# AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE

# B E T H E L S D O R P

## STATION OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY, FROM ITS INCEPTION, AND UNTIL THE DEATH OF DOCTOR VAN DER KEMP, IN 1811.

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BY

D. R. B R I G G S.
B.A. (S.A.)

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

One of the difficulties attending the historian is the question of spelling. In all cases within the actual narrative, the attempt has been made to modernise the orthography, especially regarding place names. Where these occur in quotations, however, it has been thought wisest to leave them as originally written, to preserve the accuracy of citation. The spelling of Bantu names has recently been subjected to revision; thus, for example, Gaika now appears as Ngqika, and the ama-Xosa are now referred to as the Xhosas. One other point should be noticed. The main character of the narrative that follows showed no uniformity in the spelling of his own name; sometimes he signed himself "Vanderkemp," at other times "Van derkemp," "Van der Kemp," "Vander Kemp," or "van der Kemp." Except in quoting an original document, the modern Afrikaans method is used, and his name appears as "van der Kemp." The same method has been adopted for similar names.

In the footnotes and references the following abbreviations occur:-

L.M.S. for the London Missionary Society.
L.M.S.R. for the Records of the same Society.
Directors for the Directors of the Society.
U.A. for the Union Archives.

An explanation of the symbols in connection with documents in the Union and London Missionary Society Archives is given on pp. 139, and 142 respectively.

# CHAPTER ONE.

## INTRODUCTION.

In South Africa the small town or hamlet, nestling - as is so often the case - at the foot of a mountain, frequently proclaims its identity to the traveller by inscribing its name in great, white-washed letters of stone upon the side of the hill. If this were the case with Bethelsdorp, the temptation would be to write on those bare, rocky hills, that form the back-drop for the drama a century and a half have seen on its stage, the one word, "Ichabod." For the glory has departed. And some would even question whether any of its days had been glorious. Around this small outpost of Christendom have centred, from its earliest beginnings, both praise and contumely.

It is the purpose of this investigation to attempt to judge between these opinions, in an attempt to arrive at the truth, by a survey of the years Bethelsdorp enjoyed under the direction of Johannes Theodorus van der Kemp. He has had many critics, many protagonists: perhaps of no other man in the short history of this land has there been such diversity of opinion. Before the judgments of historians and biographers can be assessed, however, the facts of his work must be appreciated, and the effort towards understanding must

be preceded by a brief description of the circumstances antecedent to the foundation of that station, which marked the summit of his life and work.

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The London Missionary Society was founded in 1795 by a body of clergymen and laymen of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, and the Methodist, Independent and Presbyterian communions. As a result of the Evangelical Revival, led by the Wesleys and Whitfield, the conscience of British churchgoers was being pricked over the conditions of the heathen. William Carey's departure for India was but one indication of a growing missionary concern. It was further manifested in the godly person of Dr. David Bogue of Gosport, at that time editor of the Evangelical Magazine. In the issue of September 1794 he inserted an earnest appeal for renewed missionary zeal and endeavour, advocating the formation of a missionary society on the lines of the Baptist organisation supporting Carey.

Bogue's appeal met with immediate and gratifying response, so that on 4th. November in the same year the first formal meeting of those interested was held at the

Castle and Falcon, Aldersgate Street, with the express view "of carrying out the suggestions of Mr. Bogue, and giving birth to a society, on a large and comprehensive scale, for diffusing the gospel to the ends of the earth." (1) There followed a series of appeals to ministers and laity alike, published in the Evangelical Magazine. At the first of a series of fortnightly meetings, preparatory to the inauguration of the Society, held on 15th. January 1795, a "platform of union" was devised and signed by the thirty-three ministers and laymen attending. The philanthropic and ecumenical flavour is noteworthy:-

> We, whose names are here subscribed, declare our earnest desire to exert ourselves for promoting the great work of introducing the Gospel to heathen and other unenlightened countries, and unite together, purposing to use our best endeavours that we may bring forward the formation of an extensive and regularly organised society, to consist of evangelical ministers and laybrethren of all denominations; the object of which society shall be to concert and pursue the most effectual measures for accomplishing this most important and glorious design. (2)

A committee of correspondence was elected, consisting of nine ministers (one Anglican, two of the Church of Scotland, two Methodists, three Independents, and one

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(1) J. Morison, The Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society, pp. xif. (Fisher, Son, & Co. London. 1844.)

(2) Op.cit., p. xvi.

"Presbyterian Dissenter"). By this time the tide of enthusiasm was flooding, and the committee agreed to launch its venture at the peak. A circular was issued by the corresponding committee, giving notice of a general meeting in London, to be held on 22nd., 23rd., and 24th. September 1795, "for the purpose of forming a permanent society, and deciding upon the best mode of carrying our wishes into effect." (3) A preliminary meeting was held at the Castle and Falcon on the evening of 2st. September, where it was unanimously agreed to send missionaries to the heathen. This, rather, than the decision of the general meetings on the days following, marks the inception of the London Missionary Society. (4)

Great congregations accepted the charter of the Society with acclamation, much stirred by the impassioned addresses they heard from the original espousers of the cause. Joseph Hardcastle, Esquire, was elected the Treasurer of the Society; the Rev. John Love and Mr. William Shrubsole of the Bank of England were elected home and foreign secretaries respectively; and twenty-five directors chosen. (5) The first field was to be

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(3) Cited Morison, op.cit., p. xix.
(4) At first it was known merely as "The Missionary Society," though the name was later changed.
(5) Morison, op.cit., p. xxvi.

the Pacific island of Tahiti, and later it was hoped to send missionaries to "the coast of Africa, or to Tartary, by Astrachan, or to Surat, on the Malabar coast, or to Bengal, or the Coromandel coast, or to the island of Sumatra, or to the Pelew Islands." (6)

The aims of the Society were briefly set forth in a letter of introduction, conveyed by van der Kemp to Lord Macartney, then Governor of the Cape. In this it is stated:-

> The Missionary Society was formed for the sole purpose of introducing the Christian Religion into heathen Countries, and is donducted upon the same evangelical principles which distinguish the peaceable and successful labours of the Moravians: the latter now have a Mission established in the interior of the Country under your Excellency's protection. It is an essential principle in the constitution of our Society, as well as in that of the United Brethren, to abstain from all considerations of a political Nature, and in submission and loyal regard to the power which protects Us, to carry on our spiritual labours in peace and quietness. The Society of Moravians is limited to a particular sect of Christians, and in this respect principally differs from ours, which unites in its support and execution every class and Section of Protestant Christians in Great Britain. (7)

It is interesting to note the avowed attitude of the Society towards politics, especially in view of the charges frequently brought against its missionaries in

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(6) Morison, op.cit. , p. xxvii.
(7) Letter from Directors, L.M.S., written from London, dated 4th. October 1798. (U.A. BO/33/74.)

South Africa in this respect. A consideration of this matter must be deferred until later. (8) The ecumenical standpoint of the Society has already been noticed, and it is reiterated in the citation above. This characteristic remains in the outlook of the Society to this day, in spite of the fact that the Congregationalists now form the main support of the Society. (9)

...

Although this investigation is primarily concerned with the development of a particular institution, it is inevitable that the character of its founder will figure largely in the narration. In the town of Rotterdam, on 17th. May 1747, was born to Cornelis van der Kemp (a minister and professor of theology in the Lutheran Church) and his wife, Anna Maria, a son, whom they named Johannes Theodorus. When he was sixteen years of age, he entered the University of Leyden to study medicine, though his chief interests at the time centred round Philosophy and Religion. A brilliant scholar, but intensely proud, he found it impossible to

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(8) See below, chapter six.
(9) The ecumenicity of the L.M.S. has never been more adequately stated than in its 'fundamental principle' - see R. Lovett, The History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895, vol. i., pp. 49-50. (Henry Frowde. London. 1899.)

continue his studies after his brother, Didericus, had been elected professor in the same university, and he escaped this indignity by joining the Dragoons. It is not within the province of this work to describe in detail the locust years that were the next stage in the life of this Augustine of modern missions; that has been all too adequately done by an authoress of his land of adoption, (10) and with greater delicacy by his official biographer. (11) His libertinism, especially with a certain peruke-maker's wife, was partially checked by the problem of training the daughter born of this union, and even more by a sermon he heard, when the text was taken from Psalm 101:2 - "O, when wilt Thou come unto me?" After the peruke-maker's wife had once more demonstrated her infidelity, he was confronted with rearing his daughter alone.

It was at this time (1778) that he fell in love with a cotton-spinner. The picture of a proud captain of horse, gladly performing before a critical public the tasks of a menial, should provide sufficient answer

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(10) Sarah Gertrude Millin, The Burning Man. (William Heinemann. London. 1952.)

(11) A.D. Martin, Doctor Vanderkemp. (Livingstone Press. London. n.d.) The whole of this section owes much to the first twelve chapters of Dr. Martin's biography.

to those critics who accuse him of an overweening arrogance. The philosopher-soldier-libertine renounced his evil ways, under the influence of the chastity of his bride-to-be, and his commission in the army, when the Stadtholder coldly informed him that such a marriage was beneath the dignity of an officer in the Dutch army. So they were married, he in his thirty-third year, Christina Helena Frank, in her twenty-third. The honeymoon was spent in England. Van der Kemp decided to continue his medical studies at Edinburgh, where he obtained his medical degrees in 1782. He returned to Holland, setting up a practice in Middelburg.

If it was through his little daughter that his reclamation first began, it was continued when she and his wife, now catechumens, began to question him concerning the Scriptures and Dogma. He was driven back upon himself; slowly the constrictions of Parmenidean metaphysics were beginning to be shaken off, Deism was gradually giving place to an acceptance of the final revelation in Jesus Christ. The victory, however, was not to be easily gained. After nine years at Middelburg, he moved to Dordrecht in May 1791, and once again found himself on the banks of the Maas. The river was to spell tragedy, for, on 27th. June 1791, the boat he was sailing overturned: his wife and daughter were swept

away and drowned before he could save them, and he himself was rescued only by a miracle. The disaster was the turning-point in his life. A last, bitter struggle was ended by his partaking of the Lord's Supper, and the apprehension of this worthy follower of St. Paul was complete. He had found with von Weisäcker, "that the first sip from the cup of knowledge cuts us off from God - but in the bottom of the cup God waits for those who seek Him." He wrote to a friend, "Jesus is worthy of unlimited confidence."

After service as an army doctor in the Stadtholder's vain attempt to stem the revolutionaries' advance, van der Kemp returned to his books and meditations. It was at this time that a pamphlet fell into his hands. The description it contained of the formation of a Missionary Society in London was the directive for his future. He applied to become one of its missionaries, went to London for an interview, and was ordained at the Crown Court Presbyterian Church. As a preliminary step to his great work, he went back to the Netherlands, to found a Missionary Society there. His work of disturbing what Gibbon would have described as the "fat slumbers of the Church" was successful. In all the leading cities he preached to awaken the consciences of his countrymen. A Dutch Missionary Society was formed,

and van der Kemp returned to England with Johannes Jacobus Kicherer, who had volunteered to accompany him on his expedition.

These two men, together with John Edmonds and William Edwards, sailed from Portsmouth on S.S.HHills-borough, a convict ship en route to Australia, two days before Christmas 1798. The party arrived in Table Bay on 31st. March 1799, after a voyage (as far as the missionaries were concerned) of selfless service to the convicts. On arrival at the Cape, the four men found an enthusiastic welcome awaiting them, expressed chiefly by the Rev. Michiel Christiaan Vos of Roodezand (now called Tulbagh), soon to be one of van der Kemp's most inveterate foes. They were also favourably received by the Acting-Governor, Major-General Dundas, and by W.S. van Ryneveld, the Fiscal (or Attorney-General). Van der Kemp lost no time in organising the South African Missionary Society, which was to be the representative of the London and Netherlands Societies at the Cape. The party thereafter divided, Kicherer and Edwards for Bushmanland, van der Kemp and Edmonds proceeding to Kaffirland.

On 29th. May 1799 these two missionaries left for the eastern frontier. Exactly a month later they arrived at Graaff-Reinet, to find the country in a disturbed state, the Boers preparing for a punitive expedition to Ngqika's kraal, and the Landdrost Maynier doing his utmost to preserve peace, and to prevent the missionaries from hazarding their lives across the Fish River. Once again the narrative must regretfully be condensed; the struggles of eighteen months among the Xhosas, when van der Kemp laboured alone for a year, with one convert to show for his labours, have been told elsewhere. (12) On 14th. May 1801 he arrived back in Graaff-Reinet, where two new colleagues, James Read and A.A. van der Lingen, were awaiting him. The events which followed belong to the next chapter.

The earlier history of van der Kemp is important for the light it throws on his character. More will be said on this subject later. (13) It is sufficient to note here that he was a scholar, who turned soldier. In spite of his years in the army, he remained a philo-

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(12) See A.D. Martin, op.cit., chapters xi, xii.; R.H.W.Shepherd, Where Aloes Flame, pp. 79-87. (Lutterworth Press. London. 1948.)

(13) See below, chapter eight.

sopher, more interested in the speculative than the active side of life. Yet he possessed a singular tenacity of will, and in pursuit of his convinced object would count public opinion for nothing. Although in the Revolutionary Wars he remained a "King's man," refusing a position of honour in the new Batavian Republican Government, he was, none the less, a child of the times. His philanthropic tendencies were nurtured in such soil as Rousseau's theories of the noble savage, and were brought to fruition as he became convinced of the truth of Paul's assertions that Christianity had abolished natural divisions in the spiritual realm of the Gospel. His conversion had so changed his outlook, that the once proud student could pray, "Oh, invite me amongst Thy swine;" the brand had been plucked form the fire, whose own burning was to banish from many lives the darkness of sin and of ignorance of the love of God.

# CHAPTER TWO.

## THE FOUNDING OF A HOTTENTOT INSTITUTION.

The town of Graaff-Reinet is known to-day as "the Gem of the Karroo." It is the capital of a far-flung empire of great farms, whose subjects are sheep, where the currency is wool. But when van der Kemp first came there, it was a small frontier village, comprising a few houses, a church, and a drostdy, from which the tricolor had flown. It was in 1795 that the Dutch farmers, angered at the callous indifference of extortionate East India Company officials, had desperately thrown off the shackles of authority, and declared themselves the Republic of Graaff-Reinet. Their venture was short-lived, however, for four months later the British took the Cape, and immediately set about re-establishing law and order. Maynier, who had been forced to relinquish his position in face of republican threats to his life, was re-instated landdrost, after the British troops had dispersed the rebels and taken the ringleaders prisoner. This was but one cause for further discontent in the district.

Not seventy miles (as the crow flies) eastwards from Graaff-Reinet flows the Great Fish River, in those days the boundary between European civilisation and the Bantu. Such a demarcation was more ideal than real: the

Xhosas were wont to raid the outlying farms, driving the stolen cattle across the Fish River, and the farmers were equally used to riding in pursuit, to regain their cattle. This situation was accepted until the Governor strictly forbade any communication between the Xhosas and the white settlers. The Xhosas demonstrated their complete disregard for the Governor's commands by continuing their depredations, and the farmers were forced to look on, while their property was lost to them. To add to the confusion, Ndlambe, uncle of Ngqika, crossed the Fish River, and settled with his people in the Zuurveld. This new threat to the peace of the frontier added fuel to the fire of grievances against the British government.

Conditions in Graaff-Reinet were serious, but the situation did not become explosive until Major Sherlock arrived with his dragoons and Hottentot soldiers, to see that order was kept, and the law obeyed. Maynier was suddenly faced with the problem of accommodating these troops. He commandeered the church, as the largest building in the village. This was considered by the farmers to be sacrilege of a high order: that a church should be used as barracks was, in all conscience, bad enough; that it should afterwards be used to house Hottentots was unthinkable!

When van der Kemp arrived at Graaff-Reinet, on his return from Ngqika's kraal, he found Read and van der Lingen carrying on the work there. In a letter he describes their work as follows:-

> Brother Read labours with all his might among the English dragoons; and Oh! glory and thanks to God, his labours are visibly blessed. Brother Vanderlingen preaches, and catechises the Dutch people; and unworthy Vanderkemp is favoured with between 150 and 200 Hottentots, to whom he speaks every evening, from six o'clock to eight, the word of God. ... Brother Vanderlingen assists me faithfully in catechising the heathen; and I am confident that my dear Brother Read will soon be enabled to do the same, as he makes a very rapid progress in the Dutch language. (1)

It appears that the hostility of the villagers had not yet become general, for in the same letter he mentions that he had declined an invitation to become minister of the church at Graaff-Reinet.

From the outset, van der Kemp realised that something had to be done for the many Hottentots squatting in and around the village, whose condition was deplorable, as well as for the roving bands of their kinsmen, who were terrorising the frontier. Before the year was out he addressed the Governor a lengthy letter, in which he outlined his scheme for a Hottentot Institution. The

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(1) Written from Graaff-Reinet, dated 27th. May 1801, and published in The Christian Magazine (1802), vol. vi., p. 43.

thirteen heads under which the proposals were set out are of such importance as to warrant their being quoted verbatim: (2)

> 1st, It appears to us desirable that our missionary settlement should be formed between the Bushman River and Algoa Bay, at a moderate distance from Fort Frederick; and if a proper supply of water be procured there, which for the present is doubtful, on the banks of the Sundy (sic) River.
>
> 2nd, The chief object and aim of the missionaries, under whose direction this settlement shall be established, ought to be to promote the knowledge of Christ and the practice of real piety, both by instruction and example, among the Hottentots and other heathen, who shall be admitted and formed into a regular Society; and, in the second, place, the temporal happiness and usefulness of this Society, with respect to the country at large.
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> 3rd, Into this Society those only ought to be admitted who will engage themselves to live according to the rules of its institution.
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> 4th, The actual admission into and expulsion from this Society, shall entirely depend upon the judgment of the missionaries; but it seems necessary, that of those who shall have lived in the families of colonists, none shall be considered admissible but

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(2) This letter, which a thorough search could not trace in the Union Archives, is quoted from an anonymous publication, The History of the Civilization and Christianization of South Africa; from its first settlement by the Dutch, to the final surrender of it to the British, pp. 195-200 (Waugh & Innes. Edinburgh. 1832.). It also appears in John Philip's Researches in South Africa, and in Lovett, op.cit., pp. 499ff., where the date of writing is said to be the 11th. February 1801. The authenticity of this letter is not in question, for Dundas acknowledges receipt of it on 26th. November 1801 (U.A. B0/54/325).

such as shall procure a written declaration of their admissibility, signed by the landdrost of the district where they have lived.

5th, As we by no means wish to counteract, but, on the contrary, to promote as much as possible, the labours of the Moravian brethren, we are resolved not to admit any individual belonging to their institution, unless it be with their express permission, and at their request. We hope to be equally cautious in respect to other missionary institutions which may in future times be formed within the colony.

