

tricts occur, and by watching their flight in the mornings and evenings I have, when forsaken by the natives, discovered the fountains in the desert. As they fly they repeatedly utter a soft melodious cry, resembling the words "pretty, pretty dear." They are excellent eating.

In the forenoon I observed the base of an extensive range of hills to the northward concealed for miles, as if by thick clouds or mist, which steadily advanced towards us, holding a southerly course; this mist proved to be a flight of myriads of locusts, in my opinion one of the most remarkable phenomena a traveller can behold. They very much resembled a fall of snow, when it gently descends in large light flakes, and the sound caused by their wings reminded me of the rustling of the summer-breeze among the trees of the forest. In the afternoon I hunted a mountain-range to the westward of the saltpan called by the Boers and Bastards "Sautpan's berg;" and in the evening visited the old Bushman's hut, whom I found at home with a litter of very small Bush-children, his grandchildren. I lay down to sleep beneath an aged mimosa in their vicinity, and about midnight the wind setting in from the Southern Ocean, and having no covering but my shirt, I felt it piercingly cold; sleep was out of the question, and I was right glad when I heard the sparrow's chirp announcing the dawn of day. Notwithstanding these nocturnal exposures, my health since leaving my regiment had been perfect—not a twitch of rheumatism (a complaint from which I suffered while in India), although I had ceased to wear flannel, which I had previously done for years: I can therefore confidently recommend the country to those who suffer from that most grievous affliction. Colds, coughs, and sore throats are of rare occurrence; and scientific persons, on whose opinions I could rely, informed me that the frontier districts of the colony, and the remoter ones to the northward, are the finest in the world for persons labouring under any pulmonary complaint. At times when I returned to camp I felt very lonely for want of some companion to welcome me, and discuss over my gipsy-fire the adventures and incidents of the day: in general, however, when the sport was good I enjoyed excellent spirits.

On reaching my waggons we inspanned and trekked east, making for a small fountain situated on the borders of a large pan, which lay in a broad hollow. Here the entire country was of a soft sandy character, and utterly uninhabited; the plains covered with long rough heath and other low scrubby bushes, intermingled with much sweet grass. Ranges of hills of goodly height and considerable extent intersected the plains, and bounded the view at various distances on every side; ancient forests of picturesque and venerable mimosas, interspersed with high grey-leaved bushes, detached and in groups, stretched along the bases of these mountain-ranges, their breadth extending about a mile into the surrounding country. We reached the small fountain in the dark, our road leading through the saltpan, where we halted for an hour to collect salt, and had little difficulty in filling two large sacks.

This day a flight of locusts passed over our heads during upwards of half an hour, flying so thick as to darken the sun, maintaining an elevation of from six to three or four hundred feet above the level of the plain. Woe to the vegetation of the country on which they alight! In the afternoon two mounted Boers, one of them the brother of the master from whom my little Bushboy had absconded, rode up and requested me to give him back, when, after listening to their importunities and false statements till I was tired, I informed them that the nation to which I belonged was averse to slavery, and that I could not think of acceding to their demand. They then saddled up and departed, telling me the matter should not rest there. The little Bushman seemed highly amused with the whole proceeding; and when the Boers mounted their steeds and rode away, he shrieked with delight, exclaiming in Low Dutch, "Yah, yilla forfluxta Boera, villa had de chadachta me te chra, mar ik heb noo a ghroote baas, dat sall yilla neuk;" signifying "Yes, you worthless Boers, you thought to get hold of me; but I have now a great master who will serve you out." My oxen and horses having effaced all original traces around the fountain, I described a circle a little distance from it, to ascertain if it was much frequented. This is the manner in which spoor should

at all times be sought for; and finding abundant traces of various wild animals, I resolved to remain here some days. Concealing my waggons from view in an adjacent hollow, I constructed a shooting-hole beside the fountain, where for several mornings, at early dawn, I shot hartebeests as they came to drink.

On the 12th I rode north-east, and after proceeding several miles through an open country, entered a beautiful forest of camceldorn-trees, skirting a range of steep rocky hills. The country gave me the idea of extreme antiquity, where the hand of man had wrought no change since the Creation. In a finely-wooded broad valley we fell in with a magnificent herd of blue wildebeests, and as they cantered across the grassy sward, tossing their fierce-looking, ponderous heads, their shaggy manes and long, black, bushy tails streaming in the breeze, they presented an appearance at once striking and imposing; to a stranger they conveyed rather the idea of buffaloes than anything belonging to the antelope-tribe, to which, indeed, wildebeests, both blue and white, are but remotely allied, notwithstanding the classification of naturalists. Returning to camp with the trophies of a hartebeest, I started a strand wolfe, or fuscous hyæna, which I rode into and slew.

About midnight on the 16th I went to my shooting-hole beside the fountain, and at dawn, hearing some animal approach, I peeped through the stones that surrounded my hole, and saw a fine bull bindled gnoo dash into the water within forty yards of me; he stood at bay, and was followed by four wild dogs, their heads and shoulders covered with blood, and savage in the extreme. They seemed quite confident of success, and came leisurely up to the bull, passing within a few yards of me, their eyes glistening with ferocious glee.

My anxiety to possess this fine old bull, and also a specimen of the wild dog, prevented my waiting to see more, and deliberating but for a few seconds, I shot the gnoo and the largest dog. The bull, on receiving the ball, bounded out of the fountain; but, suddenly wheeling about, re-entered it, and, staggering violently for a moment, sunk beneath its waters. The hound got the bullet through his heart, and springing forward from his comrades, instantly measured his length

upon the gravel. I then quickly reloaded my rifle, lying on my side—a proceeding which, I may inform those who have not yet tried it, is rather difficult to accomplish. Whilst I was thus occupied, the three remaining hounds reluctantly withdrew, and described a semicircle to leeward for the purpose of obtaining my wind and more correctly ascertaining the cause of their discomfiture, when I reopened my fire, and wounded another, after which they all made off.

I could not help feeling very reluctant to fire at the jolly hounds. The whole affair reminded me so very forcibly of many gallant courses I had enjoyed in the Scottish deer-forests with my own noble deer-hounds, that I could not divest myself of the idea that those now before me deserved a better recompense for the masterly manner in which they were pursuing their desperate game. One hound in particular bore a strong expression of dear old Factor in his face, a trusty stag-hound bred by myself, whose deeds, though not renowned in verse like Ossian's Oscar and Luath, were perhaps little inferior either in speed or prowess to those famed in ancient song. The wild dogs, or "wilde honden," as they are termed by the Dutch Boers, are still numerous, both in the colony and the interior. They hunt together in large organized packs of from ten to sixty, and by their extraordinary powers of endurance, and mode of mutual assistance, are enabled to run into the swiftest, or overcome the largest and most powerful antelope. I have never heard of their attacking the buffalo, and I believe that the animal pursued in the present instance is the largest to which they give battle. Their pace is a long, never-tiring gallop, and in the chase they relieve one another, the leading hounds falling to the rear when fatigued, when others, who have been husbanding their strength, come up and relieve them; having succeeded in bringing their quarry to bay, they all surround him, and he is immediately dragged to the ground, and in a few minutes torn to pieces and consumed. They are of a bold and daring disposition, and do not entertain much fear of man, evincing less concern on his approach than any other carnivorous animal with which I am acquainted. When a pack is

disturbed they trot leisurely along before the intruder, repeatedly halting and looking back at him. The females bring forth their young in large holes, in desolate open plains, and these burrows are connected with one another underground. When a troop of wild dogs observe a man approaching, they do not, as might be supposed, take shelter in the holes, but, trusting to their speed, rush forth, even though the intruder should be close upon them, and retreat across the plain, the young ones, unless very weak, accompanying them. The devastation occasioned by these dogs among the flocks of the Dutch Boers is inconceivable. It often happens that when the careless shepherds have left their charge, in quest of honey, or for some other object, a pack of these marauders come across the defenceless flock; a sanguinary massacre in such cases invariably ensues, and incredible numbers of sheep are killed and wounded. The voracious dogs, not contented with killing as many as they can eat, follow resolutely on, tearing and mangling all that come within their reach. Their voice consists of three different kinds of cry, each being used on a special occasion: one is a sharp angry bark, usually uttered when they suddenly behold an object which they cannot make out. Another resembles the chattering of monkeys; this cry is emitted at night when large numbers of them are congregated together, and they are excited by any particular occurrence, such as being barked at by domestic dogs. The third, and the one most commonly made, is a sort of rallying note to bring the various members of the pack together when they have been scattered in following several individuals of a troop of antelopes. It is a peculiarly soft melodious cry, yet nevertheless may be distinguished at a great distance; it very much resembles the second note uttered by the cuckoo, and, when heard in a calm morning echoing through the distant woodlands, it has a very pleasing effect. They treat all domestic dogs, however large and fierce, with the utmost scorn, waiting to receive their attack, and then clanishly assisting one another, they generally rend them in pieces. The domestic dogs, most cordially reciprocating their animosity, abhor their very voices, at what distance soever heard, even more than

that of the lion, starting to their feet, and angrily barking for hours. This interesting though destructive animal seems to form the connecting link between the wolf and the hyæna.

Having summoned my men, and with considerable difficulty dragged the ponderous carcase of the old bull out of the water, we found that he had been cruelly lacerated, and it appeared to me they had endeavoured to hamstring him. His hind legs, haunches, and belly were dreadfully torn; he had lost half his tail, and was otherwise mutilated. I could not help commiserating his fate. It is melancholy to reflect that, in accordance with the laws of nature, such scenes of pain must ever be occurring; one species, whether inhabiting earth, air, or ocean, being produced to become the prey of another. At night I watched the water, with fairish moonlight, and shot a large spotted hyæna.

I continued here hunting hartebeests until the 21st. I inspanned at an early hour and trekked due east till sundown, and then halted near a small fountain of fine water, having performed a march of about twenty-five miles.

CHAPTER IX.

RIET RIVER—MIRAGE—BLESBOK—CURIOUS FACIS CONCERNING LIONS.

WE inspanned before dawn on the 23rd of February, and after steering east and by north for twelve miles, found our selves on the southern bank of the Riet River, the breadth of which is here about thirty yards: it rises one hundred miles to the eastward, and, flowing westerly, joins the Vaal River opposite Campbell's Dorp.

On the third day after making the Riet River we crossed below a very picturesque waterfall, and resumed our march along its northern bank. The day was cool and pleasant, the sky overcast; the hot days of summer were now past, and the weather was most enjoyable. Continuing my march in the afternoon, I left the Riet River on my right, and held on through an open sandy country richly covered with abundance of sweet grass, and intersected by mountain ranges of very considerable extent. At sunset I encamped at a Boer's farm, who received me hospitably, and during dinner, according to custom, pestered me with a thousand questions, such as, What was my nation? Where was I from? Where was I bound for? Why I travelled about alone in such a manner? Where was my farm? Were my father and mother living? How many brothers and sisters had I? Was I married? And had I never been married in the whole course of my life? On my replying in the negative to this last question, the Boer seemed petrified with astonishment, and the family gazed at one another in utter amazement. On the following day I made two long marches, and again halted on the farm of a Boer, whose name was Potcheter. I found this man particularly bitter against the Government, and on my going up to him to inquire where I should outspan, he was very surly, remarking to three other gruff-

looking Boers, as I walked away, that I was "a verdomd Englishman."

