

the women, in their quaint costumes, and with their arms and legs decorated with beads and bangles, being the leading feature in it. Many of the men spoke Dutch, but none of the women could speak that language, so that I lost the fun of hearing their observations. One of the women was very graceful and pretty, with a turn of the head and neck that reminded me of the hunting Diana in the Vatican. She was quite conscious of my admiring glances, and took advantage of the knowledge they conveyed to her, to wheedle me into buying a pumpkin at a preposterous price.

I never saw so grotesque a caricature as these Kaffirs presented, of scenes I have observed at Swan and Edgar's, and Howell and James's. Some absurd-looking savage in a blanket, would ask to see a shirt, or a coat, or a pair of trousers, or perhaps a hat. The assembled multitude would become all attention. He would be turned round and round, the critics would fall back a pace or two, and look at him with deep thoughtfulness, while he watched their faces anxiously: no, there was a bulge in the back! or the brim was a little too narrow—he must try another. Or perhaps when the critics were satisfied, the purchaser would screw himself round, and gazing down his own back, say, "Don't you think it would be better if it were a little more this or a little less that?" and his friends would discuss the matter, gravely walking round him with their heads on one side, until it was settled to general satisfaction. The trying on of boots was very fine—the would-be purchaser often having very little on him except the boots. After pulling them on, he would promenade backwards and forwards in them, trying how they felt. When the purchase, whatever it might be,

was concluded, the purchaser frequently celebrated the event by a "break-down," amid universal applause. I stayed at this amusing place until the next morning, and then continued my route along the Eland river.

We passed several Boer encampments, the tents being pitched a little away from the path, and close to the river. I rode over to them to ask if their inhabitants wished to buy anything, but none of them did. They were very civil to me, however. One gaunt old lady, at whose tent I dismounted and had some coffee, was much interested in politics, as well as in all my private concerns; and farther wished to induce me to buy an ox at an exorbitant price.

"Why," said I, "you are asking war prices; no one will give you ten pounds for an unsalted ox in peace times."

"Ah," said she cheerfully, "we all mean to keep our oxen until the Kaffirs break out again: they are sure to break out—quite sure."

We outspanned for breakfast near the encampment of an old infirm Boer of the name of Prinsloo, who had a very jolly-looking wife. Prinsloo himself looked like a gentleman, and they seemed nice people in their way. They came over to the waggon, after I had paid them a visit in their tent, and bought a bottle of brandy from my private store; for I had none for purposes of sale.

It was near this place, but I forget exactly where, that two waggons laden with planks from the wood-bush came along while we were outspanned. With them was a tall young Boer, who evidently had a very good opinion of himself, and thought it the correct thing to swear most villainously in all the English he knew. This

prepossessing specimen of young Boerdom halted his waggons, and, swaggering up to Mr. Egerton, asked him his name; then whether he was the owner of the waggon.

Mr. Egerton pointed to me, upon which my friend swaggered over to where I was sitting on the grass, and proceeded to survey me as if I were a curious animal of some unknown kind. Then he said,—

“So, you are a Smouse, are you? Well, you will howl.”

(N.B. The same word “heul” is used in Dutch for either crying or howling.)

“Indeed,” said I.

“I want some brandy,” said he.

“I’m sorry for that,” said I; “because I can’t give you any.”

This disconcerted him, and he called to his oxen, and departed, swearing at them in English as long as he was within hearing.

For the next few days nothing remarkable occurred. We passed several encampments and one trader—and once I was most agreeably surprised by finding Mrs. Farquarson in a tent instead of a Dutch woman. Her husband was surveying neighbouring farms, and she, with her baby, was enjoying the free bush-veldt life as a change from Pretoria. I kept along the Eland river still, but I found that trade was bad, a great many traders being just in front of me; and so I determined to change my route, and turned across, past Schildpotsfontein, towards Waterberg.

Schildpotsfontein is a very muddy fountain in the midst of a large Kaffir kraal or town. The chief is named Andreas Mayepepe (I spell as the name would be pronounced in English), and the principal feature of the

place is sand. I never saw such a sandy place; you waded through sand wherever you went, you were in constant danger of getting your waggon stuck fast in the sand, and had to pilot it in its course to the outspanning place, as carefully as if it were a ship amongst shoals. If there was a breath of wind you were choked with sand; but, although not otherwise an inviting place, it recommended itself to me by its inhabitants doing a good trade with me, although another trader came there a few hours after I did, and also did a good trade. The chief was but a poor specimen of a chief, and kept a general store. His subjects paid him scant respect, and said his store had not much in it, and what little there was, was dear. The Kaffirs here were not half so amusing as those at the Eland river, although laughable enough. There were Kaffirs in European dress, and Kaffirs in blankets, and Kaffirs in shirts. I don't remember any naked Kaffirs here, and the women, girls, and children, were attired, or not attired, like those at the Eland river. The men mostly spoke Dutch, but the women only Kaffir, or rather "Makatees;" for there are many Kaffir languages. I may here remark that the Makatees' language is a very unpleasing Kaffir dialect, and that the Makatees people are, by universal admission, a very nasty Kaffir people.

