted with regard to the Cape, that it was by no means necessary for their trade as a place of refreshment. The Directors, however, were soon convinced of their mistake, having discovered that, although English seamen could bear the run between England and India, the native blacks, which they are under the necessity of employing in time of war, could not do it; and it is to be apprehended they either have or soon will discover, that unseasoned troops, sent directly from England, are no more able to bear an uninterrupted voyage, than the Lascars. It will remain, therefore, for the Directors to find out some other place, in lieu of the Cape, now that they are excluded from it, a circumstance which, indeed, their own conduct seemed to invite.

But, as I have already observed, all maritime affairs are peculiarly liable to casualties, and, on this consideration, one would be led to conclude that a friendly port must always be held as a valuable acquisition to all who are concerned in such affairs; and more especially to the East India Company, whose concerns are of such vast magnitude. The number of ships that meet with stress of weather, and suffer from the tremendous storms that are frequent in the winter

season, on *L'Aguillas Bank*, must always stamp a value on the Cape, and make its ports and bays particularly desirable on the homeward-bound voyage.

That instances of distress do happen, and not unfrequently, in situations where the only hope of safety can be placed on the Cape, or in some of its bays, might be proved in a number of cases that happened while it remained in the hands of Great Britain; but I will content myself with mentioning one single instance. The Countess of Sutherland Indiaman experienced a most violent gale of wind between Madagascar and the coast of Africa, in which, after losing all her masts, she became a wreck at the mercy of the winds and waves for several days; and, at length, was momentarily expected to sink, when, on the weather clearing up, they descried the land of Africa to the southward of the spot where the *Grosvenor* was lost; and being now in the stream of the current, they contrived to fetch into *Kromme River's Bay*, a small Cove in *Camtoos*, or *Saint Francis*, or *Content Bay*, for it has a variety of names. Having here procured a supply of water and other refreshments, and rigged up a kind of jury masts, she endeavoured to proceed to *Simon's Bay* for the purpose of undergoing a thorough repair; but, unfortunately, she met with a second gale of wind, just as she was approaching the entrance of the bay; and in this gale she must inevitably have perished, had not Captain *Hotham*, with his Majesty's ship the *Adamant*, gone out to her immediate assistance, and succeeded in towing her off the rocky coast, towards which she was rapidly drifting. Now this single ship and her cargo were said to be estimated at the

value of three hundred thousand pounds ; a sum of money equal to the maintenance of the civil, military, and contingent expences of the Cape, for a whole year.

Had the Cape, at this time, been in the hands of the Dutch, the fate of the Countess of Sutherland must have been inevitable. In war she would have been taken ; and in peace she would have been suffered to go on shore ; for the Dutch possess neither the activity nor the willingness to give speedy assistance to ships in cases of distress. This unfortunate ship has since been captured and carried into the Isle of France ; and the loss of the Prince of Wales, in attempting to beat round the Cape in the winter season, may wholly be attributed to the circumstance of this colony being in the possession of an enemy. The value of these two ships would have maintained the garrison for two years.

There is no place, in the homeward-bound voyage from India, so proper or so convenient for the valuable fleets of the East India Company to assemble at for convoy, in time of war, as the Cape of Good Hope. Here, at a very reasonable rate, their crews might be refreshed with fruits, vegetables, and fresh provisions. Salt beef, for the rest of the voyage, might here also be laid in, affording, thus, a considerable increase of tonnage in each ship for stowing goods, by her taking in only three instead of six months' provisions.

If, in the second place, we consider the Cape as a naval station, commanding the entrance into the Indian Seas, its importance, in this respect, will be no less obvious. A small

squadron, during the last war, was found to be fully adequate to guard the passage round the Cape, and effectually to defeat any attempt of an enemy to disturb the peace of India, as well as to prevent them from giving the least annoyance to our trade in the Indian Seas. Not a single ship of the line of the enemy ventured to double the Cape in six years, much less did he venture to risk any attempt to throw troops into the colonies or the continent of India. If indeed foreign ships, in their voyage from Europe to India, find it necessary to refresh their crews at the Cape, how much more urgent would the necessity be when the same ships were crowded with troops. The French, in all their former wars, in the short voyage to the Isles of France and Bourbon, refreshed and refitted at the Cape. These islands, as I have already observed, instead of being able to victual a fleet, barely furnish provisions sufficient for the inhabitants and a small garrison. But by the supply of provisions and naval stores sent to them from the Cape, Suffrein was enabled to maintain his ground in the Indian Seas, without which he would very soon have been obliged to give up the contest. In the late war our cruizers from the Cape kept the Southern Ocean completely clear of the enemy's ships, and allowed the Indian squadron to make such choice of their cruising ground, that between the two, not a French frigate escaped, nor scarcely a single privateer remained on the Mauritius station for some time before the close of the war. Our Indian squadron was reduced to a mere nothing, whereas it is now considered necessary to keep in those seas eight sail of the line and two Commanders in Chief, half of which force might be withdrawn and kept with greater advantage and much less expence at

the Cape of Good Hope, ready on any emergency to act either to the eastward or the westward.

It is not probable that France will ever be able to make any impression on India but by the assistance of a fleet; and it must be our own fault if we allow them any such fleet in the Eastern Seas; as by our possessing the Cape, she must find it utterly impracticable to assemble, much more to victual and store, any such fleet. The want of a suitable place to refresh at must render every attempt to cope with us in those seas abortive. So well were they aware, in the late war, of the futility of any expedition from the Isles of France and Bourbon, without the assistance of the Cape of Good Hope, that they preferred the fatal experiment of colonizing Egypt, in the hope, perhaps, of proceeding at some future time by the Red Sea to India. They knew that, even if they had succeeded in getting out to these islands a sufficient number of ships and troops, yet without the supplies which they have usually on such occasions drawn from the Cape, any such expedition must necessarily here have ended.

While England held the Cape, the trade of every other nation to India and China might be considered as entirely at her mercy, though this is an advantage of which she is under no necessity of availing herself. During the northern confederacy, several Danes came in to refresh, although they knew they would be taken, or at least detained. With respect to the Americans, who, of late, by their carrying-trade alone, have worked themselves into the greatest portion, next to England, of the India and China trade, notwithstanding

the favorable situation of their country to an extended commerce with India, they would find it extremely inconvenient to be obliged to relinquish the accommodation of refreshing their crews, and disposing of part of their cargoes, at the Cape of Good Hope ; from whence, indeed, in case of any rupture, their trade might, at any time, be completely checked, a circumstance which would operate as a security for the preservation of amity and a good understanding with that commercial nation. Had we, indeed, been fortunate enough to have retained this settlement, there is every reason to believe the indulgencies granted to their trade here might have been an important consideration with them, in the renewal of a commercial treaty with England.

After what has been stated with regard to the healthiness of the climate, exemplified in the small degree of mortality among the troops, and in the vigor and stability that their constitutions acquired, it is scarcely necessary to add that the same salutary effects equally prevailed in the navy on this station. The mortality, indeed, among the seamen, was still less, probably on account of their being less exposed to the summer heats, and to their having fewer opportunities of committing irregularities. There was generally a difference of six or eight degrees in the temperature of the bay and the town. When the thermometer, for instance, in Cape Town was at 84°, it stood no higher than 76° on board the ships in Table Bay.

The moderate expence at which a fleet can here be maintained is, likewise, an advantage not to be overlooked. The

sailor may be subsisted equally cheap with the soldier. It has been calculated, after making the usual allowances for waste, damage, and interest of money, on ships provisions sent out from England, to say nothing of the premium received on bills given in exchange for paper currency, that the sailor at the Cape can be furnished with his ration of fresh beef or mutton, biscuit, and wine, at one-fourth part of the rate which the same ration costs the government in salt provisions and biscuit sent out from England. A pint of wine, as I have already stated, costs no more than threepence, and might be reduced to half that price by abolishing the monopoly; and the Cape brandy, though at present bad, on account of the defective manner of distillation, and the improper ingredients employed, may be had at a much cheaper rate than West India rum, and would, in a little time, under the encouragement of the British Government, have been made in its quality equally good of its kind.

What the actual expence of the squadron, which might be considered to be stationed there for the defence of the settlement, amounted to, is not easily ascertained. Sometimes there were eighteen pendants, and sometimes not eight; and the ships were generally employed on various and active service. The following account, made up in conformity to a precept of the House of Commons on a motion of the late Sir William Pulteney, will shew at least the money expended there in seven years for naval services.

“ An account of the expences which have been incurred in maintaining the possession of the Cape of Good Hope, from the time it was surrendered to his Majesty's forces, to the time it was delivered up at the peace, so far as relates to payments made on account of the following Offices in the Naval Department.”

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
NAVY OFFICE.									
Stores purchased, payment to artificers, salaries and other charges on account of the naval establishment on shore	—	—	—	365,848	1	11			
Pay to Admirals or Commanding Officers on the station, their Secretaries	—	—	—	14,680	12	4			
Wages to the Companies of his Majesty's ships employed there	—	—	—	192,510	0	0	573,038	14	3
VICTUALLING OFFICE.									
Expences incurred for the sea service	—	—	—	632,635	18	3			
Ditto for the land service	—	—	—	35,639	16	8 $\frac{3}{4}$	668,275	14	11 $\frac{3}{4}$
SICK AND WOUNDED OFFICE.									
<i>Sick and wounded Seamen.</i>									
Victualling, &c. of patients	87,228	13	1 $\frac{1}{2}$						
Salaries, &c. to officers	10,052	15	9						
Vegetables, lime juice, &c. to his Majesty's ships and vessels	8,791	16	3	106,673	5	1 $\frac{1}{2}$			
<i>Sick Prisoners of War.</i>									
Victualling, &c. of patients	5,457	11	5						
Salaries, wages, &c. to officers	2,575	19	6	8,033	10	11	114,706	16	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
							Total £. 1,356,021 5 3 $\frac{1}{4}$		
							Or a yearly expence of 193,717 6 5		

To this account the Commissioners of the Navy have very properly subjoined the following observation: “ The above accounts include all the expences incurred at the Cape while it was in our possession, not only on account of the squadron which may be considered as more immediately stationed for the protection of the settlement and of the

“ establishment of the naval yard, but for a great number of
“ ships of war which touched at the Cape on their passage
“ to and from India, as well as for a considerable body of
“ troops which were sent to that settlement and afterwards
“ transported to India. The abatement of the expences of
“ victualling these ships and troops, and of the prisoners
“ taken from the enemy, would very much reduce the ex-
“ pence relating to the victualling department; and the same
“ observation will apply to a considerable extent in respect
“ of the expences for the sick and wounded seamen, and also
“ of the expences for refitment of ships not belonging to the
“ Cape squadron, and for stores supplied to them: but find-
“ ing it impracticable to separate the expences, so as to
“ ascertain with correctness what part was incurred for such
“ a number of ships and for such a naval establishment as
“ might be considered to have been maintained solely for
“ the protection of the settlement, which expences only
“ would come within the meaning of the precept, it has been
“ judged better to send the accounts in their present form,
“ with the above explanations, than to attempt to form an
“ estimate thereof, the accuracy of which could not be
“ relied on.”

It would indeed be just as correct to charge the victualling and other expences of the fleet under Lord Nelson blockading Cadiz to the account of Gibraltar, as the whole money expended on naval services at the Cape of Good Hope to the account of maintaining that settlement. As a great proportion of the provisions were the produce of the colony, I have little hesitation in saying that if the same number of

ships had been attached to the Indian station, the victualling account would at the very least have been equal to twice the sum contained therein.