6th, As we are of the opinion, that the rule laid down by Paul, - 'That if any would not work, neither should he eat,' ought to be strictly observed in every Christian Society, our intention is to discourage idleness, and laziness, and to have the individuals of our institution, as much as circumstances will admit, employed in different useful occupations, for the cultivation of their rational faculties, or exercise of the body, as means of subsistence, and of promoting the welfare of this Society, and the colony at large. These occupations may be referred either to agriculture or farming, the management of cattle, or mechanical arts, and little manufactories, e.g., soap-boiling, candle making, spinning of thread, manufactories of paper, tanning, pot-making, brick-making, turning, &co.

7th, As the introduction of these employments will involve the European missionary societies in considerable expenses, the workmen should be considered as journeymen in the service of the Society, and be paid weekly for their labour; but the products of their labour should be the property of the Society, and sold for its benefit. The fund, however, arising from the sale of these articles, shall be entirely devoted for charitable institutions of a missionary nature, among the heathen, e.g., the erection of other missionary settlements, an orphan house, in which abandoned and fatherless children may be educated, or the subsistence of the sick, old, or poor. By these measures we intend not to preclude anyone who, by his industry and diligence shall be enabled to elevate himself above the class of journeyman, from becoming a master and proprietor in his own business.

8th, Should the settlement, which is to be put under the direction of two missionaries and a school-master, increase to a greater number than can be directed by three missionaries and two school-masters, it appears better to divide it into two distinct settlements, to be placed in different parts of the country, than to extend it beyond the limits mentioned.

9th, Good order and domestic discipline is to be maintained by the missionaries themselves. The settlers are to be divided as Christians, catechumens, and hearers. By the last we understand heathen, who will flock to us to hear the word of God. By catechumens, heathen who are more particularly under our inspection and care, instructed in the doctrines of the gospel, and submit to ecclesiastical discipline. Christians are those who bring forth fruits of conversion, and be by baptism instituted as members of the church.

10th, We have no severer punishment than excommunication from the Church, and expulsion from the Society. If we shall be compelled to proceed to this last step, we shall think it our duty to acquaint the landdrost of the district with the case. Should any of the settlers be accused of a crime against the laws of the country, we shall think it likewise our duty to inform the landdrost of the fact, that justice may be administered by the court to whose cognizance the crime belongs; and no malefactor shall find a shelter within our walls.

11th, As your excellency cannot be indifferent with respect to the state and progress of the institution, we suppose that it will please your excellency to accept at least once a-year a report as to its state in detail, by a list, pointing out the number, names, qualities, occupations, and other circumstances of the members, according to a model which shall be approved by your excellency.

12th, Our ideas respecting the polygamy of the heathen exactly correspond with those of the Moravian brethren.

13th, As to the protection which we may expect from your excellency, we entirely trust to your excellency's declared resolution to favour our missionary exertions,

> and request that we may enjoy the same protection and privileges which are granted to the brethren in the Bavian's Kloof. The state of our congregation, formed out of Hottentots, and a few of other nations at Graaf Reinet, is such that it shall be necessary to leave an individual missionary in that village, for the instruction of those who shall, by their circumstances, be constrained to reside at this place. The number of children in our reading school amounts to one hundred and twelve, of whom, however, seldom more than seventy are present. We have been obliged to print a spelling-book for their use, and we hope that your excellency will permit us to print and sell little school-books, for the benefit of the future establishment, and to educate some of our young men in the art of printing, as a peculiar branch of their employment.

To this the Governor replied, (3) promising all the support possible from the authorities, and suggesting the banks of the Loerie or van Staaden's Rivers as the best site for such an establishment. At the same time, he requested the new landdrost of Graaff-Reinet, F.R.Bresler, to undertake a survey of these parts, with a view to selecting a site for the institution. (4) His plan was that the Hottentots at Graaff-Reinet, as well as those who had engaged in military service, with their wives and families, should be accommodated; and he ordered a supply to rice to be sent, "till by their own industry they shall no longer require such assistance."

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(3) Written from Cape Town, on 26th. November 1801. (U.A. BO/54/325.)

(4) Letter, written by H.Ross, Deputy Secretary, from Cape Town, on 27th. November 1801. (U.A. BO/54/327.)

In the meantime, affairs at Graaff-Reinet had become grave. It is not the purpose of this investigation to record the cross-currents of public opinion that changed the village into a dangerous whirl-pool, where nearly all Christian feeling was submerged. The rebels (as they acknowledged themselves) and van der Kemp were ranged on opposite sides, and it was yet another instance of an irresistible force meeting an immovable object. The tragedy of the prayer-meeting on 1st. June 1801 (where the Hottentots recited Psalm 134, and the Dutch members replied with Psalm 74:4-10) is one part of the picture; the Church Wardens writing to the mother congregation in Cape Town, describing how under van der Kemp "the Divine Worship was so hurt," (5) is the other. Soon the two factions were speaking not in Psalms, but with bullets.

The reply from General Dundas came none too soon. Read was sent post-haste to Algoa Bay, for consultation with the commander of the garrison at Fort Frederick. He arrived back in Graaff-Reinet on 29th. January 1802, with the news that there was no suitable land available in the vicinity, except one farm, whose owner had been

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(5) Undated letter, perhaps early March 1802. (U.A. BO/33/165-168.)

imprisoned at Cape Town for treason. On the same day, a letter was received from Dundas, advising van der Kemp to remain at Graaff-Reinet, in view of the uncertainties of the international situation, though he did not absolutely forbid the proposed venture. Trouble had broken out between the soldiers and the Hottentots, which accelerated van der Kemp's decision to ignore the advice of the Governor, and shake off the dust of Graaff-Reinet. Major Sherlock approved, and authorised the party to make use of the farm of Theunis Bota, some seven or eight miles west of Fort Frederick. (6)

Of the 799 Hottentots then under van der Kemp's spiritual oversight, 301 expressed the desire to accompany him to the coast; a further 356 had no choice but to stay, being in Government employment. Only 66 of the remainder wished to stay at Graaff-Reinet, where van der Lingen would minister to them, the others deciding to follow the troops to Cape Town. A factor affecting their decisions was a report - later proved false - that a large band of colonists was lying in wait for van der Kemp and his party. Major Sherlock offered an

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(6) Journal, 1802. (L.M.S.R. B/1/2.) This is the correct site of Bota's Place. Cory, The Rise of South Africa, vol. i, pp. 112f., has confused this place with the site of Bethelsdorp. He thus makes the site of original settlement the same as that of the later, permanent establishment, which is quite incorrect.

escort of soldiers, but the missionary declined any such protection. (7)

Preparations for the journey proceeded apace. The missionaries hoped to complete the journey in fifteen days, and the authorities provided 196 sheep and a waggon to speed them on their way. On the Sunday before their departure, van der Kemp preached from Genesis 35:2-3. A further indication that the time was ripe for moving came in the form of a letter from the Governor, cancelling his earlier suggestions, and urging the missionaries to move as soon as possible. So, on 20th. February 1802, (8) under cover of darkness, the party left the scene of so much hostility.

The Hottentots who accompanied the two missionaries numbered one hundred and nine, but, as they travelled, others who had taken refuge in the kloofs and forests joined the band, so that by 25th. February there were well over two hundred in the party. Once again, rumour of a Boer commando preparing to attack them reduced their numbers: "Captain" Wildeman took his followers away. A meeting with Klaas Stuurman, leader of another band of pillaging Hottentots, gave van der Kemp the

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(7) Journal 1802. (L.M.S.R. B/1/2.)

(8) Martin, op.cit., p. 118, incorrectly states that it was early in March. The correct date is given in the Journal, and in a letter to Dundas, 18th. March 1802 (U.A. BO/28/37.).

opportunity to remonstrate with the man, and procure an assurance of his peaceful intentions regarding the colonists. (It is to his credit that Stuurman kept his word, and left the area unmolested, until further raids by the Dutch commandos reduced him to such straits that he was forced to fight against them, in order to survive.) A hundred Hottentots joined Klaas Stuurman's band, leaving only seventy-seven with van der Kemp and Read.

It was on 5th. March 1802 that the company arrived at Fort Frederick, where the commander, Major Lemoyne, and his officers treated them with much kindness. Two days later they moved to Bota's Place, and the Hottentot Institution was begun. A Proclamation, issued from the Castle of Good Hope, on 2nd. April, authorised van der Kemp

> to instruct the Hottentots in the neighbourhood of Zwartkops Bay (sic) in the Christian religion, and by exhortation to reclaim them from their present wandering marauding state, to animate them to industry, and to encourage them under every circumstance to act with moral rectitude and humanity. (9)

There can be no doubt that the site was regarded by all as only temporary, until the future of that part of the country (as of the Cape itself) had been determined. The spot was not suitable for a company of one

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(9) Proclamation, signed by H. Ross, Deputy Secretary, (U.A. BO/55/25.).

hundred and sixty persons: the ground was barely fertile, though there happened to be, according to van der Kemp, an abundance of timber and limestone for building, and grass for thatching. (10) The Governor had sent a supply of corn, partly to feed the Hottentots, the rest for sowing. Each family was given 800 square paces of land, on which to build a house and lay out a kitchen-garden. Three buildings already stood on the farm: a dwelling-house of three rooms, another fit for a Church and School, and the third in which the missionaries set up their printing-press, which soon produced a small volume - a spelling-book of 3,138 monosyllables. From this book instruction was given twice daily in reading and writing. Every morning and evening the missionaries gathered their people into the school for private worship, when van der Kemp read a chapter of Scripture and explained it. Service was held once on Sundays, and catechumens' classes each Wednesday and Saturday. (11)

Any hope of early success was dispelled by the outbreak of an epidemic. In this part of the country the water-supply has even been proverbially inadequate. At Bota's Place it was necessary to dig wells, but these

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(10) Journal 1802. (L.M.S.R. B/1/2.)
(11) Ibid.

were found to contain only brackish water. The inhabitants were, therefore, forced to make use of the pools of stagnant water in the vicinity, and it was through drinking this that an epidemic spread through the settlement. Van der Kemp himself was struck down with it, and, at the time of writing the report for 1802 (30th. March 1803), he had had to keep to his bed for eleven months; nor was he then fully recovered.

As a consequence of van der Kemp's indisposition, the burden of the work devolved upon Read. Not only had he the care of the mission, but his duties extended to the garrison at Fort Frederick also, where he ministered each Sunday until its evacuation. There were definite signs of progress, among the most significant being the conversions of Roosje, an old Hottentot woman, a girl of fourteen named Hesje Ourson, and a Hottentot man, John Vogel. For these and other "seekers" a special meeting was held on Sunday afternoons. Even more important, however, was the occasion in September 1802, when Read was at Fort Frederick, meeting the Governor. There was no one available to conduct evening prayers, until two of the converts, Cupido Kakkerlak and Samson Tidor, requested van der Kemp to allow them to take the service. This indication of a development

towards self-support in religious matters is noteworthy, and gratifying at this early stage.

The good-will of the Governor had provided for the inception of a Hottentot institution. It was largely due to Dundas' interest and support that the venture did not fail in the first few months. He sent wheat and barley to the mission, and ploughs to aid in the agriculture. At Bota's Place, however, the ground was hardly suitable for agriculture, and the ploughs were, as a consequence, often nearly useless. The difficulties were increased by the marauding bands of Hottentots and Xhosas, who stole their cattle. There was, on the other hand, one gleam of sunshine piercing the gloom, which the missionaries understood as a sure sign of divine favour: the institution was in great need of a bell, to summon the people to worship, or to school, or as a warning when danger threatened. In the July a ship was wrecked on the rocky coast hard by the farm, and her bell cast up on the beach. From this event, doubtful as their interpretation of events might be, the missionaries drew encouragement to continue despite adverse circumstances.

Meanwhile the Peace of Amiens had been signed, by which the Cape was to be handed back to the Dutch. Dundas wished van der Kemp and Read to remove to Cape Town, so that their safety during the interregnum might be assured. He visited Bota's Place on 6th. September 1802, to seek to persuade van der Kemp of the wisdom of this move. At another meeting eight days later, this time in Fort Frederick, he was no more successful, for the missionaries refused to leave their flock; van der Kemp replied for both in words unshakeable in their determination:-

> To this I answered (he writes) that I hoped to remain faithful to the calling to which God had called me; that even if I knew, that I could save my life by leaving them, I should not fear to offer it for the least child among them. (12)

When the Governor found it was impossible to move them from their resolve, he offered them the use of Fort Frederick, should they need it, and arranged for a very handsome gift of provisions from the garrison's stores to be sent to the institution. This included: 6,000 lb. rice, 6 casks salted beef, 3 waggons, 1 fish-net, a corn mill, two corn-sieves, a pair of smith's bellows, and several agricultural implements. As if this were not

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(12) Journal 1802. (L.M.S.R. B/1/2.) Cited also in Martin, op. cit., pp. 121f.

enough, Dundas in addition gave them two hundred sheep, fifty-nine "labouring oxen," eleven milch cows, and ninety-six horned cattle. (13)

Upon the departure of the English garrison from Fort Frederick, conditions on the frontier deteriorated rapidly. Even before this, the marauding bands had been causing much trouble, even to the missionaries. In spite of their attempts to convert the leaders of these bands to peaceful pursuits, matters went from bad to worse, until the Governor was forced to prohibit all intercourse between the Hottentots of the institution and those living along the Sundays River. (14) A commando under Tjaart van der Walt was called out against the insurgents, but it was repelled, and at the Gamtoos River van der Walt was killed. In most of these raids Klaas Stuurman remained neutral, thus making himself a target for both Dutch and native attacks. It was van der Kemp's championship of this man that re-awakened among the Dutch their earlier animosity towards him and his fellow missionaries.

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(13) Journal 1802. (L.M.S.R. B/1/2.)

(14) Letter, written by Ross, from the Castle of Good Hope, dated 28th. May 1802. (U.A. BO/55/95.)

Eight days after the British troops had left, the establishment was attacked by a band of Hottentots, led by the brother of Klaas Stuurman, Andries. At midnight of the 27th. September, the peace of the station was shattered as fifty shots were fired into the air, and preparations were made to drive off all the cattle. The marauders drove the cattle before them, as a shield, in their advance on the mission house, where all the inhabitants had taken refuge. The cattle, however, took fright at some freshly sawn timber and bolted, leaving the Hottentots exposed. Holding their fire until it became imperative that they shoot or be themselves shot, the missionaries and their followers at last opened fire, and were successful in driving off the marauders. Andries Stuurman was shot through the thigh, severing an artery, and he died within a few minutes. Most of the cattle were saved, but the following night the attack was renewed. The insurgents, however, found the cattle secured and the place barricaded. Two days later they attacked the establishment in broad daylight, stabbing a wood-cutter, and driving off the whole herd. The Hottentots of the institution raced to the defence, put the marauders to flight, and rescued all but eight of the cattle. It was obvious that this experience was but the prelude to more sustained attacks on the institu-

tion, and for this reason van der Kemp decided that it would be necessary after all to leave Bota's Place, and accept the Governor's invitation to use the buildings at Fort Frederick.

At the Fort the difficulties increased rather than abated. For one thing, the missionaries and their followers were not the only refugees making use of the place. The Dutch farmers from the neighbourhood had been ordered by the Governor to proceed to the Fort and remain there, until the Batavian authorities arrived. These were the same people whom rumour had represented as lying in wait for van der Kemp and his people on their march from Graaff-Reinet, and it would seem that their subsequent attitude lent some colour to previous suggestions. They resented very deeply the fact that they were forced to mingle with the Hottentots, and that these were treated by the missionaries as their equals. Notwithstanding express commands by the Governor to the contrary, (15) they put every difficulty in the way of

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(15) Letter from Bresler, landdrost, to Boers assembled on the farm of Thomas Ignatius Ferreira, snr., written from Fort Frederick, 17th. September 1802 (U.A. B0/28/109):-

"... His Excellency positively commands that no hinder (sic) and molestation whatsoever shall be given to the religious exercises of the said Missionaries and their Hottentots, but that, on the contrary, in the event of

only in June 1803!

van der Kemp, especially after Read married one of the Hottentot girls of the institution. The work suffered in proportion to the opposition. A number of Hottentots ran away, to join their brethren along the Sunday's River. There had been 301 Hottentots at Bota's Place, but now there were barely two hundred. Yet there were indications that the spiritual work was progressing, especially among the children and young people. In his Journal van der Kemp mentions how one could hear them praying in the woods long before daybreak. (16) On the other hand, there had been a few who had lapsed: four people had been excluded from what van der Kemp calls "the meeting of experience," but of these three had repented, and been re-admitted.

When the Batavian Governor, Lieutenant-General Jan Willem Janssens, arrived on the eastern frontier in April 1803, it was to find disorder and hatred at Fort Frederick. The Dutch farmers had shown to the missionaries all the opposition and antipathy their fellows had evinced at Graaff-Reinet, and had taken pleasure in deliberately making some of the male Hottentots drunk,

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their being compelled to quit their present abode, and to retreat to the Buildings at this Bay, you are chearfully (sic) to receive and protect them."

(16) Journal 1802. (L.M.S.R. B/1/2.)

while they seduced the girls. Janssens arrived with his mind already perverted by the enemies of the mission in Cape Town, but a frank discussion with van der Kemp, aided by their friendship of earlier years, ironed out the difficulties. A site for the mission had to be selected, as, soon after their departure from Bota's Place, the missionaries had had the mortification of seeing the farmers burn the buildings there to the ground. The new site was soon selected, and named by the Governor "Bethelsdorp." On the 2nd. June 1803, van der Kemp and Read moved, with their people, to the new institution, whose progress will be described in a fresh chapter. The journey here had been long and arduous, fraught with danger, and the missionaries had tasted despair. At last, however, the vision that prompted van der Kemp to preach from Genesis 35 before they left Graaff-Reinet had become a reality: they had gone up to their Bethel, and there an altar was to be raised to God, and not all the hordes of darkness could prevail against it, to break it down.

# CHAPTER THREE.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF THE WORK AT BETHELSDORP.

Looking almost due north from the windswept crag on which Fort Frederick perches, it is possible to discern a line of low hills in the middle distance. At their foot, just out of sight, lies the village of Bethelsdorp, to which van der Kemp was allowed to take his people. It is a barren spot, with little or no vegetation, save the scrub for which the Karroo further north is famous. The ground is sterile, with only outcrops of rock to break the monotony; the veld is sour. And the south-easter, which blows across the flats of of the Zwartkops River, is the doctor of the village, as it is to the Cape Peninsula six hundred miles away. The water supply is severely limited, there being little possibility of sinking wells, and the stream that runs through the village is often a mere trickle. It is variously known as the Bethel or Little Zwartkops River, rising in the kloof behind the settlement, and joining the Zwartkops River a few miles to the south-east. Near the confluence are to be found the fields of which Campbell wrote so enthusiastically. This, then, is Bethelsdorp, famous and respected, or notorious and despised, as one's sympathies or prejudices have been aroused.