Notwithstanding this cold reception I outspanned, and on returning to the house soon managed to get into their good graces. During dinner the conversation turned on the present administration of the government; and this being a disagreeable subject, I produced my 'Museum of Animated Nature,' a work which never failed to enchant the Boers, and put an end to all political discussions; shooting and wild animals engrossing the conversation during the rest of the evening. My entertainer informed me I should see herds of blesboks on the following day, and that a considerable party of Boers had mustered upon a farm a few miles in advance, to hunt a troop of lions which had killed some horses on the preceding one. I also learnt that a war was brewing between the emigrant Boers on the northern bank of the Orange River and the Bastard and Griqua tribes; this rumour threw my followers into a state of great alarm, but I resolved that my movements should not be influenced by these reports.

Before leaving I heard that the party who had been lion-hunting had bagged two fine lions, a male and female; and as their farm lay in my line of march, I mounted Colosberg, and, desiring my servants to follow with the waggons, rode forward to inspect the noble game. I found the lion and lioness laid out on the grass in front of the house, and the Boers' Hottentots busy skinning them. Both lions were riddled with balls, and their heads shot all to pieces. This is generally the way in which the Boers serve a lion after they have killed him, fearing to approach, until they have expended a further supply of ammunition. A Hottentot is then ordered to throw a stone at him, after which the Boers ask if he is dead, and on the Hottentot replying, "Like so, baas," he is ordered to pull him by the tail before the hunters will venture to go up to him.

The Boer to whom this farm belonged was a tall, powerful, manly-looking fellow, and informed me he was a Dane. He was in great distress about two favourite dogs the lions had killed during the attack; three more were badly wounded.

Being anxious to commence my operations against the blesboks, I resumed my march shortly after mid-day. On taking leave, the Dane presented me with some meal and a couple of loaves of bread, a luxury to which I had been an utter stranger for many months, and which, together with vegetables, I may further add, I hardly ever tasted during the five hunting expeditions I performed in South Africa. Another short march in a north-easterly direction brought me to the western borders of the boundless regions inhabited by the blesboks; here I drew up my waggons beside a vley of rain-water, in open country, the plains before me being adorned with herds of black wildebeest, springbok, and blesbok.

I had now reached a country differing entirely from any I had hitherto seen. The sweet grass, heretofore so abundant, became very scarce, being succeeded by short, crisp, sour pasturage, which my cattle and horses refused to eat. A supply of forage, however, could generally be obtained by driving them to the stony hillocks and rocky mountain ranges intersecting the campaign country. The plains, which were firm and hard, and admirably suited for riding, were pastured short and bare by the endless herds of game which from time immemorial had held possession of them, and often extended to amazing distances, without any landmark to break the monotony of their boundless and ocean-like expanse. At other times the eye was relieved by one or more abrupt pyramidal or cone-shaped hills, which serve to guide the hunter to his encampment after the excitement of the chase.

When the sun is powerful, which it is during the greater part of the year, an enduring mirage dances on the plain wherever the hunter turns his bewildered eyes. This mirage restricts the range of vision to a very moderate distance, and is very prejudicial to correct rifle-shooting. The effect produced by this optical illusion is remarkable: hills and herds of game often appear as if suspended in mid-air. Dry and sun-baked vleys, or pans covered with a crystallized efflorescence, constantly delude the thirsty traveller with the prospect of water; and more than once I have ridden towards a couple of springboks, magnified a hundred fold, which I had

mistaken for the white tilts of my waggons. This vast tract of bare, sour pasturage, which is peculiarly the inheritance of the black wildebeest, the springbok, and the blesbok, but more particularly of the latter, occupies a central position, as it were, in Southern Africa. On the west of my present encampment, as far as the shores of the South Atlantic Ocean, no blesboks are to be found; neither do they extend to the northward of the latitude of the river Molopo, in $25^{\circ} 30'$, of which I shall at a future period make mention, although herds frequent the plains along its southern bank. To the south a few are still to be found within the colony, but their head-quarters are to the northward of the Orange River; whence they extend in an easterly direction throughout all the vast plains situated to the west of the Vitbergen range.

The blesbok, in his manners and habits, very much resembles the springbok, which, however, it greatly exceeds in size, being as large as an English fallow-deer. It is one of the true antelopes, and all its movements and paces partake of the grace and elegance peculiar to that species. Its colour is similar to that of the sassayby, its skin being beautifully painted with every shade of purple, violet, and brown. The belly is of the purest white, and a broad white band, or "blaze," adorns the entire length of its face. Blesboks differ from springboks in the determined and invariable way in which they scour the plains, right in the wind's eye, and also in the manner in which they carry their noses close to the ground. Throughout the greater part of the year they are very wary and difficult of approach, but more especially when the does have young ones; at that season, when a herd is disturbed, and takes away up the wind, every other herd in view follows it, and the alarm extending for miles and miles down the wind, to endless herds beyond the vision of the hunter, a continued stream of blesboks may often be seen scouring up wind for upwards of an hour, and covering the landscape as far as the eye can see. The springboks, which in equal numbers frequent the same ground, do not in general adopt the same decided course as the blesboks, but take away in every direction across the plains, sometimes with flying

bounds, beautifully exhibiting the long snowy-white hair with which their backs are covered, and at others walking slowly and carelessly out of the hunter's way, scarcely deigning to look at him, with an air of perfect independence, as if aware of their own matchless speed.

The black wildebeests, which also thickly cover the entire length and breadth of the blesbok country, in herds averaging from twenty to fifty, have no regular course, like the blesboks. Unless driven by a large field of hunters, they do not leave their ground, although disturbed. Wheeling about in endless circles, and performing the most extraordinary variety of intricate evolutions, the shaggy herds of these eccentric and fierce-looking animals caper and gambol round the hunter on every side. While he is riding hard to obtain a family shot at a herd in front of him, other herds are charging down wind on his right and left, and, having described a number of circular movements, they take up positions upon the very ground across which he rode only a few minutes before.

Singly, and in small troops of four or five individuals, the old bull wildebeests may be seen stationed at intervals throughout the plains, standing motionless during a whole forenoon, coolly watching with a philosophic eye the movements of the other game, eternally uttering a loud snorting noise, and also a short, sharp cry, which is peculiar to them. When the hunter approaches these old bulls, they commence whisking their long white tails in a most eccentric manner; then springing into the air, begin prancing and capering, and pursue each other in circles at their utmost speed. Suddenly they all pull up together, to overhaul the intruder, when two bulls will often commence fighting in the most violent manner, dropping on their knees at every shock; then quickly wheeling about, they kick up their heels, whirl their tails with a fantastic flourish, and scour across the plain enveloped in a cloud of dust.

Throughout the greater part of the plains frequented by blesboks, numbers of the sun-baked hills or mounds of clay formed by the white ants occur. The average height of the ant-hills, in these districts, is from two to three feet, and they are generally distant from one to three hundred yards

from each other, being more or less thickly placed in different parts. These are of the greatest service to the hunter, enabling him with facility to conceal himself on the otherwise open plain, and I was thus enabled to hide, and select out of the herds the bucks and bulls carrying the finest heads, for my collection.

On the 28th, having breakfasted, I rode forth with two after-riders, to try for blesboks, and took up a position on the plain, lying flat on my breast behind the ant-hills, while my after-riders, one of whom led my horse, endeavoured to move them towards me. We found blesboks abundant, but extremely wary; I wounded several, but did not bag one. I shot however two springboks, which were fat, and of the flesh of which we stood much in need. I had several chances at wildebeests, but I had resolved not to fire at them.

The following day was the 1st of March, and after an early breakfast I again took the field, with my after-riders and a spare horse; late in the day I bagged a fine old blesbok: it was a family shot, running at two hundred yards; I also shot a springbok, and mortally wounded another; both were very long shots.

The blesbok is one of the finest antelopes in the world, and the buck is allowed to be the swiftest in Africa; he nevertheless attains very high condition, and at this period was exceedingly fat. I was surprised and delighted with the exquisite manner in which his colours are blended together: nothing can exceed the beauty of this animal. Like most other African antelopes, his skin emitted a delicious and powerful perfume of flowers and sweet-smelling herbs. A secretion issues from between his hoofs, which has likewise a pleasing perfume.

The 3rd was a charmingly cool day. At an early hour in the morning I was visited by a party of Boers, some of whom I had previously met; they were proceeding to hunt wildebeest and blesbok, and were mounted on mares, each of which was followed by a foal. They requested me to join them in their jag, but I excused myself, preferring to hunt alone. As soon as they were out of sight I saddled up, and rode north, with two after-riders, to try for blesboks. I found the country

extremely pleasant for riding, for it resembled a well-kept lawn.

On the following day, when returning to camp, I started, in a low-lying grassy vley, a herd of "vlacke varcke," or wild hogs; it consisted of seven half-grown young ones and three old ones, one of which carried a pair of enormous tusks, projecting eight or nine inches beyond his lip. Being well mounted on "The Grey," and the ground favourable, I at once gave chase, and selecting an old boar, after two miles of sharp galloping lost him in the burrows of the ant-bear. I endeavoured to smoke him out, but without success.

On the 7th we inspanned, and trekked east about ten miles, encamping near a small isolated farmhouse, which had lately been vacated by a Boer, owing to the impending war with the Griquas. Here we found plenty of old cow-dung, a fortunate circumstance, for fuel is very scarce throughout the whole of the blesbok country, there being often great difficulty in obtaining sufficient to boil the kettle for coffee. There were two strong springs of excellent water here, in which cresses flourished, and below the fountains a small garden; here I found a welcome supply of onions and other vegetables. Game was abundant on all sides; wildebeests and springboks pasturing within a few hundred yards of the door.

On the 12th I bagged two bull wildebeests and two springboks to the northward of my camp. In the evening I took my pillow and "komberse," or skin blanket, to the margin of a neighbouring vley, where I had observed doe blesboks drink; of these I had not yet secured a single specimen, though I was very anxious to do so, as they carry fine horns, which, though not so thick as those of the males, are more gracefully formed. About midnight an old wildebeest came and stood within ten yards of me, but I was too lazy to fire at him, and all night I heard something moving in the cracked earth beneath my pillow, but, believing it to be a mouse, did not feel much concerned about the matter. On the following morning no blesbok appearing, I stalked an old springbok through the rushes and shot him, and after having concealed him, held for camp, despatching two men to bring home the venison and my bedding.

While taking my breakfast I observed them returning, carrying a large and deadly serpent; and I at once felt certain it must be the creature I had heard the previous night beneath my pillow. On asking them where they had killed it, they replied, "In your bed." They had discovered the horrid reptile sunning itself on the edge of my blanket, until perceiving them it glided beneath it; it was a large specimen of the black variety of the puff adder, one of the most poisonous serpents of Africa, death ensuing within an hour after its bite.