With respect to the wear and tear of the tackle and furniture, I have understood it to be very considerable on this station, owing to the frequent gales of wind, and the exposed situation of the ships. Admiral Pringle used to say, that every south-easterly gale, of a week's duration, cost his Majesty some thousand pounds. But this expence might, probably, be obviated by forming an establishment at Saldanha Bay.

The geographical position of the Cape of Good Hope throws a vast weight into the scale of its importance to England. Its happy situation, with regard to climate and the productions of the soil, stamps its value as a depository of troops and seamen ; and its relative position on the globe enhances that value by the ready communication it commands with almost every part of the world. We have seen with what expedition more than two thousand troops were thrown from hence into India, to the very walls of Seringapatam ; and, on another occasion, twelve hundred effective men into Egypt. With equal facility and dispatch could the same, or a greater, number have been conveyed to the east coast of North America, the West India islands, and the east and west coasts of South America. At a month's notice, the whole coast of Brazil could be lined with cruizers from the Cape. The whole eastern coast of Africa, and the various islands contiguous to it, are at the mercy of the power who

holds the Cape; and the large island of Madagascar may be approached in ten or twelve days, those of France and Bourbon in much less than a month, the Red Sea in five or six weeks, and the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel in seven or eight weeks. These passages will certainly depend much on the season of the year in which they are made; but when this is properly chosen, the different places may be arrived at within the periods here mentioned. The only effectual blockade of the Isles of France and Bourbon can be kept up from the Cape; it is in vain to attempt it from India without a much greater force than it would be prudent to keep there for that purpose. In fact, this advance post, in its relation to our Eastern dominions, may be considered in the same light as Barbadoes is to Jamaica and the rest of the West India islands—a point from whence they can at all times receive a speedy reinforcement; and with this additional advantage, that it excludes the enemy from entering the Eastern Seas with any considerable force.

If, at any time, troops should be wanted in the West Indies, the homeward-bound East Indiamen might be employed to transport them thither from the Cape without retarding their passage more than sixteen or eighteen days, as the common practice of crossing the line is now as far to the westward as 26° west longitude. Detachments of the Hottentot corps would be well calculated for service in the West India islands. Should, at any future period, the French resume their projects on India by the Red Sea (which they will certainly not fail to do whenever an opportunity presents itself), in three months from the time it was first known in England,

a force from the Cape might be in possession of the straits of Babelmandel, and, by thus anticipating, completely frustrate their designs, which, with the Cape in their possession, or in that of the Dutch, they would with great facility accomplish.

But if the geographical position of the Cape gives it the pre-eminence, as a great naval and military station, as the barrier and master-key of our Indian possessions, it still derives other advantages from this very circumstance, which, though of a subordinate nature, are highly deserving of notice ; these are the turn it is capable of giving to the commerce of India and China ; and the encouragement and protection it affords to the Southern Whale Fishery ; but as these considerations are too important to be slightly passed over, it may be proper to reserve the observations that occur on them for a subsequent chapter ; and, in the mean time, proceed to point out the disadvantages that may result to Britain, and particularly to the East India Company, from the Cape being placed in the possession of the Dutch, or, which must be considered as the same thing, in that of the French, the former being so much reduced and degraded by the latter, that they no longer are, and in all probability never can revive as, a separate and an independent nation.

We have already seen the vast advantages that Great Britain derived to her trade and possessions in India, during the late war, by holding this barrier in her own hands ; let us now consider what our situation is, in these respects, in the present state of things. The Cape of Good Hope is in the possession of an enemy ; Rio de la Plata belongs to Spain, who has

been forced into hostility against us; and the Isles of France and Bourbon, deriving their usual supplies from the Cape, are enabled to send out their cruizing squadrons against our trade. These three important stations, all hostile to us, form a triangle, within the boundary lines of which every ship, bound to or from the Indies, must necessarily pass; and the respective positions of these three points are so favorable for annoying our trade, that, were the skill and activity of the enemies who hold them commensurate with our own, which, fortunately for us, they certainly are not, it would be almost an hopeless attempt for a ship to escape.

It will be urged, perhaps, that the great extent which may be taken in crossing the equator from eighteen to twenty-six degrees of longitude, leaving it to the discretion of the commanders of our East India Company's ships to keep the American shore close on board, or to pass it at a distance; and the equally great extent that may be chosen in doubling the Cape, from the thirty-fourth to the forty-second degree of latitude, would render the cruizing of the enemy so precarious, that the odds of escaping them are greatly in our favor. It is granted that it may be so; and I am, moreover, persuaded that neither the French nor the Dutch would attempt to intercept our outward-bound ships, for these two reasons; first, because their value is so much less on the outward than on the homeward-bound passage; and secondly, on account of the uncertainty of falling in with them, as well as in consideration of the violent storms their cruisers would be almost sure to encounter off the Cape of Good Hope.

But these circumstances take a very different turn on the homeward-bound voyage. The danger is then increased in a much greater proportion than the value of the ships is augmented. If, indeed, we are willing to allow the enemy to employ the same means that we should ourselves do, in a like situation, the capture of many of our ships may be considered as inevitable. Since this was written the observation has been but too fully justified.

In the first place, the danger of the straits of Sunda presents itself to our homeward-bound China ships. A small squadron from Batavia, stationed at Nicholas Point on the north of Java, where there is good anchorage, or at Anjerie Point in the middle of the Strait, at both of which places it may receive a constant supply of refreshments, would be able to intercept every ship that attempted to pass the Strait. To avoid these the Strait of Malacca has been chosen, but in either case the ships from China pass a fixed point. When Linois waited the approach of the Canton fleet near Pulo Aura, he knew to a certainty that he could not miss them; and had he possessed the courage and the skill of a British officer, the greater part, if not the whole, of this valuable fleet must have fallen into his hands or have been destroyed.

Both these straits, it is true, may be avoided by taking the eastern passage; but here a new and no less danger presents itself from the port of Manilla. As all ships, making this passage, must go within sight of Luconia, it would

be difficult for them to avoid an active squadron cruising off this island. Thus,

“ *Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim ;*”

by avoiding one danger they fall into a greater.

Admitting, however, that either through the exertions of our cruisers, or the inactivity of the enemy, the China fleet should escape both Scylla and Charibdis ; the next dangerous point that occurs, not only to them but to the whole trading concern of the East India Company, is the L'Aguilla's Bank, where we can have no cruisers to protect our trade, on account of the heavy storms that prevail there, and the want of a friendly port to refit and refresh our ships. The current, that sets along the outer margin of this bank, moves at the rate of forty or fifty miles a day, in the winter months, in direct opposition to the north-westerly winds ; a circumstance so well known, that all our ships strive to keep in the stream of the current, which sweeps them round the Cape against the wind. The enemy's cruisers would find no difficulty in running from False Bay, in the winter months, close along shore as far as Algoa Bay, which our ships have frequently done in three or four days ; and, by skirting the outer margin of L'Aguilla's Bank, they can, at any time, return by the stream of the current, even against a gale of wind. Thus might their ships of war from the Cape track our homeward-bound Indiamen, and greatly annoy our trade ; for, on the return-voyage, they have much less scope in doubling the Cape than when outward-bound. Indeed, in the winter season, it is almost

impracticable to double the Cape at any great distance from it. The attempt to do it has generally failed, and always been attended with the greatest danger of losing the ships, as in the instance of the Prince of Wales. The Experiment from China, venturing on the usual track, was captured on the edge of the L'Aguilla's Bank.

Supposing them, however, to have escaped all these dangers; admitting them to have passed the island of Manilla, the Straits of Malacca and of Sunda, and the Cape of Good Hope; there still remains one point against which nothing can protect them but a superior fleet. In whatever degree of latitude the Cape of Good Hope may be doubled, in the homeward-bound passage, all our ships run nearly upon the same line to Saint Helena, so nearly, indeed, that I suppose they scarcely deviate twenty leagues from the same track. If then a squadron of the enemy's ships from the Cape should cruize to windward of this island, and within sight of it, our India fleet must necessarily fall into their hands. And on this cruizing ground, where the wind is fixed and steady, the water smooth, and the weather always fine, the enemy's vessels may remain for any length of time.

The enormous expence, and, indeed, the impracticability of affording effective convoys to our Indian trade, under such unfavorable circumstances, must be obvious to every one. The expence of one effective convoy to be stationed off Saint Helena, as long as the Cape remains in the possession of the French, to say nothing of the serious inconvenience of detaching ships of war from more important stations, would be

much more than sufficient to maintain the whole establishment of the Cape for a twelvemonth ; and, in all probability, more than the profits might amount to of the cargoes so convoyed. Saint Helena, besides, is not adequate to furnish any supplies for such a convoy. With the greatest exertions a few refreshments are raised for the use of the island, and the surplus is disposed of at a most extravagant rate to the shipping of the East India Company. They have few horned cattle, and not one of these can there be killed without the consent of the Governor. Yet this is the only place we now have left where a convoy can be assembled ; a fixed point, where it is exactly known to all the world at what periods, within a month, the several convoys will be collected. How incalculable then were the advantages of possessing a middle point between India and Europe, where every necessary refreshment might be had in the greatest abundance ; and which, instead of being a point of danger and annoyance as it now is, was the bulwark of security to our Indian trade and possessions.

Those who may feel inclined to console themselves for the loss of the Cape, by reflecting that nothing of serious moment happened to our Indian fleets and possessions during the American war, should recollect the great change of circumstances that has taken place since that event. Holland, at that time, though an impoverished and declining nation, was independent on France, and had her own possessions in India to protect ; and France, though equally then, as now, zealous to accomplish the ruin of our wealth and power in India, which she had long in vain endeavoured to emulate, had but

just the means of giving a feeble protection to her territorial possessions in that quarter of the globe. Armies were not raised, nor fleets equipped, with that facility under the monarchy, as under republican tyranny, or consular despotism. Mr. Delacroix took great pains to impress on the mind of Lord Malmesbury the accession of strength that France had acquired by her republican form of government. “ Nous ne sommes plus dans la décrépitude de la France monarchique, mais dans toute la force d’une république adulescente.”

What imperial France may be able to achieve, a little time will probably determine. Not having, however, at present any possessions in India to protect, her grand object will probably be, in co-operation with the Dutch, to endeavour to hold in their hands, by rendering it impregnable, this outwork and barrier of all India; and having once effected this, she will find little difficulty in assembling, at her own islands of France and Bourbon, a sufficient number of troops and transports to disturb the peace of our Indian settlements. Her aim will not be that of fighting our fleets of war, nor of making a direct attack on our Eastern possessions, but to abet and assist the native powers against us, with a view rather of destroying our empire in India, than any hope she can possibly form of establishing one of her own. Without funds and without credit she can have little prospect of amassing wealth by fair trade and honest industry; and will therefore attempt, by every means she can think of employing, to effect the ruin of ours; by disturbing the peace of our settlements through her intriguing agents; by forming al-

liances with those who are disposed to be hostile towards us ; and by assisting them with her troops.

It was in this point of view that the French considered the Cape of Good Hope to be more important than the Island of Ceylon, the cession of which, I have reason to believe, they never meant to dispute vigorously in negotiation, being rather determined to stand a contest for the restoration of the Cape *nominally* to its ancient possessors. If, however, in order to obtain a peace, we were actually reduced to the necessity of accepting the alternative of retaining one and giving up the other, as may have been the case, it became, no doubt, a very serious and interesting consideration, justly to appreciate their comparative value and importance. The one rated as yielding a revenue of nearly a million a year, with a harbour not surpassed in the whole world ; the key of all India ; and a place, in the hands of a powerful enemy, from whence all India might be assaulted—the other, a barren promontory (for such it was generally esteemed) at a great distance from our Indian territories, affording little or no revenue, and maintained at a considerable expence.