The new Governor, Janssens, as has already been mentioned, arrived at Fort Frederick in April 1803, to find van der Kemp, Read, and their people settled there. He soon came to realise that something had to be done for these people, and, as soon as arrangements could be made, ordered a survey of the neighbourhood, in an effort to discover a suitable site for the settlement of the Hottentots. The desirability of such an institution was further impressed upon the Governor by a letter from van der Kemp, outlining his ideals and intentions regarding it. In some respects, he repeats in summary form his aspirations expressed in the earlier letter to Dundas, but he has more to say on the practical issues, as was to be expected after some months in the actual work. (1)

In this letter he begins by outlining the nature, ideals and internal management of the proposed institution, which is a recapitulation of his previous views. Concerning the situation of the institution, he suggests that they should be given a farm similar to Bota's Place, or that of the Burger Hurter on the Loerie River, or of Koldi the butcher on the Bushman's River. He

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(1) The letter is written by van der Kemp, in the names of Read and himself, from Fort Frederick, dated 13th. May 1803. (U.A. BR/93/245-248.) As with all his official correspondence during this period, the letter is in Dutch.

points out that the ideal would be to have two farms, one for the husbandry of cattle and sheep, the other for agriculture. Further, certain buildings would be essential - a church, a school, a dwelling-house, barns for their grain, and store-rooms for the many implements and utensils used on a mission.

From these considerations, he goes on to discuss the means by which the inhabitants could earn a living. Here, once more, is an echo of his earlier correspondence with Dundas, and is important as a corrective to his critics who accuse him of woolly thinking, and no faculty for practical planning. He points out that the main means of subsistence must be agriculture, so that each family should possess enough ground to reap half a bushel of corn; and, further, own a garden which would yield cabbages, potatoes, peas, beans and pumpkins for winter provisions, as well as other vegetables in the summer. Another avenue of production would be cattle-farming, while some of the men might be able to make a living out of hunting and the sale of skins, or by fishing, and selling their catches to the local farmers. Yet another means of livelihood could be found by those who owned waggons, transporting goods for the garrison or the farmers. Many of the inhabitants of the institution might be expected to earn a living

by hiring themselves out to the local farmers, while others could be employed in remunerative work on the mission, such as stone-cutting, brick-making, soap manufacture, sawing timber, metal-working, etc.

Arising from this, van der Kemp requested Janssens to give the necessary authorisation for beginning the institution; that its boundaries should be clearly marked; that the Government should assist the mission with grain and two ploughs, until there had been an opportunity to acquire a supply from the mission lands; that a supply of ammunition be given them from the magazine at Fort Frederick; and that permission should be given for the inhabitants of the institution to work the salt-pan near by, and sell the salt at a reasonable price.

The contents of this letter must have persuaded Janssens that the scheme was practicable, for he gave instructions that Dirk van Reenen and Gerhardus Oosthuizen, Commandants Botha and van Rooyen, together with James Read, should survey the locality, and select a suitable site for the erection of the institution, which he was pleased to name Bethelsdorp. On 30th. May 1803 they reported to Janssens that they had found a site, between the farms of Thomas Ignatius Ferreira, senior, and the Widow Scheepers. In a letter of 31st.

May [2] Janssens outlined his regulations by which Bethelsdorp should be governed, but pointed out that it was necessary for the whole matter to be finalised by the Commissary-General de Mist and himself, on his return to Cape Town, where the official records of the colony were housed. It was not before the beginning of the new year that this confirmation arrived, [3] in form very similar to Janssens' earlier letter, but with an appended note by de Mist. Fourteen regulations were laid down for the institution, as follows:-

1. The Institution was to be under the protection of the Commanding Officer of Fort Frederick.

2. The institution should know no other authority or political influence than that of the Batavian Government, and the Hottentots should be acquainted with its views.

3. No one already bound by contract with a local farmer, or able to support himself, should be admitted to the institution.

4. Information of differences between Hottentots and the inhabitants should be passed on to the Commanding Officer of Fort Frederick by the missionaries;

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(2) Written from Fort Frederick. (U.A. BR/93/233-237.) In this connection it should be noted that Dr. Philip is incorrect when he states in his Researches that the missionaries had no say at all in the selection of the site of Bethelsdorp.

(3) Written by Janssens, from Cape Town, dated 12th. January 1804. The original of this letter, together with a translation into English by Rev. Mr. Barker, is in London (L.M.S.R. A/4/2). Another translation is available in Cory, op.cit., pp. 150-152.

he was to be responsible for hearing the case presented by the Field Cornets and both parties involved, and, until a civil authority had been set up, should give a provisional verdict.

5. Van der Kemp was to furnish the Commander of Fort Frederick with a list of inhabitants of the institution, and, after Bethelsdorp had been legally established, a list of arrivals and departures should be submitted every three months.

6. It was the wish of the Government that not too many natives should be housed at the one institution; if this became over-crowded, a new station should be provided.

7. No Hottentots, except those engaged in hunting, or who had been given a note of permission, were to possess or be given fire-arms. Van der Kemp himself was allowed a gun.

8. A quantity of inferior powder was always to be kept at Bethelsdorp. This was to be provided to van der Kemp by the Commander of Fort Frederick, upon proper request, and for payment.

9. Those Hottentots who had been vagrants, or who had been living with the Xhosas, upon arrival at Bethelsdorpwere immediately to hand over their guns, which were to be delivered to the Commander of Fort Frederick.

10. Van der Kemp was to take every precaution to see that the Hottentots gave no valid cause for complaints by the farmers.

11. The institution, as all other loyal subjects, was to work to further peace, order, and safety in the colony.

12. The institution, receiving the protection of the Commander of Fort Frederick, was to reciprocate by being as helpful as possible to his garrison.

13. No service was to be expected from the Hottentots other than under good treatment and equitable payment.

14. It was to be part of van der Kemp's duties to endeavour to bring the roving Hottentots, such as Stuurman and his clan, to observe law and order.

Of these regulations, four demand somewhat closer attention: the rest are what one might expect to be laid down for a frontier mission station in troublous days. The two regulations concerning Hottentot labour for the farmers (numbers 3 and 13) are noteworthy, as ensuring, on the one hand, that the farmers were not deprived of their labourers, and, on the other, that the servants were fairly remunerated. It was with the best will in the world that these regulations were drawn up, but it will be shown later how virtually impossible it was for them to be obeyed. The regulation limiting the size of Bethelsdorp (number 6) is important also, as showing the nervousness of the authorities regarding a large assembly of non-Europeans in any one place. The most significant regulation, however, in the view of the present writer, is number 4, where the missionaries were enjoined to inform the authorities of friction between the Hottentots and European settlers. It was ever one of the complaints advanced by the farmers that the missionaries of Bethelsdorp acted as informers on behalf of the Hottentots, and that the ear of Government was deafened with their reports. Here, however, it is clear that it was the wish of the Batavian authorities that van der Kemp and Read should act in just this way, and,

during this regime at any rate, this cause for complaint against them was invalid.

Appended to the regulations summarised above, is a note by de Mist, of the same date. It contains further regulations, all of which are of interest:-

1. Within twelve months of that date, van der Kemp was to request the Commander of Fort Frederick to undertake a provisional marking out of the ground belonging to the institution. He, with the Field Cornet, was to be responsible for giving "a notification of the land, such as is reasonable and with proper room, rather too large than too small," to give the Hottentots opportunity to lay out gardens and corn-fields, and to allow space for cattle-grazing.

2. The men of the institution were to mark out its limits by planting trees, shrubs, or aloes, or the erecting of stone beacons. On request, the present site might be enlarged.

3. None of the ground was to be sold or bartered, except to establish someone already domiciled in the village, and funds accruing in this way were to be placed in a common chest or purse.

4. The missionaries of Bethelsdorp (or of any other institution) were not permitted to preach, teach, or hold meetings at places where a teacher of the Dutch Reformed Church, on public authority, performed services. This prohibition, however, was not tobe applicable to vacant churches where there was no ordinary teacher.

5. Whether the ground was paid for or not, Bethelsdorp was to be treated in every respect as Baviaans Kloof (Genadendal), so long as the above conditions were fulfilled.

It must be admitted that these conditions were, in the main, extremely liberal, especially when it is recalled how embittered the local farmers had become, and how they had endeavoured to pervert the mind of the Governor on the subject of van der Kemp and his institution. The third regulation is of interest, as showing that the Batavian authorities were not averse to the idea of non-Europeans owning land. The fourth regulation, of course, is a reiteration of the peculiar prejudice that made the Dutch Reformed Church appear the enemy of missions from the time of Georg Schmidt, the first Moravian missionary to the Cape, and for at least a century after his abortive attempt to evangelise the Hottentots.

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It was on 2nd. June 1803 that van der Kemp, Read, and their followers left Fort Frederick, and the story of Bethelsdorp began. The first work demanding attention was the erection of a church, school and dwelling-house for the missionaries, and houses for the Hottentots. From the description of a visitor to the station in January 1804
December 1803, it is possible to gain some glimpse of the lay-out of the place, but it should be borne in mind that this visitor was predisposed to believe the worst

of the place and its inhabitants, and, furthermore, Dr. Henry Lichtenstein is guilty of some gross inaccuracies when speaking of van der Kemp. (4) Lichtenstein's description of Bethelsdorp has often been quoted by those adversely inclined towards the work of van der Kemp, and it will do no harm to give his words in full once more:-

> It is scarcely possible to describe the wretched situation in which this establishment appeared to us, especially after having seen that at Baviaans-kloof. On a wide plain, without a tree, almost without water fit to drink, are scattered forty or fifty little huts in the form of hemispheres, but so low that a man cannot stand upright in them. In the midst is a small clay hut, thatched with straw, which goes by the name of a church, and close by, some smaller huts of the same materials for the missionaries. All are so wretchedly built, and are kept with so little care and attention, that they have a perfectly ruinous appearance. For a great way round, not a bush is to be seen, for what there might have been originally, have long ago been used for firewood: the ground all about is perfectly naked, and hard trodden down, no where the least trace of human industry: wherever the eye is cast, nothing is presented but lean, ragged, or naked figures, with indolent sleepy countenances. The support of the missionary institutions in England and Holland, the favour of the government, the chace (sic), and the keeping of a few cattle, the produce of which is scarcely worth mentioning - these are the means to which two hundred and fifty men have to look for their support. (5)

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(4) These are listed by A.D. Martin, op.cit., p. 132, and will be discussed later, see chapter eight.

(5) Henry Lichtenstein, Travels in Southern Africa, vol. i., p. 294. Translated by Anne Plumptre. (Van Riebeeck Society, No. 10. Cape Town. 1928.)

With (it would seem) malicious satisfaction, he adds, in a footnote at the end of his description of the visit to Bethelsdorp, the remark that in that neighbourhood the place was nicknamed "Bedelaarsdorp" - "Beggars' Village." (6)

No doubt there is a lot in Lichtenstein's description that is true, for it can hardly be supposed that a man would deliberately invent statements concerning a small outpost of civilisation which he, in all probability, would never see again. Yet it must be pointed out that Lichtenstein came to Bethelsdorp prejudiced against the place and the man at its head. It is true that the buildings were little better than hovels, being built of mud and straw, but it should be borne in mind that this site was purely a temporary one for the institution, and van der Kemp would have deserved scorn had he spent a great deal of money erecting more substantial edifices.

Lichtenstein goes on to criticise the want of industry, comparing Bethelsdorp most unfavourably with the Moravian mission at Baviaans Kloof, later known as Genadendal. There are several points that emerge from this: For one thing, Genadendal had been in existence eleven years at the time of Lichtenstein's visit there,

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(6) Ibid., p. 295 note.

Bethelsdorp only six months. It would be foolish to expect that the latter should evince the same marks of settlement and industry as a place twenty times its senior. Another point to be borne in mind is the geographical position of the two places: the Moravians had been granted a tract of land in one of the very fertile areas of the Western Province, at no great distance from the capital, and where the pursuits of evangelism and industry could be carried on undisturbed by wars and rumours of wars. Bethelsdorp,on the other other hand, was on the most barren piece of ground for miles around, weeks of travel from civilisation, and close to the turbulence of the frontier. The open-minded reader will agree that under these varied conditions, any comparison would be unfair to the one mission station, and over-favourable to the other. In fine, the laziness of the Hottentots at Bethelsdorp is mentioned as if this were a slur on the persons conducting the mission. Van der Kemp had, however, complained to the Directors of this almost before Lichtenstein's eyes had seen the place. (7)

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(7) Annual Report for 1803. (L.M.S.R. B/4/2.)

"Laziness is the most prevalent evil among our people, which exposes them to the greatest distresses. Some, however, are willing to work if we could employ them; this we cannot do, not having been able for more than a year to get any money from the Cape, so that we cannot pay them for their labour, which circumstance subjects both them and us to many inconveniences."

Nor could the example of the Moravians be quoted, strict disciplinarians as they were, for once again the time factor has relevance: it was too early to say at this stage how strict van der Kemp and Read would be with their people; once the institution was running smoothly.

From the above remarks it will be plain that, while the physical description of Bethelsdorp is considered to be correct, Lichtenstein's deductions from what he had seen were not so near the truth, and his comparison with Baviaans Kloof grossly unfair to Bethelsdorp. His description and critical estimate of van der Kemp have been deferred to a later chapter, when the views of some of the missionary's critics and protagonists will be considered. (8)

While van der Kemp and Read were busy trying to establish Bethelsdorp, there was a soldier in Cape Town, by name Irwin, whose interest was being quickened in the work among the Hottentots. This man's name is honoured by the Methodists, as being one of the first to begin religious work of this communion among the soldiers at the Cape. There is not much information available concerning either Irwin himself or the Methodist beginnings in Cape Town. It would appear, however, that this man

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(8) See below, chapter eight.

had been able to purchase his discharge before the British handed over the colony, and applied to the Governor for permission to proceed to Bethelsdorp. This he was allowed to do, and the ship on which he sailed carried for the new mission a quantity of provisions - a fresh token of the goodwill of the Batavian authorities. This bright omen soon turned to tragedy, for the vessel was wrecked, the provisions, and (far more disastrous) Irwin was drowned. (9) Thus an endeavour in ecumenicity, true to the ideals of the London Missionary Society, miscarried before it had truly begun.

War had once more broken out between England and Holland, and its repercussions were felt in the new establishment at Bethelsdorp. The local farmers (as will be shown later) (10) agitated against a mission belonging to a hostile country being allowed, and van der Kemp began negotiations with the London Missionary Society to transfer the control of all its work in this country to the Netherlands or South African Missionary Societies, as a temporary measure, and in the interests of peace. This, however, could not be done in a hurry,

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(9) See letter from Janssens to van der Kemp, written from Cape Town, dated 12th. October 1803. (L.M.S.R. C/3/2.)

(10) See below, chapter eight.

and, before the lengthy correspondence had allowed a conclusion to be finally reached, the Cape had been recaptured by the British. (11)

The progress of the institution must be considered briefly. Material for this part of the study is not readily accessible. References are made to the numbers of people at the station, those baptised and received into membership of the Church, etc., from time to time in the letters van der Kemp wrote to London, and in the annual reports of the institution. To gather this information, however, is not as easy as might be supposed, for van der Kemp's handwriting left a great deal to be desired; the ink he used was inferior, and has faded badly in places; and, from time to time, accidents occurred and the correspondence was spoilt. As examples of the latter, the waggon bearing the annual report for 1803 overturned in the flooded Gamtoos River, and the document is completely illegible; the report for 1804 must have suffered a similar fate, for it can be deciphered only with the greatest difficulty. Thus, for this part of the history of Bethelsdorp, it will be necessary to rely more on chance references than on the more authoritative sources.

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(11) The first time the subject was mentioned by van der Kemp to the Directors was in a letter from Bethels-

According to Lichtenstein, (12) the number of Hottentots at Bethelsdorp at the end of 1803 was between two and three hundred. The next indication available in this connection is in a letter written by van der Kemp on 8th. January 1805, where he stated that there were at that date 320 inhabitants at the settlement, of which forty-three were church members. (13) From the copy of the Baptismal Register (14) the following statistics in this regard are taken:-

| Year. | Adults baptised. | Children baptised. |
|---|---|---|
| 1803. | 7. | 6. |
| 1804. | 22. | 14. |
| 1805. | 8. | 5. |

For some time van der Kemp had been anxious over his own health, and, in consequence, over the affairs of

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dorp, dated 29th. February 1804 (L.M.S.R. C/4/2.). He discussed the subject at length in letters dated 2nd. April 1804 (L.M.S.R. B/4/2), 1st. November 1804 and 8th. January 1805 (L.M.S.R. A/1/3.).

(12) Op.cit., p. 290.

(13) Letter, written from Bethelsdorp, 8th. January 1805. (LMSR. A/1/3.)

(14) U.A. A.C.C. 559/4. It should be noted that the figure quoted for adult baptisms for the year 1803 refers only to those baptised at Bethelsdorp, after the removal thither of the institution from Fort Frederick. A further ten persons had been baptised at Fort Frederick before removal. The figures for 1805 are lower than might be anticipated, through the summonsing of van der Kemp and Read to Cape Town in the April of that year, see below, p. 53.

Bethelsdorp. He was of the opinion that the need was for another ordained man, competent and authorised to carry on the work, should he himself fall ill or die. Thus he wrote to the Directors in London, suggesting that Read be ordained, and persuaded some of the members of the Bethelsdorp church to write supporting this suggestion. (15)

The staff of Bethelsdorp was increased during this period by the arrival of F.G. Ullbricht on 3rd. March 1805. This man, sent out originally by the Dutch Missionary Society, had already suffered much animosity from the farmers. Just over a month later, on 21st. April, two more missionaries arrived, Sebastian Tromp and his wife. Tromp had been a missionary, working under the auspices of the South African Missionary Society, at Cape Town, later at Waggonmaker's Valley (the present town of Wellington), and finally at Tigerberg in the northern part of the colony among the Bushmen. Upon their arrival, Mrs. Tromp began services among the women at Bethelsdorp, and started a knitting-school for girls.

In the meantime, the animosity of the farmers had increased, mainly through the instruction of the Hotten-

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(15) See Annual Report, 1805. (L.M.S.R. D/1/3.)

tots in the arts of reading and writing. This matter will be dealt with more fully in a later chapter; (16) in the meantime, it is necessary merely to note that, after prolonged and bitter representation to the Governor, they succeeded in persuading Janssens to issue a proclamation to the effect that all instruction in writing be forbidden in schools already established or prospective schools. (17) This meant that the only education permissible at Bethelsdorp was in the sciences of cultivation, husbandry, etc., and, for the female inhabitants, in the arts of knitting, needlework, and domestic duties.

At this time the mind of van der Kemp was being exercised in the matter of expense. During 1804 he wrote to the Directors, (18) providing them with a summary of expenses necessary to maintain the institution. These make interesting reading. The following items he considers will be required annually:-

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(16) See below, chapter six.

(17) The proclamation by Janssens is dated 10th. February 1805. In his Annual Report for that year (L.M.S.R. D/1/3), van der Kemp refers to this prohibition, and gives this date for the proclamation. Martin, op.cit., pp. 148f., however, dates it as 20th. February, a small error, and easily made.

(18) Letter, written from Bethelsdorp, 2nd. April 1804. (L.M.S.R. B/4/2.)

