

twelve miles in length : nor could they hope for a relief from this difficulty, until another could be opened to Table Bay, into which the admiral might send ships ; but the season was still very unfavourable to their anchoring there. On the other hand, the enemy were strong, seemed disposed to make a steady resistance, and had had sufficient time to mature their preparations. While these difficulties discouraged the idea of offensive operations, strong reasons urged the general to attempt them. He knew the arrival of General Clarke to be very uncertain, and the possibility of his troops procuring provisions, sufficient to enable them to wait his coming, extremely doubtful. These circumstances determined him to trust to the spirit of his army for an extrication from his difficulties, and to attempt a surprize by night on the most considerable of the enemy's out-posts, hoping, that a severe blow struck against the burgher militia might spread a panic amongst these raw and inexperienced troops. This attempt was made on the 27th ; but it entirely failed through the intricacy of the roads, and the ignorance of the guides ; and produced a degree of vigilance amongst the enemy, which rendered any farther attempts hopeless.

The Dutch were now in their turn the assailants : on the morning of the 1st of September they lined the mountains above the English with Hottentots and Burgher militia, and poured in a fire of musquetry, which threw the picquet of the reserve into disorder, and the enemy perceiving their advantage, advanced and drove them in : but this was only a transient success : they were quickly repulsed by the grenadiers of the 78th regiment, under the command of Captain Brown.