“ If we give up Ceylon,” has observed Lord Macartney, “ being situated at the extremity of the peninsula of India, it “ would become an immediate and terrific enemy to us in that “ quarter, as commanding the power of invading from thence “ both the coast of Malabar and Coromandel. To a maritime “ power the excellent harbour of Trincomalée is a jewel of in- “ estimable value ; it holds the Bay of Bengal at its mercy, and “ affords every facility of overawing and controuling the na-

“vigation of the Straits of Sunda and Malacca. Our Asiatic
“possessions, commerce, and marine, would consequently lie
“open to the depredations of the masters of Ceylon Ad-
“mitting then that Ceylon should preponderate, if put into
“the scale against the Cape, let it not be forgotten, however,
“that *the Cape in an enemy's hands may become a powerful in-*
“*strument for their recovering Ceylon.*”

There can be no question that the French had previously decided on the relative importance of these two settlements which had been taken from their ally; and that they were extremely glad we gave up that which was considered as the worse, under the idea of its being an instrument in their hands which might enable them to take from us the better. Ceylon to them was of no great value. It furnishes no supplies for an army or a navy, and would always be at the mercy of that power which could bring a superior fleet into the Indian Seas; and we have shewn that no such fleet of an enemy could be assembled there, nor victualled, nor provisioned, whilst the Cape of Good Hope remained a British colony. It would seem then to have been a more desirable object to retain possession of that station which would effectually have excluded them from the Indian Seas; and which would have enabled us to confine them to their useless islands of France and Bourbon.

Of one thing England may be well assured, that the destruction of its commerce, as the source from whence its power and affluence are derived, is a sentiment so deeply rooted in the mind of the Corsican that, so long as it continues to flourish,

his irascible and vindictive temper will not allow him to keep on any terms of friendship with us. He is well aware that our commerce is our great support, that, as Mr. Delacroix observed, it enabled us to subsidize all Europe against them; and that if he could once break up our commerce to India and China, and shut us out from the Mediterranean, the grand bulwark that stands between him and universal sovereignty would, in a great degree, be removed.

Should his views, unhappily for the world, ever be accomplished, an age of barbarism would return, ten times darker than that which followed the irruption of the northern hordes. A deadly blow would be struck at once to the liberty of the press; nothing would be written, nor printed, nor tolerated, but what the sovereign despot should find conducive to his universal sway. The time would then come when *legit ut clericus*, instead of saving a man from death, would be the sure means of bringing him to his end.

It behoves his Majesty's Government then to be upon its guard, and to watch the points where we are most vulnerable, in our commercial concerns, with unremitting attention; but above all, to secure the possession of every post that might favour the designs of the French upon India. The first step towards the accomplishment of this desirable object is the recovery of the Cape of Good Hope; for, without the possession of this out-work, our Indian Empire can never be considered as secure. While the enemy is allowed to keep the key, the house is all at times liable to be plundered.

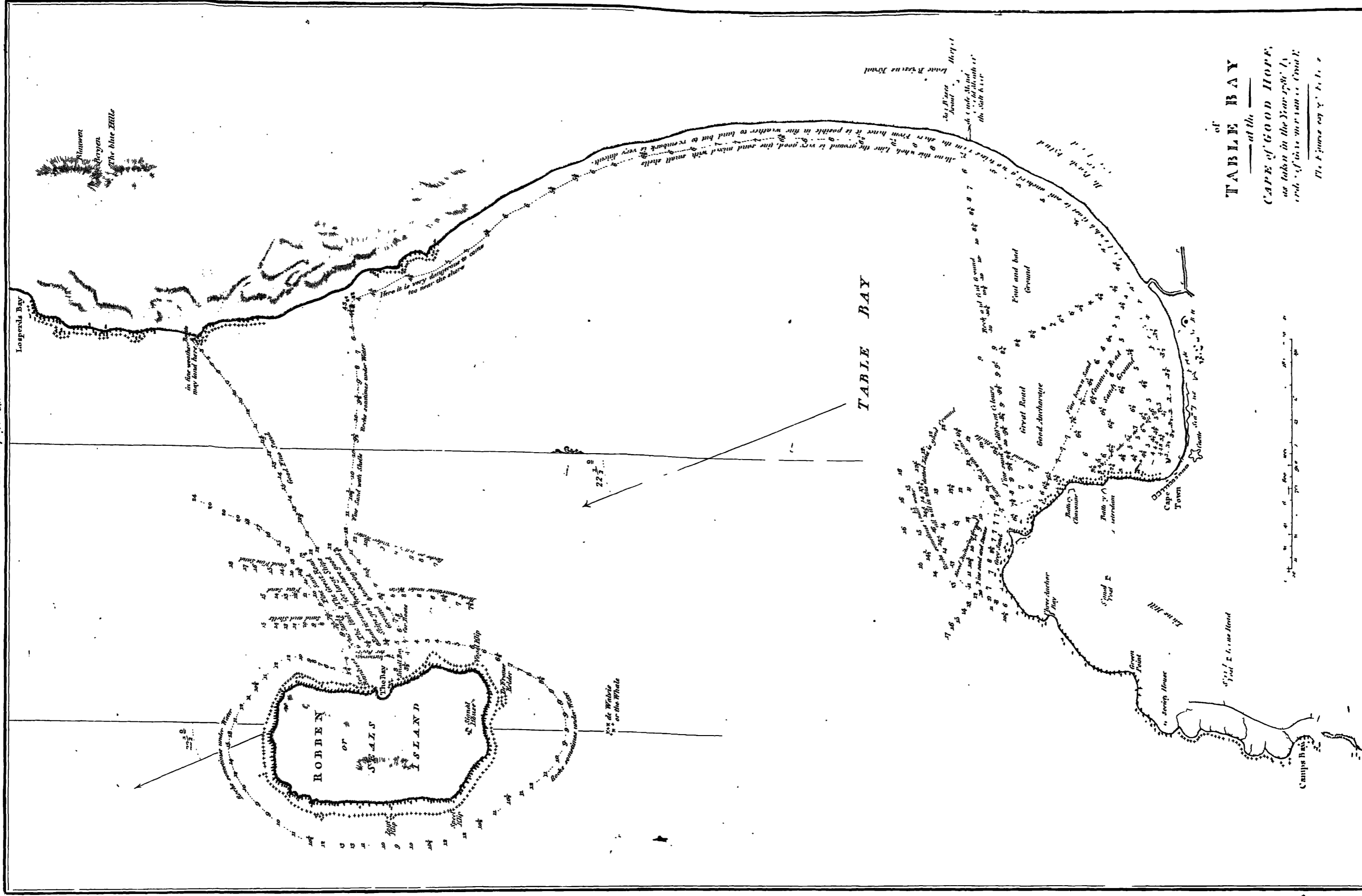
Having now pointed out some of the principal advantages which the Cape possesses as a naval station, it is right to mention the inconveniencies under which it labours in this respect. The most serious of these, which, indeed, is the only material one that I am acquainted with, is the want of a secure and convenient harbour for refitting, repairing, or building ships. The two principal bays that are resorted to by shipping, one in the summer, the other in the winter months, are entirely open, and exposed to the two prevailing winds, the north-west and the south-east; nor does it appear to be practicable, by any expence, to render them secure and sheltered, nor to construct any kind of dock or harbour for the reception of large ships, and scarcely even of small coasting vessels.

If any thing of this kind were to be attempted in Table Bay, it could only extend to the accommodation of small craft; and the only place for this purpose would be at Rogge Bay, where nature has laid a solid foundation of rock, close to which there is a considerable depth of water, where the swell of the sea is broken by the jutting points on which are erected the Amsterdam and the Chavonne batteries. At all events, this would be a much better and more convenient landing place than at the present wooden wharf, which is barely kept from falling into ruins at an enormous annual expence.

In all other parts of the bay an attempt to make any kind of harbour would be fruitless. The tide barely rises five feet, and the constant rolling swell in the winter season would always choak the entrance of any dock with sand. Thus the mouth of the Salt River is alternately open and blocked up with sand.

The annexed chart of Table Bay was constructed by order of Governor Van de Graaff in the year 1786, and has been found, by a diligent examination, to be extremely accurate. The anchoring-ground in general is tolerably good, but the shifting of the sand leaves bare sometimes whole ridges of the same kind of hard blue schistus that appears every where on the west shore of the bay. These ridges are so sharp, that a cable coming across them is sure to be cut in pieces. This has happened so frequently, that the bay is full of anchors, which have never been fished up; and these contribute equally with the rocks, to cut and chafe the cables of other ships. If some pains be not taken to remove the anchors, the number of which increase every year, there will not, in time, be a clear anchorage for a single large ship. When the Dutch Admiral Dekker's squadron was blown out of Table Bay in February 1803, they left six or eight anchors behind.

Admiral Pringle, I understand, was of opinion that the inconvenience arising from the rocks and the lost anchors was in some degree remediable, by sinking mooring-chains for the large ships, instead of their lying at anchor. In the south-east winds, which blow from September to the end of April, and which is the season when all ships bound for the Cape resort to Table Bay, there is no other danger than that of being driven out to sea from the wear and tear of the cables; though the water is not smooth, yet the sea is not high, and it is next to impossible for a ship to go on shore, unless on the south point of Robben Island, which they have always time enough to avoid, the distance being seven or eight miles. Within this island and the continent there is excellent anchorage,



of
TABLE BAY
 at the
CAPE of GOOD HOPE,
 as taken in the Year 1780. by
 order of the Surgeon General.

The Figure by G. F. S. S.

where ships so driven out usually bring up. Here, too, ships intending to come into Table Bay generally wait the abatement of a south-east wind, if it should happen to blow too strong for their working up against it. This island is too small, and at too great a distance, to afford the least shelter to Table Bay in the north-west winds that blow in the winter months.

The frequency, the strength, and the long duration of the south-east winds are attended with considerable disadvantage to commerce, it being sometimes impracticable to ship or to land goods for many successive days.

These winds are very uncertain in their duration, there being scarcely two years in which their periods do not vary. The Dutch used to bring their ships round about the beginning of September; but as Simon's Bay is safe, at all times of the year, for a few ships, the English protracted the time of entering Table Bay to the beginning of October, yet in the year 1799, his Majesty's ship the Sceptre, with seven others, were driven on shore on the fifth of November.