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|---|---|
| A new waggon with appendages. | Rds. 500. |
| Two new ploughs. | 50. |
| Smaller utensils, spades, hatchets, etc. | 100. |
| Paper, books, etc., for the school. | 50. |
| Maintenance for three missionaries. | 300. |
| Additional articles. | 500. |
| | 1500. |

At the time of the surrender of the Cape to the British in 1806, the proclamation concerning currency exchange allowed the rix-dollar to be equivalent to two English shillings. (19) There is no reason to reckon the exchange rate during the days of the Batavian Republic as any higher than this figure. From this it will be seen that van der Kemp assessed the total expenditure for the institution at £150 per annum, in which is included £30 for the three missionaries, or £10 each. He explained the meagreness of this figure: while the cost of living at Cape Town was high (a common hat costing Rds. 30, or £3), at Bethelsdorp the missionaries had no such expenses to meet, as they lived on milk and game, and dressed simply. Read, being married, was allowed a special grant, which that year he estimated at Rds. 150, or £15.

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(19) See Cory, op.cit., p. 161.

The main item of anticipated expenditure was waggons, which van der Kemp was careful to explain. He pointed out to the Directors that at the time of writing there were four waggons owned by the institution, all old, and of which two were in constant use; the other two were broken and lying in a field. The waggons, however, could be repaired, were there a cartwright at the place, and a supply of iron. He pointed out further that it was vitally necessary to have waggons, as they were used for carrying timber, or salt for sale at Algoa Bay or at the Cape.

The plans of the institution included the cultivation of the land, from which it was hoped that the people would reap enough corn to satisfy their own wants, and have some over to sell in the district. It appears that just at this time corn was at a premium, as none of the farmers could supply it, the Government could deliver only half of the 280 bushels requested, and, with the total failure of the harvest due to drought, the people of Bethelsdorp had to go as far afield as the Sneeuwbergen to try to buy corn. On the other hand: the cattle belonging to the institution were doing fairly well; van der Kemp reported that they were well provided with "horn

cattle, milch cows, and labouring oxen." At the time of writing, they had not yet acquired any sheep, but he hoped with part of the money from the Society to buy a hundred or two hundred, with which to augment their meat ration.

Among the industries they hoped to begin at Bethelsdorp, he mentions pottery, lime-burning, potash manufacture, tanning, soap-boiling, sawing timber, and brick-making. He remarked, however, that when the mission had progressed enough to pay wages and give food to the people, that would be time enough to think of these other industries. This was a wise policy, but van der Kemp does not seem to have had the necessary interest in manual labour to enthuse the Hottentots at Bethelsdorp with a desire to promote these or any other industries, except on a very small scale.

With all these plans afoot, matters outside the institution were serious. The farmers and the acting landdrost, Captain Alberti, had represented their case time and again to the governing authorities, and the bitterness against Bethelsdorp was growing steadily. At last, on 25th. April 1805, there came through Captain Alberti a summons from Janssens to van der Kemp and Read

to proceed to Cape Town for an interview with the Governor, to answer certain charges brought against them by the colonists. The missionaries left four days later, leaving the institution in the care of Ullbricht. Twelve people, including Read's wife, accompanied them on the journey to Cape Town, which took five weeks. On 8th. May, they met two of their waggons returning from Cape Town; with the convoy was Erasmus Smit, a missionary, who had obtained permission to go to Bethelsdorp. (20) On arrival at Cape Town, the missionaries were received with great courtesy by Janssens, but the business which brought them there was not so pleasantly cleared up. This aspect will be discussed in more detail in a subsequent chapter; suffice it here to say that van der Kemp and Read were prevented from returning to Bethelsdorp, and at the end of the Batavian regime at the Cape they were still in Cape Town, preaching to the slaves. (21)

With van der Kemp's summons to Cape Town the first phase in the development of Bethelsdorp may be considered to end. The achievements of this man and his helpers, of

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(20) Annual Report, 1805. (L.M.S.R. D/1/3.) Martin, op.cit., p. 141, states that Smit joined the staff of the institution in 1807, but, from the above, this would appear to be incorrect.

(21) See below, chapter six.

which Read was the principal, deserve a certain amount of praise. He had, for one thing, begun a work of mercy for the poor unfortunates of the country, giving them asylum, and a chance to live in peace, under the sound of the Christian religion. He had taken men and women unused to the ways of civilised living, knowing very little restraint in their actions, and had moulded them into a community, where (as even his most stringent critics must admit) there was the minimum of crime. He had declared himself the protagonist of the under-dog, ruthless in his exposure of cruelty and injustice. All these are positive achievements, deserving the respect of men. To stop there, though, would be to tell but half the tale. Great as his achievements up to this point were, van der Kemp was guilty of much that he could have avoided. The most serious charge that can be brought against him was that he, it would seem, set out deliberately to belittle the farmers in the eyes of the authorities, setting (as he did on nearly every occasion) the word of one man against that of another, with no attempt to probe the verity of the statements made by Hottentots. His refusal to co-operate with the lawful authorities was another point on which he deserves censure,

as well as his inability to expel from the people at his institution the deep-seated laziness for which they were notorious.

# CHAPTER FOUR.

## SPIRITUAL WORK AT BETHELSDORP DURING THE YEARS 1806 - 1811.

This part of the story of Bethelsdorp must begin, not with van der Kemp (who was away in Cape Town), but with a description of the arrival of a saintly woman at the institution. Mrs. Matilda Smith (to give her the English form of her name, as used by Philip and other writers on missions), who was born in the year 1749 at the Cape, was perhaps one of the most devout ladies in the country at the time. Twice widowed, and having lost all her children in their infancy, she devoted her time and talents to the work of spreading the Good News among the poorer classes in Cape Town. One of her great friends was Ds. Michiel Christiaan Vos, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Roodezand (Tulbagh), where she stayed for some time, assisting him in his huge parish. She was an enthusiastic friend of missions, being one of the foundation members of the South African Missionary Society, and supporting the Moravians at Genadendal in every way. She had made the acquaintance of van der Kemp soon after his arrival at the Cape, and remained devoted to his work for the rest of his life. When he was summoned to Cape Town by Janssens, and it seemed that he would be kept there a great length of time, Mrs. Smith decided to leave the comforts of her stately home in the city, and journey to Bethelsdorp to assist in the

maintenance of the work van der Kemp had begun. She left for Bethelsdorp on 30th. November 1805, arriving there on 5th. January 1806, just as the people were assembling for Sunday evening worship. The very next day she set about her duties, and this part of her diary is full of records of visitation, exhortation and other spiritual work in the Church. Of the work of this important addition to the staff of Bethelsdorp, more will be said later. (1)

In the meantime, the British squadron, under Sir David Baird, had arrived at the Cape, and the regime of the Batavian Republic had come to an end. The new Governor was favourably disposed towards van der Kemp, and allowed him to return to Bethelsdorp within a month of the capture of the colony. He left Cape Town on 5th. February, arriving at Bethelsdorp on 12th. March, accompanied by Smit and twelve Hottentots, who had journeyed to Cape Town specially to aid him, in case he were allowed to return. Read was asked by the Governor to travel to Algoa Bay by ship, that he might keep an eye on the provisions she carried for the institution. The voyage lasted twenty-two days, and the tragedy of Irwin

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(1) J. Philip, Memoir of Mrs. Matilda Smith, pp. 95-109. (F.Westley. London. 1824.)

was almost repeated, when shipwreck was only narrowly averted, before finally dropping anchor under the guns of Fort Frederick. (2)

The staff of Bethelsdorp now consisted of van der Kemp, the senior missionary; Read, his principal assistant; Ullbricht; Tromp and his wife, who, with Erasmus Smit, were residing there as supernumerary missionaries, until a new field opened up for them; and Mrs. Matilda Smith, who was unanimously elected deaconess shortly after van der Kemp's return from Cape Town. As was mentioned in the last chapter, van der Kemp had been trying for some time to have Read ordained to the ministry. At last the permission of the Directors came to hand, and he was ordained in January 1807.

Two days before leaving Cape Town, van der Kemp had addressed the Directors of the Society on the matter of staffing at Bethelsdorp. He asked them to approve the following regulations:-

1. That there be not more than three missionaries and one school-master at Bethelsdorp.

2. That, if Bethelsdorp grew too large to be

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(2) Letter from van der Kemp, written from Bethelsdorp, to J. Hardcastle, dated 10th. July 1806. (L.M.S.R. A/3/3.)
Letter from Read, written from Bethelsdorp, to the Directors, dated 2nd. August 1806. (L.M.S.R. B/3/3.)

managed by three missionaries and one schoolmaster, it be divided into two settlements, provided the approval of the Government was first obtained.

3. Other missionaries, not able to find a proper place for their operations, be allowed to reside at Bethelsdorp in the meanwhile, but that they look out for another missionary site.

4. Keeping slaves at Bethelsdorp (or any other mission station) be forbidden, and no person keeping slaves be admitted to the institution.

5. Each missionary at Bethelsdorp be content with £30 per annum, but that journeys and missionary excursions approved by the Directors be financed by the Society.

6. A newcomer to Bethelsdorp be allowed a grant of £50 for building and £40 to purchase a small herd of cattle.

7. No more people be sent to Bethelsdorp as missionaries, but only as helpers, under the supervision of the Director of the institution, till they shall have proved themselves capable of being missionaries.

8. That the Directors have a suitable stock of cattle at Bethelsdorp, for use in the Society's waggons, and for the use of the missionaries.

9. The ecclesiastical government to be prescribed by no one, only by the guidance of Christ in a man's heart; and the congregation to set their seal on this by ordination. (3)

These regulations are of importance, and one of them at least was destined to have far-reaching results. The limitation of the size both of the staff and of the

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(3) Letter by van der Kemp, to Directors, written from Cape Town, 3rd. February 1806. (L.M.S.R. B/2/3.)

institution itself must have resulted from the realisation by van der Kemp that a station too large to be properly controlled would very easily get out of hand, and the resulting trouble would be disastrous to the already tainted reputation of the mission. It is significant also that, since the last mention of salaries, van der Kemp's estimates should have trebled, until he now recommends £30 per annum per missionary; was it, one wonders, his own resumption of the marital state that made him more sympathetic in the matter of cost of living? It should be noted, at any rate, that he makes no distinction between married and single members of the staff. The allowances for building and acquiring a small herd by newcomers seems very fair, and would have made for pleasant relations between missionaries. (4) One is forced to wonder what lay behind the recommendation in regulation number 7, for van der Kemp does not enlarge on it, nor does it seem as if he had suffered from anyone putting his hand to the missionary plough

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(4) To readers not acquainted with missionary methods in this country, the reference to missionaries possessing herds of cattle might seem out of place. It must be remembered, however, that with the small stipends usually offered to missionaries, it is necessary that they reduce the cost of living as much as possible, and the possession of a few cows will help materially by the provision of milk, butter, cheese, and (on occasion) fresh meat. This was the experience of the present writer's father, when he was a missionary among the Zulus of Southern Natal.

and then looking back. Nor is the wording of the ninth regulation at all clear, though it is given exactly as it appears in the letter: in the first part it seems to refer to the method of church government of Bethelsdorp, in the second to the call to the ministry. It was the fourth regulation, however, that was to prove the most immediately significant, for, as will be shown later, it was the cause of Mrs. Smith's decision to leave the institution.

The work of the Church at Bethelsdorp was being carried on in the same manner as had always distinguished van der Kemp's methods. Twice a day the people met for exposition of the Scriptures and for prayer. At sunrise morning prayers were held, when the Old Testament was read, to encourage the people in their labours; at night the curfew bell called them for evening prayer, when passages from the New Testament were read, that the people might judge by its standards the work they had done. They met in the flimsy church, built of reeds, until in 1809 a strong wind blew it down during evening worship, and a new, more substantial building was put up. On the Lord's Day services were held in the morning and the evening, and these were longer than daily prayers. There is an amusing note in the Report for 1809, by which

time some of the converts had been trained and now took their part in preaching alongside the missionary staff: the sermons from these enthusiasts had grown into expositions lasting a full two hours, and even on week-days they so far exceeded reasonable limits, that a regulation had to be introduced, whereby the exposition on week-days was restricted to half-an-hour, and an hour allowed for the sermon on Sundays. (5) During her sojourn at Bethelsdorp, Mrs. Smith made it her habit to keep the congregation a quarter of an hour after evening service, "repeating the substance of the discourse, with additional remarks, much to the edification of the people; her admonitions being plain, applicable, striking, and earnest, as those of a person standing on the very brink of eternity." (6)

It was after the manner of the Apostolic Church that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was kept at Bethelsdorp. It was preceded by the Agapé, the Christian love-feast, and it was the custom to celebrate the Eucharist in the evening each Sunday. There is in Dr. Martin's biography a most beautiful and moving description of this rite as it must have been celebrated at Bethels-

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(5) Annual Report, 1809. (L.M.S.R. E/1/4.)

(6) J. Philip, Memoir of Mrs. Matilda Smith, pp. 117f.

dorp in those days, to which the reader is referred. (7) Just as the early Christians were wont to do, the faithful of this place each brought his own contribution to the Agapé, following which the Lord's Supper was dispensed, usually by van der Kemp himself. In times of drought and poverty, no bread was tasted at Bethelsdorp for months on end, and the celebrants used instead a preparation of dried pears, beaten into the form of a cake. The wine was passed from one to his neighbour in a rude, earthenware cup. It was here, in this act of communion in Jesus Christ, that the true nature of the people was to be found, the self-emptying of the missionaries, the pitiful upward struggles of the Hottentots towards a nobler life; here they were united and made sacred through the common meal. And it is precisely here that most of the critics are unable to grasp the essentials of the man or the place they attempt to assess; no one the least out of sympathy with the central act of the Christian Church can understand the unity existing around the Table - yet it is on the question of converting the Hottentots, which includes the extension to them of the means of grace, that the critics rush in where angels fear to tread.

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(7) A.D. Martin, op.cit., pp. 127-129.

The Baptismal Register (8) provides the following information for the years 1806-1811:-

| Year. | Adults baptised. | Children baptised. |
|---|---|---|
| 1806. | 9. | 15. |
| 1807. | 3. | 11. |
| 1808. | 7. | 9. |
| 1809. | 4. | 14. |
| 1810. | 4. | 10. |
| 1811. | Nil. | 6. |

When one considers that in the whole period reviewed in this investigation of Bethelsdorp only eighty adults are entered in the Register as having been baptised, and of these but sixty-four had the Sacrament administered to them at Bethelsdorp, one point in the policy of van der Kemp becomes clear. Quite rightly, he regarded baptism as a Sacrament, as the sign and seal of the covenant of grace, and, as such, not to be entered into lightly or inadvisedly. The preparation for baptism was intensive, and until he and his colleagues were perfectly sure that the catechumens were ready to receive the Sacrament, it was refused to them. (9) This naturally tended to

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(8) U.A. A.C.C. 559/4.

(9) There are not a few instances which could be quoted, when van der Kemp reported that people were being held over as unprepared for baptism; an example is to be found in the Annual Report for 1805 (L.M.S.R. D/1/3.), where he reports having baptised eight people between 1st. January and 29th. April, six others being held over.

decrease the numbers actually baptised, and consequently the number of church members. This fact should be borne in mind when criticisms are levelled against van der Kemp for the small number of church members he had gathered in the years of his superintendency. The word "gathered" is used advisedly, for it is to his honour that he insisted on the principle of the "gathered" church operating at Bethelsdorp.

The catechumens' classes were mentioned in the foregoing paragraph. These were held every Wednesday morning and Saturday afternoon. At these classes, which were attended by adults and children alike, instruction was given through the medium of a Catechism, entitled Nation Principles of the Word of God for the Hottentot Mission, which had been published by the mission press in 1804.

As will be described in the next chapter, Mrs. Smith kept a school during her stay at Bethelsdorp. Seeing the concern here is with the spiritual side of the work, mention must be made of how she used the time in school. After having started the women and girls on their work, she would speak to them of the great truths of the Gospel, and her niece records that her conversation on these occasions was "so edifying, and carried on with such affectionate earnestness, that her scholars were not

merely impressed and pleased at the moment, but appeared to have derived from it the most essential and lasting advantage; nearly the whole of them being subsequently baptized, and declaring they had received their first serious impressions under her instructions. These are now ornaments to their profession, and living proofs of the blessing of God on her zealous endeavours." (10)

Mrs. Smith did not confine herself to the people who attended the school. After school hours she generally went for a walk with a few of the women who belonged to the Church. Their habit was to retire to the woods, for prayer, when the Hottentot women alternately led the devotions. After van der Kemp's return from Cape Town, and Mrs. Smith's election as a deaconess, her duties widened to include visitation of the sick, particularly the female church members. She did not limit herself to pious conversation on such occasions, but made it her business to instruct the women "in all the conveniences and comforts of domestic life; teaching them how to donduct their simple households affairs with economy,

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(10) Cited by J. Philip, Memoir of Mrs. Matilda Smith, p. 124. The remainder of the remarks concerning Mrs. Smith are mostly taken from the same source. The whole report written by her niece, who accompanied her to Bethelsdorp, is to be found on pp. 122-124 of Philip's Memoir.

cleanliness and order; how to manage their children properly, and how to make and repair the family garments." (11) As if all this were not enough, Mrs. Smith catechised the seekers among the women, by holding private conversations with them, and also conducted a weekly meeting with the baptised women, who were preparing for full communicant membership in the church. (12)

From these remarks it can be seen how much the presence of Mrs. Smith meant to the Institution. She was the maternal genius required to put things on a sound domestic footing, a position neither Mrs. Read, herself an uneducated Hottentot, nor Mrs. van der Kemp, a redeemed Malagasy slave-girl, as yet outside the Christian fold, could hope to fill. The only pity was that she could not see her way clear to stay. The regulations concerning persons who kept slaves not being allowed to enter Bethelsdorp, and any resident being forbidden to keep slaves there, seriously affected Mrs. Smith. She was a prominent colonist, who, like so many others, including most of the Dutch Reformed and Lutheran ministers (and even some missionaries), saw nothing contrary to the will of God in keeping slaves. She had

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(11) Philip, op.cit., loc.cit.

(12) Letter written by van der Kemp to Hardcastle, from Bethelsdorp, dated 10th. July 1806. (L.M.S.R. A/3/3.)

brought her chief slave, Alexander, with her to Bethelsdorp, who was of great assistance in the work of the place. Van der Kemp, true as always to his convictions, had long conversations with her on the subject, and, though he could never convince her of the sin of owning human flesh, persuaded her to send Alexander back to Roodezand, which she did on 1st. January 1807. When, on the 25th. March of the same year, the British Government abolished the slave trade, there were great rejoicings at Bethelsdorp, and Mrs. Smith began to feel uncomfortable. On 11th. December, after having finally thrown in her lot with the slave-owning classes, she left Bethelsdorp, accompanied by her niece, after van der Kemp had recommended them to God in prayer. (13) Thus, through so small a divergence in views (or perhaps one should more fairly say, what appears to-day as so small a divergence), there was lost to Bethelsdorp the mother the institution needed so badly, and it is not too much to say that from this date until the end of the period under review, the institution never recovered from this loss.