I remained here several days, and then went on a short distance to a Missionary station. Here the women and girls wore European dress, and many of even the little children were clothed. I think it was here that I was amused to hear Mr. Egerton trying to convert a Kaffir to republican principles. The fellow admitted that Andreas Mayeppee was, so far as he knew, of no particular use, and yet that all his subjects had to pay him tribute; but there

he stuck fast. "One must have a chief—some chief—we couldn't get on without a chief," he said; and farther than that he could not be got by any arguments.

We had a long trek without water between this place and the next water at Marullo-kop, or Marullo-hill, so-called from a picturesque hill crowned by a large marullo tree near the spring of water. Oxen do not care to drink late at night, or early in the morning, so, as one is obliged to outspan once between the Missionary station and Marullo-kop, we started late, in order to outspan after dark. The trader I mentioned before (Mr. N.) treked along with us. I left Roughy in the waggon, for he was rather footsore, and Mr. Egerton and I rode on; but to my dismay, when the waggons came up, I heard that the poor little dog had jumped out, and run after me as the boys supposed—but in fact had lost himself. It was pitch dark, but I hoped he might find his way to the camp-fire. Morning, however, came, and no Roughy. I could not keep the waggon waiting, for there was no water for the oxen, and it was useless to ride back to the kraal, as, even if I had found him there, he was too heavy to carry far on the horse, and too bad a runner to run after me, so I regretfully had to leave him to his fate, and go on.

We saw several spring-bucks as we rode along, but none near enough to allow of Mr. Egerton trying his skill as a marksman; and early in the day we got to Marullo-kop. The little precipitous hill rises suddenly from the flat thickly-wooded plain, and the spring of water makes a very little lake at its foot. Tucked in among the trees were some Boer tents; saddles, skins, and dried quagga flesh were hanging on the trees close to them, and various implements, strewed around, showed

that one at least of their occupants carried on the trade of a blacksmith and a mender of waggons.

This individual came to greet us, as Mr. N., Mr. Egerton, and I rode up. He was a fine, sturdy-looking fellow, with an open smile and a yellow beard. After greeting him, I led my horse to where I wished the wagon to outspan, off-saddled, and sat down, while Mr. Egerton departed with his gun. Presently the pleasant-looking Boer came over from his tent with a glass of wine in his hand, and accompanied by Mr. N. He said, that, at home, he would have offered me something better, but here in the bush-veldt he had nothing else to offer. I thought more of this attention afterwards, when I learned from himself and others that he was a leader amongst the malcontents. His name was Barend Englesberg. I went with him to his tent, and was introduced to his wife, an enormously fat woman, with a very merry face, also to his daughter-in-law, Liza, and to several other women and girls—relations of his.

The waggons soon came up, the goods were spread out, and a great deal of bargaining ensued; also a great pulling about of goods, during which we had to keep our eyes about us; for it is a well-known thing amongst traders that Dutch women and girls are very light-fingered.

Barend Englesberg told me there were numbers of wild quaggas about, but that they were shy and difficult to get close to. He also told me that there were several lions, and that they often came down to the water at night. He evidently wished to frighten me. In the evening he even took the trouble to send me over word that he had heard a distant roar, and that I had better be on my guard; but that was all I heard of a lion during my stay.

On leaving this place Mr. N. and I parted company—he taking one road into Waterberg, and I another. My road led through thick bush until we crossed a chain of hills and descended into a wide valley, intersected by the “Nilstrom,” or Nile river, and saw, in front of us, the magnificent, solitary, and precipitous hill, called “Kranz-kop;” whilst, across the valley, the view was bounded by the range of the Waterberg hills (for they cannot be called mountains).

We outspanned for dinner near to a Kaffir house in the valley, whence a woman came with a cup of coffee for me, and told me, she had seen me while I was with the Jennings. She had relations living on their place, and had been there on a visit. She was dressed in European costume, and talked Dutch. She told me she belonged to the Mission station, which I could see tucked away in a fold of a hill just opposite, where she informed me I should find a very nice lady, the wife of a German Missionary, who had passed me on his way to Andreas Mayepee’s while I was outspanned at Marullo-kop. She said also that I should do a good trade, not only at the Mission-station, but at the Kaffir kraals round Kranz-kop.

It was sunset as we rode up to the pretty little Waterberg Mission-station, which will ever remain impressed on my memory, with its little cluster of white huts, its mealea gardens, its rambling parsonage, shaded by blue gum-trees, and its little church with a tiny spire, all nestled in amongst the hills—as the prettiest although not the most striking picture I have seen in the Transvaal—a picture that was sadly pleasant, as reminding one of home.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE next morning I went to pay a visit to Mrs. B——, who received me most kindly. The whole house spoke of true homely comfort; the face of the mistress of it beamed comfort at you, although she was still crippled from the effects of the fever which had desolated Waterberg that summer, and which had made her desolate by the loss of her baby; but she had many older children, and they looked as if they had just stepped out of a German “Randzeichnung,” or of Retzsch’s etchings to the “Lied von der Glocke.” There was something wonderfully refreshing and wholesome about the whole establishment, and the Kaffirs in this place were certainly the best I came across—mainly, I fancy, from the good influence of Mr. B—— and his wife, of whom I heard a high character from every one, and of whom I can only say that it is a sad pity there are not more missionaries like them. Their flock were certainly fond of them; but Mrs. B——, and afterwards Mr. B——, told me that the Kaffirs were very disobedient, lazy, deceitful, selfish, and grasping in their dealings, even with them; and that many whom they had helped at great personal inconvenience at the time of the fever epidemic, had afterwards refused to assist them in putting their land in order, even for pay.