The loss of this ship was attended with many distressful circumstances. At one o'clock she fired a *feu-de-joie*, in commemoration of the anniversary of the Popish plot; at ten the same evening scarcely a vestige was to be seen, but the fragments of the wreck scattered on the strand, in myriads of pieces, not a single plank remaining whole, nor two attached together. Captain Edwards, his son, with ten other officers, and near three hundred seamen and marines perished on this

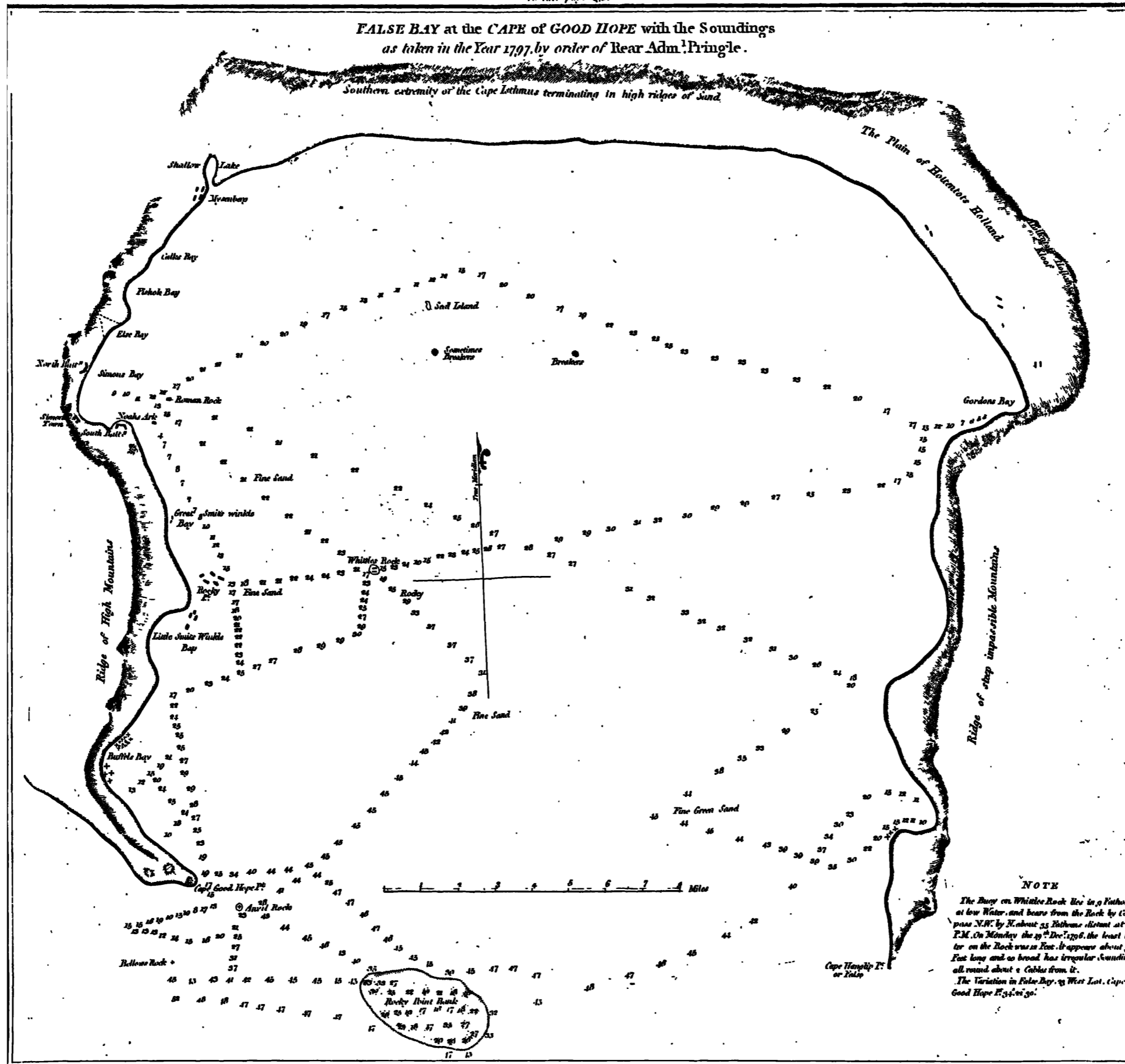
melancholy occasion. The body of young Edwards, a fine boy of about fourteen years, was found the next day with a bible in his bosom ; that of the father not till several days after. The morning after this melancholy accident happened, exhibited a dismal scene of distress. The strand was strowed with dead carcasses, most of them mangled in so shocking a manner by the shattered fragments of the ship, that they were obliged to bury them in holes upon the beach ; the bodies that could be taken up whole were placed in waggons and carried to the usual burying-ground.

The Oldenburg, a Danish man of war of 64 guns, went on shore the same day, but, from her having drifted upon a smooth sandy beach, the crew were saved, as were those of all the other ships. The Sceptre was unfortunately thrown upon a ledge of rocks near the mouth of the Salt River. Captain Edwards, it seems, conformably to the custom of the navy, employed every means to bring her up while drifting, and, having lost their last anchor, bent even the fore-castle guns to the cable. The Dutch, knowing from experience how ineffectual is every attempt when once a ship has parted her cables, pay no further attention to her safety but, setting some of the head sails, run her ashore between the wharf and the centre of the sea-lincs, upon a smooth sandy beach, by which means, though the ship be lost, the crew are generally saved.

Our officers seem to be divided in opinion as to the preference to be given to Table Bay or Simon's Bay. They are certainly both defective, but the latter would appear to be the

FALSE BAY at the CAPE of GOOD HOPE with the Soundings
as taken in the Year 1797. by order of Rear Adm. Pringle.

Southern extremity of the Cape Lethmus terminating in high ridges of Sand.



NOTE
 The Bay on Whistler Rock lies in 9 Fathoms at low Water, and bears from the Rock by Compass N. E. by E. about 35 Boreas distant at 9 P.M. On Monday the 19th Decr 1796. the least water on the Rock was 25 Feet. It appears about 70 Feet long and 20 broad, has irregular Soundings all round about 2 Cables from it.
 The Variation in False Bay, is West Lat. Cape Good Hope 17.34.00.30.

more secure, from the circumstance of few, if any, ships having ever been known to drive on shore from their anchors, whilst scarcely a season passes without some being lost in Table Bay. In the winter months, when the wind blows from north to north-west, forty or fifty ships may lie at anchor perfectly secure in Simon's Bay; and eight or ten may be sufficiently sheltered in the strongest south-easters. The Great Bay False, of which this is an indentation or cove, was so little known at the time of the capture by the British forces, that Rear-Admiral Pringle, in the year 1797, directed it to be surveyed and sounded, in consequence of which the exact situation was ascertained of a very dangerous rock, placed directly in the passage of ships into Simon's Bay; a rock, of the existence of which the Dutch were entirely ignorant. The annexed chart, with the soundings, is a copy of the said survey.

The usual months in which ships resort to Simon's Bay are from May to September inclusive. The distance from Cape Town, being twenty-four miles, and the badness of the road, mostly deep sand and splashes of water, render the communication at all times difficult; but more especially so in the winter; and few supplies are to be had at Simon's Town; a name with which a collection of about a dozen houses has most unworthily been dignified.

The necessity of ships of war being sent round into Simon's Bay for five months in the year, might be attended with very serious consequences to the safety of the colony, as far, at least, as depended on the exertions of the navy belonging to

the station. Being a lee port, the chances are greatly against their being able to work up to Table Bay, and still less to Saldanha Bay, to afford any assistance in the event of an attack by an enemy's fleet; which, without any interruption or molestation, might disembark troops, and land artillery, stores, and ammunition at Robben Island, or any of the windward bays.

This being the case, it would seem more desirable that the ships of war upon the station should winter in Saldanha Bay, being not only a windward port with respect to Cape Town, but one of the best harbours, perhaps, in the whole world. It extends in length near fifteen miles, in the direction of the coast, which is about north by east, and south by west; and the entrance into it is near the northern end, through a ridge of granite hills, moderately high. In this entrance are three rocky islands, two of which, named Jutten and Malagas, are partly without; and the third of flat naked rock, called Marcus, is directly in the mouth of the passage, about three quarters of a mile from the northern, and a little more than a mile from the southern points of land, forming the entrance. These two points and the island being once fortified, would render the bay inaccessible to an enemy's fleet. To the southward of the entrance, and within the bay, are two other islands, called the Schaapen and the Mewen. Between these is a narrow passage into the south angle of the bay, which is called the Laguna, or lake, where cutters, schooners, fishing ships, and all kinds of small craft, to almost any amount, might lie as securely as in a dock. On the north side of these two islands is also good and safe anchorage for

large ships; and it was here that the squadron of Admiral Lucas was lying, when captured by that of Sir George Elphinstone.

But the northern part of Saldanha Bay, distinguished by the name of Hootjes Bay, affords the most eligible, convenient, and secure anchorage for large shipping, being landlocked and sheltered from all winds. There is also a very excellent landing-place near a mass of granite rock, which is convertible into a commodious pier. The western shore of Hootjes Bay is skirted by a range of granite rocks, along the sides of which shipping might be hove down to repair, the water being four fathoms deep, close in with the rocks. The Dutch ship *Middleburg*, that was set on fire when Commodore Johnstone appeared off the bay, went down with her sides just touching these rocks, where she now lies under water as if alongside a quay.

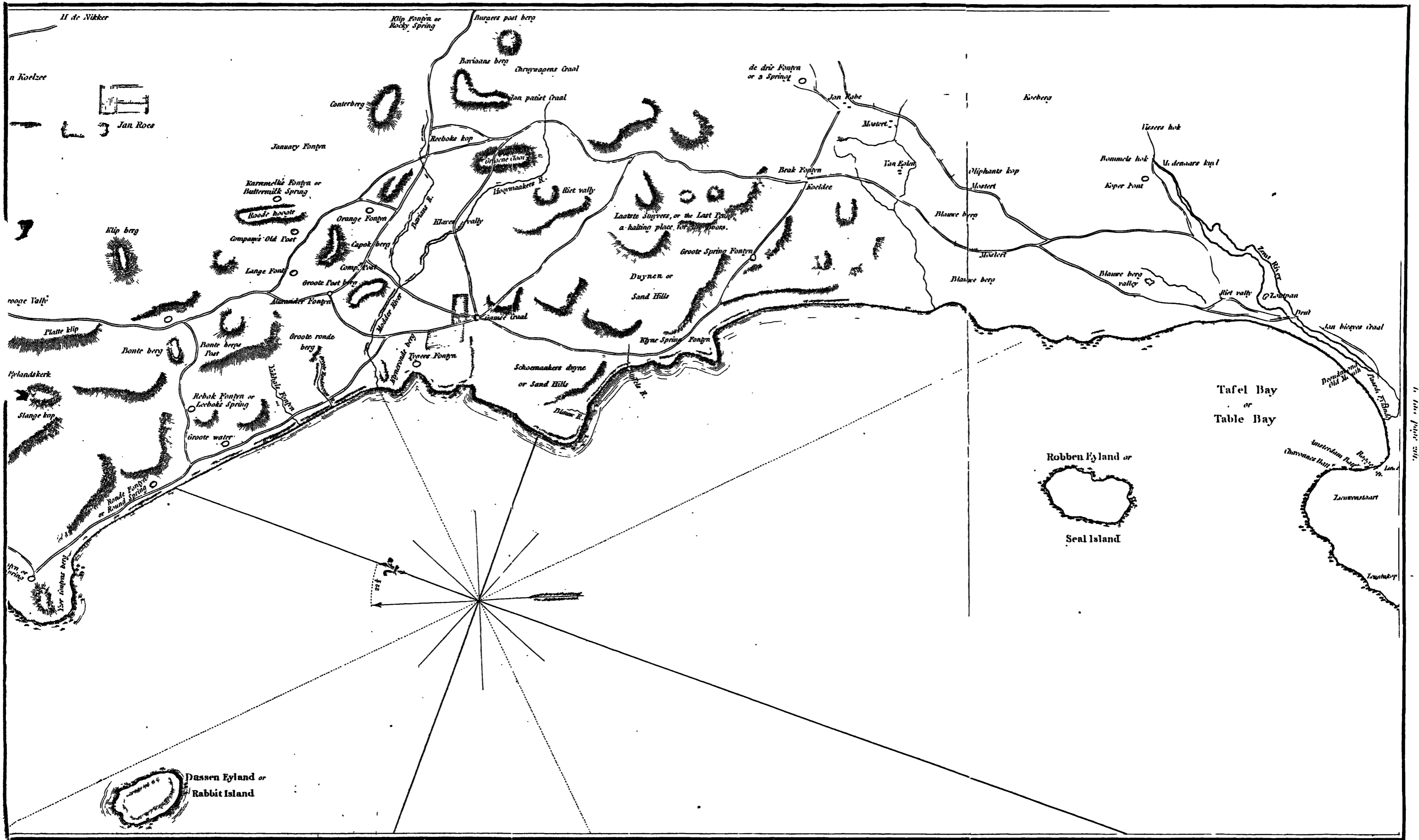
The entrance of Saldanha Bay lies in latitude $33^{\circ} 10'$ south, longitude 18° east, and the distance from Table Bay is eighteen leagues north by west. About nine leagues to the southward of the entrance is a low flat island, not many miles from the main land, called Dassen Island, which is said to be constantly covered with rabbits and penguins. The former may generally be taken with great ease; for on the appearance of people on the island, the penguins take possession of the rabbit holes, to the exclusion of the rightful owners. Saldanha Bay, the shores of Dassen Island, and Robben Island, in the mouth of Table Bay, abound with the different kinds of fish peculiar to this part of the world. Saldanha Bay,

in the winter season, is frequented by vast numbers of the black whale, where the Southern fishers very frequently resort in order to complete their cargoes.