A few days before Mrs. Smith left, the staff at Bethelsdorp was increased still further by the arrival of a young man, Carl Pacalt, who is chiefly remembered

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(13) The removal of Alexander and Mrs. Smith's departure are both recorded in the Annual Report, 1807. (L.M.S.R. D/4/3.)

for his years of devoted labour at the mission station near George, that bears his name, Pacaltsdorp. There was also a change in the status of another missionary, when Ullbricht followed the unfortunate example of Read, by marrying one of the inhabitants of Bethelsdorp.

The most important indication of progress that these years afford is that the Hottentots themselves had begun to evangelise the people living in the district. Of course, some of these men were forced to go into the service of the farmers, in order to earn a living; others were transport-drivers, owning [redacted] vehicles, and touring the district in this way; but others were genuine evangelists, going out from Bethelsdorp with only this object in view. In any case, the important thing is that all these people, whatever their reason for leaving the institution, took in their hearts the love of God and the burden of His message, which they transmitted to their people on the farms and in the district. Nor did they forbear to take any opportunity that was offered of preaching to the farmers, who, in many cases, received the Word as gladly as did their slaves and the Hottentots working for them. Dr. Martin spends some time telling of these men, and the reader is directed to his book for the

stories of Jochim Vogel, Cupido Kakkerlak, Boezak, Samson, Jocham, Jacob and Kruisman. (14) Perhaps the tale of Jacob is the most deserving of quotation. An indolent fellow, he did not stay long at Bethelsdorp, but removed to the kraal of David Stuurman on the Gamtoos River. It was here that the fruits of what he had heard at Bethelsdorp were realised. The missionaries report: "The spark of life which began to shine now with uncommon lustre, broke out in a lucid flame that set almost the whole kraal on fire." (15) From here he went out to the other kraals in the vicinity, and everywhere a spiritual fervour marked his travels. It was probably due almost entirely to this one man that the work in the kraal of David Stuurman, of which Read has such glowing accounts to give, (16) began at all and was able to be carried on, until many years later from some of the people here a nucleus was available to found the mission station at Hankey.

Towards the end of the period, van der Kemp's health began to give way. He had a great deal to worry him. Not only had he the care of the Church, but the progress of

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(14) A.D. Martin, op.cit., pp. 142-144.
(15) Annual Report, 1806. (L.M.S.R. D/3/3.)
(16) Letter, written by Read, from Stuurman's kraal, dated 30th. January 1808. (L.M.S.R. A/5/3.)

the institution was not all that it could have been; his wife's persistent disinterestedness in the Christian religion was a heavy burden to bear; but chiefly it was the violent antagonism of the farmers and the antipathy of the landdrost Cuyler that broke him down. Philip quotes him as saying:

> I would go anywhere to escape from my present situation: I cannot remain much longer at Bethelsdorp; my spirits are broken, and I am bowed down by the landdrost Cuyler's continual oppression of the Hottentots. (17)

and it was the cry of an old man, tired with much fighting, and longing for the peace of laying his weapons down.

It had ever been the desire of van der Kemp to go to Madagascar. There was some magnetic force for him in this island lying off the east coast of Africa, and time and again he asked the Directors for permission to go there, or he would request the Governor's favour in procuring his release from Bethelsdorp, that he might evangelise the people of the island. By 1810 he felt he was too old for this venture, nor would his health allow of it; but by the middle of the year things had improved

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(17) J.Philip, Researches in South Africa, vol. i., p. 131. (James Duncan. London. 1828.) Unfortunately, Philip does not give his source when making this citation, but it was expressed some time during 1810 or 1811.

somewhat, and he was eager once more to make the move he had longed so often to do. He suggested that Pacalt should accompany him, and he made preparations to proceed thither from Cape Town, after matters between him and the authorities had been settled. (18)

In March 1811 he and Read were summoned to Cape Town, for the purpose of a full inquiry into the atrocities alleged by them, perpertrated upon the Hottentots by the farmers. From this journey van der Kemp did not return, and it may be considered that with his departure from Bethelsdorp the period covered by this investigation comes to an end. An appraisal of the facts contained in this chapter will be deferred, until the other facets of the work at Bethelsdorp have been considered, together with the relations existing between the institution and the missionaries, on the one side, and the authorities and the farmers, on the other. Not before all this information has been made available can judgment be properly given for or against van der Kemp and his work.

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(18) Letters of van der Kemp, written from Bethelsdorp, dated 28th. January 1810 (L.M.S.R. B/2/4) and 8th. June 1810 (L.M.S.R. A/3/4).

# C H A P T E R  F I V E.

## SECULAR UNDERTAKINGS AT BETHELSDORP DURING THE YEARS 1806 - 1811.

Missionaries have always understood that their commission to evangelise the heathen includes the development of powers latent in these people, that they might grow up to that full stature which allows them to take their place alongside the more civilised nations in the affairs of the world. These powers are to be developed mainly through the channels of education, industry, and commerce: through education, which includes instruction in the simpler arts of literacy, as well as an introduction to the culture of the world, through music, art, and drama; through industry, that men may achieve the end of self-support by the work of their own hands, in the factory, work-shop, and engineering shed, as well as on the farms; and through commerce, important not so much for the exchange of goods, as for the merchandise of ideas which is bartered through such meetings with other traders.

The missionaries at Bethelsdorp, while they might not have been able to agree to the full content of the above statements, were no exception to the general tenor of this view, and from their earliest days, even before the institution was sanctioned, van der Kemp was planning for just such facets of the work. He wisely

realised that evangelism alone would not be enough: the preaching of the Gospel must be accompanied by an attempt to raise the level of the ordinary, every-day life of the people. In a previous chapter the efforts in this direction during the regime of the Batavian Republic were briefly described. Here the story is taken up during the remaining years to be covered by this investigation.

It will be recalled that, by proclamation of Governor Janssens, the school was virtually closed when instruction in writing was forbidden. At the beginning of 1806, however, when the British once more ruled the Cape, the ban on writing was removed, and van der Kemp was able to return from Cape Town with the glad news that the educational work could continue with the full sanction of the authorities. It is strange, though, that van der Kemp has little to say concerning this reading and writing school. (1) Presumably it was carried on by Mrs. Tromp and Mrs. Smith, while these two ladies were at the institution.

Mention has already been made of the school kept by Mrs. Smith. It is from the report by her niece (2) that

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(1) A significant exception is in a letter to the Earl of Caledon, written from Bethelsdorp, dated 15th. September 1807. (U.A. CO/2561/20.)

(2) J. Philip, Memoir of Mrs. Matilda Smith, pp. 122ff.

the intimate picture of this gracious lady imparting instruction to her little Hottentot charges is obtained: At first only four children applied for entry to the knitting school; soon the number increased to sixteen, and a year later there were twenty-four. Some women also joined the classes. After the niece had given them their first tuition in stitching, Mrs. Smith "took great pains to bring them forward in the art of shaping stockings, night-caps, gloves, &c." It was out of her own pocket that the funds for purchase of wool and materials came for the first year.

Not only was the inherent indolence of the Hottentot a difficulty to be overcome, but their migratory habits provided the good lady with much trouble. No sooner would one of her pupils be making satisfactory progress, than her parents would engage themselves in the service of some farmer, and she would have to leave the school to accompany them, or else, by staying at the institution, be in danger of starving. To remedy this, Mrs. Smith procured at her own expense corn, meat, and vegetables for the maintenance of her scholars, until by the sale of their pieces of work to farmers, military men and others, they had collected sufficient money to purchase a few cows. So, after a year, the pupils became virtually

self-supporting. As the school progressed, not only was the herd enlarged, but a stock of cotton, provisions and clothing was laid in. In this way the wants of the needy members of the establishment were met, and all expenses were defrayed. As a proof of the success of this venture: when Mrs. Smith left Bethelsdorp at the end of 1807, each child in the school shared in the accumulated profits, and the dividend declared was a cow each, or its equivalent in goods or money. The adult women, of course, shared in the system as well as the children, each taking her own earnings for her own use, though Mrs. Smith was careful to advise them how their money should be spent on fresh materials for working, or on decent clothes. At the end of her account of the knitting school, Mrs. Smith's niece remarks: "In consequence of this care and attention, the knitting-school was more remarkable for neatness and cleanliness than any other branch of the institution." (3)

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(3) J. Philip, ibid., p. 123.

The second avenue of elevation that was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter is that of industrial undertakings. The reader will recall how, in the letter to Dundas, where the subject of a Hottentot institution was first broached, van der Kemp stressed the necessity of labour, quoting the dictum of St. Paul, that no man unwilling to work should eat. He repeated his ideas on this matter when he wrote to Janssens, outlining his plans for Bethelsdorp, but later expressed the opinion that the more specialised industries should be deferred until the mission was on a sound footing, and able to pay its way. This did not mean that he was giving up the ambitions he had expressed for the place: far from it, as his remarks to the Earl of Caledon in the letter just referred to show quite clearly:

> It is not only not inconsistent with the religious nature of the institution, but one of its requisites, that the narrow sphere of activity to which our Hottentots originally are confined, gradually be extended by pointing out to them the various methods, in which a man by his industry may co-operate to the welfare of the society, of which he is a member.

In all fairness to van der Kemp, it must be admitted that the natural surroundings of Bethelsdorp militated much against its ever becoming a hive of industry. Agriculture at the actual site of the institution was

quite out ofthe question, due to the barrenness of the stony ground, and cattle and sheep raising was made difficult by the sourness of the veld. Quite apart from any considerations of the Hottentot's laziness, or of van der Kemp's lack of interest in manual affairs, Bethelsdorp's situation was the millstone from the very beginning round the neck of any would-be labourer. As a later missionary there expressed it:

> On such a spot as Bethelsdorp, even the superior skill and industry of Europeans would effect nothing in agriculture. (4)

From remarks such as these it is surprising to turn to the testimony of John Campbell, the man whom the London Missionary Society sent out in 1813 to survey their work in South Africa. He remarks that, while Bethelsdorp presents "a most miserable appearance as a village," and while the ground is barren in the extreme, so that there are neither trees nor gardens, a mile and a half away, on the banks of the Little Zwartkops River, the ground had been cultivated on both banks for upwards of two miles. This, he maintains, is the largest single

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(4) Rev. G. Barker, in a report to the Government, 1830; cited by W.M. Macmillan, The Cape Colour Question, p. 151 (Faber & Gwyer. London. 1927.), who points out that Mr. Barker was one witness whose caution in expressing himself on missionary matters was appreciated by Cory and du Plessis to the extent that they quote him against Dr. Philip.

piece of cultivation seen by him in his travels through Africa, and three times as much ground as is under cultivation at Genadendal. (5) In view of the persistence of criticism against the institution on this score, it is nothing short of astonishing to come upon remarks such as these, from so sober and meticulous a reporter as Campbell, who, despite his associations with the London Missionary Society, cannot be accused of bias towards van der Kemp or Bethelsdorp. If by 1813 the land had been ploughed and sown to this extent, it can safely be assumed that during van der Kemp's lifetime not much less was under cultivation.

In addition to the ground cultivated along the Little Zwartkops River, the gardens of Bethelsdorp are to be found in the kloof behind the village. The present writer, it is to be regretted, has not been able to discover the exact date of the beginning of work here, for van der Kemp merely speaks of work in the gardens, without indicating whether it is those on the river or in the kloof to which he is referring. The inhabitants of Bethelsdorp, however, take pride in pointing out to visitors that the extensive terraces along the kloof, upon which the gardens are built, were begun by van der

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(5) John Campbell, Travels in South Africa, p. 96. (Black and Perry. London. 1815.)

Kemp and Read. There seems little cause to doubt that this local tradition contains at least some degree of truth. If this can be assumed, here is added testimony against the charge of complete idleness at Bethelsdorp.

It is from Campbell's report on Bethelsdorp that much is to be learned concerning the industries at the place, for van der Kemp, demonstrating (however unconsciously) his unconcern for such matters, hardly ever refers to them in his reports, which are filled instead with accounts of conversions and spiritual utterances, not so much of importance to the student of history as to the theologian concerned with the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian missions.

Turning now from the work on the land to the other forms of industry envisaged by van der Kemp, it will be recalled that he enumerated these in his letters to Dundas and Janssens. When submitting a report in 1807 to the Earl of Caledon, he wrote glowingly of the work of Mrs. Smith in the school, but was forced to confess that the missionaries had not been as successful in the introduction of other manufactories. Those in regular employment were: one shoemaker; ten or twelve employed in coopering, carpentry, sawing planks; and a few were

assistants to Read in the smithy. Some women were occupied in soap-boiling, tanning sheep-skins, candle-making, or plaiting straw hats, straw mats, etc. (6) This list does not make inspiring reading, and one is not surprised at the remarks of Lieutenant-Colonel Collins, in his report to the Earl of Caledon of a visit he paid to the institution on 6th. April 1809:-

> ... It appears that out of more than six hundred persons residing at Bethelsdorp, there are only sixty-six baptized, and only forty-three exercising any useful employment. I cannot, therefore, perceive that the efforts produced by the zealous and unremitting labours of Dr. Van der Kemp and his brethren during a period of seven years are such as to promise great benefits from a continuance of this institution, even to the members of it. ... (7)

By 1813, when Campbell visited the place, it would appear as if some progress in this sphere had been made, for he places on record a list of eighteen different employments, though he omits to mention, it is true, the percentage of the population thus employed:- there were at Bethelsdorp smiths, carpenters, waggon-makers, basket-makers, blanket-makers, tobacco-pipe-makers, "sawyers," turners, hewers of wood, carriers (i.e., transport drivers owning or hiring their [redacted] waggons), soap-boilers, mat-makers,

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(6) Letter of van der Kemp to Earl of Caledon, written from Bethelsdorp, dated 15th. September 1807. (U.A. CO/2561/20.)

(7) Quoted from G.McC. Theal, Records of the Cape Colony, vol. vii., p. 109. (Government of the Cape Colony. 1900.)

stocking-makers, tailors, brick-makers, thatchers, coopers, lime-burners, an auctioneer, and a miller. (8)

In addition to these employments, there was a salt-pan, situated some two miles from the institution, which was worked by the people of Bethelsdorp. In those days there was a great call for this salt, and it was sold as far afield as the Cape. This pan, it is interesting to note, is still in production to-day, having been enlarged considerably since the days of van der Kemp.

Over and over again in the official correspondence of the establishment, there comes up a complaint about the unsuitability of the site. As has already been described, (9) it was clearly understood that, when van der Kemp and his people moved into Bethelsdorp, this site was only temporary. Its barrenness was but the strip of desert separating them from their promised land. The institution, however, stands to-day where it did one hundred and fifty years ago.

From this it must not be supposed that there were no genuine efforts made to improve either the lot or the situation of the institution. To do Janssens justice,

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(8) J. Campbell, op.cit., p. 127.
(9) See above, p. 43.

at the earliest opportunity he did endeavour to remove the station. He wrote to van der Kemp (10) to the effect that, if it would not be injurious to the progress of the mission, he would like to move it to the holding of one van Leening. Before it could be possessed, however, the grant was reassumed by order of the Commissary de Mist.(11) Thus the first attempt to find a more congenial situation came to nothing.

The next attempt was made in April 1807, when van der Kemp and Read went to inspect two possible sites near the Kromme River, some fifty miles or more westwards of Bethelsdorp. This time it was because of their unsuitable physical conditions that the sites were not accepted. (12)

Finally, at the end of 1807, the Governor made arrangements for van der Kemp to meet the laddrost of Swellendam, a Mr. Faure, and Mr. George Rex, at the latter's farm near Knysna, to examine a site near Plettenberg Bay. Matters in those days moved slowly, and it was not until the 13th. April 1808 that the

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(10) Letter, written from the Cape, dated 3rd. May 1805. (L.M.S.R. B/1/3.)

(11) Quoted by Macmillan, op.cit., pp. 150f., from an anonymous Account of Missions in the Philip mss.

(12) Report for 1807. (L.M.S.R. D/4/3.)

Earl of Caledon's directions were carried out. In a letter to the Governor, van der Kemp mentions the difficulties in the way of accepting either the piece of land recommended by him, or the other plots suggested by Faure. The country around Plettenberg Bay is extremely rough, and van der Kemp considered it almost inaccessible to waggons. Far more serious, however, was the fact that the veld in this district was even sourer than that of Bethelsdorp, and the landdrost gave it as his considered opinion that neither cattle nor sheep could be kept on any land in the Plettenberg Bay area not already owned by farmers, nor could corn or vegetables be grown, and the water supply was inadequate. It was for these reasons that van der Kemp declined the offer of a site in these parts. Instead, he pointed out to the Governor that all that was really required was a tract of good, arable land adjacent to Bethelsdorp, where there was a good supply of water: this, he felt, would "render it completely answering His Excellency's benevolent intentions." (13) The reasons given by van der Kemp in this instance have been dealt with more fully, as it is necessary here to clear up a slight misunderstanding

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(13) Letter from the Secretary to van der Kemp, written from Cape Town, dated 29th. December 1807. (U.A. CO/4824/293.)
Reply from van der Kemp, enclosing report of the inspection, written from Bethelsdorp, dated 28th. April 1808. (U.A. CO/2563/12.)

caused by an inaccuracy in a letter from Caledon to the Secretary for the Colonies in the British Government. Speaking of the efforts to find a more congenial situation for Bethelsdorp, the Governor reports on the inspection of the land at Plettenberg Bay, adding, "but nothing could be done or proposed satisfactory to the Doctor." (14) It should be noted that it was not due to the obstinacy of van der Kemp that the offers were not accepted, but purely to the advice given by the landdrost of Swellendam. The Earl of Caledon carefully omits all reference to this, thus giving the impression that it was the fault entirely of van der Kemp that no move was made.

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Before leaving the subject of secular undertakings at Bethelsdorp, and seeing that there is nothing to report on commercial undertakings (it was many years before a shop was opened in the institution), something must be said of the philanthropic work carried on.

When the establishment first started, slavery was an accepted mode of obtaining labour at the Cape, as it was

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(14) Letter from Earl of Caledon to Viscount Castlereagh, written from Cape Town, dated 16th. October 1809. Theal, op.cit., vol.vii., pp.170ff.

in the rest of the British dominions. As was natural, the missionaries strenuously opposed all traffic in human flesh, and conceived it as their duty, as often as was possible, to redeem these unfortunate persons. It has been placed on record by Read (15) that van der Kemp redeemed seven slaves out of his own pocket during the three years 1805-1807, at a cost of nearly Rds. 5,000, which in English currency amounted to £500. Some of these, of course, were his Malagasy bride, and her mother and family. This reference shows the deep seriousness with which van der Kemp viewed the matter of slavery, and he must be given the honour due to him, for his convictions cost him dearly, but he held to them to the end.

One other matter deserves attention. There were at Bethelsdorp a number of destitute children, many of them orphans. These children, some of whom were Xhosas, having come to the institution when their parents had been killed or driven off by the commandos, were a source of anxiety to the missionaries, and it was decided to request the permission of the Directors of the Society to erect an

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(15) Letter to the Directors, written from Stuurman's kraal, dated 30th. January 1808. (L.M.S.R. A/5/3.) A.D. Martin, op.cit., p. 161 note, referring to this makes the sum of Rds. 5,000 equivalent to £800; the figure quoted here is based on the rate of exchange quoted earlier, see p. 51 above. It is possible that the cost of living had increased in the interim, and Martin's estimate is correct.