They never varied in their kindness, however, towards these people, although they were firm with them. This was the character I heard of them from their neighbours among the Boers, and my own observation certainly tallied with it.

On returning from my visit I found Mr. Egerton and Hendrick doing a roaring trade; and this was kept up for the whole day, and for some succeeding days, Kaffirs coming in from the neighbourhood to buy. Some of these were "Knopnase," perfect savages, with tassels of fur tied on to their woolly heads, and a girdle, with a fringe of wild cats' tails, as their only garment. We spent Sunday here. The service in the church was conducted in the Makatees' language, and some of the girls and young men came out very smart. After a few days we moved down the valley, trading at various Kaffir kraals and Boer farms (for now we were out of the bush-veldt), then crossed the Nile river, and traded amongst the wild Kranz-kop Kaffirs, until I had no more Kaffir goods left. I remember being greatly amused one evening, at the astonishment and delight caused by my appearance on horseback amongst some girls and women we met on their way to a kraal. They clapped their hands and danced about the horses (I was leading Violin), crying out, "Oh, the missus! the pretty missus on the horse!" And when I broke into a canter, their screams of delight, as they ran after me, made me laugh so much, that I had to interrupt the performance, and return to a walk.

Having got rid of all my Kaffir goods, I thought I would try to get rid of a few more of my Boer goods before returning to replenish my stock at Pretoria. I therefore passed through the mission station again, and

followed the course of the river towards Makapans-poort, thus once more getting into the bush-veldt.

At one of my outspans I came across a man who lived near Noitgedacht. I was riding Eclipse and leading Violin, and Mr. Egerton was on Dandy, when we rode up to his encampment. He asked me if I would sell Eclipse; and on my saying that I would not part with him, asked me if the other horses were for sale. I said he could have the pony for thirty, the colt for eighteen pounds—that the pony was salted. He said I asked a dreadful price; but later on, after he and some other Boers had done a little trade with me, he said a friend of his, De Clerc, wanted Violin. There was a deal of bargaining, for he wanted me to exchange him for two oxen, and at last we struck a bargain. I was to have the oxen and some money to boot; but in the morning he changed his mind—he would have Dandy instead. I insisted upon having the full sum in cash for Dandy, and this was a sore point. It turned out that it was not De Clerc who was buying the horse; he was buying him for his son-in-law, Willem de Plessis. He tried every way to get me to lower the price; but I was really sorry to part with the pony, and I stuck out. They had him up, and asked me if he would stand fire, upon which I told them he always trotted away when his rider dismounted to fire; so young De Plessis tried him, and found my statement to be correct; but he still wanted the pony. At last the money-bag was pulled out, and the counting out began. He got up as far as twenty-eight pounds, then his courage failed him. He asked—could I not take twenty-eight pounds? I said I could not. He said it was all he had got. I said that was all right, then; I

should keep the pony. He got up from the disselboom, on which he had been sitting alongside of me, and going to another Boer who was standing a little way off, brought the two sovereigns, and gave them to me.

"Give him the pony," said I to Hendrick. "Take off the saddle and bridle."

"Oh, but you will include them in the price," said he; but I shook my head. "Then you will let me have the stable head-stall?"

"No, not unless you pay for it."

"But the knee-band you will give in?"

[It is the fashion in Africa to spancel a horse by tying its head to one of its legs, and a knee-band is often used to prevent the leg from being frayed by tying the reim round it.]

"No," I said; "not unless you buy it."

"You will, at least, let me have the reim?"

I let him have that. It was worth about sixpence. He looked at the gold lovingly as I put it into my bag.

"You will give me a written guarantee that he is salted?" he said ruefully. "It is a terrible lot of money."

"No, I won't," said I.

"Then, at least," said De Clerc cheerfully, "you will sell us a bottle of your brandy?"

"Yes, if you will pay me ten shillings;" and they did so, and departed rejoicing.

I did not go much farther along the river, for I met Mr. N——, who told me that there was no trade to be done with the Boers farther up; and, as I said before, my Kaffir goods were exhausted. My last outspan, before I turned back, was close to the encampment of an old

woman of the name of Nell, related to the De Clercs and Engelsbergs in some inextricable manner, as is often the case with Boer relationships. This is natural, when it is the custom for people of both sexes to marry so often as they do in Boer-land, for each succeeding wife to call her actual husband's mother "ma," her former husband's or husbands' mother "ma," and her husband's former wives' mothers "ma." The husbands observe the same rule, one that includes the various fathers as well, who are called "pa" by a variety of people hardly related to them according to our ideas. The relationships become still more bewilderingly intricate, when one considers that the "pa" and "ma" may marry half-a-dozen times themselves, and may thus multiply their children's fathers or mothers, and grandfathers, and grandmothers to an appalling extent. I once made, or at least attempted, a calculation of the number of grandmothers a Boer might have, but I felt that to grapple with the subject was to court insanity, and so desisted.