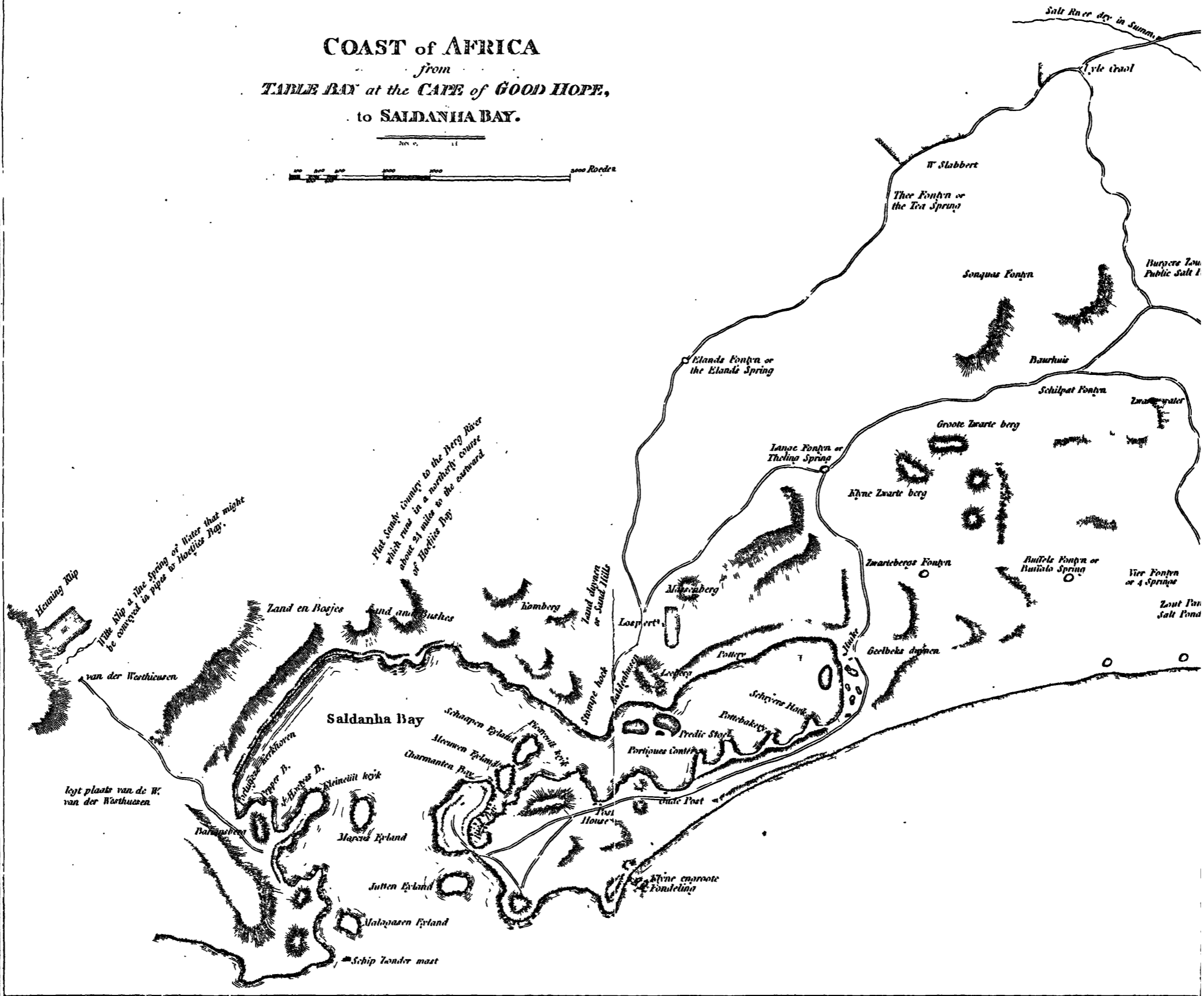
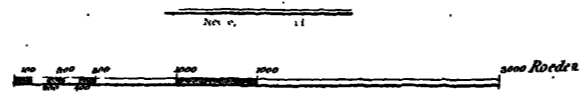
The situation of Saldanha Bay is much more convenient than that of the peninsula for receiving the supplies afforded by the country. The deep sandy isthmus, whose heavy roads have been the destruction of multitudes of cattle, would be entirely avoided ; and its distance from the corn districts, which is the most material article of consumption, is much less than that of the Cape. Its situation, with regard to all the northern parts of the colony, is much more convenient than Cape Town ; and equally so for those who inhabit the distant district of Graaf Reynet, and who usually pass over the Roode Sand Kloof.

From the many conveniencies that Saldanha Bay possesses, as a secure harbour for shipping, at all seasons of the year, where they may be repaired, and even built, must, on the other hand, be deducted two very serious disadvantages, without the removal of which it must ever present insuperable obstacles against its becoming a great naval station ; these are the want of wood and of fresh water.

The first might indeed be supplied, to a certain degree, from the adjacent country. In the sand hills, that surround a part of the bay, grow several kinds of shrubby plants, whose long and thick roots are easily drawn out of the loose sand, and in such abundance as scarcely to be credited. They form a kind of subterranean forest. The sides of the hills



COAST of AFRICA
from
TABLE BAY at the CAPE of GOOD HOPE,
to SALDANHA BAY.



Hemming Rip
 1776 Nijp a fine Spring of Water that might
 be conveyed in pipes to Hoerlitz Bay.

Flat sandy country to the Berg River
 which runs in a northerly course
 above 21 miles to the eastward
 of Hoerlitz Bay

legt plaats van de W.
 van der Werthuisen

Kleine en groote
 Fontein

also, and the extensive plains, are covered with frutescent plants. If the country, indeed, was planted with the oak, poplar, silver tree, and others that grow near the Cape, plenty of firewood might, in a very few years, be furnished for any number of shipping that would ever frequent the bay.

The scarcity of water is a much more serious evil than that of wood, and perhaps more difficult to obviate. There are two small springs towards the south end of the bay, but the water of both is slightly impregnated with salt. The farmers, however, seem to have no idea of digging wells, or of opening a spring to let it run; on the contrary, the usual practice is that of making a large dam close to the spring: by so doing, they expose a greater surface to the action of the sun, which is certainly an unwise measure, on a soil so strongly impregnated with saline substances, and in a climate where evaporation is so powerfully carried on. On a trial being made, by order of the late Admiral Sir Hugh Christian, to obtain water by digging near the landing-place of Hootjes Bay, a mass of granite rock, of a steel blue color, was entered to the depth of thirty or forty feet, and the small quantity of water that oozed through the seams was found to be impregnated with salt.

It may be observed, in the annexed chart of the coasts from Table Bay to Saldanha Bay, that in every part there are abundance of springs spontaneously bursting out of the ground, for not one of these have ever been dug for, nor a spade put into the ground in order to open the conduits and

suffer them to run more freely. If, indeed, we consider for a moment the situation of this low sandy belt of land, stretching along the northern coast, common sense must convince us that there is plenty of water at no great distance below the surface. It is bounded on the east, at the distance only of seventy miles, by a chain of mountains, whose summits are from two to nearly five thousand feet high ; and all the waters, from both sides of these mountains, fall upon this narrow plain. A great part of them, it is true, sink into the Berg River, but the Berg River itself is on a level with Saldanha Bay, into which, indeed, the whole body of it might, with great ease, be carried.

This was, in fact, a favorite subject of conversation with the late Colonel Gordon, and some other Dutch gentlemen, by which would not only be furnished a plentiful supply of water for a town, garrison, and shipping but, at the same time, a navigation would be opened into the interior of the country, particularly into Zwartland, the granary of the colony. Such a scheme would, no doubt, be practicable, though that part of it which regards the supply of a fleet and town with fresh water would perhaps fail to answer the purpose, for the following reasons : That part of the Berg River, where it would be the most practicable to turn its course, is within a mile or two of the place to which the high spring tides flow, and about twenty miles from the present mouth of the river in St. Helena Bay. The distance from the same place, along the line in which the new channel would be carried to Saldanha Bay, is about five and twenty or perhaps thirty miles. Allowing for the circuitous course of the river in its present

channel, and considering the bays of Saldanha and St. Helena to have the same difference of level with the place at which the river is proposed to be turned, the general current in the new would be the same as that in the present channel, and this is so very trifling, that let there be given in the new one a fall as little as possible at the first, and as great as possible near the bay, the tide must nevertheless set up it for many miles, and render the water completely salt; and if it were an open canal terminating in a bason, there is reason to suppose it would soon be choked up with the sand which the wind shifts and rolls about. There is a spring at Witte Klip, the White Rock, which is situated on an elevated point about six miles to the northward of Hootjes Bay, which appears to be amply sufficient for the supply of a considerable fleet of ships, if collected and brought to the bay in pipes, the expence of which could not exceed a few thousand pounds.

Even should this not be found sufficient for the purposes of the fleet and the necessary establishment consequential to its becoming the naval station, a measure might be adopted which could not fail of securing a constant supply of fresh water to any amount. This would be effected by bringing it in pipes from the Berg River, which never fails in the dryest weather, and the surface of which, contrary to almost all the other rivers of the colony, is very little sunk below the general surface of the country. I should think that ten thousand pounds would go a great way towards accomplishing this object, so important to every nation whose shipping trade to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope. Were this once

effected, the interest of the capital expended in the undertaking would be more than defrayed by an additional port duty of ten dollars or two pounds sterling for each ship; a mere trifle, when compared to the ease and security in which ships would here ride at anchor, and thus avoid the wear and tear of Table Bay, besides the conveniency of careening and repairing; and, above all, the perfect safety in which they would remain in all winds and at all seasons of the year.