Orphan House at Bethelsdorp. (16) There was the usual, inevitable delay, while correspondence was exchanged on the subject, and by the end of the period permission had just been granted. By the time of Campbell's visit in 1813, he was able to report that the Orphan House had been erected, and that it was doing its appointed work of caring for the needy children. (17)

As was remarked at the end of the last chapter, it is not possible to assess the full weight of the facts concerning Bethelsdorp in its many spheres until the investigation has been completed. There remains one subject to be considered, the relations existing between the institution and the authorities and farmers. This will be attempted in the next chapter, after which it is hoped that it will be possible to obtain some estimate of the worth of Bethelsdorp.

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(16) The subject is first mentioned in a letter from van der Kemp to the Directors, dated 5th. September 1809 (L.M.S.R. C/1/4.), and in Hardcastle's reply, dated 22nd. January 1810 (L.M.S.R. B/2/4.). Further references in van der Kemp's correspondence of 5th. November 1810 (L.M.S.R. B/3/4.) and 8th. January 1811 (L.M.S.R. A/4/4.).

(17) J. Campbell, op.cit., p. 126.

# CHAPTER SIX.

## RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND COLONISTS.

Beginning with van der Kemp, and continuing until the death of Dr. John Philip, at least, the missionaries of the London Society were looked upon by the colonists and most Governmental authorities as meddlers in matters of no concern to them. The story of the external relations, first of Bethelsdorp, and later of most of the London stations, is unpleasant, principally because of the wealth of misunderstanding that has gathered round the actions of the missionaries. In particular, van der Kemp is remembered more for his "meddling" than for any other activity, unless it be that he married a woman with a skin darker than his own. The purpose of this chapter is to present, as briefly as possible, the facts as they appear in the records of that era, to show how and where the trouble began, and why it was continued. Thereafter it should be possible to form an opinion concerning this subject.

Just as at Bota's Place, so at Bethelsdorp, trouble came quickly. This time, however, it did not come from the roving and marauding bands of Hottentots, nor even from the antipathy of the Dutch farmers. It came from the super-heated nature of van der Kemp himself. He considered that the Hottentots in his institution had as

much right as any in the country to be regarded as free men; that it was against the conscience and laws of the nation to be able to impress them into labour; and that the asylum provided for them at Bethelsdorp removed them from the jurisdiction of all petty officials of the Government, leaving them subject to the Governor alone. Thus it was that, when the Batavian authorities decided to divide the huge district of Graaff-Reinet, creating a new district of Uitenhage, and Alberti, the newly appointed acting landdrost, summoned certain of the inhabitants of Bethelsdorp to assist in the building of the drostdy in Uitenhage village, van der Kemp strenuously denied his authority to make these demands. This was the beginning of the long and bitter struggle between him and his successors, on the one hand, and the Government on the other - a struggle that was to last for fifty years, and bring contumely on the word "missionary" that lasts in many quarters of the land until this very day. And, when one stops to consider how small the issue really was, it is grievous to think of the cauldron of hate such a small spark caused to boil.

There was, though, a further cause for trouble. The Hottentots coming to the institution increased in numbers daily, and each brought some fresh tale of oppression and

ill-treatment by the Dutch farmers. Without any doubt, van der Kemp was too gullible, accepting the stories at face value, and it must be admitted that he seldom, if ever, sought further confirmation of their truth. These stories, however, inflamed his righteous ire against the colonists even more. He wrote post-haste to the Governor, laying before him the whole state of affairs on the eastern frontier, and especially the amount of maltreatment being meted out to the Hottentots by the farmers. In due fairness, it should not be overlooked that van der Kemp had first approached Alberti on the subject of a certain K. Giesie's having abused a Hottentot working for him, which Alberti dismissed on the grounds that he could place no reliance upon Hottentot "talk." (1) The letter to the Governor, dated 18th. April 1804, not only informed him of the conditions on the farms, but also stated that the missionaries, because of these conditions, were unable to allow their people to engage themselves voluntarily in the service of the farmers, "on account of the cruelty and injustice with which those who entered into their service were treated, without any justice being done to them by the Magistrates." (2) To

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(1) Alberti's reply, written from Fort Frederick, dated 29th. December 1803. (L.M.S.R. D/3/2.)

(2) Annual Report, 1804. (L.M.S.R. B/4/2.)

this Janssens replied by ordering the landdrost of Uitenhage to take the necessary steps to secure peace and order, which the missionaries alleged was not done.

The local farmers, too, had cause for complaint. Not only were their servants, it seemed to them, being enticed away from the farms by the easy life of Bethelsdorp (so that they described it to the Governor as a refuge for idle savages), not only were they being accused by the head of this detestable institution of all sorts of refinements of cruelty; but - and this was insult after injury - these savages were better educated than they or their sons. To understand this last statement, it is necessary to recall that the frontiersmen were far from the schools and other civilising influences of Cape Town; at very rare intervals a stranger might arrive at the farm with enough knowledge to be able to stay a few months and teach the children the rudiments of letters. But, in the main, there was no education provided for the Dutch children, who were growing up completely illiterate. It is, thus, very easy to understand the jealousy and suspicion in untutored minds for those who were in every other way their inferiors, who yet had the unquestioned superiority of being able to read and write. It was principally on the score of

writing that the farmers were incensed, not only through a feeling of inferiority, but (what was more serious) because this ability to write placed in the hands of the Hottentots an instrument for co-operation which might help some leader to weld them into a powerful attacking force. It was, therefore, through jealousy and fear that they made representations to the Governor to have the school closed. How successful they were in this matter has already been described. (3) That the Government allowed the farmers their wish in this matter is proof that, for all its republican ideals of equality and fraternity, it was bent on pursuing a discriminatory policy in the colony, in order to maintain peace.

There was another aspect in which the dissatisfaction of the farmers manifested itself at this time. The missionaries of Bethelsdorp were the servants of a British missionary society, while the Cape was the possession of the Batavian Republic, an avowed enemy of the British. The farmers saw in the tolerance of a mission station of a hostile power the dangerous position of <u>imperium in imperio</u>. And when van der Kemp received a letter from a former commander of Fort Frederick, Major

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(3) See above, p. 50.

Lemoyne, in which he sent greetings to certain Hottentots who had been in his employ, it seemed that their case was clinched. Here was proof enough of treason. In their agitation to the authorities, however, they overlooked one small point: this English officer asked to be remembered also to the Dutch farmers of the district whom he had met while at Algoa Bay. It would not seem as if the seditious intentions of either missionary or soldier could, therefore, be drawn from this instance.

Matters were bound to come to a head within a short while, and it was a long letter from van der Kemp, written, says Martin, "in plain and vigorous language," (4) full of complaints and reports of fresh atrocities, that drew from the Governor an exceedingly sharp, but none the less deserved, retort:

> The bitter tone in which your reverence ascribes evil motives to others, the unfounded rights which your reverence wishes to guarantee to Hottentots as against Europeans, the encouragement and protection which the evil-minded and those that have gone astray find with your reverence, do no less harm than the mal-treatment and evil advice of some Boers. ... The state in which matters are on the Kaffir border grieves me. I had hoped to find at the institution at Bethelsdorp a loyal co-operation with the magistrate at Uitenhage. It was in vain. ... Had the directorate used its knowledge, possessions and

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(4) Actually, the letter is frankly rude, and in some places verges on libel. Martin's reference is p. 150.

> its moral teaching to win the affection of some of the Boers, then I believe that religion, the country and the Hottentots would have gained thereby. ... Be well assured, sir, that I do not in any way approve the great injustices which many Boers practise. ... I pray and adjure the directorate of Bethelsdorp to approach more closely to the magistrate and to recognise fully that it is the duty of the institution to submit to the same authority. If anyone thinks he has reason to complain then the complaints canbe submitted here, but to fail to appreciate the legal authority of the community is a deviation from duty. (5)

What Janssens had to say could not have made pleasant reading for van der Kemp, but, looking back on the situation from this distance, it cannot be described as in any way an unjust attack on him. He had, at every opportunity, striven to blacken the case of the farmers; he had failed to co-operate with the landdrost and field cornets; and the story of every rogue had been received with credulity. It is interesting to note that Janssens does not in any way deny that misdemeanours occur on the frontier. He must, however, have grown tired of the continual complaints from van der Kemp which poured into his offices, all the more irritating when the landdrost resided not twelve miles from Bethelsdorp and was the proper authority to receive these complaints.

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(5) Written, from the Cape of Good Hope, 9th. August 1804. (L.M.S.R. C/4/2) The original is, of course, in Dutch. The translation quoted here is to be found in Martin, op.cit., pp. 150-151, where a fuller citation of the original is available.

It has been remarked in an earlier chapter how in April 1805 Janssens at last summoned van der Kemp to Cape Town, together with Read, and that they were detained there for over a year. The charges to which van der Kemp was required to answer were as follows:-

1. He had received Hottentots into Bethelsdorp who were in Boer or military service, after having persuaded them to desert to the institution.

2. He had disobeyed the landdrost when asked to send four Hottentots to Algoa Bay.

3. He had passed on greetings of the English to the Hottentots. (6)

He succeeded easily in clearing himself of these three charges, and it must be admitted, on the face of things, that (apart from the first) they appear to be rather petty. It is probably true to say that Janssens saw in these accusations a convenient way of getting van der Kemp to Cape Town, and, once there, of keeping him.

At the beginning of 1806 the Batavian regime came suddenly to an end with the arrival of a British squadron under the command of Major-General Sir David Baird, and the Cape passed finally into the hands of the British. Perhaps it was a kindly Providence that arranged matters thus. At all events van der Kemp's prolonged detention

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(6) Annual Report, 1805. (L.M.S.R. D/1/3)

at the Cape made it possible for him to make the acquaintance of the British authorities at first hand, and before they had been prejudiced by the rumours and malicious scandal then prevalent in the capital. The result was all that he could hope for; he wrote enthusiastically to the Directors in London concerning his interview with Baird:

> We have little doubt that he will permit us to return to our dear Bethelsdorp as soon as tranquillity shall be restored to that country. (7)

In point of fact, his "deliverance" came two days' later, for on 5th. February 1806 he set out from Cape Town, accompanied by his colleague Smit and twelve Hottentots. The Governor had given him one of the waggons captured from the Dutch, and he accepted this as a symbol of a new era of friendship with the authorities. (8) The new landdrost, Captain Jacob Glen Cuyler, gave every evidence of amity and a desire to co-operate with the missionaries at Bethelsdorp. In the same letter to Hardcastle, van der Kemp remarks that the landdrost had

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(7) Written from Cape Town, 3rd. February 1806. (L.M.S.R. B/2/3.)

(8) Letter from van der Kemp to Hardcastle, written from Bethelsdorp, 10th. July 1806. (L.M.S.R. A/3/3.) Martin, op.cit., p. 157, states that "eleven Hottentot men and women" accompanied him from Cape Town, but this figure would appear to be incorrect.

"spontaneously" granted permission for the people of the institution to plough and sow an excellent piece of government ground nearby, thus increasing the harvest for that year. Is this not the land mentioned previously as being under the plough?

It might be supposed that the new regime would have seen a continuation of the happy relationships existing between the British governors and Dr. van der Kemp during the first British Occupation, so that the days of the Batavian Republic at the Cape would seem merely a stormy interregnum. At first, as can be seen from the foregoing, it did appear that conditions had improved, but this state of affairs soon worsened. There were many factors involved in this change, and it is not thought necessary to detail here the painful charges and countercharges that made the five years until van der Kemp's death a long tale of woe, but only to indicate the broad features of disagreement, in an attempt to evaluate the importance of this period.

Perhaps the main cause of trouble was the fact that van der Kemp soon showed that he was not prepared to cooperate with the landdrost, under whose authority he was residing. Cuyler found himself, on his arrival, faced with the prospect of completing the drostdy at Uitenhage

which Alberti had been forced to leave unfinished, due to a chronic lack of funds, amounting almost to insolvency of the Batavian Government at the Cape. Just as in the case of his predecessor, Cuyler had to find labour from somewhere, and sent his field cornets round the district. At Bethelsdorp they were met with a blunt refusal by van der Kemp to allow any of his Hottentots to enter into Government service. Naturally, the landdrost was forced to look askance at such an attitude, and this same point of almost infinitesimal importance again proved the beginning of years of bitterness.

A second reason for the enmity between the landdrost and the missionary was the question of military service. No sooner had Cuyler assumed duties than there was a raid by the Xhosas upon two or three frontier farms, during which a farmer named Grobbelaar was murdered. A commando was called out to avenge his death, and the Hottentots were expected to form a corps to assist the Europeans. Just as he had always acted, van der Kemp was strenuous in his refusal to allow the Hottentots of Bethelsdorp to do their share. Cuyler did not share the somewhat advanced views of the missionary, and the misunderstanding was never cleared up. Again and again, when this subject came up, the two men were ranged opposite each other.

The vital cause, however, of the rift between Cuyler and van der Kemp was undoubtedly the matter of ill-treatment of the Hottentots by the farmers. And here it should be noted that each man was as prejudiced as the other. The reader will have gathered by this time that this subject was never long out of the thoughts of van der Kemp, that he was, in fact, obsessed with the idea that at least ninety per cent of the Hottentots were being cruelly maltreated by the farmers, and that the Government was deliberately turning a blind eye to these atrocities. On the other side, Cuyler was equally bound by prejudice, for he had married a daughter of one of the farmers in the district, and it could not be expected that he would view van der Kemp's charges in the strictly impartial light of an arbiter.

That there were cruelties practised on the Hottentots by the farmers is undeniable. The correspondence between van der Kemp and Cuyler on this matter is most unpleasant, and, while much of what van der Kemp was told and believed may not have been true, nevertheless there were too many instances authenticated by other people for the matter to have been ignored.

At the beginning of his appointment, Cuyler had been instructed by the Secretary to the Governor:

> The Rev. Mr. Vanderkemp and his society of Christian Hottentots are particularly recommended to your protection; you will upon all occasions give this venerable and good man every assistance in your power. You must however listen to his account of the ill-treatment of the Hottentots and of the cruelty of the Boers with precaution. An enthusiast in his mission, he occasionally must see things in a stronger point of view than they are in reality. (9)

It is possible that Cuyler invoked the latter part of these instructions on as many occasions as possible, even when he ought to have evinced a less suspicious attitude towards the information provided by van der Kemp. For it remains true that where there is smoke, there must be fire - and there was, in all conscience, an inordinate amount of smoke on the frontier at that time! It would seem (from the later stages of Cuyler's stay in Uitenhage) that his name must be cleared of any charges of incompetence, especially in view of the findings of the Commission of Inquiry, which is known popularly as the "Black Circuit," unless the fact that certain of the cases in that Court were substantiated throws more blame onto him for not investigating them earlier. What-

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(9) Cited from Cory, op.cit., vol. i., p. 164.

ever may be the judgment of history, there can be little doubt that the private opinions each of the other prevented the landdrost and the missionary from working together, and hindered the cause not only of peace, but of the Gospel itself, in the district of Uitenhage. The strictures of Janssens still apply to van der Kemp in this period.

Mention has been made of the Commission of Inquiry of 1812, which was the first circuit court in the eastern districts, and was occupied mostly with cases which Read had brought to the notice of the world by a letter published in the Missionary Magazine in London, and which he had written in 1808. (10) Following on the publication of this letter, as was to be expected, the whole colony seethed with unrest, and feelings ran high. The authorities called upon Read to substantiate his charges, which he attempted to do, but without being able to convince Cuyler, whose report on the matter was transmitted to the Fiscal (or Attorney-General), J.A. Truter. (11) It was he who brought the seriousness of the situation fully to the notice of the Governor, and there followed an intensive effort to discover the truth. Ultimately

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(10) Written from Bethelsdorp, 30th. August 1808. (L.M.S.R. B/5/3.)

(11) The whole correspondence is available in Theal, op.cit., vol. vii., pp. 396-413, 500.

van der Kemp was summoned to Cape Town, where he and Read were required to give evidence, but he died before the Commission could begin its sittings in the Uitenhage district. The result could be described as a fiasco. Read, ever a poor disputant, missed the incisiveness of his superintendent, and did not manage to carry conviction into his evidence. The great majority of the cases were dismissed. It is not too much to say, though, that, had van der Kemp been present at the Court, in not a few cases the verdict might well have been otherwise.

In this chapter on van der Kemp's relations with the inhabitants and the authorities of the colony, much has been said on the dark side. Light, however, did shine trough some chinks of the wall of public opinion, for there were some of the farmers who did not disagree with him entirely, and many of the colonists, especially among the citizens of Cape Town, regarded him with the respect his bearing and reputation demanded, and he had many to love him. Robert Moffat, writing some thirty years after van der Kemp's death, gives a balanced critique of the man, (which will have to be examined in the last chapter of this work) which he concludes in words apposite to the present discussion:-

> It is also but justice to add, that Dr. Van der Kemp was not without sympathy; there were many noble-minded colonists who took a deep interest in his sufferings and labours; who felt a strong compassion for the spiritual destitution of the Hottentot race, and the slave population; and who were liberal in supporting the cause. (12)

It is gratifying to be able to record this and similar expressions, especially when one comes across sentiments such as the following, which, towards the end of the period under review, became more and more frequent from the pen of van der Kemp:

> I think our enemies have in view to accomplish their design, not by expelling us out of the colony, or by a formal prohibition of our missionary work, but by teasing, and gradually confining us more and more to a narrow sphere of activity, in the hope that, by repeated trials, we shall be wearied out, and disposed at length to abandon our station, and leave them masters of the field. (13)

The mention in the above citation of a narrow sphere of activity brings this discussion onto a phase of the subject that must now be considered, viz., the

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(12) R. Moffat, Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa, p. 42. (John Snow. London. 1842.)

(13) Letter of van der Kemp to the Directors of the L.M.S., written from Bethelsdorp, January 1807. In the documents provided on the microfilm to the present writer by the Archivist of the L.M.S., there is no mention of this letter. It is quoted, however, in Philip, Researches in South Africa, vol. i., p. 116. (James Duncan. London. 1828.) There seems no reason to doubt its authenticity.

opinion of the Government as to the value of Bethelsdorp. The efforts of various Governors to secure a better site have already been recounted. (14) The present writer will not be the first to point out that it was largely by Governmental action that Bethelsdorp began; that it was able to continue largely through the interest and beneficence of the Governors; and certainly that, had van der Kemp not broached the subject, the authorities themselves would have have been forced to move in this direction, and probably a completely secular institution would have resulted. (15) It is for this reason that what follows takes on significance.