The old Mrs. Nell had had several husbands, and it was an endeavour on her part to make me understand how a certain individual I knew was related to her, through his being related to some relation of a former wife of one of these husbands, that started me off on the above-mentioned calculation. She was an old woman who wished to do business, and evidently thought me very verdant—as I was in those days—still her expectations were beyond my merits, for when she wished me to purchase an old and rather vicious bull, and explained to me that all I had to do to get him to walk along with my waggon was also to buy a cow or two—I respectfully declined. A grandson of hers was a boy with a sharp

turn for business, which I suppose he had inherited from her. I had bought a young falcon and a pair of turtle-doves at the mission station, and I conclude the fame of that purchase had reached this young gentleman's ears. On riding up to old Mrs. Nell's tent I remarked a sort of magpie tied to the stump of a tree close by. In the course of conversation Mrs. Nell directed my attention to it, and said her grandson had caught it. I said it was an amusing pet; and she said that it was so indeed. Some little time after she hinted that perhaps if I liked to have it her grandson might be induced to part with it, but I took little notice of the remark. Later on she came with the grandson and the magpie to my waggon. I admired the bird, to please the boy as I thought, but was rather amused when he suggested that I should give him a bottle of sweets for it. I assured him that if I had the misfortune to own the bird, I would give him a bottle of sweets to take it away. This disconcerted him, and I heard him whisper to his grandmother, "If the aunt" [Little Boers call all women "aunt"] "won't buy it, what shall I do with it?" He then returned to the charge, and at last came down to begging me to give him threepence for the bird. Finding that I would not give him anything, he walked off looking very sulky, carrying the poor bird; and I heard afterwards from Mr. N—— (who was at Mrs. Nell's tent when he returned) that he said it was a horrid shame of the aunt not to buy the bird when he had caught it expressly to sell to her—and forthwith proceeded to wring its neck. On my way back I traded two cows, which I sold afterwards at a gain, but otherwise trade was very slack.

Mr. N—— picked me up on horseback, as I was riding

in front of the waggon on my way from the missionary station back to Marullo-kop. His waggon was on in front, and shortly after we caught sight of a large herd of wilde-beests, and chased them. It was a magnificent sight to see them bounding through the bush, with their tails flying, the bulls tossing their long black manes. They do not look like animals of the antelope species when thus seen.

Mr. N—— had no gun with him, greatly to his regret and my delight. He raced after them farther than I did, and we parted company in consequence. I then remarked how very easy it would be to lose oneself in the bush. In the excitement I had not remarked which way I was turning. I only knew that I had left the road to my left when I darted into the bush; and when I found myself alone (having pulled up owing to Eclipse putting his foot in a hole), I should not have had any idea of where I was had it not been that the line of hills I had just crossed, with the top of Kranz-kop looking over them, gave me my direction. When I got to Marullo-kop I found Mr. N—— already there, and he and Barend Engelsberg had made up their minds that if I did not soon arrive, they would set out to look for me, as they said lions had been seen close to where he and I parted company. For the truth of this statement I should be sorry to vouch, although Mr. N—— believed it.

The Engelsbergs gave me a hearty welcome, and Liza felt that her acquaintance with me had developed sufficiently, to allow of her asking me to lend her some money, to buy jam from Mr. N——. I suggested that as there was no knowing when we might meet again the trans-

action was likely to be a losing one to me; but she cheerfully answered that I should no doubt come again that way, and then she would see me.

A little Engelsberg, of about twelve, with a very innocent face, also distinguished herself by taking Mr. Egerton in. She came up to me as I was walking away from the waggon, and asked me if Mr. Egerton might get her an article which cost two shillings. She knew the price, for she had asked it before; so I said "Yes." She then went to the waggon, and on Mr. Egerton handing her the article she tendered one shilling, telling him that she had just asked me if she could not have the thing for a shilling, and that I had said "Yes." Mr. Egerton having seen her speak to me, believed her, and she took her purchase away, no doubt much pleased with her adroitness.

Mr. N—— and I came into Andreas Mayepees's kraal together, and found there another trader, a very jolly young fellow, who spent the evening by my camp-fire, telling stories of hunting adventures and smuggling adventures in which he had been engaged. My driver, Hendrick, had served the firm to which he belonged for a long time, and Mr. S——, the young trader, gave me a very high character of him, and told me one of his great recommendations was that he could be trusted to go trading alone with a waggon amongst the Kaffirs.

I inquired here about my little dog, but all I could hear, was that he had been seen some days after I left. I felt pretty sure that he was hidden away in some Kaffir hut; for Kaffirs have a great fancy for pretty little dogs.

We three traders parted company the next day, and I took my course once more towards the Eland river.