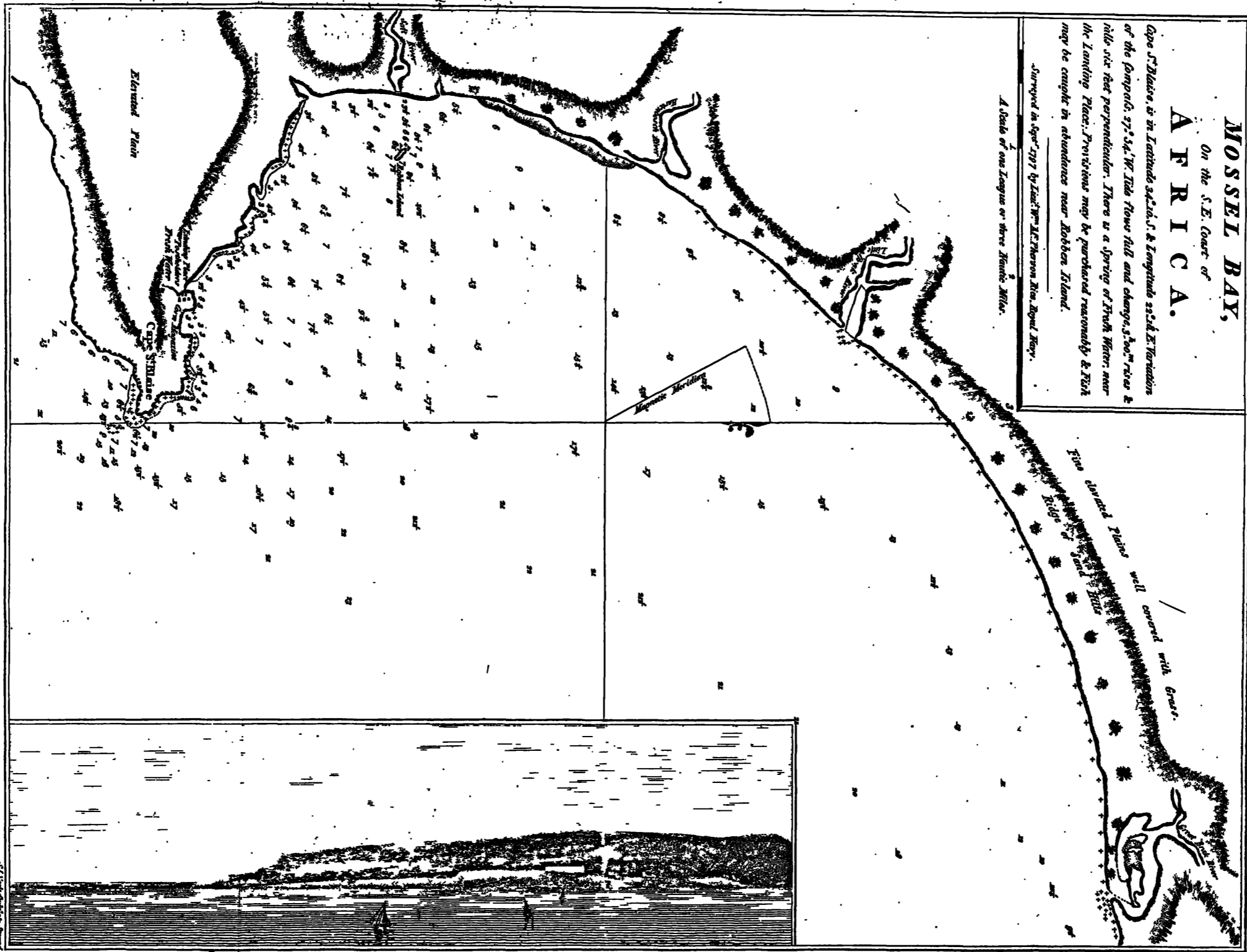
There can be little doubt, if a naval establishment was once formed at Saldanha Bay, that many coasting vessels and fishing ships would be constructed here, as it affords every convenience that could be required for building ships, which would be the means of increasing the coasting trade, and especially in the article of timber, the produce of the colony. Whether any of the forest trees of South Africa are suitable for building ships seems, as yet, a doubtful matter. Hitherto they have not had any trial. With respect to size and form they are liable to no objections, and there can be little doubt that, by felling them at a proper time, and seasoning them in such a manner as the climate may require, they would be found to answer all the purposes that might be wanted, not only for the hull of a ship but also for masts and yards. So little did they know, in the Cape, of the resources of the colony, with respect to the timber, that of the forty-four distinct species of forest trees, of the wood of which I procured specimens, that were delivered to Government by Lord Macartney, not more than six or eight were in partial use; of the rest the names even were unknown.

MOSSEL BAY, On the S.E. Coast of AFRICA.

Cape S. Blaise, is in Latitude 34°26'. S. & Longitude 22°54' E. Variation of the Compass, 37° 34' W. Tide flows full and changes, 5° 00" rise & falls six feet perpendicular. There is a spring of Fresh Water, near the Landing Place. Provisions may be purchased reasonably & Fish may be caught in abundance near Robben Island.

Surveyed in Sept. 1797 by Lieut. Wm. L. Thomson, R.N. Royal Navy.

A Scale of one League or three Nautical Miles.



Published from the original charts of Thomson, 1797.

1871, from the original charts of Thomson, 1797.

The only bay within the limits of the colony, to the northward of Saldanha Bay, is that of Saint Helena, which, by land from Hootjes Bay is little more than fifteen miles. In shape and situation it resembles Table Bay, but wants the attractions of the latter both in respect of the quality of the contiguous land and the quantity of water. Whalers sometimes anchor in this bay, where, from the remote and undisturbed situation, so many whales constantly resort in the winter months, that they seldom find any difficulty of making up the deficiency of their cargo.

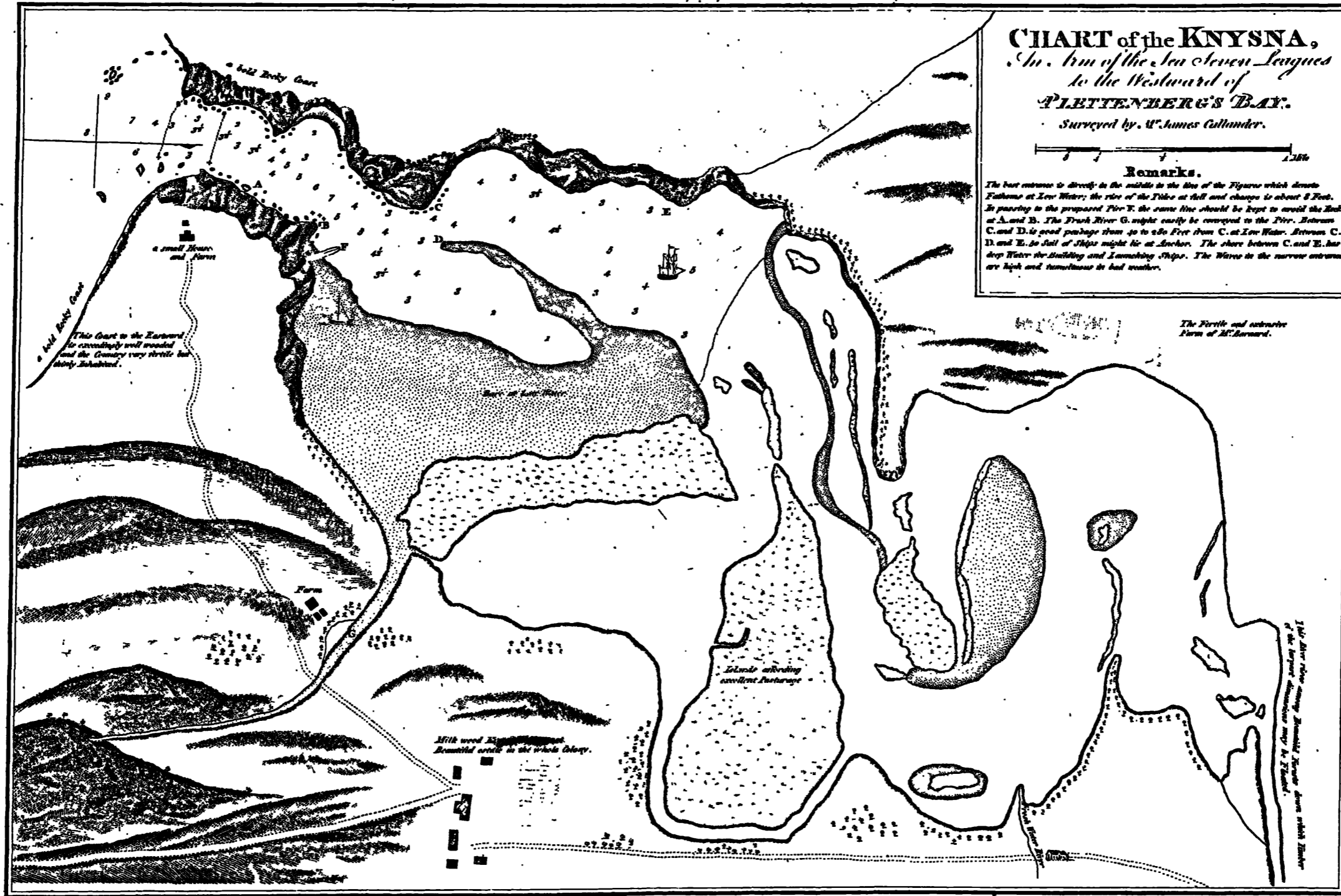
But on the south coast of the colony there are several bays into which ships may occasionally run for shelter in the north-west monsoon, but they are all open to the south-east quarter. Of these the principal are Mossel Bay, the Knysna, Plettenberg's Bay, and Algoa or Zwart Kop's Bay. The charts of this coast and the bays that were in the possession of the Dutch were found to be so incorrect, that Admiral Pringle sent Lieutenant Rice, in the Hope brig, for the purpose of making a survey, of which the following charts and observations are chiefly the result.

The outermost point of Mossel Bay, called Cape Saint Blaize, lies in latitude $34^{\circ} 10'$ south; longitude $22^{\circ} 18'$ east (I make it in the general chart $22^{\circ} 45'$ east). The variation of the compass in 1797 was $27^{\circ} 54'$ west. The time of high water at full and change about 3 o'clock, and the rise and fall of the tides six or seven feet. The distance from the Cape is about 240 miles. During the summer months,

when the winds blow between east and south, or directly into the bay, a heavy swell breaks upon the beach, which makes it dangerous, and frequently impracticable, for boats to land ; but these winds are never so violent, nor so lasting, as at the Cape ; and ships may ride at anchor in perfect security about three quarters of a mile from the landing place. The south-west winds, that frequently blow with great violence from April to September, bring into the bay a most tremendous sea, setting round Cape Saint Blaize. At this season of the year it would be highly imprudent for ships to enter Mossel Bay.

A rill of water glides over the sandy beach, where there is the best landing, and it is easily conveyed into casks in the boats, by means of a hose ; but it is a very scanty stream, and not altogether free from saline impregnations. To the south-east of this landing place is another small cove tolerably sheltered, and deep enough to admit vessels of ten or twelve feet draught of water. At either of these coves piers for landing and shipping goods might conveniently be constructed, and at a small expence, as materials may be procured upon the spot. Boats, however, may land at every part of the bay ; and the adjacent country would easily afford supplies for about five hundred men.

The mouths of the rivers that fall into the bay are generally blocked up with sand. They abound with various kinds of fish, and on the rocky parts of the coast are plenty of muscles and excellent oysters. The chief produce of the surrounding



country is grain; and there is a magazine erected near the landing place, which is said to be capable of holding ten thousand bushels.