On the 15th I had a very good day's sport. As the day dawned I peeped from my hole, and saw troops of blesboks feeding on every side of me, but none came within range. I shot one springbok; and having concealed him in the rushes, walked to camp. After breakfast, I took the field with Kleinboy and the Bushman, and rode north. My first shot was amongst a herd of thirty wildebeests, one of which I wounded and recovered the following day. I also stalked a stag hartebeest after the most approved Highland fashion; he was a princely old fellow, carrying splendid horns and a beautiful coat of new hair; I thought I could never sufficiently admire him. Having removed the head and skin, we made for camp, and on my way I was tempted to try a long shot at one of two old blesboks that kept capering to leeward of us. Sitting down on the grass, and resting both elbows on my knees (a manner of firing much practised by the Boers), I let fly, and made a famous shot, sending the ball through the middle of the blesbok's shoulder at upwards of two hundred and fifty yards; on receiving it, he cantered forward a short distance, and fell dead. The rifle I used in those days was a double-barrelled two-grooved one, by Dixon of Edinburgh; with this I managed to make such superior shooting to that with the old style of rifle, that I considered the latter as a mere popgun in comparison with the other. In the evening I took up a position in my shooting hole northward of the camp. About an hour after the moon rose, a troop of wildebeests came and stood within thirty yards of me; I fired, and a very large bull with one horn fell to the shot. If I had allowed this bull to lie there, my chance of

further sport was over for that night and the following morning. I therefore took the old fellow by his horn, and, exerting my utmost strength and taking time, I managed to drag him as he fell, and still living, to a hollow beside the water, in which I concealed him. In half an hour another troop of wildebeests came and stood snuffing on the spot where he had fallen. I fired, and a fine old bull received the ball in the shoulder, and bounding forward a hundred yards, rolled over in the dust.

On the 16th I hunted on the plains to the north-east, killing one springbok, and at night watched a distant vley, and got a fright which I shall remember to my dying day. Soon after the moon rose, a troop of wildebeests came within range; at one of these I fired, when he dropped to the shot, the ball passing through the spine. A little after this I discharged my other barrel at a large spotted hyæna, returned my rifle to its holster without loading either barrel, and presently was asleep.

I had not slept long when my slumbers were disturbed by strange sounds; I dreamt that lions were rushing about in quest of me, and, the sounds increasing, awoke with a sudden start, uttering a loud shriek. I then heard the rushing of light feet as of a pack of wolves close on every side of me, accompanied by the most unearthly noises, and on raising my head, to my utter horror I saw myself surrounded by savage wild dogs. Right and left, and within a few paces of me, stood two lines of these ferocious-looking animals cocking their ears and stretching their necks to have a look at me; while two large troops, in which there were at least forty, kept dashing backwards and forwards across my wind, chattering and growling with the most extraordinary volubility. Another troop of wild dogs were fighting over the wildebeest I had shot, and on beholding them I expected no other fate than to be instantly torn to pieces, which made the blood curdle over my cheeks and my hair bristle on my head. However, I had the presence of mind to remember that the human voice and a determined bearing might overawe them, and accordingly, springing to my feet, I stepped on to the little ledge surrounding the hole, where, drawing myself up to my full height, I waved my large blanket with both hands, at the

same time addressing my savage assembly in a loud and solemn manner. This had the desired effect: the wild dogs removed to a more respectful distance, barking at me like collies; upon this I snatched up my rifle and commenced loading, and before this was accomplished the entire pack had retreated. The wildebeest I had shot was picked clean by fifteen hyænas before the morning.

For the two next days I was annoyed by a cunning old bull wildebeest, which, having discovered my retreat, kept sentry over me, and successfully drove away every troop of his fellows that approached my vley to drink. Feeding just out of rifle-range, he not only warned his comrades of their danger by fixing his eye on my place of concealment and snorting loudly, but when this failed drove the other wildebeests from me in the most determined manner, like a collie dog driving sheep. Before leaving my hole, however, on the second morning, I had my revenge. A troop of cows, heedless of his warnings, approached the vley, and in his anxiety for their safety he neglected his own. Coming for the first time within long rifle-range, I put up my after-sights and let drive at his ribs; the ball struck him, when, kicking up his heels and flourishing his long white tail, the old bull bounded away, and disappeared over a ridge.

The night of the 19th was to me rather a memorable one, as being the first on which I had the satisfaction of hearing the deep-toned thunder of the lion's roar, and although there was no one to inform me by what beast the haughty and impressive sounds which echoed through the wilderness were produced, I had little difficulty in divining. There was no mistake about it; I at once knew, as well as if accustomed to it from my infancy, that the appalling sound uttered within half a mile of me was no other than the voice of the mighty and terrible king of beasts. The dignified and truly monarchical appearance of the lion has long rendered him famous amongst his fellow quadrupeds, and his appearance and habits have often been described by abler pens than mine, nevertheless I consider that a few remarks, resulting from a long acquaintance with him by day and night, may not prove uninteresting to the reader. There is something so noble

and imposing in the presence of the lion, when seen walking with dignified self-possession, free and undaunted, on his native soil, that no description can convey an adequate idea of his appearance. The lion is exquisitely formed by nature for the predatory habits which he is destined to pursue. Combining in comparatively small compass the qualities of power and agility, he is enabled, by means of the tremendous machinery with which nature has gifted him, easily to overcome and destroy almost every beast, however superior to him in weight and stature.

Though considerably under four feet in height, he has little difficulty in dashing to the ground and overcoming the lofty giraffe, whose head towers above the trees of the forest, and whose skin is nearly an inch in thickness. The lion is the constant attendant of the vast herds of buffaloes which frequent the interminable forests of the interior; and a full-grown one, so long as his teeth are unbroken, generally proves a match for an old bull buffalo, which in size and strength greatly surpasses the most powerful breed of English cattle: he also preys on the zebra, all the larger varieties of the antelope, and on both varieties of the gnou.

Lions do not, as has been asserted, refuse to feast upon the venison that they have not killed themselves. I have repeatedly discovered lions of all ages feasting upon the carcasses of various game quadrupeds which had fallen before my rifle. The lion is very generally found throughout the secluded parts of Southern Africa, he is, however, nowhere met with in great abundance, it being very rare to find more than three, or even two, families of lions frequenting the same district and drinking at the same fountain. When a greater number were met with, I remarked it was owing to long-protracted droughts, which, by drying nearly all the vleys, had compelled the game of various districts to crowd the remaining springs, and the lions, according to their custom, followed in the wake. It is a common thing to come upon a full-grown lion and lioness associating with three or four large young ones nearly full-grown, and at other times two or three full-grown males will be found associating and hunting together in a happy state of friendship.

The male lion is adorned with a long, rank, snaggy mane, which in some instances almost sweeps the ground, and varies in colour, some being very dark, others of a golden yellow ; this has given rise to a prevailing opinion among the Boers that there are two distinct varieties of lions, which they distinguish by the respective names of "Schwart fore life" and "Chiel fore life:" this idea, however, is erroneous. The colour of the lion's mane is generally affected by his age ; he attains his mane in the third year of his existence ; at first it is of a yellowish colour ; in the prime of life it is blackest ; and when he has numbered many years, but still is in the full enjoyment of his power, it assumes a yellowish-grey, pepper-and-salt sort of colour. These old fellows are cunning and dangerous, and most to be dreaded. The females are utterly destitute of a mane, being covered with a short, thick, glossy coat of tawny hair. The manes and coats of lions frequenting open districts destitute of trees, such as the borders of the great Kalahari desert, are more full and handsome than those inhabiting the forest.

One of the most remarkable things connected with the lion is his voice, which is extremely grand and peculiarly striking ; frequently it is a low, deep moaning, repeated five or six times, ending in faintly audible sighs ; at others he startles the forest with solemn roars, reiterated in quick succession, each increasing in loudness to the third or fourth, when his voice dies away in low, muffled sounds, resembling distant thunder. At times, and not unfrequently, a troop may be heard roaring in concert, one assuming the lead, and two, three, or four more regularly taking up their parts ; they roar loudest on cold frosty nights, but on no occasion are their voices to be heard in such perfection, or so intensely powerful, as when two or three strange troops of lions approach a fountain to drink at the same time. When this occurs, every member of each troop sounds a bold roar of defiance at the opposite party ; and when one roars, all roar together, and each seems to vie with his comrades in the intensity and power of his voice. The grandeur of these nocturnal forest concerts is inconceivably striking and pleasing to the hunter's ear, and the effect is greatly enhanced if he is

alone in the depths of the forest, at the dead hour of midnight, and ensconced within twenty yards of the fountain which the surrounding troops of lions are approaching. Such has been my case scores of times ; and though I am allowed to have a tolerably good taste for music, I consider the vocal harmony with which I was then regaled as the sweetest and most natural I ever heard.

Lions commence their sighing moans as the shades of evening envelop the forest, and continue their roar at intervals throughout the night ; in distant and secluded regions, however, I have constantly heard them roaring loudly as late as nine and ten o'clock on a bright sunny morning. In hazy and rainy weather they are to be heard at every hour in the day, but their voice is subdued. It often happens that when two strange male lions meet at a fountain a terrific combat ensues, which not unfrequently ends in the death of one of them. The habits of the lion are strictly nocturnal ; during the day he lies concealed beneath the shade of some low scrubby tree or wide-spreading bush, either in the level forest or on the mountain side ; he is also partial to lofty reeds or fields of long rank yellow grass, such as occur in low-lying vleys. From these haunts he sallies forth at sundown, and commences his nightly prowling : when he is successful in his beat and has secured his prey, he does not roar much that night, but utters only and occasionally a few low moans—that is, provided no intruders approach him, otherwise the case would be very different.

Lions are ever most active and daring in dark and stormy nights ; and consequently on such occasions the traveller ought more particularly to be on his guard. I remarked a fact connected with the lions' hour of drinking peculiar to themselves ; they seemed unwilling to visit the fountains with good moonlight ; thus, when the moon rose early, they deferred their hour of watering until late in the morning ; and when the moon rose late, they drank at a very early hour in the night. By this acute system many a grisly lion saved his bacon, and is now luxuriating in the forests of South Africa, which had otherwise fallen by the barrels of my " Westley Richards." Owing to the tawny colour of the coat

with which nature has robed him, he is perfectly invisible in the dark; and although I have often heard them at the water under my very nose, not twenty yards from me, I could not possibly make out so much as the outline of their forms. When a thirsty lion comes to the vley he stretches out his massive arms, lies down on his breast, and makes a loud lapping noise in drinking, not to be mistaken; he continues lapping for a long while, and four or five times during the proceeding pauses for half a minute as if to take breath. In a dark night, their eyes glow like two balls of fire. The female as a general rule is more fierce and active than the male; lionesses which have never had young are much more dangerous than those which have. At no time is the lion so much to be dreaded as when his partner has little ones; at that season he knows no fear, and in the coolest and most intrepid manner will face a thousand men. A remarkable instance of this kind came under my own observation which confirmed the reports I had heard from the natives. One day, when out elephant-hunting in the territory of the "Baseleka," accompanied by two hundred and fifty men, I was astonished suddenly to behold a majestic lion slowly and steadily advancing towards us with a dignified step and undaunted bearing; lashing his tail from side to side, and growling angrily, his terribly expressive eye resolutely fixed upon us, he displayed a show of ivory well calculated to inspire terror amongst the timid "Bechuanas." A headlong flight of the two hundred and fifty men was the immediate result; and, in the confusion of the moment, eight of my dogs, which they had been leading, were allowed to escape in their couples. These instantly faced the lion, who, finding that by his bold bearing he had only succeeded in putting some of his enemies to flight, now became solicitous for the safety of his little family, with which the lioness was retreating in the back-ground, and turning about, he followed her with a haughty and independent step, growling fiercely at the dogs which trotted along on either side of him. Three troops of elephants, upon which I was marching for the attack, having been discovered a few minutes previous to this, I, with the most heartfelt reluctance, reserved my fire, and about twenty

minutes afterwards the possession of two noble elephants repaid my forbearance.