That evening I rode over to a Boer encampment to ask if I might outspan near it for the night. The owner, a fine-looking man, who was just putting his sheep in the kraal, answered courteously in the affirmative, and, after I had ridden back to the waggon and told Hendrick where to outspan, I cantered once more towards the tents, with a view to paying a visit to their occupants, when I suddenly saw a little black and white dog standing looking at me and flourishing his tail in a most surprising way. It was my Roughy! I jumped off the horse and caught the small beast up. He screamed with delight as he cuddled up to me, then suddenly leapt down and performed a frantic dance round me, letting off such a volley of little barks that I thought he would have choked, whilst the Boer family looked on in high satisfaction. It seems that, some time before, the poor little thing had come across the river to their tent, thin and so footsore that he could go no farther, and they had taken him in and cared for him, and had refused to sell him once, because they wanted to find his true owner. The name of these good Samaritans was Briet. Very nice people they were, clean and tidy in all their arrangements, and keeping their little adopted child (a rosy urchin of four, with laughing black eyes) as neat and fresh as any English child could be—very unlike the generality of Boers, whose children are filthy.

I stayed there the whole of the next day. They told me that, owing to the want of rain causing the grass to be dry, their sheep and young lambs were dying. Just across the river were the broad lands of an enormously rich Boer, a man who counts his cattle by thousands, as also his sheep, who has numbers of large farms, and

plenty of money in hard cash besides. His name is Erasmus, and he is know in Boerdom as the "rich Erasmus." Now it so happened that, some time before, the grass on the other side of the river had caught fire, and he had sent to ask the Briets to help him in putting it out. They had done so, toiling all through the night with might and main. The burnt grass had now shot forth sweet green leaves, such as sheep delight in, and the Briets asked if they might hire a run for their starving flock—but were refused it by the old miser! I heard that this enormously rich man refuses himself sugar in his coffee, and wears his coats until they almost fall into rags.

There were some pretty young girls, relations of the Briets, in a tent close by. When I was starting the next day, one of them in a pretty coaxing way asked me to make her a present as a remembrance of me. She was too pretty and too young to rebuff, so I said I would give her something, I forget what.

"No," she said, holding my hand, "you must let me choose my own present."

For the same somewhat unreasonable reason as before, I said she should do so, when judge of my astonishment as she tried to draw a valuable ring off my finger, saying "You shall give me this!"

"No," I said, "I can't give you that."

"Oh, but I don't want anything else," she answered; and she looked very much disappointed when I explained to her that the ring was a keepsake, and under no circumstances could be removed from my finger.

CHAPTER XXV.

NOTHING worth relating occurred on my road to Pretoria. When close to the town, I rode to a house built close to the road, and situated on a farm where there was very good grazing, to ask whether I might outspan the waggon, and let the oxen feed there, while I was in Pretoria. It turned out that the farm had been lately leased by an Irishman, who had served in the volunteers along with Mr. Egerton, and who now was trying his hand at a Kaffir store and a suburban hotel, together with farming. He asked me in, and I stayed for some days at his hotel, riding into Pretoria to do my business, and was much amused at his efforts at keeping his house, and a partner he had, in order. It was a decidedly bachelor's establishment, but was also decidedly preferable to any hotel in Pretoria; and my host did all he could, with true Irish hospitality, to make me comfortable. However, I soon moved into Pretoria, and my own house being let, pitched a tent in the Felman's Erf, where I still retained possession of the eligible residence I mentioned before. This, however, I did not now occupy, but used as a store-room.

I had determined upon parting with Mr. Egerton, as, in the life I was now leading, I no longer required his

services. I think we were both sorry to say good-bye; and I was the more sorry, because I could not see any chance of an opening for him. He got an employment of a very laborious nature before I left Pretoria once more, and I left him the key of the eligible residence, which he determined to use as his domicile, so as not to incur the expense of an hotel. And this brings me to what has been my reason for recounting so much of Mr. Egerton's history; a reason which, if he ever reads this record of my adventures in South Africa, I believe he will deem a good one. His story points the moral of what I am about to remark.

For two years before I bade good-bye to Mr. Egerton, and, as an act of friendship, offered him the key of that miserable little hole, wherein to eat his meals and make his bed, subscriptions had been asked for and obtained for the erection of a new church—for embellishments of that new church—and even (if I mistake not) for an organ for it; and from its pulpit had been thundered forth denunciations of the drunkenness and consequent vices, only too common, alas! amongst the dwellers in Pretoria. These denunciations were so frequent, that they became the topic of general conversation, and reached the ears of even those who, like myself, never heard them from the pulpit; but no effort was made to provide the means to enable men (not exceptionally determined) to avoid being dragged into the cardinal vice.

It is not an easy thing for a man to avoid frequenting a canteen when he comes as a stranger to Pretoria. He cannot get furnished lodgings—there are not such things to be had—the nearest approach is board and residence in a family; and not only is there no comfortable reading-

room to be found in the hotels, but the bedrooms are small and uncomfortable. The natural and almost inevitable resource is the "bar," where he can find companionship.

If he does not get employment at once (which is very possible), or supposing that on arriving in Pretoria he has but a very little money in his pocket (which is often the case), then, not being able to afford to stay at an hotel, he must try to get a bed or some sort of shake-down at a canteen, where he is bound to drink or he would not get the shake-down.