To the eastward of Mossel Bay, and about eighteen miles on the Cape side of Plettenberg's Bay, there is a remarkable inlet, which may one day become an important station. It is called the Knysna. In the first volume, I observed that the tide set into it through a narrow passage or portal, as into a dock; that this passage, though narrow, and not quite clear of rocks, would admit of small vessels. Since that observation was made on the spot, Mr. Callandar, a gentleman formerly belonging to the navy, has taken a particular survey of this arm of the sea, of which the annexed is a plan. He observes that the depth of water, and great extent, of the Knysna, running into the very centre of fine forests, render it a most eligible place for the building and repairing of ships. That vessels of five hundred tons and upwards, deeply laden, may pass the portal; and that much larger might be built therein and sent out light, to be completed in Plettenberg's Bay. That the forests contain several different kinds of durable and well grown timber, fit for that valuable purpose, as well as abundance of masts and yards. That the native fir, called geel hout (*Ilex crocea*), grows to upwards of sixty feet in length, and to five, six, and even eight feet in diameter; which is also the case with the native oak, bearing an acorn exactly like that of Europe, but called here, on account of a strong and disagreeable smell which it emits when green, the stinkwood tree (*Quercus Africana*). That the smell, however,

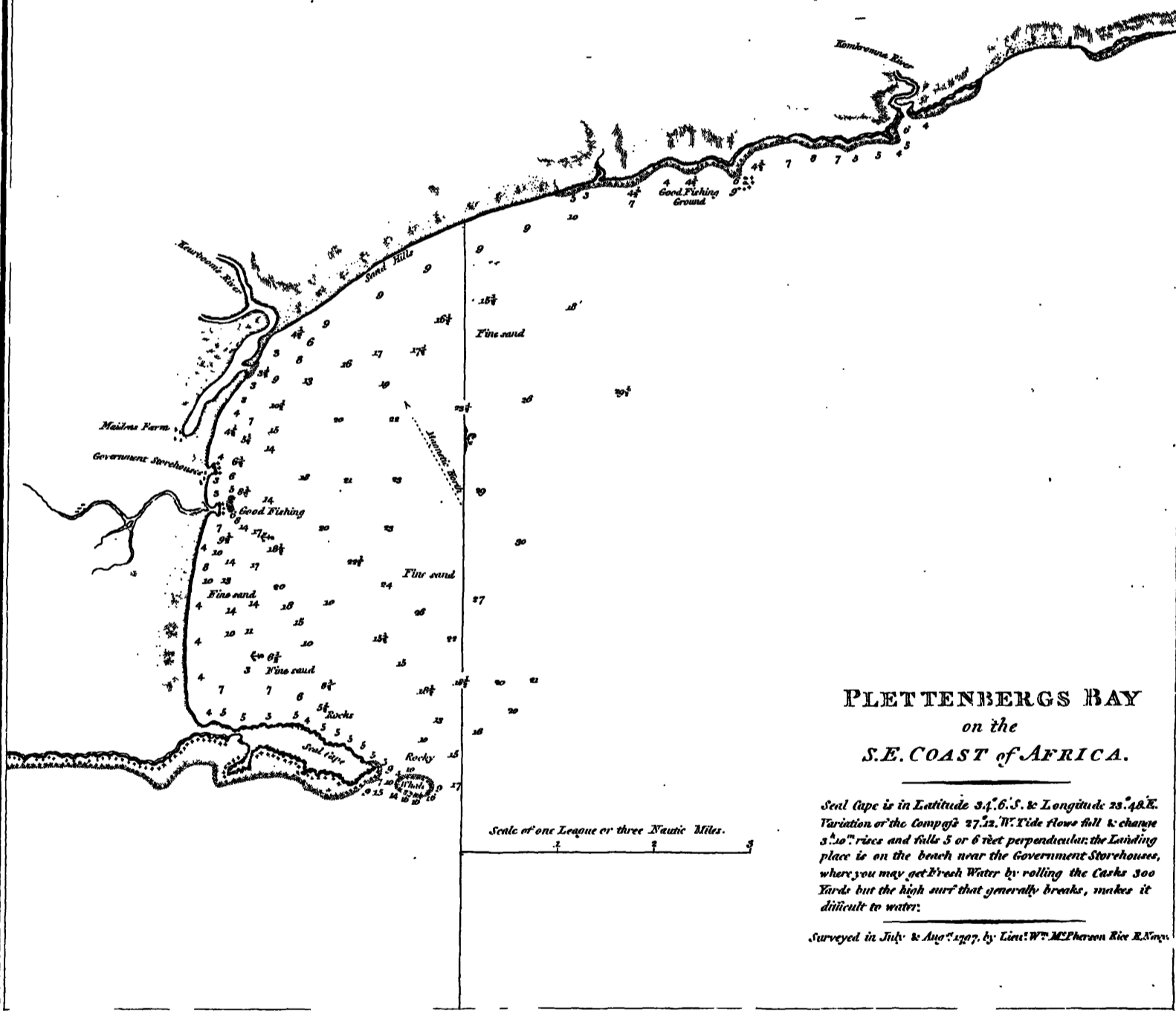
is attended with the peculiar advantage of preventing the worm from attacking it.

Plettenberg's Bay is a wide open roadstead, entirely exposed to the south-east winds. The west point called Robenberg, or Seal Mountain, lies in latitude $34^{\circ} 6'$ south, longitude $23^{\circ} 48'$ east; distant from Cape Point 320 English miles. The eastern shore of the bay rounds off into the general trending of the coast, which, seen from the landing-place, terminates in a very high and regular cone-shaped mountain, called in the old Portuguese charts, Pic Formosa, but by the more modern Dutch navigators, the Grenadier's Cap. The best landing-place is about three miles and a half to the northward of the Robenberg, on a sandy beach, about five hundred and fifty yards in length, guarded at each extremity by rocky points that project into the sea. A heavy rolling sea generally sets into the bay, except in northerly and north-westerly winds; when these blow, the water is smooth. The south-west winds occasion the greatest swell of the sea.

A considerable river, called the Keerboom, falls into the bay, but the mouth is generally choaked up with sand; and the water within the bar, which forms an extensive bason, is saltish for several miles up the country. There is another small stream that runs down a very beautiful valley, but the water of this is also brackish for at least two miles from the beach. The only fresh water, and it can scarcely be so called, issues from a small well on the side of the hill, at the

Appearance of Seal Hill when the Cape bore S.B.E. & Gap E. by S. distant 4 or 5 miles.

Appearance of Seal Hill when the Cape bore N. by E. & E. the Gap N.W. & Peak within Kourbooms R.N.E. distant 5 or 6 miles.



PLETTENBERGS BAY
on the
S.E. COAST of AFRICA.

Seal Cape is in Latitude 34° 6' S. & Longitude 23° 48' E.
Variation of the Compass 27° 12' W. Tide flows full & change
5.10" rises and falls 5 or 6 feet perpendicular; the Landing
place is on the beach near the Government Storehouses,
where you may get Fresh Water by rolling the Casks 300
Yards but the high surf that generally breaks, makes it
difficult to water.

Surveyed in July & Aug. 1797, by Lieut. W. M. P. Theron R. N. S. M. S.

foot of which the Government house, the wood magazine, and other stores are built. The anchoring ground is good, and there is not much danger for shipping, well found with stores, to take in cargoes of timber at any season of the year.

The last bay to the eastward is that called Zwart Kops or Algoa. This bay is also open to every point of the compass from north-east to south-east, and of course affords not any shelter against the prevailing winds. The bottom, however, is generally fine sand and good holding ground. Ships may anchor in five fathoms at the distance of a mile from the general landing-place, which is on the west side of the bay; but vessels of great burden should keep farther out, on account of the very heavy swell that almost perpetually rolls in from the eastward. The latitude of the landing-place is $33^{\circ} 56'$ south, and longitude $26^{\circ} 53'$ east of Greenwich; and the distance from the Cape, in a direct line, 500 English miles. The time of high-water, at full and change of the moon, appears to be about three o'clock, and the tide rises between six and seven feet. The extent of the bay, from the western point to the eastern extremity, where it rounds off into the general trending of the coast, is about twenty miles; and the shore, except from the landing-place to the west point, is a fine, smooth, sandy beach. The rivers that fall into the bay are the *Zwart-kops*, the *Kooka*, and the *Sunday*. The mouths of all these rivers are closed up by bars of sand, which occasionally break down as the mass of water in the basons within them becomes too heavy for the mound of sand to support it; and the first south-east wind again blocks them

up, carrying at the same time a quantity of salt water into the rivers. Close to the landing-place, however, there is a copious spring of excellent water at the extremity of a narrow slip of ground, hemmed in between a ridge of sand-hills on one side, and by a sudden rise of the country on the other. This slip is about four thousand feet long by five hundred in width. It is composed of excellent soil, has a gentle slope to the shore of the bay, and is the prettiest situation for a small fishing village that could possibly be imagined.

After indeed General Dundas had decided on the expediency of erecting a small work for the defence of the landing-place, and caused a block-house to be built and surrounded with a pallisade for the protection of the men to be stationed there, the face of the surrounding country began to put on a new appearance. The slip of ground, contiguous to the landing-place, was converted into gardens; and the stupid boors stared with wonder, and were struck with astonishment, at the variety and quantity of vegetables they produced. These people, also, soon found the benefit of a ready market for the consumption of their produce. Many trifling articles, such as milk and eggs, from which they had never before derived the least advantage, were now commuted into money. Their sheep and cattle were sold at higher rates than the butchers were accustomed to give them; and their butter, soap, and candles, which they were always under the necessity of carrying more than five hundred miles to market, fetched now, upon the spot, double the usual prices.

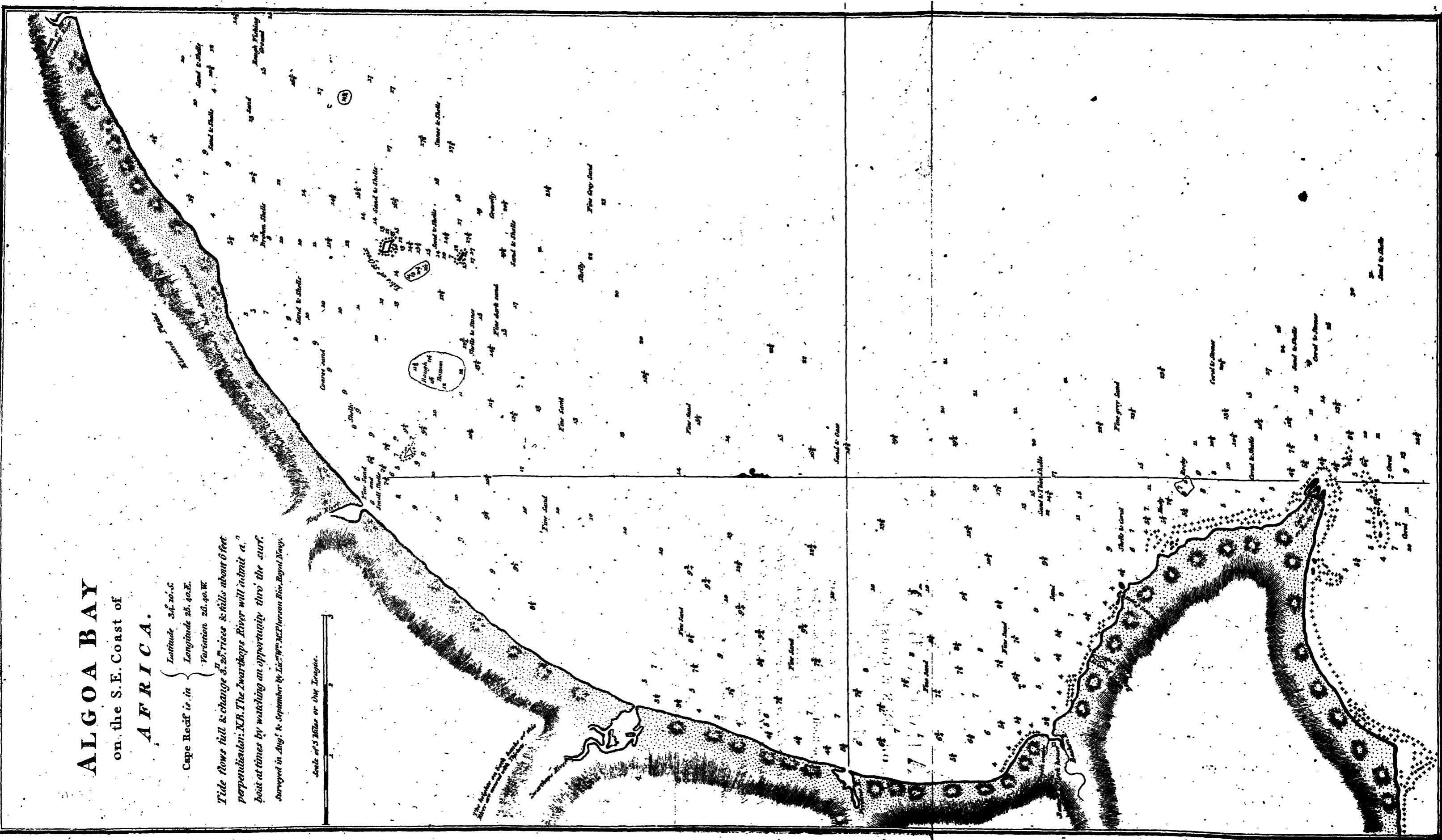
ALGOA BAY

on the S.E. Coast of
AFRICA.