Mention has already been made of the visit of Lieutenant-Colonel Collins to Bethelsdorp on 6th. April 1809. (16) The description he gave of the place led naturally to certain recommendations to the authorities. He could see no useful purpose being served by continuing the work at Bethelsdorp, seeing that after six years only some sixty-six baptised persons were resident at the institution, and only forty-three of the six hundred inhabitants were engaged in any useful employment. He

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(14) See above, pp. 83ff.
(15) See, e.g., W.M. Macmillan, op.cit., pp. 146ff.
(16) See above, p. 82.

recommended that the station should be closed, and its inhabitants distributed among the Moravian establishments, while the Xhosas at Bethelsdorp should be made to decide between living with their own people, and accompanying the Hottentots to Genadendal. Those Hottentots unwilling to go to the Moravians should engage themselves in the service of the farmers. He suggested that the missionaries of Bethelsdorp should go either to Madagascar, or to the northern part of the Cape, where they should minister to the Bushmen, and the only Hottentots allowed to accompany them should number not more than twenty persons of each sex, to be their servants. Finally he recommended that the missionaries should "direct the attention of their pupils less to literary than to mechanical operations." (17)

After the report of Colonel Collins, which probably suffered the same fate as most civil service correspondence, the authorities did not evince such an active interest in Bethelsdorp, until the charges brought forward by Read resulted in the Commission of Inquiry, who, on its return to Cape Town, presented the new Governor, Sir John Cradock, with a report in which the institution did not figure favourably. They referred to the laziness

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(17) Report of Lieut.-Col. R. Collins to the Earl of Caldeon. Theal, op.cit., vol. vii., pp. 106-114.

prevalent at the place, and thus allied themselves with the attitude of Cuyler, the landdrost of Uitenhage, and of the local farmers, which takes on an added significance thereby.

The aim of this chapter has been to present the facts concerning the rift between the missionaries and the Hottentots, on the one hand, and the Government and the farmers, on the other. There are certain conclusions to be drawn from this information, but these have been deferred until the next chapter, when a critical survey of the establishment will be made.

# CHAPTER SEVEN.

## AN EVALUATION OF THE WORK AT BETHELSDORP.

Almost the first words of this survey mentioned the passing of the glory of Bethelsdorp. It was in the light of this belief, with the conviction that there had been glorious days at this place, that the investigation was first begun. The writer was just as certain that, in the course of that exploration for historical facts, he would find much that was unpleasant, and that dimmed the radiance of that glory. Now that the facts have been set down, he must confess that his convictions have not materially altered, and he is prepared still to write over Bethelsdorp, "Ichabod," for the glory that was there is no more.

The reader will have become used, by this time, to hearing that Bethelsdorp was but a temporary site. It is, however, necessary to repeat the statement here, in order to evaluate the worth of the buildings that had been put up. At the beginning these were of clay and with thatched roofs, put up, it would appear in a definite scheme, that even the temporary village might have some appearance of neatness. As time went on, however, and no opportunity was forthcoming to move to better surroundings, these original buildings had to give place to some more permanent. When Campbell visited the institution the old plan had disappeared, and the houses

had been built just anywhere, and of all sorts of material. This must have detracted from the appearance of the village, but was, in all probability, inevitable. The church building, too, had had to be replaced with a more permanent structure. Certain critics have taken a delight in referring to the appearance of Bethelsdorp, and making the most of their findings, but it must be once more insisted that, in the years when it was uncertain how long the people would be living there, had van der Kemp spent the Society's money on permanent and attractive buildings, he would have been guilty of what might almost be termed misappropriation of funds.

Lichtenstein, when writing about Bethelsdorp, had much to say about the manner in which the days were spent, not in some useful pursuit, but at church. The truth of the matter is that morning and evening prayers were held every week-day, but that these were not of such a length as to interfere with the normal working day. The remark that the discourses at these services was limited to half an hour must not be misunderstood, for it must be borne in mind that in those days this was considered an extremely short address. There is one point, however, on which it is possible to agree with Lichtenstein. It will be recalled that the classes

for the catechumens were held on Wednesday mornings as well as on Saturday afternoons, though the exact times of meeting are not given. It cannot have been that the "seekers" were instructed too early in the mornings, however, for this would doubtless have clashed with the morning prayers. Thus the meeting on a Wednesday morning would have been held during working hours, and in all probability that on the Saturday afternoons would have had the same result of interrupting labour. It would certainly seem from this that van der Kemp here allowed his interest in spiritual matters to interfere with the normal working of the institution, as it was busy with the every-day life.

The question of baptisms at the institution has already been discussed. (1) The policy of fencing the communion table by making it very difficult to become a church member at all must have had a salutary effect on the people, and without any doubt resulted in a high standard of membership in the church. Van der Kemp's policy in this matter, it would appear, was admirable, and one could wish that it were more closely followed in these days.

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(1) See above, p. 65f.

One other matter in connection with the church life at Bethelsdorp merits attention here. It is a sign of healthy growth in a church when its members begin to turn their eyes to the white fields around them, ready for the harvest. This happened at Bethelsdorp very soon after work had begun, for as early as 1806 evangelists were going out into the district with the Good News. From the earliest times, too, there had been those who desired a share in conducting the worship, and who continued to acquit themselves creditably in this sphere of Christian service. On this point, too, the work of van der Kemp at Bethelsdorp was sound, and deserves praise.

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Turning now to the school conducted by Mrs. Matilda Smith during her two years' stay at Bethelsdorp, it will be recalled how successful her endeavours in this sphere were. (2) When her niece remarked that of all the bodies in the institution, the knitting school was the best conducted and most progressive, she was telling nothing less than the truth. That within a year the pupils of the school should have become self-supporting,

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(2) See above, pp. 76-77.

and at the end of the second year had enough in hand to enable each of them to be given a cow or its equivalent value in goods or money, is a very great achievement, one, it is felt, that can have its equal in very few other mission schools of the period in this country, or, in fact, in any other part of the world.

It should not be overlooked, when estimating the success of the school, that Mrs. Smith had certain difficulties that had to be overcome before progress could be reported. The fact that her pupils belonged to a population almost entirely vagrant proved a very real drawback, until she financed the venture herself, and gave the children the opportunity to remain in the school even when their parents had moved out of the institution. This good lady's accomplishments will take on added stature when it is further remembered that the women who attended the school belonged to the same nation, with all their traits of indolence and lack of responsibility. Yet she took them in hand, and managed to instil into them the love of industry, so that these women, too, were able to live more comfortably through what was earned by their efforts in the school.

The fortunes of the other school at Bethelsdorp, that for reading and writing, depended to a great extent on the attitude of the farmers in the vicinity. Their antagonism has been mentioned, and some of the possible reasons for it advanced. (3) There cannot be any doubt that it was a combination of a feeling of inferiority and the fear that the Hottentots would make use of their ability to read and write to join forces and rise against the white settlers, that caused this attitude. It is a surprising thing that van der Kemp did not realise the cause of their opposition to the school, and, if he did, made no move to put it right. There was a very obvious and easy way in which the whole position could have been remedied, one which was employed at the Church of Scotland institution, Lovedale, with great success. The school was opened, and the native children as well as the children of the Europeans attended. Had this been done at Bethelsdorp, with the school made available to the children of the farmers, and perhaps boarding facilities provided for those living at a distance, the story would have been quite different, for, by growing up and learning together, much of the hostility and misunderstanding must have disappeared.

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(3) See above, pp. 92f.

Looking back on the affairs of the schools from the advantageous position of a hundred and fifty years later, it is possible to see that the words of Collins (4) contained much wisdom, when he advocated that the curricula contain more instruction in the mechanical arts. This was a defect in the instruction given at Bethelsdorp, that a great deal of time was taken up making the Hottentots literate, without instilling into them the desire for attaining a proficiency in agriculture or manual skill; and when it happened that the missionaries were forbidden to instruct them in letters, there was no sign that the time was used in instruction in other directions. The advice of Collins will be appreciated even more when it is borne in mind that the Hottentots at that time had very little opportunity to put their learning to good use, whereas, had they been educated in the other arts, there was ample scope for them either in the employment of the Government, or on the farms, or as independent journeymen. This, however, was not done.

One other aspect of this situation, however, must be mentioned. It is quite possible that Collins made the recommendation he did for the same reason as the farmers had earlier agitated for the closing down of the

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(4) See above, p. 106.

school - viz., that he, with the other Europeans, feared the power that the Hottentots might gain through being literate. And it must be admitted that much of the fear and hatred and suspicion of the present day stems from the same source: if the Non-European is allowed full and equal rights of opportunity, it may be that one day he will usurp the place now held by the European, which, being so convinced of the divine right of white supremacy, of course, is unthinkable!

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When discussing the secular undertakings at the institution, it was remarked that agriculture formed the main employment for the male members who cared to busy themselves over anything. In spite of the sourness of the ground, and its rocky nature, making ploughing and sowing almost impossible at Bethelsdorp, the fields along the Little Zwartkops River were a tribute to the industry of some of the inhabitants, especially as these fields outshone the labours even of the Moravian missionaries at Genadendal. Account of this testimony of John Campbell, when the criticisms of van der Kemp's indulgence of the Hottentot's laziness are levelled, must be taken, for it was not possible for such a broad expanse of land

to be brought under cultivation without some hard work on the part of some members of the institution, though it is realised that some of this may have been done after van der Kemp's decease, and thus outside the period of this investigation.

Van der Kemp's earliest hopes were that his institution would be a hive of industry, as is shown by his remarks when first writing to Dundas on the subject. (5) His intention was

> to discourage laziness, and to have the individuals of our institution, as much as circumstances will admit, employed in different useful occupations, for the cultivation of their rational faculties, or exercise of the body, as means of subsistence, and of promoting the welfare of this Society, and the colony at large.

If the evidence of Campbell were all that was available, it would lend colour to the impression that van der Kemp had been entirely successful in his aspirations. Yet even from what Campbell has left on record, there is a hint that all was not well, for, while listing the eighteen trades to be found at Bethelsdorp, he is careful not to say how many people were employed in each. It is from Collins' report to Caledon that it is possible to obtain the truer picture, of forty-three persons in employment out of a total population of over six hundred,

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(5) See above, p. 17. The quotation is from the same place.

or less than seven per cent. The report of the Commission of Inquiry in 1812 also reported to Sir John Cradock adversely concerning the laziness of the members of Bethelsdorp.

From the foregoing, it will be obvious that the actual number of persons at Bethelsdorp who were in any useful employment (excluding those in the service of the farmers) was negligible. For this van der Kemp and Read rightly deserve censure. They had expressed it as their intention to train the Hottentots in the ways of profitable industry, and, seeing that it was partly on this clause in the letter to Dundas that this gentleman found reason to agree to the founding of an institution, it must be contended that the missionaries failed in their undertakings towards the Government. Much more serious, however, was their failure towards the Hottentots themselves. This backward race, with natural tendencies to an easy-going life, were none the less malleable matter for those who were prepared to put some effort towards their reformation. The Moravian missionaries were successful in this direction, and it would seem that the only reason why the Bethelsdorp staff failed was because they were either not sufficiently interested in this branch of missionary work, or lacked the disciplinary

convictions of their brethren at Genadendal. It is probable that the latter was the case, for there is on record a statement made by van der Kemp, highly revealing on this subject; it is contained in a Memorial to the Directors of the London Missionary Society, presented by Philip (and probably Campbell) in 1819:-

> He (van der Kemp) declared with much sorrow of heart, in the hearing of Mr. Ulbrecht and a lady whom I have seen, that he began at the wrong end with the Hottentots: that he had spoiled them; that he would go to Madagascar, or any other place; that he would never return to Bethelsdorp; and that they who came after him would have their hearts full of trouble. (6)

This may be interpreted as the bittern's cry in the wilderness of despair, as the last will and testament of disappointment and disillusion. It may also be understood as the honest admission of the mistake of a lifetime, and the present writer believes that it is to be so assessed. If this is so, it is to the honour of van der Kemp that he had enough common sense to realise that he had erred, and enough Christian humility to confess it. There is no shame in making mistakes; the sin is in realising that they are being made, and carrying on in the same way. It is here, though, that van der Kemp must

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(6) Cited in Remarks upon some of the Results developed by the Publication of a Portion of the Cape Records, relative to the Condition and Treatment of the Native Tribes of South Africa, by a Member of the Late Committee, p. 22a-b; bound in D. Moodie, Specimens of the Authentic Records of the Colony of the Cape of

be found guilty, for even after making the admission just quoted, he continued in his disinterestedness of manual labour. This must ever remain one of the chief grounds of criticism of this man and his institution.

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Before the evidence already brought forward concerning the relations of Bethelsdorp with the farmers can be assessed, it is necessary to note briefly the conditions under which Hottentot labour was regulated in the colony. It has not been thought necessary to detail this information, as it is conveniently available in two first-rate books, both by men intimately acquainted with South African colour problems. (7)

The regulations concerning Hottentot labour before 1809 were somewhat haphazard. A Hottentot could enter the service of a farmer with no written agreement being drawn up; if, at the end of his period of labour, he owed the farmer anything, it was permissible for the farmer to refuse to give him an exit certificate from his farm, or

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Good Hope, relative to the Aboriginal Tribes. (A.S. Robertson. Cape Town. 1841.)

(7) W.M. Macmillan, The Cape Colour Question.
J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937. (Longmans, Green & Co. London. 1939.) In the present writer's opinion, this book is even more balanced a presentation of the problem than is Macmillan's.

keep his children as apprentices, in lieu of the debt being settled in cash. In 1809, however, the Earl of Caledon issued his famous Proclamation (8) regarding Hottentot labour, by which it was hoped to regularise the practices of the farmers. By this Proclamation, it was provided that each Hottentot must have a fixed place of abode, from which he could only remove if he had a pass issued by the landdrost or field cornet; all labour contracts of one month's duration or longer had to be registered before the landdrost or field cornet; and by various means the Hottentots were safeguarded from unscrupulous employers. At once it was obvious that this Proclamation did not help matters much. For one thing, it was little use demanding that the Hottentot might not move from his place of abode without a pass from the landdrost, when he would probably have to travel a day's journey from his home to obtain this pass. In any case, it was grossly unfair to demand of him that he should have a fixed place of abode, when so many of the European farmers were themselves little better than nomads, continually on the move with their flocks and herds. The provisions endeavouring to protect him from unscrupulous employers were not of much use, as in most

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(8) Proclamation by the Earl of Caledon, cited in Theal, op.cit., vol. vii., pp. 211-216.

cases he would have spent the time between reporting his employer and the case coming off languishing in the local gaol; nor could he be sure that, when the case was heard, his witnesses would be accepted by the white magistrate. And should he lose his case, he was liable to be flogged. When this is understood, it is somewhat easier to understand the tension that existed between the missionaries fighting for the rights of the Hottentots, and the farmers struggling to retain their precarious supremacy.

In his earliest letter to Dundas van der Kemp outlined his rules for admission to the institution. (9) The pity is that he did not adhere to these ideals, for they would have prevented him from plunging headlongg into serious trouble. It must be assumed, though, that when he arrived at Bethelsdorp, he found the conditions completely different from the utopia he had visualised. The laziness of the Hottentots, his readiness to believe every word they told him, and the animosity of the farmers combined to produce the bitterness that drew from Janssens his words of condemnation. The attitude of van der Kemp was no solution; in fact the tension was perceptibly increased by his bearing towards the farmers, and, while he overworked the admonition of our Lord to

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(9) See above, p. 16, clauses 3 and 4.

rejoice under affliction, it seldom seems to have occurred to him to wonder whether some of the bitterness might not have existed on his side.

It must be admitted that one's sympathies for the farmers cannot help being aroused, when it is realised that their word was slighted, that a race of people notorious for their lack of veracity had their word accepted by the missionaries when the word of Christians was ignored or counted false. This, it seems, was a deliberate insult on the part of the missionaries, and certainly did not demonstrate the Christian spirit. They seem to have overlooked the fact that there are always two sides to a question, both of which must be heard before judgment can be fairly delivered.

The remarks of Janssens concerning van der Kemp's attitude towards the landdrost of Uitenhage apply to the whole period under review. In spite of repeated notices to that effect from the authorities in Cape Town, he steadily refused to acknowledge that he and his institution were subject to the landdrost. One might have thought that, once Janssens had delivered himself so forcefully on the subject, that fault of van der Kemp's would have been remedied, but it seems that he ignored the strictures completely.

In view of their professed attitude towards the landdrost, field cornets and farmers, it is not surprising that the missionaries were not regarded with favour by any of these people, or by the authorities in Cape Town. Yet it cannot be denied that they were sincere men, attempting a most difficult piece of work for the honour and sake of their Lord, and not for any earthly gain of their own. If the preceding pages seem to bear too hardly upon them, it is only because, in view of his own calling and confessed interest in missionary work, the present writer does not wish to be blamed for being in any way biased in what must attempt to be a scientific investigation. (sic) What has been written, however, is his honest opinion, though he would seek to qualify it by what follows.

That Bethelsdorp was unpopular cannot be denied, but the couplet is true of this case:

> The ancient proverb will be well effected -
> A staff is quickly found to beat a dog.

It should not be overlooked, however, that while the missionaries here suffered from the hatred of colonists, it was the same story (for part of the time, at any rate) with the Moravians at Genadendal, who for the first few years had much trouble with the ministers of the Dutch

Reformed Church and with the farmers. The mission station of the same Society at Groene Kloof (the present Mamre) suffered a great deal at the hands of an unsympathetic landdrost, and enjoyed much hostility from the farmers. Nor was the London station at Klaarwater (the present Griquatown), which was contemporaneous with Bethelsdorp, left unmolested. Even after the period being discussed here, the Governor was making excessive demands upon Anderson, the missionary there. From these passing references, it is clear that Bethelsdorp was not alone in unpopularity.

If it is to be found anywhere, the real glory of Bethelsdorp lies in the fact that the men who staffed the institution were intensely devoted to their people, even to the extent of marrying among them in the cases of Read and Ullbricht. This complete identification with the down-trodden and homeless of the land must have cost them dearly, but there is never any indication that they regretted their actions. It should not be forgotten that these men elected to serve at a place that left a great deal in the shape of physical comfort to be desired. They asked nothing better than that they served their Lord and knew, without asking any rewards, that they did His will. Because of their attachment to the institution

and the people there, amounting in some cases almost to fanaticism for the Cause, it was inevitable that they should in some cases see things somewhat out of focus. They were reformers, and it remains true that reformers are often guilty of excesses as great on the opposite side, as those they seek to correct. That there was need in the land in those days of reform is indubitable, and it is to the everlasting honour of these men that they raised their voices fearlessly, with no thought of personal safety. Here, if anywhere, is glory.

The achievements of the institution were not a few, when the disabilities under which the work was carried on are called to mind. That there should be a number of faithful members in the church at Bethelsdorp, almost a remnant in the Old Testament sense, and that from among these there should be some willing to go out with the message of the Gospel, is cause enough for rejoicing. In addition to the spiritual achievements, the task of education was begun, and carried on with much success in the face of great difficulty, especially during Mrs. Smith's reign over the desks. Agriculture and manual industry were not, it is true, as successful, but, even so, there were indications of progress, however slight.

More important, though, than the visible marks of progress was the invisible effect upon the Hottentots, and the country in general, of a place of asylum for the outcast and the homeless. Here he might find his cause championed, while he was made welcome to a home, and, did he so desire, he could learn from these people the dignity of labour. The moral effect of Bethelsdorp was cumulative, to be felt in full in the years that lay ahead. And this, too, was glorious.