If he does succeed in procuring employment, but without getting introduced to some quiet family where he can board and lodge, the difficulty of spending his evenings anywhere but in a "bar" remains, for there is nowhere else to spend them if he does not sit in his bedroom. If he does not succeed in getting employment, or can only procure work for which he receives pay too small to meet his daily expenses, (even rough living is expensive in Pretoria,) then it is not easy for him to avoid, after a time, finding it expedient to take his blanket and make his bed upon fine nights under a rose-hedge in the vicinity of the town, so as to save the expense of a bed; and when in the chill, damp morning he gets up, I personally do not wonder that the temptation to have a "tot" at the canteen is too strong for him. The time may very easily come when he cannot afford to look whether the night be fine or not, before making his bed under the rose-hedge, and then the morning "tot" seems still more alluring, I fancy—and so on, and so on, until he becomes one of the denounced.

Would not (under these circumstances) a subscription

to start a cheap but self-supporting lodging-house, with a restaurant and reading-room attached, be more to the point than a subscription for an ornamental church, from whose pulpit the poor homeless victims to a strong temptation may be denounced, after a hymn has been sung to the accompaniment of an organ also bought by subscription?

As I regretfully shook hands with Mr. Egerton, in the market-square of Pretoria, with the moonlight streaming over it, and turned after my waggon, once more on my way to the bush-veldt, I wondered whether, were I he, I should have the strength of mind to go back to that dismal hut by the swamp, every evening, to cook my dinner with wood I should have to gather and blow into a flame after a hard day's toil, and, having eaten, to sit down on a box to read, by the light of a single candle, unless I spread my blankets on the ground and went to sleep, amidst the litter of a store-room. This too with a dreary consciousness, that I should wake up in the grey morning, to discomfort, loneliness, and toil—while, all the time, there were lights and there were warmth and rest to be had in many a canteen, and something to drink—which meant to feel jolly for a little time, and to go to sleep without thinking of the morrow.

I believe it is a fact that gentlemen's sons go more quickly and certainly to the dogs in this, and I suppose in every, colony, than the sons of working men. Putting aside that they cannot obtain work so easily as the latter, the reason is self-evident; they cannot battle so strongly against the privations and discomfort they are exposed to, and hence they are more liable to seek temporary solace in drink. The habit once formed, will hardly be abandoned, even if the origin of it ceases.

I do not mean to say that all the drunkenness which prevails in Pretoria is originally caused by a desire to forget discomfort, but I am confident that a great deal of it is, and that much misery and vice might be prevented by the adoption of some such plan as I have suggested.

Before leaving Pretoria, I had dismissed Hans, my leader—he was too fond of smoking “*daccha*,” an intoxicating leaf, the constant use of which drives its votaries at times almost to insanity—and in his place I had engaged the services of a Zulu Kaffir called Pete, recommended to me by my driver, Hendrick. The boy, little Hendrick, remained with me by his own desire; and I was glad to keep him, for he was a bright, intelligent, and yet wonderfully innocent-minded child. When he first came to me he used to amuse me by turning out of his blankets of a morning without a scrap of clothing on him, although the sharp wind might be blowing, and the hoar frost be lying thick on the ground, reserving his dressing arrangements until after he had lit the fire and set the kettle on to boil, for early coffee; but by this time, he was beginning to think it incumbent upon him to put on his shirt before he performed these duties.

Another change had come o’er the spirit of my dream. I was now the possessor not only of a house in Pretoria, but of a small ‘farm, about twenty-five miles from Pretoria, going the shortest way, and which carried with it the right of free grazing and water on the large farm of which it originally formed a part. The place was noted as being healthy for horses and sheep, and was an excellent stand for a Boer-store; and I got it for a price which even the Boers near considered cheap.

My load consisted principally of Kaffir goods, and I had a barrel of Cape brandy up as well. This speculation I had been recommended by many who knew about trading, and I had been asked for brandy so frequently by Boers, that I thought I would try it. So I took out a bottle licence. This reminds me of an absurd old magistrate who gave me the said licence, and who took me up very sharp for wanting a bottle and not a retail licence (I think that is the correct name for a licence to sell by the glass).

"I don't want to sell by the glass," said I.

"Oh! don't you?" quoth he; "but I am very much afraid you will." And he held up a long finger, and shook it and his head, in a manner that would have suggested to a by-stander, that I already stood convicted of several similar offences.

"It is not probable," I remarked, "that I should like to have a lot of tipsy Kaffirs round my waggon." But up went the fore-finger again, and with a terrible shake of the head he answered,—

"Well, mind, if I catch you at it, I shall fine you heavily—very heavily."

"I will give you permission to fine me as heavily as you like, when you catch me," said I, pocketing my licence; and I conveyed to my old friend, doubtless, the idea that I was a hardened sinner, up to all the dodges necessary to evade the law successfully.

There was another thing about this brandy which amused me. A friendly store-man at the store where I bought it, who had previously given me many little hints about trading, beckoned me aside when it was loaded up.

"When you get well out from amongst the Boers," he

said—"for I understand you are going right in amongst the Kaffirs this time—just fill up the cask with water; the Kaffirs won't remark it. I wouldn't advise you to put tobacco into it; that I don't think right. But just fill up with water; it won't pay well enough if you don't."

I thanked him and departed.