Cape Reef is in { Latitude 34.20. S
Longitude 25.40. E.
Variation 26.40. W

Tide flows full & change 3.25 rises & falls about 6 feet perpendicular. NB. The Zwartkops River will admit a boat at times by watching an opportunity thro' the surf. Surveyed in Aug. & September by Lieut. JAMES McPHERSON R.N. Royal Navy.

Scale of 3 Miles or One League.



Zwart-kops Bay would appear to hold out no inconsiderable advantages in the fishing trade. The bay swarms with the black whale, and abounds with every sort of excellent fish that frequent the coast of Southern Africa; and the neighbouring salt pan would furnish an inconsumable quantity of strong bay salt ready prepared for use. More solid advantages might still be derived to the trading part of the nation, and to the East India Company in particular, were an establishment formed at this place for the preparation of salted beef and fish. The cause of the indifferent quality of the Cape beef I have already sufficiently explained. The cattle in this part of the country, from the Snowy Mountains to the sea-coast, are generally in good condition; and the beef that is killed here takes salt and keeps just as well as in Europe. If the butchers at the Cape can afford to contract for supplying the army with beef at two-pence a pound, after having brought the cattle five, six, and seven hundred miles at their own expence, and at the loss of almost half the weight of the animals, it may easily be conceived at how very cheap a rate vessels bound on long voyages might be victualled at Zwart-kops Bay: or, if the meat here prepared should be transported to the Cape in coasting vessels, it might be afforded there considerably under sixpence a pound. The surrounding country is very fertile; and corn in almost any quantity might be purchased at the bay for less than three shillings a bushel. Hides and skins might also be salted and become an article of export. Those of the wild antelopes, even with the rough dressing of the uninformed peasantry, make very fine leather. For strength and durability the skins

of wild animals are much preferable to those that have been domesticated.

It must however be confessed, that there is not in the whole sea-coast of this extensive colony a single bay that is not either insecure for shipping, or otherwise objectionable: yet, with all the imperfections and inconveniencies of its bays, its geographical position on the globe will, at all times, render it a powerful instrument in the hands of a maritime nation for directing the commerce of India and China into new channels, for enriching its possessors, and distressing their enemies.

CHAP. IV.

Importance of the Cape of Good Hope, considered in a commercial Point of View, and as a Dépôt for the Southern Whale Fishery.

THE original intention of the United Provinces, in forming a settlement at the Cape of Good Hope, as I have already observed, was that of its being a place of refreshment for the shipping of their East India Company, beyond which they did not consider it prudent to extend its use, till of late years, when experience had taught them the very important advantages it possessed as a military depôt for forming and preparing their troops, which were intended to serve in their Indian settlements. Ships, however, of every nation, were permitted to refit and refresh in the ports of the Cape, on payment of certain port fees that were not by any means extravagant. But as the supplying of such ships with provisions was a lucrative monopoly, acquired by favour or purchased for a sum of money, the prices paid by foreigners were never less than double, and oftentimes treble, of those paid by the inhabitants. Hence little encouragement was held out for foreign ships to call at the Cape, beside that of getting water and a few refreshments for their crews.

All commerce, except such as was brought in Dutch bottoms, was deemed clandestine and contraband; yet, such

illicit trade was not only winked at, but encouraged, by the servants of the Company, whose salaries, indeed, were so small, that they could not subsist their families upon them. The supplies, also, for the Cape, of which the Company reserved to itself the exclusive privilege of furnishing, both from Europe and India, were sometimes so scantily and so tardily brought in, that the inhabitants were under the necessity of smuggling certain articles of daily consumption out of foreign ships for their immediate use.

As the East India Company considered the Cape in no other light than as a conveniency to their commerce and their settlements in the East Indies, to which point all their regulations respecting it tended, their system of policy seemed to require that every impediment should be thrown in the way of its becoming a flourishing settlement. The petty traffic they reserved for themselves, or allowed their servants to carry on, at this place, consisted in an exchange of colonial produce for the manufactures of Europe and India. And this traffic was not only a monopoly in the hands of the Company, or some of its servants, but a fixed price, or what is usually called a *maximum*, was imposed both on imports and exports. Other regulations, that were adopted for the government of the colony, were little calculated to promote its prosperity; and, although many of these were altered and modified from time to time, on the representations and remonstrances of that part of the inhabitants, not engaged in the service of the Company, yet few of them were productive of public benefit. The influence of the Company's servants was always sufficient to counteract the operation of any measure that promised to be

more advantageous to the general interests of the colony, than to the individual benefit of those entrusted with the government.

There cannot be a stronger proof of this being the case than the general prosperity that prevailed under the British government; when, in the course of six years, with the administration of the same political system reserved to them by the capitulation, except in so far as regarded the abolishment of monopolies, which were nearly done away, the public revenues were more than doubled, without an additional tax or increase of rents: and property in the town was also raised to nearly the double of its former value.

The Dutch East India Company were, in fact, jealous of establishing a power at the Cape which, by too great encouragement, might, in time, shake off their yoke in Europe, and overawe their settlements in India. For, although the whole population of the colony, exclusive of slaves and Hottentots, barely amounted to 20,000 souls, men, women, and children, which were scattered over an extent of country whose dimensions are not less than 550 by 230 English miles, yet, as it was not convenient for the Government to keep up a great force at the Cape, these colonists, few as they were, felt themselves sufficiently strong to give it, at least, a good deal of trouble. Nor, indeed, could it always place a firm dependence on the forces that were stationed there, these being chiefly hired troops engaged for limited service, of which both officers and men entered frequently into family connections with the inhabitants. Thus circumstanced, it would have been no dif-

difficult matter for the colonists to cut off, at any time, those refreshments, without which the ships of their East India Company would be unable to proceed on their voyage to India.

The Dutch settlers seemed to be fully aware of the advantage which their situation gave them in this respect in making their late weak attempt at independence, which, though then unsuccessful, they may again feel themselves inclined to renew, if their old masters should be allowed to retain the colony under the same regulations and restrictions as heretofore. The present weakness and the exhausted finances of the Batavian Republic will scarcely be able to support even the same degree of authority over its subjects here as before the capture; and the Asiatic Council, on finding themselves no longer capable of holding the government of the Cape, as a conveniency to their trade, might, probably, be the less scrupulous in rendering it a mischievous agent against us. Indeed, exclusive of any vindictive motives, they might, perhaps, be tempted by the brilliant idea of establishing a free mart of import and export at the extremity of Africa; which, like another Tyre or Alexandria, should concentrate in itself the resources and supplies of every other region of the globe.

If, indeed, at the late negotiations at Amiens, the Cape of Good Hope had been declared a free port, as is said to have been proposed, though the result would certainly have proved extremely profitable to speculators and the inferior nations of Europe trading to the East, yet such a measure would as

infallibly have proved ruinous to the concerns of the English United Company of merchants trading to the East Indies. The sales of Leadenhall-street would have suffered beyond calculation; a speedy termination would have been the consequence to their monopolizing system; whilst, excepting a few English adventurers trading under neutral flags, the English nation would be the last to benefit by such a measure. The Danes, Swedes, Spaniards, Portugueze and, above all others, the Americans, would soon find their advantage in purchasing cargoes of India and China goods at the Cape of Good Hope, at a moderate advance and without duties, in preference of applying to the London market, where they are liable to duties or puzzled with drawbacks; or rather than prosecute the long and expensive voyage through the Eastern Seas. The Americans, indeed, and the English adventurers, would become the great carriers between India and China, and the Cape of Good Hope.

In like manner it is to be apprehended that, if at a general peace the Dutch should be allowed to keep possession of the settlement, the French, having neither credit nor capital of their own, will not only, by means of the Cape, consolidate a force in the Isles of France and Bourbon, to be ready to act against us and to disturb the tranquillity of our Indian settlements, but that they will likewise oblige the Dutch to allow an emporium of Eastern produce at this extremity of Africa for the supply of foreign nations, and particularly of the Spaniards and Portugueze on the Brazil coast, to the prejudice of the interests of the British East India Company.

It was an opinion, at one time pretty generally entertained, that by reason of the long and expensive voyage to India, and of the moderate profits with which the Company was satisfied, the throwing open of the India trade would be less injurious to the interests of the Company than ruinous to the concerns of the private merchant who might be induced to engage in it. Yet we see great numbers of ships every year proceeding, even as far as China, under foreign flags, but with British capitals; and it is certain that the Americans, with very small ships and proportionate capitals, find their account in the India and China trade, exclusive of that part which employs them in carrying home the private property of individuals, who have enriched themselves in India. The Americans, with the returns of their lumber cargo, which they can always dispose of at the Cape, and the produce of their South Sea Fishery in oil and seal-skins, will always be able to purchase a cargo of China goods, part of which they may find convenient to dispose of at the Cape on the return-voyage, in exchange for wine and brandy. With the rest they not only supply the West Indian and American possessions of foreign powers, as well as the markets of their own extensive country; but it is well known they have, of late years, very materially checked the re-exportation of India and China goods from England to our own islands in the Atlantic.

It is obvious, then, that the Americans, by trading direct to India and China, can afford to undersell the English West India merchants in our own islands, notwithstanding the drawbacks allowed on export from Leadenhall-street; and, consequently, that they may find their advantage in being allowed

to dispose of the whole or part of their cargoes at the Cape of Good Hope ; to the prejudice of the British East India Company and the encouragement of English smugglers, of which, indeed, the Directors were not without their apprehensions, even whilst the Cape remained in our hands as a dependency of the Crown.

And if the Americans can contrive to make this a beneficial commerce, under all the disadvantages of working up a capital to trade with in the course of a long protracted voyage, how much more so will ships, under neutral flags and English capitals, carry on a lucrative trade to and from the southern emporium of Africa ; more injurious, in proportion as they are more active, than the ships actually employed by foreign merchants ?

Here, then, is another cogent reason that, one might suppose, would have had some influence on the minds of the Directors, and have operated so far, at least, as to have compelled them to state to Government the danger to their concerns of relinquishing the Cape ; whereas the indifference they thought fit to assume, though too affected to be real, unfortunately had the ill effect of disparaging and undervaluing it in the eyes of the nation. If they should be inclined to plead a want of information with regard to the treaty of peace, let them recollect that, under the administration of Lord Bute, after the preliminaries of peace had been signed by the Duke of Bedford, the latter was instructed, at the instance of the Court of Directors, to alter an article that related to the Carnatic, or to break off