Among Indian Nimrods a certain class of royal tigers is dignified with the appellation of "man-eaters," these having once tasted human flesh, show a predilection for the same, and such are very naturally famed and dreaded among the natives. Elderly gentlemen of similar tastes and habits are occasionally met with among the lions in the interior of South Africa, and the danger of such neighbours may be easily imagined. I account for lions first acquiring this taste in the following manner: the Bechuana tribes of the far interior do not bury their dead, but unceremoniously carry them forth, and leave them lying exposed in the forest or on the plain, a prey to the lion and hyæna, or the jackal and vulture; and I can readily imagine that a lion, having thus once tasted human flesh, would have little hesitation, when opportunity presented itself, in springing upon and carrying off the unwary traveller or "Bechuana" inhabiting his country. Be this as it may, man-eaters occur; and on my fourth hunting expedition a horrible tragedy was acted one dark night in my little lonely camp by one of these formidable characters.

In winding up these few observations on the lion, which I trust will not have been tiresome to the reader, I may remark that lion-hunting, under any circumstances, is decidedly a dangerous pursuit; it may, nevertheless, be followed, to a certain extent, with comparative safety by those who have, naturally, a turn for that sort of thing. A recklessness of death, perfect coolness and self-possession, an acquaintance with the disposition and habits of lions, and a certain dexterity in the use of the rifle, are indispensable to him who would shine in the grand and exciting pastime of hunting this justly celebrated king of beasts.

CHAPTER X.

BOER ENCAMPMENT—FEARFUL ENCOUNTER WITH A LIONESSE—
BATTLE OF SCHWART COPPICE.

On the 22nd of March I rode south to a distant farm, for the double purpose of obtaining some corn or meal, and of hearing the news of the impending war between the Boers and Griquas. On reaching the spot I found a large party of Boers encamped there; they had mustered for mutual protection, and their tents and waggons were drawn up on every side of the farm-house, forming a very lively appearance. They informed me that all their countrymen, and also the Griquas, were thus packed together in "lagers," or encampments, and that hostilities were about to commence. They remonstrated with me on what they were pleased to term my madness, in living alone in an isolated position in such sharp times, and invited me to place myself for protection under their banner. I endeavoured to persuade them to get up a party to hunt the lion; but this they declined to do, remarking that "a lion (like Johnnie Gordon's bagpipes) was not to be played with." Returning to my camp I bowled over a springbok at one hundred and fifty yards. On the 23rd, having breakfasted, I rode north, with after-riders, to try for blesboks; it was a cool day, with a strong easterly breeze; we found the game extremely wild, and as we proceeded, vast herds kept streaming on up the wind, darkening the plain before us, in thousands. About two miles north of the bushy mountain where I had first heard the lion roar, far in the vast level plain, were some mimosa-trees. Within a few hundred yards of these we discovered an old bull wildebeest, newly killed by a lion and half eaten; his large and striking foot-prints were deep in the sand, and so fresh that they seemed to have been imprinted only a few minutes before—moreover, there was not a single vulture near the carcase. We therefore felt

convinced that the lion must be lying somewhere near us, having hidden himself on our approach, and we searched for some time in the adjacent hollows, where the grass was very rank, but in vain. The game now became more and more wild, taking away into another district in long strings, like our island red-deer when hard driven; I accordingly gave it up, and turned my horse's head for camp. On my way there I bagged one blesbok and two bull wildebeests. One of these got the bullet through his heart, but nevertheless stood at bay for some time. After reaching the waggons I suddenly resolved to take men and horses with me, spend the night in the vicinity of the lion, and search early for him on the following morning; accordingly, while dinner was preparing, I occupied myself in cleaning and loading my three double-barrelled rifles, after which, having dined, I rode with Klein-boy and John Stofolus to my hole by the vley, where my bedding lay day and night. This spot was within a few miles of where we expected to fall in with the lion in the morning. We secured the three horses to one another, as there was no tree or bush within miles of us; but I could dispense with the animals, for I knew very well by the looks of the Hottentots that they would keep a vigilant eye over our destinies. I spent a most miserable night.

The wind, which had been blowing so fresh in the middle of the day, had subsided to a calm when the sun went down, and was now succeeded by an almost death-like stillness, which I too well knew was the harbinger of a coming tempest. We had not lain down an hour when the sky to leeward became black as pitch, and presently most vivid flashes of lightning followed one another in quick succession, accompanied by terrific peals of thunder. The wind, which, during the day, had been from the north-east, now, as is usual on such occasions, veered right round and came whistling up from the south-west, where the tempest was brewing, which in a few minutes more was upon us in all its fury, the rain descending in torrents on our devoted heads, while the lightning momentarily illumined, with the brilliancy of day, the darkness that reigned around. The whole plain became a sheet of water, and every thread of my clothes and bedding was thoroughly satu-

rated. My three rifles had excellent holsters, and with the help of two sheep-skins which I used instead of saddle-cloths I kept them quite dry. In two hours the tempest had passed away, but light rain fell till morning. About midnight we heard a lion roar a mile or so to the northward; and a little before the day dawned I again heard him in the direction of the carcase of the wildebeest we had found on the preceding day. Soon after this I gave the word to march, and finding my trousers lying in a pool of water, I converted a blanket into a long kilt by strapping it round my waist with my shooting-belt; the costume of my followers was equally unique. We held for the north end of the lion's mountain at a sharp pace, and gained it before there was light enough to see surrounding objects; as the day broke we reduced our pace, and rode slowly up towards the carcase in the middle of the vast level plain, on which were large herds of wildebeests, springbok, blesbok, and quaggas, which this day were as tame as they had been wild on the previous one—this is generally the case after a storm. The morning was cloudy; misty vapours hung on the shoulders of the neighbouring mountains, and the air was loaded with balmy perfume, emitted by the grateful plants and herbs. As we approached the carcase, I observed several jackals steal away, and some half-drowned-looking vultures sitting round it, but there was no appearance of the lion. I spent the next half-hour in riding across the plain looking for his spoor; but sought in vain, and being cold and hungry, turned my horse's head for camp, riding slowly along through the middle of the game, which would scarcely move out of rifle-range on either side of me.

Suddenly I observed a number of vultures standing on the plain about a quarter of a mile ahead of us, and close beside them a huge lioness, consuming a blesbok which she had killed, assisted in her repast by about a dozen jackals, that were feasting with her in the most friendly and confidential manner. Directing my followers' attention to the spot, I remarked, "I see the lion;" to which they replied, "Whar? whar? Yah! Almagtig! dat is he," and instantly reining in their steeds and wheeling about, they pressed their

heels to their horses' sides, and were preparing to betake themselves to flight. I asked them what they were going to do? To which they answered, "We have not yet placed caps on our rifles." This was true; but while this short conversation was passing the lioness had observed us. Raising her full, round face, she overhauled us for a few seconds, and then set off at a smart canter towards a range of mountains some miles to the northward; the whole troop of jackals also started off in another direction, and there was, therefore, no time to think of caps. The first move was to bring her to bay, and not a second was to be lost. Spurring my good and lively steed, and shouting to my men to follow, I flew across the plain, and, being fortunately mounted on Colesberg, the flower of my stud, gained upon her at every stride; this was to me a joyful moment, and I at once made up my mind that she or I must die.

The lioness having had a long start of me, we went over a considerable extent of ground before I came up with her; she was a large full-grown beast, and the bare and level nature of the plain added to her imposing appearance. Finding I gained upon her, she reduced her pace from a canter to a trot, carrying her tail stuck out behind her, and slued a little to one side; I shouted loudly to her to halt, as I wished to speak with her, upon which she suddenly pulled up, and seated on her haunches like a dog, with her back towards me, not even deigning to look round, appeared to say to herself, "Does this fellow know who he is coming after?" Having thus sat for half a minute, as if involved in thought, she sprang to her feet, and, facing about, stood looking at me for a few seconds, moving her tail slowly from side to side, showing her teeth, and growling fiercely; she next made a short run forwards, making a loud, rumbling noise like thunder. This she did to intimidate me; but, finding that I did not flinch an inch nor seem to heed her hostile demonstrations, she quietly stretched out her massive arms, and lay down on the grass. My Hottentots now coming up, we all three dismounted, and, drawing our rifles from their holsters, looked to see if the powder was up in the nipples, and put on our caps. While this was doing, the lioness sat up, and showed evident symptoms of uneasiness, looking

first at us, and then behind her, as if to see if the coast was clear; after which she again made a short run towards us, uttering her deep-drawn murderous growls. Having secured the three horses to one another by their rheims, we led them on as if we intended to pass her, in the hope of obtaining a broadside; but this she carefully avoided to expose, presenting only her full front. I had given Stofolus my Moore rifle, with orders to shoot her if she should spring upon me, but on no account to fire before me; Kleinboy was to stand ready to hand me my Purday in case the two-grooved Dixon should not prove sufficient. My men as yet had been steady, but now they were in a precious stew, their faces assumed a ghastly paleness, and I had a painful feeling that I could place no reliance on them.

Now, then, for it, neck or nothing! She is within sixty yards of us and keeps advancing. Turning the horses' tails to her, I knelt on one side, and, taking a steady aim at her breast, let fly. The ball cracked loudly on her tawny hide, and crippled her in the shoulder, upon which she charged with an appalling roar, and in the twinkling of an eye was in the midst of us. At this moment Stofolus's rifle exploded in his hand, and Kleinboy, whom I had ordered to stand ready by me, danced about like a duck in a gale of wind; the lioness sprang upon Colesberg, and fearfully lacerated his ribs and haunches with her horrid teeth and claws; the worst wound was on his haunch, which exhibited a sickening, yawning gash, more than twelve inches long, almost laying bare the very bone. I was cool and steady, and did not feel in the least degree nervous, having fortunately great confidence in my own shooting; but I must confess that, when the whole affair was over, I felt it was a very awful situation and attended with extreme peril, as I had no friend with me on whom I could rely.

When the lioness sprang on Colesberg, I stood out from the horses, ready with my second barrel for the first chance she should give me of a clear shot; this she quickly did; for, seemingly satisfied with the revenge she had now taken, she quitted Colesberg, and, slueing her tail to one side, trotted sulkily past within a few paces of me. Taking one step to

the left, I pitched my rifle to my shoulder, and in another second the lioness was stretched on the plain; in the struggles of death she half turned on her back, and stretched her neck and fore arms convulsively, when she fell back to her former position; her mighty arms hung powerless by her side, her lower jaw fell, blood streamed from her mouth, and she expired. At the moment I fired my second shot, Stofolus, who hardly knew whether he was alive or dead, allowed the three horses to escape; these galloped frantically across the country; on which he and Kleinboy instantly started after them, leaving me standing alone and unarmed within a few paces of the lioness, which they, from their anxiety to be out of the way, evidently considered quite capable of doing further mischief.