This time I took my way through Buckonoo's kloof (I spell as pronounced in English), instead of through Derdepoort. It was a very pleasant change; the gorge, or kloof, with its craggy sides so thickly wooded that only here and there a bold mass of grey rock could be seen, jutting out at some curve of the river, or of the road that ran between them, looked quite delightful in the morning light; and I several times stopped to look at the pretty picture the waggon made, as, with its long team of oxen, it wound its way through the chequered sunlight and shadow. There were thousands of monkeys in this leafy retreat, and they hooted at us as we went by, not coming close, however, but affording an immense amount of excitement to the dogs and to little Hendrick, who was riding with me on Violin. On emerging from this gorge we came to several pretty farms; at one of them I was hospitably received by an old Dutchman and his family, who were in favour of English rule. They had a farm on the high-veldt, and used this farm only as a bush-veldt farm. I went along slowly, trading as I went, at the various places I had visited before, and at last got to Marullokop. The Engelsbergs seemed very much pleased to see me, and I met young De Plessis there. He had come over to have something done to a waggon of his, and had brought his wife and his youngest child with him. As I sat in the Engelsbergs' tent, waiting for the waggon to

come up, the men—amongst whom, if I remember aright, was De Clerc—talked much of the Beeinkommste that had just been held, to discuss the advisability of starting Boer stores, the goods to be imported direct, so as to oust English traders from the Transvaal. Barend Engelsberg said he had promised to subscribe 100*l.*, and mentioned the names of some other Boers, who were going to subscribe different amounts. There was a doubt about whom they should import from. They said that the Americans and the Germans had made very liberal offers. My friends in the tent seemed to think that the American offer would be accepted. I had been listening to the men talking, while the women chatted about their babies and other domestic topics. I doubt whether they thought I understood much of what they were saying, so that there was a little hush of surprise when at this point I said “I think the plan you propose, or that has been proposed at your Beeinkommste, is a very good one, and you will, I dare say, get your things much cheaper than you now do; but I would advise any of you who may have any influence with the committee you speak of, to avoid dealing with the Americans; they are first-rate men of business, but they would be too sharp for you probably. I think it would be much safer for you to deal with the Germans.” It was a great surprise to them, in more ways than one, to hear me say this; and some time after De Clerc asked me if I was born English. I said, “Yes, I am born English—at least an English subject; but I was born in Ireland, and my parents were both Irish.” Upon which he said, “Ah!” as if he were making a note of it in his mind.

The next morning, as I was sitting by the waggon a

number of girls of various ages came over, and sitting down, after they had made some purchases, talked to me. One of them, who seemed rather a nice girl, had bought a pair of gloves I remember, and she laid them on the grass between herself and her two little cousins. These two little girls bade me good-bye before she did, and, when she rose to go, she missed her gloves. She searched everywhere for them in vain. At last she said, "Oh, I remember; they were close to my cousins; they have taken them." And I saw the tears in her eyes.

"Well," said I, "then you can get them back; they will have found them amongst their things."

"Oh, no," she said simply; "you know of course they will keep them. That was why they went away so soon."

"Then tell their mother," I suggested rather indignantly, "and get them given back to you."

The girl almost laughed at my ignorance. "Why that would be of no use," she said. "She would never give them to me, even if she knew they were there."

I found that the beauty of Eclipse was a constant theme among the Boers, and that my prowess in riding him was greatly extolled. On one occasion Barend Engelsberg brought another Boer over to the waggon, expressly to admire the horse, and to ask me to show how I could do anything I liked with him without his kicking me. Boers as a rule are very fond of horses, although they are somewhat careless of them, as indeed they are of themselves and their families, and our common taste soon established a sort of freemasonry between us, the men being always ready to listen to all I had to tell of my horses, and to recount long tales of their past and present horses in return.

When I reached the mission station I found that Mr. B—— had resigned his position as missionary, and was just removing to a farm at some distance, called Sandfontein. He came to see me at the waggon, but I did not go to the house, as I was very busy trading and had no time. Pete, my leader, distinguished himself by getting drunk on Kaffir beer while I was here, and sitting under the waggon the following day, loudly deploring his headache and general wretchedness, caused partly by the drink, and partly by the disgrace I kept him in.

My way now lay past some warm springs, of which there are several in Waterberg, to Makapan's-poort. On my way I once more passed the encampment of the De Clercs and young De Plessis, the size of which was increased by the addition of several tents and waggons belonging to Boers who had been encamped further along the river, but were now on their way from the bush-veldt to their farms on the ur-veldt or elsewhere. Amongst these Boers was old Mrs. Nell, who had tried to sell the bull to me.

The stories about lions being in the vicinity, and having killed horses and cattle, belonging in some cases to Boers whom I knew, were so numerous, and so well authenticated, that I thought it best to keep fires burning all night, and that we should sleep in a ring round the horses, leaving one boy to sleep by the fore-oxen. I saw Dandy again, and he knew me, and could with difficulty be got away from the waggon, but he was evidently well cared for and kindly treated. I must describe his master and his master's family. They are the best Boers I have come across. Young De Plessis himself—a man of about middle height, wiry, and full of energy, with bright

laughing eyes, a merry mouth, and clustering hair, with a manner in accordance, bold and free, and with something pleasantly boy-like in his way of enjoying a joke or asking a favour—was known amongst his mates as a sure shot, a daring hunter, and a first-rate horseman; yet always ready to help his wife with the baby (she told me herself he always weaned the children for her), and withal a most diligent and energetic farmer. He was the only Boer I ever saw who groomed his horse regularly every day.