When the state of Bethelsdorp to-day is compared with the conditions of those far-off years; when it is realised that the intense difficulties under which van van der Kemp laboured have now practically disappeared; when it is realised that the voice of the place is no longer heard or heeded in the land; when all this is taken into account, then it will be understood why it has been maintained that the glory has departed. Whatever the judgment of men may be, whether they agree with and support, or deny and condemn, the men who laboured at Bethelsdorp, this remains true: they cannot ignore their message, their successes, and their failures.

# C H A P T E R  E I G H T.

## A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF DOCTOR VAN DER KEMP.

In these pages the story of Bethelsdorp has been traced, and the attempt has been made to assess the facts there revealed. Throughout the narrative the name of the founder of that institution has appeared on nearly every page, for the story of Bethelsdorp was, in those early years, very largely the story of van der Kemp. He presents a complex picture, and it is necessary here briefly to weigh up the data provided by history concerning him.

No one would seek to deny that van der Kemp was an eccentric man. When the traveller Lichtenstein visited Bethelsdorp, he drew a pen picture of the missionary which has been quoted time and again in condemnation of him and consequently of his work. This is what Lichtenstein says:

> On the day of our arrival at Algoa Bay the Commissary-General received a visit from Vanderkemp. In the very hottest part of the morning we saw a waggon, such as is used in husbandry, drawn by four meagre oxen coming along the sandy downs. Vanderkemp sat upon a plank laid across it, without a hat, his venerable bald head exposed to the burning rays of the sun. He was dressed in a threadbare black coat, waistcoat and breeches, without shirt, neckcloth, or stockings, and leather sandals, bound upon his feet, the same as are worn by the Hottentots. (1)

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(1) H.Lichtenstein, op.cit., p. 292.

If any other proof is required of the eccentricity of van der Kemp, or if the misstatements of which Lichtenstein is guilty in other places casts doubt upon his remarks here, the testimony of a fellow-missionary should suffice:

> ... In a colonial village, where there were many who admired, and were ready to serve him, the Doctor would go out to the water, washing his own linen; and frequently at home and abroad, he would dispense with hat, shirt and shoes, while the patron and advocate of civilization. (2)

When it is recalled that Doctor van der Kemp's avowed aim was to raise the status of the Hottentots, it is surprising that he should have set about it in this way. Perhaps the remarks on this subject by Campbell clinch the matter:

> The truth is, the Doctor was an eccentric man and did eccentric things, which it is not my business to vindicate. (3)

This individualistic streak in his nature, that led van der Kemp into his eccentricities, was doubtless the underlying cause of another facet of his character. He was continually stirring up trouble, intentionally going out of his way to be difficult. While he most certainly did suffer much for the Kingdom's sake, there

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(2) R. Moffat, op.cit., pp. 41f.
(3) J. Campbell, op.cit., p. 575.

were many instances in which his personal hardships were self-inflicted. When this was the case, and the animosity of men was aroused against him, he would console himself with the words of our Lord which bade him rejoice under persecution. It never seemed to occur to him that he might have been able to take steps to lessen the antipathy, or even remove it altogether. It was the same as far as his personal comforts were concerned: he dressed, ate and slept in the same rude manner as did the Hottentots, but there was really no need for such lowering of his personal dignity or renunciation of the creature comforts.

Just as his blindness to the fact that in many cases the remedy of the situation lay in his own hands, so did his obstinacy increase the difficulties attending his work. It will be recalled that Mrs. Smith left the institution owing to the disagreement between her and the missionaries over slavery. While the point of view of the missionaries was undoubtedly closest to that of Christianity as a whole, there might have been much to be said for a temporary compromise, that the progress of Bethelsdorp could be secured for the future. Mrs. Smith was the only real influence on the station impelling the Hottentots towards manual labour; her efforts in the

school proved conclusively that, with the right attittude towards the Hottentots themselves, and a determination that work should be done, much might be accomplished. Had this lady remained at the establishment, there can be little doubt that the remarks of such reporters as Colonel Collins or the Commission of Inquiry in 1812 would have been very different. Yet the obstinacy of van der Kemp prevented him from working harmoniously with Mrs. Smith: simply because on what must be judged a minor point there was disagreement, conditions developed that resulted in her leaving - a loss from which Bethelsdorp never fully recovered, and for the period under review the institution was crippled through her absence. In matters such as these van der Kemp was guilty, not only of obstinacy, but also of the lack of the Christian virtue of humility: it was pride in his own opinions that caused so much of the trouble.

Added to this charactéristic was that of a domineering nature. He always had been a dominant personality; it was easy for advancing age to warp it into domination. One can sympathise with the remarks of a young missionary at Bethelsdorp, when he reported to the Directors (4) that the Pope had transferred to Bethelsdorp. As he

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(4) C. Pacalt, in a letter from Bethelsdorp, dated 19th. February 1811. (L.M.S.R. A/4/4.)

grew older, van der Kemp must have become increasingly difficult to work with, and this may be some part of the explanation of Bethelsdorp's failure in those years.

It is probable that this side of his nature was partly responsible, too, for his apparent inability to seek reconciliation with the farmers and with Cuyler. Perhaps it was pride that forbade any move on his part to banish their hostility, perhaps it was simply that it never occurred to him. At all events, he must stand condemned that he did not seek to love his neighbour with a white skin as he did his neighbour with a darker pigment. This is stated, with the desire to be as fair as possible to all parties concerned, all the while acknowledging the fact that van der Kemp had all his fair share and more of oppression and hatred to bear.

There can be little doubt that it was his marriage that for ever severed the connection between him and the colonists, along which understanding might have flowed. Dr. Martin (5) has discussed this matter at length, and the fairness with which he approaches the subject of what are called in this country "mixed marriages" is particularly gratifying. It is quite impossible here to discuss the case for or against this subject: that would

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(5) Op.cit., pp. 160ff.

require a dissertation in itself! One or two points should be noted, however, if the matter is to be understood aright. Dr. Martin is perfectly correct, of course, in appealing to Christian teaching to support the argument that pigmentation is no barrier between believers. If a white man can receive the Sacrament from the hands of a black priest, which represents the most fundamental spiritual unity the Church knows, there can be little argument advanced against physical unity among the same people. It is also true that in South Africa opinion on the subject has undergone a violent change since the country first began to be populated by Europeans. There are records extant of the marriages between Dutch colonists and Hottentot women, or between them and manumitted slaves, where the wives were accepted into Cape Society as the equals of the European women. By the time of van der Kemp's marriage, however, the Dutch people had come to look upon the native races of the country as their social inferiors, the hewers of wood and drawers of water on their farms, condemned by divine decree to occupy this servile position for ever. Marriage with them was, in consequence, out of the question. (This view did not, of course, prevent some of the white men seeking sexual relations with Hottentot women.)

Without doubt, there were several causes that might be advanced to explain van der Kemp's marriage to a young Malagasy slave-girl whom he had redeemed. He was an old man, needing the care of a woman, and the comforts she could provide in the home. It was an expression of his desire to associate himself completely with the lowest section of the population, to whose service he had dedicated himself. It was a symbolic fulfilment of his dreams to evangelise the island of Madagascar. All these are possible explanations of his action, and, as they stand, perfectly reasonable. It is not possible, unfortunately, to divorce an action such as this from its social and historical context, and it is against this background that vander Kemp's action must be judged. Knowing, as he most assuredly did, the opinion of the farmers concerning his establishment; knowing also their attitude to marriage with Non-Europeans; knowing all this, he still married the girl, and brought her to live among them at Bethelsdorp. The effect of this was that fully and finally van der Kemp sealed the fate of his life's work: the colonists would never for the future remember him for his great, sacrificing endeavours, but only for offending social mores. It is because, by his marriage, he so completely alienated the farmers that he is first to be censured over his marriage. Another point

is that, did he desire the creature comforts a wife could provide, there was small reason why he should have chosen as his partner one so much younger than he. Finally, it is difficult to understand why he should have married a wife not a Christian; it must surely have been his desire that she should enter into his own labours at Bethelsdorp, but that could not be in the case of the girl he married. With women like Mrs. Smith already favourably inclined towards him and his work, it is hard to see why he could not have married one of them. (6)

The other cause for so much of van der Kemp's unpopularity and bad name, is that he did so little to encourage the Hottentots to be useful members of the community. His disregard for manual work, however, was discussed in the previous chapter.

The foregoing has been an attempt to assess the importance of the causes of van der Kemp's being hated by his countrymen. There is, however, another side to the picture, and that must now be mentioned.

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(6) In connection with his marriage, the remarks about van der Kemp made by Lichtenstein should be noted. In practically every detail they lack historicity. Lichtenstein, op.cit., p.291 note, states that van der Kemp was seventy, the girl thirteen; both ages are incorrect. He states further that she was a Hottentot, and that van der Kemp never entered into marital relations with her, which again is incorrect, as four children were born of the marriage.

That in many respects van der Kemp was a very great man cannot be denied. There must have been something in the plaudits certain writers have bestowed upon him; he could not have been completely in the wrong. Otherwise another explanation must be advanced for Moffat's change of opinion regarding him. Three years after his arrival in the country, the young missionary could write home to Scotland in such words as these:

> Bethelsdorp, for instance, has been the seat of missionaries, but equally the seat of crime. All who have now fallen into gross sin (adultery) either were at B. or had previously lived there. The founder himself of that once renowned station had a character far from being unblameable, neither did his doctrines tend to a holy life. To us who are acquainted with his character, it is painful to see his name placed among the worthies in their public eulogiums. (7)

Nothing much worse could have been written than what Moffat penned in this letter, yet only nineteen years later he wrote at length on the character of van der Kemp, and, while he did not spare criticism, he could say:

> ... No less can be said of his labours than that they were those of an extraordinary man: and, considering the time and the state of affairs in the colony in which he lived, and

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(7) Letter of R. Moffat to Alexander Moffat, written from Lattakoo, January 1823, cited in I. Schapera (ed), Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp. 68f. (Central Africa Archives. Oppenheimer Series No. 5. Chatto and Windus. London. 1951.) The reference of the letter is Cent.Afr.Arch. M.9/1/5; Doc. 1/1823.

> the native character of the tribes among whom he laboured, the grace of God made him the honoured instrument of doing wonders. (8)

It is difficult to explain the marked divergence between these two references from the pen of Moffat in any other way than that he had had time to discover that, though the name of van der Kemp was blackened by the colonists, there yet remained in the character and work of the man something that rose over criticism.

The greatness of van der Kemp lay, first, in that he was a pioneer missionary in this country. For this his name must ever be honoured, that he went out, not knowing really whither he went, or what would meet him when he arrived there, and that he went into the land of the Xhosas to bring to them the first sound of the Good News. His faithfulness under hardship is demonstrated by the fact that he laboured among these people for nearly two years, without so much as a single convert from among them. And he would have continued had not pressure from within the colony forced him to return.

Van der Kemp was the first public defender of the Hottentots, the man to bring to public notice the disabilities under which they were forced to live. He

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(8) R.Moffat, Missionary Labours and Scenes, p. 40.

became their champion and protector, providing them with a sanctuary in which they could live in peace and comparative comfort, and where they were under the sound of the Gospel, which, he believed, would finally release them from their evil natures and bring them up to the stature of full-grown men in Christ.

He was also the friend of slaves, those poor bundles of human flesh, whose namelessness made them commercially so valuable. He loved them, and gave himself and his possessions for them. It is on record that during his stay in Africa he spent nearly £1,000 in manumitting slaves. The expense was but a demonstration of his love for them, and this love was able to triumph over the hatred of his fellow countrymen.

More than all this, though, he was a true disciple of his Lord. Like Him, he emptied himself, and counted not the cost. Honour, high social standing, advancement in civil or military affairs, distinction in learning, eminence in medicine, - these could not tempt him to stay, when the call from Africa's Macedon came to him. He took upon himself the form of a servant, and entered as fully as he could into the lives of his people. He chose to serve Hottentots and slaves, when the pulpits of the large European churches had been opened to him;

and, having made the choice, was content to remain with his parishioners for the rest of his days. The picture of this proud, learned, eminent man emptying himself in this way is a lesson to his critics, especially in this land, where much remains to be done in raising the unfortunates, and levelling society. Above all things, van der Kemp was a Christian, and he accepted literally the teaching that in Christ all are one, Jew and Greek, bond and free, or whoever they may be. It is because he left this as an example that he is to be given honour among the saints of the ages.

Let the closing scene be that of a room in Cape Town, on 19th. December 1811. The old soldier had fought his last battle, and was passing into his rest. His friend, Mrs. Smith, was with him, and she asked, "My friend, what is the state of your mind?" He smiled and said, "All is well." "Is it light or darkness?" she asked. And the answer came back, "Light!" So he died, and all Cape Town came to mourn his passing. In death, his enmity was forgotten, and men's judgments upon him were overlooked.

> Christ! I am Christ's! and let the name suffice you,
> Aye, for me too He greatly hath sufficed:
> Lo with no winning words I would entice you,
> Paul has no honour and no friend but Christ.

So it was with van der Kemp: he was the friend of Christ, and beside that men's judgments are vain.

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### (1) LETTERS FROM VAN DER KEMP & READ.

(Except where otherwise stated, all letters are addressed to the Governor or his Secretary or Aide-de-camp.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
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| ? March 1802. | BO/28/53. | |
| 3rd. August 1802. | BO/28/79. | |
| 28th. September 1802. | BO/28/111. | (to van Rijneveld) |
| 13th.May 1803. | BR/93/245. | |
| 31st.May 1803. | BR/93/241. | |
| ? January 1806. | CO/2559/1. | |

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|---|---|---|
| | 20th. March 1806. | CO/2559/5. |
| | " March 1806. | CO/2559/6. |
| | 16th. May 1806. | CO/2559/13. |
| | 31st. May 1806. | CO/2559/17. |
| | 5th. August 1806. | CO/2559/25. |
| | 31st. December 1806. | CO/2559/33. |
| | 30th. May 1807. | CO/2561/1. |
| | " May 1807. | CO/2561/4. |
| | 10th. November 1807. | CO/2561/20. |
| | 9th. May 1808. | CO/2563/6. |
| | 10th. June 1808. | CO/2563/12. |
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| | 8th. August 1809. | CO/2566/18. |
| | ? August 1809. | CO/2566/19. |
| | 5th. December 1809. | CO/2572/1. |
| | 1st. February 1810. | CO/2572/9. |
| * | 25th. October 1810. | CO/2577/3. |
| | 14th. January 1811. | CO/2577/4. |
| * | 8th. January 1811. | CO/2577/7. |
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(In all cases the letters are from the Governor, or his Secretary, or Aide-de-camp.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
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| 2nd. April 1802. | BO/55/25. | (Proclamation) |
| 12th. April 1802. | BO/55/43. | |
| 28th. May 1802. | BO/55/95. | |
| 7th. June 1802. | BO/55/101. | |
| 24th. July 1802. | BO/55/144. | |
| 10th. September 1802. | BO/55/201. | |
| 15th. September 1802. | BO/55/203. | |
| 31st. May 1803. | BR/93/233. | |
| 12th. October 1803. | BR/40/133. | |
| 1st. May 1806. | CO/4821/91. | |
| 10th. July 1806. | CO/4821/158. | |
| 14th. February 1807. | CO/4823/88. | |
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| 27th. June 1807. | CO/4823/249. | |
| 29th. December 1807. | CO/4824/293. | |

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* Letters from Read.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | 15th. September 1808. | CO/4825/375. |
| | 2nd. September 1809. | CO/4827/75. |
| * | 23rd. December 1809. | CO/4827/298. |
| | 5th. January 1810. | CO/4827/328. |
| | 6th. April 1810. | CO/4828/91. |
| * | 28th. February 1811. | CO/4829/116. |
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| | | |
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| 17th. March 1800. | BO/91/11. | Dundas to Maynier. |
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| 8th. December 1801. | BO/26/744. | Rev. M.C. Vos to Dundas. |
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| 17th.September 1802. | BO/28/103. | Bresler to Boers. |
| 11th. April 1806. | CO/2559/7. | Cuyler to Governor. |
| 17th. May 1806. | CO/2559/14. | " " " |
| 14th.September 1806. | CO/2559/27. | " " " |
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| 30th. May 1807. | CO/2561/2. | Ullbricht to Governor. |
| 31st. May 1807. | CO/2561/5. | Cuyler to Governor. |
| 27th. June 1807. | CO/4823/248. | Governor to Cuyler. |
| 2nd. July 1807. | CO/4823/258. | " " " |
| 21st. August 1807. | CO/4823/352. | " " " |
| ? January 1809. | CO/2566/2. | Cuyler to Governor. |
| ? January 1809. | CO/2566/3. | " " " |
| 25th. April 1809. | CO/2566/10. | " " " |
| 2nd. September 1809. | CO/4827/75. | Governor to Cuyler. |
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| 13th. December 1809. | CO/4827/281. | Governor to Pacalt & Wimmer. |
| 18th. February 1810. | CO/2572/11. | Cuyler to Governor. |
| 27th. April 1810. | CO/4828/91. | Governor to Cuyler. |
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|---|---|---|
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| 28th. February 1811. | CO/4829/118. | Governor to Cuyler. |
| 24th. April 1811. | CO/29/17. | Groene Kloof missionaries to Governor. |
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| | 1805. | D/1/3. |
| | 1806. | D/3/3. |
| | 1807. | D/4/3. |
| | 1808. | C/5/3. |
| | 1809. | E/1/4. |
| | 1810. | C/3/4. |
| | 1811. | D/5/4. |

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| | | | |
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| | 6th. April 1803. | A/3/2. | to Cousin of van der Kemp at Hague. |
| | (undated) | D/3/2. | to Governor. |
| | (undated) | D/3/2. | |
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| * | 30th. January 1808. | A/5/3. | |
| | 21st. May 1808. | B/5/3. | |
| | 30th. August 1808. | B/5/3. | |
| * | " August 1808. | B/5/3. | |
| | 4th. January 1809. | A/1/4. | |
| | 5th. September 1809. | C/1/4. | |
| * | 7th. November 1809. | D/1/4. | |
| | 28th. January 1810. | B/2/4. | |
| * | 4th. February 1810. | B/2/4. | |
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| + | 7th. April 1810. | C/2/4. | |
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* From Read.
\+ From Pacalt.

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15th. March | 1802. | B/1/2. | from T.T. van Rijneveld. |
| 28th. May | 1802. | D/1/2. | " Governor. |
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| ? May | 1803. | B/3/2. | " " |
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| 12th. October | 1803. | C/3/2. | " Janssens. |
| 20th. December | 1803. | C/3/2. | " Gerotz. |
| 29th. December | 1803. | D/3/2. | " Alberti. |
| " December | 1803. | D/3/2. | " " |
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| 3rd. May | 1805. | B/1/3. | " Janssens. |
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| 20th. March | 1806. | C/2/3. | " Hardcastle. |
| 12th. January | 1807. | A/4/3. | " " |
| 28th. March | 1807. | B/4/3. | " Cuyler. |
| 1st. October | 1807. | D/4/3. | " E. Smit. |
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