Such is ever the case with these worthies, and with nearly all the natives of South Africa: no reliance can be placed on them; they will to a certainty forsake their master in the most dastardly manner in the hour of peril, and leave him in the lurch. A stranger, however, hearing these fellows recounting their own gallant adventures, when sitting in the evening along with their comrades round a blazing fire, or under the influence of their adored "Cape smoke" or native brandy, might fancy them to be the bravest of the brave. Having skinned the lioness and cut off her head, we placed her trophies upon Beauty, and held for camp, and before we had proceeded a hundred yards from the carcass, upwards of sixty vultures, whom the lioness had often fed, were feasting on her remains.

As to poor Colesberg, we led him slowly home, where having washed his wounds, and carefully stitched them together, I ordered the cold water cure to be adopted; under this treatment his wounds rapidly healed, and he eventually recovered. The sky remained overcast throughout the day. When the shades of evening set in, terror seemed to have taken possession of the minds of my followers, and they swore that the mate of the lioness, on finding her bones, would follow on our spoor and revenge her death. Under this impression they refused to remain about the waggons or in the tent after the sun went down; and having cut down the rafters and cupboards of the

Boer's house for fuel, they kindled a large fire in the kitchen, where they took up their quarters for the night.

I continued hunting here until the 29th, when I deemed it high time to return to Colesberg for the purpose of packing and storing my curiosities, increasing my establishment, and refitting generally, preparatory to starting for the land of elephants in the far forests of the interior; the distemper or horse sickness, which rages in those parts during the summer months, might be expected shortly to be past; there was therefore not much time to lose. The morning was spent in stowing the waggons, greasing the wheels, securing the pots, gridirons, spades, &c., overhauling the yokes, rheims, straps, and other gear, preparatory to inspanning, and in the afternoon, turning our faces to the south, we marched upon Colesberg.

Having proceeded ten miles, we halted for the night; it rained heavily till morning. My oxen were in fine condition, and, having done but little work of late, were fresh and obstreperous; on the following day we crossed the Riet River. The country was very heavy, owing to the recent rains, and some of my gear, which was rotten, broke repeatedly, causing much delay. At sundown we halted at an encampment of Boers. These men were all rebels and our enemies, being, at that very moment, at war with our allies, the Griquas and Bastards, whom we shortly afterwards assisted against the Boers. I deemed it rather a rash step thus coolly to march through the enemy's country, boarding as it were the lion in his den: there was, however, no help for it, so I resolved to take the bull by the horns, and put on a bold face. The least I might have expected was to have my waggons most thoroughly ransacked and plundered, if not taken from me altogether, and this they would certainly have done if I had not been dressed in the garb of Old Gaul, which I always wore, and declared myself a Berg Scot.

These Boers happened to be short of coffee, a beverage of which they are extremely fond; I had fortunately a large supply in my waggons, and as I was on my way to Colesberg, had no objection to dispose of it. Accordingly, by presenting the ladies of the leading families with a few half pounds of

that berry, and selling them the remainder of my stock at a moderate price, I managed to secure the good graces of the whole, and they were pleased to express their opinion that I was a "ghooe carle," or good fellow. Hearing that a few days previous I had bagged a savage lioness, and beholding my trophies, they seemed quite astonished, exclaiming to one another, "Mi scapsels! vat zoorten mens is de?" signifying, "My stars and garters! what sort of man is this?" In the course of the evening and during the night several armed parties of Boers halted at this lager to refresh, and then passed on to join the head-quarters of their army, which was encamped about forty miles to the southward, at a place called "Schwart Coppice." Each of them was provided with one or more pack-horses bearing his commissariat and ammunition, and many of them had Hottentot and Bushmen after-riders; their sole weapon consisted of their roer, or long gun; each wore a leathern shooting-belt round his waist, and a large bullock's horn containing powder dangled by his side.

On the 31st I continued my march, and on the evening of the 2nd of April reached Philipolis, a missionary station, and the chief town of the Bastards' country. My road had led between the encampments of the contending parties, and troops of mounted Boers had been scouring the country in every direction, plundering all they could lay their hands on, and sweeping off the cattle and horses of the Bastards. Halting at an encampment of the latter on the preceding day, I was much amused by their taking me for a missionary; my costume not being very clerical, and consisting of a dirty shirt and an old Gordon tartan kilt. From a Bastard in the vicinity of Philipolis I obtained two large rough dogs, in exchange for three pounds of coffee and a little tea; the names of these dogs were "Bles" and "Flam." Bles was of an extremely fierce and savage disposition. On the evening of the 3rd we encamped on the northern bank of the Great Orange River, at a place called "Boata's Drift," nearly opposite Colesberg. Our march had been through a succession of mountains, covered with excellent pasture to their summits. It rained heavily throughout the day. After inspecting the drift or ford on the following morning, we calculated that

the river was too high for the waggons to cross; and by sending a man over on horseback, according to the most approved custom, ascertained that to be the case. I therefore instructed my men to proceed to Norval's Punt, a long march up the river, there to cross and join me in Colesberg on the evening of the following day. Having breakfasted, I saddled "The Immense Brute," and, taking the ford high up, managed to cross the stream in safety, though the current had twice taken my horse off his legs. In two hours I entered Colesberg, where I found the officers of the 91st and all my other friends in great force.

My waggons did not make their appearance till the afternoon of the third day. I took up my quarters with my old friend Mr. Paterson, who also kindly accommodated one half of my stud in his stables; the other I picketed in those of my old regiment, the Cape Mounted Rifles—my oxen fed day and night in the neighbouring mountains. On the 7th we off-loaded the waggons, and made a grand parade of my hunting trophies in front of Paterson's house, in the centre of the village: this attracted crowds of persons throughout the day. In the afternoon of the 8th, Mr. Rawstorne, the resident magistrate, received despatches from Adam Kok, chief of the Bastards, stating that the Boers had commenced active hostilities, and craving assistance from Government. Accordingly, in the evening an order was issued that all the available force in the garrison should march upon the Orange River next day, which I considered an intense bore, as I must thereby lose the society of my friends. The following morning all was bustle and preparation throughout the village, the military preparing for the march, and the merchants loading up their waggons with commissariat stores for the supply of the troops, while many a dark-eyed nymph wiped the hot tear from her expressive eye, and heaved a deep-drawn sigh as she reflected on the absence of her lover and the casualties of war. At half-past twelve the men mustered on the parade-ground, and marched out of the village for Alleman's Drift; Paterson kindly offered me his quarters as long as I remained in Colesberg, and desired I would not spare his cellar, which contained most excellent wine. On the 15th I rode out to visit

the 91st, who were encamped at Alleman's Drift, on the south side of the river, and found my friends the military enjoying themselves; the privates were angling and dragging the river, and they captured lots of mullet and barbel, averaging from one to four pounds in weight. At this spot the Orange River and the surrounding scenery are very beautiful, reminding me of the Highlands; at one bold reach the waters are hemmed in by stupendous granite rocks, which cause a deep and sweeping rapid; below are long pools, enclosed by banks adorned with drooping willows and everlasting verdure.

A party of artillery and a detachment of the 7th Dragoon Guards were reported *en route* from Fort Beaufort, to assist the 91st in their operations against the Boers; skirmishes were daily occurring between the belligerents on the opposite side, and expresses from Adam Kok were continually arriving in camp, soliciting assistance. The manner in which these skirmishes were conducted was very amusing, and illustrative of the high courage of the contending parties. Every day, after breakfast, the Boers and Bastards were in the habit of meeting and peppering away at one another till the afternoon, when each party returned to its respective encampment. The distance at which they fired at one another might be somewhere above a couple of miles, and large herds of springboks and wildebeests were quietly pasturing on the ground between them. Some of these neutrals occasionally fell before the hissing balls of the redoubted warriors. Before dismissing the subject of the rebellion of '45, I may state that soon after this, the 91st and Cape Corps being reinforced with a party of artillery and a detachment of the 7th Dragoon Guards, crossed the Orange River, advanced upon the Boers' position by forced marches, and put them to flight, when two pieces of ordnance, their waggons, and commissariat fell into our hands. Thus ended the memorable battle of Schwart Coppice; and since that time the valorous Bastards have been loud in their own praises, declaring that "they are the boys to put the Boers up to the time o' day."

On the forenoon of the 16th I rode through the river to visit a person of the name of Bain, who had made several trips into

the interior; this gentleman gave me much valuable information and dazzling accounts of the sport I might expect. He recommended my trekking down the Orange River to a drift near Rhama, and thence proceed by Campbellsdorp to Kuruman, a missionary station distant from Colesberg about two hundred and fifty miles, where I should obtain a Bechuana interpreter, and all necessary information from the resident missionary. On the following day, having taken leave of my kind friends and brother sportsmen, I rode into Colesberg, and had the pleasure of meeting two Nimrods, Mr. Murray and Mr. Oswell, proceeding, like myself, on a hunting expedition into the far interior—the former a keen salmon-fisher from the banks of Tay; the latter a civilian in the Honourable East India Company's service. During my stay in Colesberg my specimens were carefully sewn up in canvas, and nailed down in cases, and perishable articles, such as skins and stuffed heads, were hermetically sealed, being carefully soldered up in tin by Mr. Privet, the tinsmith, one of the leading members of the community of Colesberg.

I covered my waggons with new sails, and had the wheels and iron-work carefully overhauled by the blacksmith—purchased several excellent horses and trek-oxen—increased my kennel of dogs to twelve stout, rough, serviceable-looking curs—and purchased a large elephant-gun, carrying four to the pound. I also engaged two additional Hottentots, named Johannus and Kleinfeldt—replenished my supplies in every department—and on the 22nd, everything being ready, I managed to collect all my runaway men, dogs, oxen, and horses, and, after much bustle and angry altercation with my inebriated and swarthy crew, my caravan was in motion, and I started on my distant journey. We were followed by the female acquaintances of our Hottentots, screaming and yelling, at the same time catching up handfuls of red dust, which they tossed into the air with true Hottentot action; having no hair to rend, they contented themselves with scratching their woolly pates and rending their petticoats, which they soon reduced to tatters. Among other things that I loaded up with while in Colesberg was a number of common muskets, which were represented to me as being the most available

articles to barter for ivory with the tribes in the interior; these I afterwards turned to good account, and regretted that I had not purchased ten times as many. As it was probable that, in the event of my encamping too near Colesberg that evening, my followers would avail themselves of the opportunity to levant under cover of the night, and return to take another farewell of their wives and sweethearts, I made up my mind, having once succeeded in setting them in motion, to give them a good spell of it; and accordingly, there being a fine moon, I did not permit them to outspan until after midnight. We held a westerly course, steering for the Saltpan's Drift, down the Orange River, where I intended crossing, and thus avoided the hostile Boers, who were scouring the country immediately opposite Colesberg.

