

and darkness drawing near. He has a long way to go to the post office and Mr. STAF's dwelling-house. And this very night he has to go to Elfsborg (the fortress in the Gothenburg estuary) to board the ship. Therefore he is in a hurry.

SECOND LETTER.

“Caput B. Spei d. 2. Maij 1772. Beij Hr van Kirsten in Baij Falso.”

“Immediately after my arrival here at the Cape on April 12, I had the honour of writing you in a hurry.” SPARRMAN had promised in that note to send some “naturalia”, but rainfall, gales, visits, removing and care of his luggage, his pupils (the children of the Resident), etc. have made him postpone their forwarding. Most of the plants he has collected here at Baij Falso have not yet dried enough, and many of those from the Cape were damaged by moisture during the transport. So they must wait till next time. Now in winter there are only a few insects, mostly such as could be found under stones, rotten trees, etc. In spring, three months hence, the mountains and the dry fields are said to be covered with flowers. Next time he will make notes of the plants, which is now impossible because of language difficulties. People seem to tell interesting things, but he does not understand what they say. *Mesembryanthemum edule*, Hottentotts' file (?)⁵⁴ is said to be good for sore legs.

The Hospital at Cape Town was filled up with sick sailors. 66 people were taken in the hospital at Bayo Falso from a Dutch ship in which 103 (out of 340) had died during the passage from Amsterdam to Cape Town.—SPARRMAN has drawn a *Sepia*⁵⁵. The drawing is included. He also sends a *Vespertilio*⁵⁶, which he will further examine when his patron (and employer!) moves to his country seat (Alphen). He has no bottles, neither any shotgun, otherwise he would collect fishes and birds. In the Garden he saw *Equus Zebra*, *Struthio camelis* and *casuarius*⁵⁷, and on the beach two pelicans. After this some notes about things he observed during the voyage. Then he writes: “Before ending this letter I must tell you that I met Dr. Thunberg; a meeting as pleasant to me as surprising to him. If I were lodged at the Cape, I should have good help and training from him. We have made an excursion together. How we wished we had had the

⁵⁴*Carpobrotus edulis*, N. E. Br. (*M. edule*, L.), Hottentot Fig. SPARRMAN obviously heard the Dutch “vijg”, without seeing it in writing!

⁵⁵An ink-fish.

⁵⁶A bat.

⁵⁷*Equus zebra*, the Cape Mountain Zebra; *Struthio australis* (syn. *S. camelus*), the Ostrich; and the Cassowary (*Casuarius*, a small genus of ostrichlike birds which are confined to New Guinea and nearby islands, and North Queensland, Australia).