

two stories, on account of the violence of the wind, which at some seasons of the year blows with great strength and fury; indeed sometimes so violently as to shake the houses to the very foundation. For the same reason, thatch has been usually preferred to tiles or shingles; but the bad effects that have proceeded from this mode when fires happen, has induced the inhabitants in all their new buildings to give the preference to slates and tiles. The lower parts of the house, according to the custom of the Dutch nation, are not only uncommonly neat and clean in appearance, but they are really so; and the furniture is rather rich than elegant. But this is by no means the case with the bed rooms or upper apartments; which are more barely and worse furnished than any I ever beheld: and the streets seem to be much upon a par with them, they being rough, uneven, and unpaved. I was however, upon the whole extremely well pleased with the town. Many of the houses have a space flagged before the door, and others have trees planted before them, which form a pleasant shade, and give a pleasing novelty to the streets.

The only landing place is at the east-end of the town, where there is a wooden quay running some paces into the sea, with several cranes on it, for the convenience of loading and unloading the scoots that come along side. To this place excellent water is conveyed by pipes, which makes the watering of ships both easy and expeditious.

Close to this quay on the left hand, stands the castle and principal fortress; a strong extensive work, having excellent accommodations for the troops, and for many of the civil officers belonging to the Company. Within the gates, the Company have their principal stores; which are spacious as well as convenient. This fort covers and defends the east part of the town and harbour, as Amsterdam fort does the west part. The latter, which has been built since Commodore Johnstone's expedition, and whereupon both French and Dutch judgment have been united to render it effectual and strong, is admirably planned and calculated to annoy and harass ships coming into the bay. Some smaller detached fortifications extend along the coast, both to the east and west, and make landing, which was not the case before the late war, hazardous and difficult. In a word, Cape Town is at this time fortified with strength, regularity, and judgment.

There are two churches; one large, plain, and unadorned, for the Calvinists, the prevailing sect; and a smaller one for the Lutherans.

The hospital, which is large and extensive, is situated at the upper end of the town, close to the Company's garden. It is an honour to that commercial body, and no small ornament to the town. The only objection that can be made to it as a building, is its situation: had it been erected on an eminence, and a little detached from the town, which might easily have been done, no fault could have been found with it. As it is, the convalescents have free access to the Company's gardens, where they reap the benefit of a wholesome pure air, perfumed with the exhalations of a great variety of rich fruit trees, aromatic shrubs, and odorous plants and flowers; and likewise have the use of every production of it, as before observed; advantages that compensate, in a great measure, for the flat situation of the hospital.

The inhabitants are all exceedingly fond of gardens, which they keep in most excellent order. The doing this is very little trouble to them, the climate and soil being most benign and friendly to vegetation. Among the many which afforded me delight, I must not forget that belonging to Colonel Gordon, commander in chief of the Dutch troops at the Cape; where not only the taste and ingenuity of the gardener, but the skill and knowledge of the botanist, are at once manifest. The Colonel is a man of science, of an active and well cultivated genius, and who appropriates those hours he can spare from his military duties (in which he is said to excel) to a perusal of the book of nature, and researches after useful knowledge.—The pursuits tend not only to his amusement, but to his honour; and they will, doubtless, at some time or other, further conduce to the advancement of natural history, and to the honour of his country; as it said he intends to publish the observations and remarks which have been the result of his researches. Those he has made on the Hottentots, Caffres, and the countries they inhabit, will doubtless be valuable; he having made himself better acquainted with the subjects, and penetrated further into the interior parts, than any traveller or naturalist that has hitherto visited the Cape. It is to be lamented, that he has so long withheld from the world the gratification and improvement, which most assuredly must be derived from the observations of a person so well and so extensively informed. His polite attention and civility, during our stay at the Cape, claim our most grateful acknowledgments.

Beside their hospital, the Dutch East India Company have several other public buildings,