On the fourth day I reached Saltpan's Drift, and crossed with considerable difficulty, the waggons repeatedly sticking fast in the deep sand. The opposite bank was extremely steep, and required an hour's cutting with our pickaxes and shovels. We passed the farms of several Boers, from whom I purchased three excellent dogs, named "Wolf," "Prince," and "Bonteberg." Continuing our march, on the 28th we passed through the Griqua kraal named Rhama. This morning I discovered Kleinboy very coolly smoking his pipe over my loose, dilapidated powder-casks; upon which I seized the culprit, and handled him rather roughly. This so disgusted my friend that he dashed his pipe on the ground in true Hottentot style, and swore he would go no farther with me; the prospect of dinner, however, off a fine fat sheep induced Mr. Kleinboy to alter his mind on the subject, and he sulkily returned to his duty. On the 4th of May we made the Vaal River, and crossed it at my old drift. Here a party of Korannas rode up to the waggons, mounted on pack-oxen; their bridles were simply thongs attached to sticks passed through a hole in the animal's nose, and their saddles a sheepskin secured with a thong across the back. In the evening we trekked half way to Campbellsdorp. On the march my dogs killed two fine porcupines, by tearing off their heads, the only vulnerable part, getting at the same time their own noses and shoulders full of the quills. The following day we passed

through Campbellsdorp, where I was kindly welcomed by Mr. Bartlett, the resident missionary, from whom I received a liberal present of bread and vegetables.

On the third day after leaving that place we reached Daniel's Kuf, a kraal of Griquas under Waterboer. The country through which we passed was level and uninteresting, no hill nor landmark relieving the ocean-like expanse and sameness of the scene. It was in parts covered as far as I could see with a species of bush, averaging about nine feet in height, having a grey leaf and bunches of small grey blossoms, yielding a very sweet and powerful aromatic odour. In the evening we continued our march to a hot spring called Kramer's Fonteyn; and on the 9th held for Koning, a very distant water on the road to Kuruman. Towards midnight my men commenced driving furiously, and finding they were under the influence of liquor, I ordered them to halt and outspan, when Mr. Kleinboy only drove the harder, so that I found it necessary to send him flying off the box; this brought us to a halt, but I had had only a short nap when I was awakened by the cattle, and found that my men were inspanning with the intention of returning to the colony. Seeing remonstrance vain, I had recourse to my double-barrelled rifle, the sight of which made my followers relinquish their intention, and retiring to the shelter of a bush they shortly fell asleep. I kept sentry over the waggons during the remainder of the night, and on the following morning roused my ruffians, and ordered them to inspan, which orders they mechanically obeyed, swearing, however, that this was the last time they would do so.

Having proceeded about ten miles, we arrived at Koning; a vley of fine spring-water, about six hundred yards in length, densely covered with lofty reeds from twelve to fifteen feet high. Here was spoor of zebras and hartebeests, and the spot was said never to be without lions. In the afternoon I observed that my men were again in liquor, and at first imagined that the Griquas had supplied them with brandy; but examining my cases I discovered that one had been broken into, and two bottles of brandy stolen. This was a second night of anxiety and trouble, and I kept watch with

my rifle in my hand; the weather was piercingly cold; in the morning the ground was white with hoar-frost, and a thick coating of ice covered the pools of water. At mid-day on the 11th we left Koning, and continued our march to Kuruman, halting at sundown without water; the view on our left was bounded by the Kamhannj Mountains, an extensive rocky chain. In every other direction vast plains, covered with rank yellow grass, interspersed with clumps of grey-leaved bushes, extended as far as the eye could reach. Shortly before outspanning we started three leopards that were feasting on a duiker. Throughout all this country game was very scarce.

On the following day we reached Kuruman, or New Lita-koo, a lovely green spot in the wilderness, strongly contrasting with the sterile and inhospitable regions by which it is surrounded. I was here kindly welcomed and hospitably entertained by Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton, both missionaries of the London Society, and also by Mr. Ilume, an old trader, long resident at Kuruman. The gardens here are extensive and extremely fertile; besides corn and vegetables they contained vines, peach, nectarines, apple, orange, and lemon-trees, all of which in their seasons bear a profusion of the most delicious fruit. These gardens were irrigated with the most liberal supply of water from a powerful fountain which gushes forth, at once forming a little river, from a subterraneous cave: this has several low narrow mouths, but within it is lofty and extensive; it is stated by the natives to extend to a very great distance under ground. The natives about Kuruman and the surrounding districts have generally embraced the Christian religion. Mr. Moffat kindly showed me through his printing establishment, church, and school-rooms, which were well-built, and altogether on a scale that would not have disgraced one of the towns of the more enlightened colony. It was Mr. Moffat who reduced the Bechuana language to writing; he has since printed thousands of Sichuana Testaments, as also tracts and hymns, which were eagerly purchased by the converted natives; and this gentleman is admirably calculated to excel in his important calling. With a noble and athletic frame Mr. Moffat possesses a face on which forbearance and Christian

charity are very plainly written; and his mental and physical attainments are great, minister, gardener, blacksmith, gunsmith, mason, carpenter, glazier—every hour of the day finds this worthy pastor engaged in some useful employment—setting, by his own exemplary piety and industrious habits, a good example to others to go and do likewise.

Mr. Moffat informed me that a Dr. Livingstone, who was married to his eldest daughter, had lately established a missionary station among the Bakatlas at Mabotsa, in the vale of Bakatla, about fourteen days' journey to the north-east. Thither he advised me at once to proceed, as few of the larger varieties of game could now be expected to be found to the southward of Bakatla. He represented that my falling in with elephants, even in the country immediately beyond Bakatla, was very uncertain, and recommended me, if I was determined to have good elephant-shooting, to endeavour to push on to the remote and endless forests beyond the mountains of Bamangwato, in the territory of Sicomy, the great and paramount chief of that country. There would also, he said, be a probability of obtaining ivory in barter from Sicomy, he being reported to possess large quantities of that valuable commodity. With Mr. Moffat's assistance I engaged a Bechuana, of the name of Isaac, in the capacity of interpreter in the Dutch and Sichuana languages; from Mr. Hume I purchased a supply of wheat, and on the following day set all my people to work on a mill of Mr. Moffat's to reduce it to flour.

On the 15th, having taken leave of my friends at Kuruman, I continued my journey in a north-easterly course through a heavy sandy country of boundless level plains, stretching away on every side, covered with rank yellow grass, which, waving in the breeze, imparted the idea of endless fields of ripe corn. At sundown we crossed the Matluarin River, an insignificant stream, encamping on its northern bank; and on the following morning pursued our journey through the same description of country, varied, however, with detached clumps of thorny mimosa. This day we came across a swarm of locusts resting for the night, which covered the grass and large bushes. Locusts afford fattening and wholesome food to man, birds, and all kinds of beasts; cows and horses, lions, jackals,

hyænas, antelopes, elephants, &c. devour them. We met a party of Batlapis, who were collecting them in large quantities. The cold frosty night had rendered them unable to take wing until the sun should restore their powers. As it was difficult to obtain sufficient food for my dogs, I and Isaac took a large blanket, which we spread under a bush, the branches of which were bent to the ground with the mass of locusts; having shaken them, I had in an instant more than I could carry on my back; and these we roasted for ourselves and dogs.

Soon after daybreak I saw the locusts stretching to the west in vast clouds, resembling smoke; but the wind veering round, brought them back to us and they flew over our heads, for some time actually darkening the sun. In the evening I continued my march by moonlight, and halted within a few miles of Motato, an extensive kraal of the Batlapis, a tribe of Bechuanas.

CHAPTER XI.

MOTITO—THE BECHUANA TRIBES—BAKATLA—DR. LIVINGSTONE—
RHINOCEROS-HUNTING.

At an early hour on the 17th I outspanned at Motito, where I was kindly received by Monsieur Loga and Mr. Edwards, the former a French missionary stationed at Motito, and the latter an English missionary from Mabotsa; another French missionary, named Monsieur Lemue, belonging to the station, was absent. As I have now reached the southern borders of that vast tract of Southern Africa inhabited by the numerous tribes of the Bechuanas, it will be necessary, before proceeding further, to give a sketch of their manners and customs. They are a lively and intelligent race of people, and remarkable for their good humour. They are well formed, if not starved in infancy, and have pleasing features and very fine eyes and teeth; their hair is short and woolly, and their complexion is of a light copper colour. The various tribes live in kraals. Their wigwams are built in a circular form, and thatched with long grass; the floor and wall, inside and out, are plastered with a compound of clay and cow-dung, and the entrance to them is about three feet high and two feet broad. Each wigwam is surrounded with a hedge of wickerwork, and the entire kraal is surrounded by a strong fence of wait-a-bit thorns, protecting the inmates from lions and other animals.

The dress of the men consists of a kaross, or skin cloak, which hangs gracefully from their shoulders; and another garment, termed tsecha, that encircles their loins, and is likewise made of skin; their feet are protected by a simple sandal formed of the skin of the buffalo or camelopard, and on their legs and arms are ornaments of brass and copper of different patterns of their own manufacture. The men also wear a few beads round their necks and on their arms, besides which they carry a variety of other appendages. The majority of

these are believed to possess a powerful charm to preserve them from evil; one is a small hollow bone, through which they blow when in danger; another is a set of dice formed of ivory, which they rattle in their hands and cast on the ground to ascertain if they are to be lucky in any enterprise in which they may be about to engage; they have also a host of bits of root and bark which are medicinal. From their necks also depend gourd snuff-boxes made of an extremely diminutive species of pumpkin, trained to grow in a bottle-like shape. They never move without their arms, which consist of a shield, a bundle of assagais, a battle-axe, and a knobkerry. The shields are formed of the hide of the buffalo or camelopard; their shape among some tribes is oval, among others round; the assagai is a light spear or javelin, having a wooden shaft about six feet in length attached to it. Some of these are formed solely for throwing, and a skilful warrior will send one through a man's body at one hundred yards. Another variety of assagai is made for stabbing; the blades of these are stouter, the shafts shorter and thicker, and they are found mostly among the tribes very far in the interior. Their battle-axes are elegantly formed, consisting of a triangular-shaped blade, fastened in a handle formed of the horn of the rhinoceros. The men employ their time in war and hunting, and in dressing the skins of wild animals. The dress of the women consists of a kaross depending from the shoulders, and a short kilt formed of the skin of the pallah, or some other antelope. Around their necks, arms, waists, and ankles they wear large and cumbrous coils of beads of a variety of colours, tastefully arranged in different patterns. The women chiefly employ their time in cultivating their fields and gardens, in which they rear corn, pumpkins, and water-melons; and likewise in harvesting the crops and grinding corn. Both men and women go bareheaded: they anoint their heads with "sibelo," a shining composition, being a mixture of fat and a grey sparkling ore, having the appearance of mica. Some of the tribes besmear their bodies with fat and red clay, imparting to them the appearance of Red Indians. Most of the tribes possess cattle; these are attended to and milked solely by the men, a woman never being allowed to set foot within the

cattle-kraal. Polygamy is allowed, and any man may keep as many wives as he pleases: the wife, however, must be purchased. In rich tribes the price of a wife is ten head of cattle; but among the poorer ones a few spades. These implements are manufactured by themselves, fastened in the end of a long shaft, and used as our labourers use the hoe. Rows of women may be seen digging together in the fields singing songs, to which they keep time with their spades.

