

**INNER AFRICA LAID OPEN, IN AN
ATTEMPT TO TRACE THE CHIEF
LINES OF COMMUNICATION
ACROSS THAT CONTINENT
SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR**

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Inner Africa Laid Open, in an Attempt to Trace the Chief Lines of Communication Across That Continent South of the Equator by William Desborough Cooley

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WILLIAM DESBOROUGH COOLEY

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THE CHIEF LINES OF COMMUNICATION ACROSS THAT CONTINENT
SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR:

WITH THE ROUTES TO

THE MUROPUE AND THE CAZEMBE,
MOENEMOEZI AND LAKE NYASSA;

THE JOURNEYS OF

THE REV. DR. KRAPP AND THE REV. J. REBMANN

ON THE EASTERN COAST,

AND

THE DISCOVERIES OF MESSRS. OSWELL AND LIVINGSTONE

IN THE HEART OF THE CONTINENT.

BY

WILLIAM DESBOROUGH COOLEY.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

1852.

PREFACE.

THE following pages were originally written for the purpose of elucidating and justifying a map, drawn on a large scale and exhibiting in the fullest manner the authentic details of that portion of Africa, which lies between the equator and the southern tropic. The utility of such a disclosure of detail is obvious, for in weighing the credibility of statements, it is of the utmost importance to consider the copiousness and harmony of the accompanying particulars. The map in question was drawn above a year ago, and was placed early in November (1851), in the hands of Mr. John Arrowsmith, at his own desire, to be engraved and published. He received it free from any stipulation or condition but that of publication within a reasonable time, and voluntarily engaged to complete the work in two months. As circumstances beyond my control, however, now forbid my reckoning on the completion of that map, and as the value of every comment or suggestion, connected with progressive discovery, is liable to continual change, it seems best to publish the Memoir without further delay, notwithstanding the disadvantage under which it must appear when

separated from the work which determined its form and was calculated to reflect on it a natural and appropriate light: for as the Memoir was written to justify the map, so the map would have explained the motives of the Memoir, and vindicated its attention to particular details. The small map now prefixed to the work will suffice for the illustration of general views, and show the range and scope of the inquiry. Though it differs materially from the ordinary maps of the same portion of the earth, the attentive reader will soon perceive that it has not been incautiously compiled, and that its title to distinction is founded not on originality nor fulness (which latter indeed would be impossible in so small a space), so much as on superior authenticity.

W. D. C.

26th July, 1852.

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INNER AFRICA LAID OPEN.

THE interior of Africa, south of the equator, still remains in our best maps a blank ; yet our information respecting that portion of the earth, scanty as it may appear, is sufficient, when aptly analysed and combined, to shed a flood of light on a very interesting region. The chief physical features of that hitherto dark interior, and those most likely to operate on the social condition of mankind, may be made to shine forth with incontrovertible evidence.

^x To collect and duly concentrate every scattered ray of light is the task herein undertaken. If successfully performed, it will invest with an authentic character much that is now involved in doubt and uncertainty ; and, at the same time, it cannot fail to augment our knowledge with the consequences that follow on clear views. The first attempt of this kind was made in the "Memoir on the Geography of Nyassi," which appeared in the "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. xv., 1845. The novelty, extent, and intrinsic importance of the field therein opened to inquiry, would fully justify the repetition of

its survey, even within the same limits. But we now resume its investigation with a wider scope, increased resources, and with a reasonable expectation of being able to dispel much of the obscurity which still hangs over the geography of Africa. The discoveries recently made in Eastern Africa by the missionaries settled near Mombas, will be also found here, reduced to an authentic shape and in their just proportions.

The attempt to penetrate and examine that which is less known in geography, is often marred by misconception of that which is better known, arising chiefly from the vague language of travellers, and their exaggerated estimates of distances. Before we venture, therefore, to proceed into the interior, we must endeavour to ascertain the position of our starting point. In the map drawn by D'Anville for Labat's "Relation Historique de l'Ethiopie Occidentale," attention is called by that judicious geographer to the blank space in the interior, the unusual extent of which, he observes, is attributable, not to increased distance between the coasts, but simply to reduction of the exaggerated extent given to the known region on both sides. In all maps of Africa anterior to the 18th century, and in many of later date, the kingdoms of Abessinia, Monomotapa, and Congo, meet in the middle of the continent, where, consequently, they leave no void or blank. Errors of this kind, pervading nearly all our geographical materials, are hard to be got rid of; and it is curious to observe, that in the map by D'Anville, above referred to, the Abessinian name Bagamidr still adheres to the upper course of