The name of the chief at Motito was Motchuara, a subordinate of the great chief Mahura. He was very anxious that I should remain a day with him, and trade in ostrich feathers and karosses; but being desirous to push forward, I resumed my march in the afternoon, and trekked on till near midnight, when I encamped in an extensive forest of grey and ancient-looking cameeldorn trees. These were the finest I had yet seen in Africa, each tree assuming a wide-spreading and picturesque appearance; they were detached and in groups, like oaks in an English deer-park. Many of them were inhabited by whole colonies of the social grosbeak, with whose wonderful habitations the branches were loaded. These remarkable birds, which are about the size and appearance of the British greenfinch, construct their nests and live socially together under one common roof, the whole fabric being formed of dry grass, and exhibiting at a short distance the appearance of a haycock stuck up in the tree; the entrances to the nests are from beneath; they are built side by side, and when seen from below resemble a honeycomb.

The following morning we continued our march through the forest, the road being extremely heavy, and consisting of soft loose sand. Having proceeded about six miles, emerging from the forest, we entered once more on a wide-spreading open country, covered in some parts with bushes, and in others only with grass. Another hour brought us to Little Chooi, a large saltpan, where we obtained water for ourselves and cattle from a deep pit artificially made. Here I heard of a mysterious inland lake, stated by the natives to be due west from Bakatla, while those of Bamangwato assert that it is situated two hundred and fifty miles to the northward, and

always pointed out to me the north-west as its position. They said the tribes on its banks were possessed of canoes; that its waters were salt; and that every day they retired to feed, and again returned, by which I understood that this lake, whatever it may be, is affected by some tide.

At three P.M. we inspanned, and held on till midnight, crossing a desert and sandy country. In the vicinity of Chooi we passed an extensive range of old pitfalls, formed for entrapping game; they were dug in the form of a crescent, and occupied an extent of nearly a quarter of a mile. Loharon, an uninteresting and desolate spot, was reached the following day, and on the 20th we passed through a very level country, covered with detached bushes.

The plains here were bare and open, and resembled the country to the southward of the Vaal, with which I subsequently ascertained it to be connected, in a due southerly course, by an endless succession of similar plains, throughout the entire extent of which the blesbok and black wildebeest are abundant. While galloping after a herd of zebras, "The Immense Brute" put his foot into a hole, and coming down with the broad of his back on the calf of my right leg, bruised it so severely as to incapacitate me from walking for several days. About midday we resumed our march, and in the evening reached Great Chooi, a very large saltpan at that time full of water; here I found, for the first time, the bones and skull of a rhinoceros. My interpreter informed me this animal had long left the spot; to his surprise, however, we discovered fresh spoor by the fountain. Continuing our march, we entered on the 22nd a new kind of country; boundless open plains being succeeded by endless forests of dwarfish trees and bushes, the ground slightly undulating, and covered with a variety of rich grasses and aromatic herbs. The old and seldom-trodden waggon-track we followed seemed a favourite footpath for a troop of lions, their large and heavy spoor being deeply imprinted on it. At sundown we encamped on the Siklagole River, a periodical stream, in the gravelly bed of which fine spring-water was obtained by digging. As we were in great want of flesh, my

hungry pack being nearly starving, I resolved to rest my oxen on the following day, and hunt for eland, the spoor of several having been seen near our encampment.

On the morning of the 23rd I rode east with after-riders and a packhorse; the country resembled an interminable park, being adorned with a continued succession of picturesque dwarfish forest-trees single and in groups, and this, with the exception of a few grassy open plains, is the character of the country from Siklagole as far as the mountains of Bakatla. On the 31st we reached the Kurrichane mountain range, and having crossed it, travelled through a fine valley about three miles, to a gorge in the mountains which connected it with the great vale of Bakatla. Through this gorge ran a stream of the purest crystal water, our road lying along its banks, over large masses of stone and ledges of rock, which threatened every moment the destruction of the waggons.

Following the stream for half a mile, we arrived at Mabotsa, the kraal of Mosielely, king of the Bakatlas, a tribe of Bechuanas, where I was kindly received by Dr. Livingstone, the resident missionary. The vale of Bakatla is one of the most beautiful spots in Africa, a broad and level strath extending from east to west, and bounded by picturesque rocky mountains, beautifully wooded to their summits; in some parts it is adorned with groves and patches of forest-trees of endless variety, in others open, carpeted with luxuriant grass. A large portion of the valley, opposite to the town, is cultivated by the Bakatla women, and a succession of extensive corn-fields stretch away to the northward of the kraal; these had lately been denuded of their crops, but a goodly show of pumpkins and water-melons still remained on the fields. The following day was Sunday, and I attended Divine service in a temporary place of worship that had been erected by the missionaries. It was amusing to remark, in the costume of the Bakatlas on this occasion, the progress of the march of civilization; all who had managed to get hold of any European article of dress had donned it, some appearing in trousers without shirts, and others in shirts without trousers.

The 2nd of June was the coldest day I had experienced in Africa, a cutting wind blowing off the Southern Ocean. This

morning Mosielely, attended by a number of his nobility, came to see me, and others of the tribe, who flocked around my waggons, importunately requested snuff; the appearance of the chief was mild, but not dignified. Siemi, one of his generals, with whom he seemed to be on very intimate terms, was a jolly-looking old warrior with a wall eye, and a face strongly marked with the small-pox; he had killed about twenty men in battle with his own hand, and bore the mark of honour, a line tattooed on his ribs for every man. Mosielely presented me with a bag of sour milk, and requested I would tarry with him a few days for the purpose of trading; I informed him that I was now anxious to push on to the country of the elephants, but would do so on my return. This seemed a great disappointment to his majesty, who was anxious to exchange karosses for guns and ammunition; but I had resolved not to part with my muskets for anything but ivory, which article Mosielely on this particular occasion did not possess.*

Dr. Livingstone informed me that large game was abundant on all sides to the north of Bakatla, and stated that herds of elephants occasionally visited the territories of the adjoining chiefs, sometimes frequenting a district for half a summer; but that at the present time he was not aware of there being any elephants in the adjacent forests. In the distant and unexplored country beyond Bamangwato, the territory of Sicomy, the natives affirmed that elephants were at all times abundant, and consequently there was a prospect of obtaining ivory in barter for my muskets. This determined me not to tarry in any district, however favourable, for the purpose of hunting

* The Bakatlas work a great deal in iron, manufacturing various articles, with which they supply the neighbouring tribes, and obtaining their ore from the surrounding mountains. This is smelted in crucibles, and a great deal of the metal is wasted, only the best and purest being preserved. They use a sort of double bellows, consisting of two bags of skin, by which the air is forced through the long tapering tubes of the two horns of the oryx; the person using the bellows squats between the two bags, which he raises and depresses alternately, working one with each hand. Their hammer and anvil consist of two stones. Nevertheless their spears, battle-axes, assagais, knives, sewing-needles, &c., are neatly turned out of hand. The men of this tribe also manufacture large bowls, which they cut out of the solid wood, the tool they use for this purpose being a small implement shaped like an adze.

other varieties of game. My host warned me, however, that I should experience considerable difficulty in reaching Bamangwato, since there was no path nor track of any description to guide me; my only chance of getting there seemed to depend on being able to obtain Bechuana guides from Caachy, a subordinate chief of a branch of the Baquaina tribe, then resident at a place called Booby, situated about eighty miles to the north-west of Bakatla. Without these guides it would be almost impossible to proceed, as the supplies of water were few and very far between; the probability, however, was that they would be refused, since it is the invariable policy of African chiefs to prevent all travellers from penetrating beyond their territory.

Bamangwato is distant upwards of two hundred miles north of Bakatla, from which it is separated by rugged and apparently impassable mountain ranges, extensive sandy deserts, and vast and trackless forests. Isaac already began to lose heart, raised a thousand objections to my proceeding to so distant a country, and recommended in preference my hunting in the territory of Sichele, the paramount chief of the Baquainas, about fifty miles north of Bakatla, where he assured me we should find elephants. Perceiving his remonstrances did not avail, and that I was inexorable, he proposed resigning his situation, and was with difficulty prevailed upon by Dr. Livingstone to accompany me farther.

On the 3rd I took leave of my kind friend the Doctor, and started for Bamangwato, accompanied by a large party of the Bakatla men and two Baquainas, who followed me in the hope of obtaining flesh, a report having spread through the tribe that I was a successful hunter. The Bechuanas are extremely fond of flesh, which they consider the only food befitting men; corn and milk the food of women. Being seldom able to obtain large game for themselves, they entertain great respect for those who can kill plenty of venison for them, and they will travel to very great distances to procure it. We proceeded in a westerly course, and held up the lovely valley of Bakatla, through open glades and patches of ancient forests.

I had ridden only a short distance across the valley when I fell in with a troop of blue wildebeests, and presently saw

seven majestic buck koodoos standing on the mountain side high above me ; in trying to stalk these I disturbed a troop of graceful pallahs and a herd of zebras, which clattered along the mountain, and spoiled my stalk with the koodoos. To these succeeded a large herd of buffaloes reclining under a clump of mimosa-trees, and securing my horse to a tree I proceeded to stalk in on them, and killed the patriarch of the herd, which, as usual, brought up the rear.

Early on the 4th we continued our march for Booby, a large party of savages still following the waggons. Before proceeding far, the beautiful appearance of the country tempted me to saddle my horses and hunt on the mountains westward of my course. I was accompanied by Isaac, mounted on the Old Grey, and carrying my clumsy Dutch rifle of six to the pound ; two Bechuanas followed us, leading four of my dogs. Having crossed a well-wooded strath and reached a little crystal river, the banks of which were trampled down with the spoor of a great variety of heavy game, but especially of buffalo and rhinoceros, we took up the spoor of a troop of buffaloes. This we followed along a path made by these animals through a neck in the hills ; and emerging from the thicket, beheld, on the other side of a valley which had opened upon us, a herd of about ten huge bull buffaloes. These I attempted to stalk, but was defeated by a large herd of zebras, which, getting our wind, charged past and started them. Ordering the Bechuanas to release the dogs, and spurring Colesberg, which I rode for the first time since the affair with the lioness, I gave chase, and by riding hard obtained two broadside shots at the last bull. He, however, continued his course, but I soon separated him, with two more, from the troop. My rifle being two-grooved, I was unable to load it on horseback, but followed them in the hope of bringing them to bay. In passing through a grove of thorny trees I lost sight of the wounded buffalo, which had turned short and doubled back, a common practice with them when wounded. I had a hard gallop for two miles after the others, riding within five yards of their huge broad sterns, and inhaling their strong bovine smell, which came hot in my face. I expected every minute they would come to bay, and give me time to load ; but this they

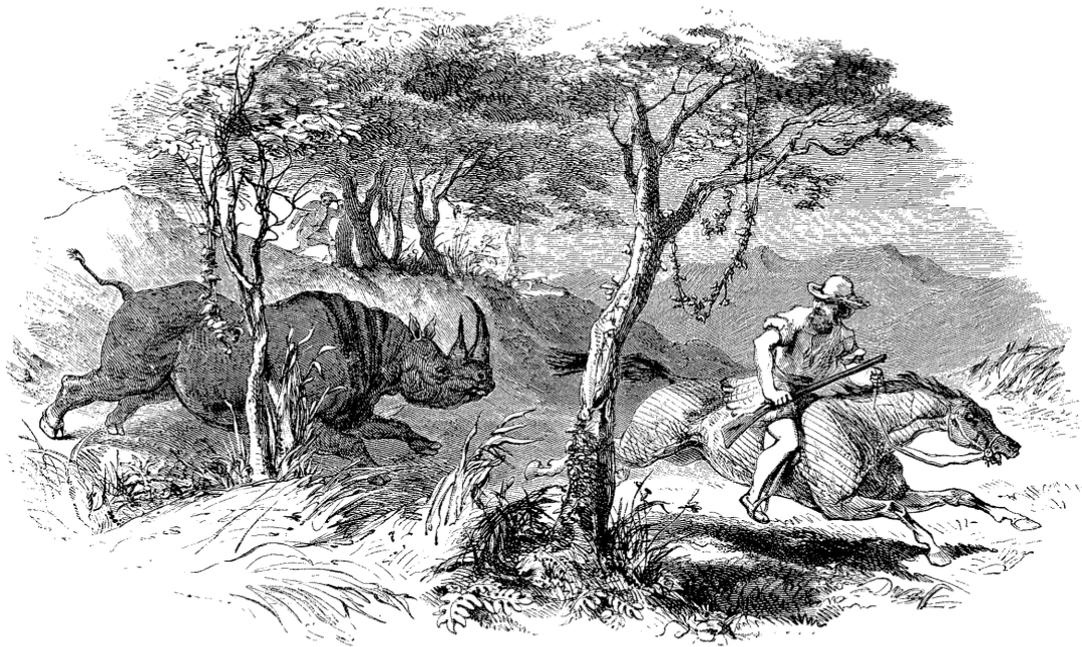
did not seem disposed to do. At length, finding I had the speed of them, I increased my pace; and going ahead, placed myself in front of the finest bull, to force him to stand at bay, upon which he instantly charged me with a low roar, very similar to the voice of a lion. Colesberg neatly avoided the charge, and the bull resumed his course. We now came to rocky ground, and found the forest more dense as we proceeded; the buffaloes evidently making for some strong retreat. I managed with much difficulty to hold them in view, following as best I could through thorny thickets. Isaac came some hundred yards behind, and kept shouting to me to drop the pursuit, or I should be killed. At last the buffaloes suddenly pulled up, and stood at bay in a thicket within twenty yards of me. Springing from my horse, I hastily loaded my two-grooved rifle, which I had scarcely completed when Isaac rode up and inquired what had become of the buffaloes, little dreaming that they were standing within twenty yards of him; I answered by pointing my rifle across his horse's nose, and letting fly sharp right and left at my two antagonists. A headlong charge, accompanied by a muffled roar, was the result. In an instant I was round a clump of tangled thorn-trees; but Isaac, by the violence of his efforts to get his horse in motion, lost his balance, and at the same instant, his girths giving way, himself, his saddle, and big Dutch rifle, all came to the ground together, with a heavy crash, right in the path of the infuriated animals. Two of the dogs, which had fortunately joined us at that moment, met them in their charge, and, by diverting their attention, probably saved Isaac from instant destruction. The buffaloes now took up another position in an adjoining thicket; they were both badly wounded, blotches and pools of blood marking the ground where they had stood; the dogs did me good service, and in a few minutes the two noble bulls breathed their last. In dying they repeatedly made a very peculiar, low, deep moan, which I subsequently ascertained the buffalo invariably utters when in the act of expiring.

I was astonished at the size and powerful appearance of these animals, their horns reminded me of the rugged trunk of an oak-tree, and each was upwards of a foot in breadth at

the base, and together effectually protected the skull with a massive and impenetrable shield; descending and spreading out horizontally they completely overshadowed the animal's eyes, imparting to him a look the most ferocious and sinister that can be imagined. Returning to the waggons I bowled over a stag sassayby, and a princely old buck pallah.

Early in the afternoon I despatched men with a pack-horse to bring in the finer of the two buffalo-heads; it was so ponderous that two powerful men could with difficulty raise it from the ground. The Bechuanas who had accompanied me, on hearing of my success, snatched up their shields and assagais, and hastened to secure the flesh, nor did I see any more of them; the two Baquainas remained with me, having entered into a plot with my interpreter to prevent my penetrating to Bamangwato. Isaac did not soon forget his adventure with the buffaloes, and at night over the fire informed my men that I was mad, and that any one who followed me was going headlong to his own destruction.

At an early hour on the 5th I continued my march through a glorious country of hill and dale, throughout which water was abundant. Beautifully wooded hills and mountains stretched away on every side; some of the mountains were particularly grand and majestic, their summits being surrounded by steep precipices and abrupt parapets of rock, the abodes of whole colonies of black-faced baboons, which, astonished to behold such novel intruders upon their domains, leisurely descended the craggy mountain sides for a nearer inspection of our caravan. Having advanced about nine miles, I drew up my waggons on the bank of a rivulet, where the spoor of large game was extremely abundant, and I discovered in the bed of the stream the scaly skin of a manis, which had been recently eaten by some bird of prey. This extraordinary animal, which in its habits partakes of the nature of the hedgehog, is about three feet in length, and covered all over with an impenetrable coat of mail, consisting of large rough scales, about the size and shape of the leaves of an artichoke; these overlap one another in an extraordinary and very beautiful manner; the tail is broad and likewise covered with scales. On being disturbed, the manis rolls



THE BLACK RHINOCEROS GIVING CHASE.

itself into a ball; it is met with throughout the interior of South Africa, but is rare, and very seldom seen.

It was on the 4th of June that for the first time I beheld the rhinoceros; she was a huge white one, and, accompanied by her calf, was standing in a thorny grove. Getting my wind, she set off at top speed through thick thorny bushes, the calf, as is invariably the case, taking the lead, and the mother guiding its course by placing her horn, generally about three feet in length, against its ribs. My horse shied very much at first, alarmed at the strange appearance of Chukuroo, but by a sharp application of spur and jambok I prevailed upon him to follow, and presently, the ground improving, I got alongside, and, firing at the gallop, sent a bullet through her shoulder; she continued her pace with blood streaming from the wound, and very soon reached an impracticable thorny jungle, where I could not follow, and instantly lost her.

Shortly after this I came upon a black bull rhinoceros, which I stalked within twenty yards, when hearing the *Borèlé* advance, and knowing well that a front shot would not prove deadly, I sprang behind a bush; upon which the villain charged, blowing loudly, and chasing me round it. Had his activity been equal to his ugliness my wanderings would have terminated here, but by my superior agility I had the advantage in the turn. After standing a short time eyeing me through the bush, he got a whiff of my wind, which at once alarmed him, and blowing again, and erecting his insignificant yet saucy-looking tail, he wheeled about, leaving me master of the field. There are four varieties of the rhinoceros in South Africa, distinguished amongst the Bechuanas by the names of the *borèlé* or black rhinoceros, the *keitloa* or two-horned black rhinoceros, the *muchocho* or common white rhinoceros, and the *kobaoba* or long-horned white rhinoceros. Both varieties of the black rhinoceros are extremely fierce and dangerous, and rush headlong and unprovoked at any object which attracts their attention. They never become very fat, and their flesh is tough and not much esteemed by the Bechuanas; their food consists almost entirely of the thorny branches of the wait-a-bit thorns. Their horns are

much shorter than those of the other varieties, seldom exceeding eighteen inches in length, they are finely polished by constant rubbing against the trees. The skull is remarkably formed, its most striking feature being the tremendous thick ossification in which it ends above the nostrils; and it is on this mass that the horn is supported. The horns are not connected with the skull, being attached merely by the skin, and they may thus be separated from the head by means of a sharp knife. They are hard and perfectly solid throughout, and a fine material for various articles, such as drinking cups, mallets for rifles, handles for turners' tools, &c. &c.—the horn is capable of a very high polish. The eyes of the rhinoceros are small and sparkling, and he does not readily observe the hunter, provided he is to leeward; the skin is extremely thick, and only to be penetrated by bullets hardened with solder. During the day the rhinoceros will be found lying asleep or standing indolently in some retired part of the forest, or under the base of a mountain, sheltered from the power of the sun by some friendly grove of umbrella-topped mimosas; in the evening these animals commence their nightly rambles, and wander over a great extent of country; at night they usually visit the fountains between the hours of nine and twelve, and it is on these occasions that they may be most successfully hunted, and with the least danger. The black rhinoceros is subject to paroxysms of unprovoked fury, often ploughing up the ground for several yards with its horn, and assaulting large bushes in the most violent manner; on these bushes they work for hours with their horns, at the same time snorting and blowing loudly, nor do they leave them in general until they have broken them to pieces. The rhinoceros is supposed by many, and by me among the rest, to be the animal alluded to by Job, chap. xxxix. verses 10 and 11, where it is written, "Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?" evidently alluding to an animal possessed of great strength and of untameable disposition, for both of which the rhinoceros is remarkable. They delight to roll and wallow in mud, with

which their rugged hides are generally encrusted. Both varieties of the black rhinoceros are much smaller and more active than the white, and are so swift that a horse with a rider on his back can rarely overtake them. The two varieties of the white rhinoceros are so similar in habits, that the description of one will serve for both; the principal difference consisting in the length and set of the anterior horn; that of the muchocho averaging from two to three feet in length, and pointing backwards; while the horn of the kobaoba often exceeds four feet in length, and inclines forward from the nose at an angle of 45° —the posterior horn of either species seldom exceeds six or seven inches in length. The kobaoba is the rarer of the two, and is found very far in the interior, chiefly to the eastward of the Limpopo; its horns are very valuable for making loading rods. Both these varieties of rhinoceros attain an enormous size, being the animals next in magnitude to the elephant; they feed solely on grass, carry much fat, and their flesh is excellent, being preferable to beef: they are of a much milder and more inoffensive disposition than the black rhinoceros, rarely charging their pursuer. Their speed is very inferior to that of the other varieties, and a person well mounted can overtake and shoot them; the head of these is a foot longer than that of the borèlé. They generally carry their heads low, whereas the borèlé, when disturbed, carries his very high, which imparts to him a saucy and independent air. Unlike the elephants, they never associate in herds, but are met with singly or in pairs; in districts where they are abundant, from three to six may be found in company, and I once saw upwards of a dozen congregated together on some young grass, but such an occurrence is rare.

Finding that rhinoceroses were abundant in this vicinity, I resolved to halt a day for the purpose of hunting, and after an early breakfast on the 6th rode south-east with the two Baquainas; they led me along the bases of the mountains, through woody dells and open glades, and we eventually reached a grand forest grey with age—here we found abundance of spoor of the larger game, and started several herds of the more common varieties. At length I observed an old bull eland standing under a tree; he was the first I had seen,