His wife was tall, and made on a large scale; but her every movement was graceful. Her face, with its regular features, large steady eyes, with long dark eyelashes and pencilled eyebrows, was a picture of serene cheerfulness, and the set of her well-shaped head on her finely-formed neck and bust was statuesque. I have seen her doing all sorts of little domestic work with the air of a Juno, except that Juno, according to Homer, never can have looked serene. She was always dressed neatly, with a fresh kerchief folded across her breast, and her hair was always tidy, her hands always clean, and she never seemed disturbed or hurried about anything. Her tent was a model of neatness, and her children never looked dirty.

The baby was a delightful baby, with big brown eyes and round cheeks; and it was always speckless. I am sure I don't know how she kept it so, but I never saw that infant otherwise than spotlessly clean from the top of its head to the tip of its little pink toe; and its garments always seemed to have been just put on. There were two older urchins—one a handsome dark-eyed fellow, as brown as a berry, and full of mischief; the other blue-eyed and shy, with a tendency to hold by his mother's

apron and put his fingers in his mouth when in the presence of a stranger, but a pretty child. These youngsters were often superficially dirty, but one could always see their little white shirts peeping out at their collars and cuffs, and when, at meal-times, they were told to wash before sitting down, a very little soap and water made them look refreshingly clean. I have described this family, not as a type of Boer families, but because it is the only Transvaal Boer family, amongst the many I have seen, of which all these nice things could be said, unless I except the Briets, and the Briets were rich, whereas young De Plessis was very poor. I dined one Sunday in the De Plessis' tent, and had a very nice dinner, of wild buck's meat and a sort of sweet suet-pudding with cinnamon in it, served up with thick meat-sauce. Several neighbours came in, and we were very merry. De Plessis and his friends were laughing over a "grand spree" they had had the night before, when, as a finish up, they had smeared each other's coats all over with fat. Some very distinguishable marks of the practical joke yet remained. Trade was good here, and I stayed for some time.

There was one man, of the name of Jan Smith, who was always coming to the waggon to beg me to sell him a "tot," and when I said I could not sell one, begging me to give him one. It was wonderful how these Boers would beg of me to infringe the law, and assure me that they would never tell of me, and that no trader minded adhering to it. I soon began to be sorry I had got brandy up, for, when they found that I would not sell them "tots," they would club together and buy a bottle, drink it in a surprisingly short time, and come back for more, until the whole encampment was several sheets in

the wind. They were only gay and festive during the day, but at night I rather think they used to quarrel; and in order to get rid of the liquor, which I saw would prove a bother to me, I offered it to the whole encampment at cost price, and said I would trade it in cattle. They were much inclined to take it, but could not quite make up their minds as to how they would manage to bottle it off, and so, much to my regret, the thing fell through.

One day my driver Hendrick told me, in a very mysterious manner, that young De Plessis had got the plumage of an ostrich, which he would like to sell to me, taking three quarters of the payment in goods. I said he could bring the feathers, and let me see them. Then Hendrick said he would bring them that evening, but that I must be very careful not to let any one see them. I asked why, when he informed me that as a rule Boers were very envious of each other, and that if it were known among young De Plessis' friends and relatives that he had had the luck to shoot an ostrich, he would be annoyed by them. In the mean time the feathers were brought and approved, and young De Plessis, with his wife and her mother, Mrs. De Clerc, came over in the evening secretly, chose the goods, and got payment, and also showed me how to pack up the feathers nicely, this process being performed very secretly in my tent. Before he left I asked him the reason why he observed so much secrecy, for I did not believe Hendrick's version.

"You see," said De Plessis, "it is against the law."

"Indeed."

"Yes, it is breeding-time now, and although it is true that that cock bird had lost his mate, yet I should be liable to a fine of 500*l.* if it were known I had shot a bird

during this season. Besides, my father-in-law promised that he would shoot that bird for Mr. L—— (a trader), and if he knew I had shot it he would persecute me. So pray don't say anything about it, for I should be utterly ruined if I had to pay 500*l.* In fact, I could not pay it, for I have not got it."

"Well," said I, "I am sorry that I have helped you to do an unlawful act; however, as I have, I will keep your secret, even if I have to depart a little from the truth. It is no secret of mine, and I should be sorry to harm you."

"Oh, but," said he, "it is your secret as well as mine. You are as guilty before the law as I am."

"Oh!" said I; and in my own mind I thought that altered the case very much. However, I resolved to keep the feathers until I came back from Makapan's-poort. I knew I should see De Plessis on his farm in Waterberg as I returned, and I need tell no lies, nor talk about the feathers until I got to Pretoria, and wanted to dispose of them.

De Clerc used often to come with other Boers to my waggon. He was an oldish man, but handsome in a rugged sort of way, was a bold hunter and a good horseman, and a leading man amongst the Waterberg Boers, being a fairly well-educated man for a Boer, and having held office under the Boer Government. He used often to talk politics to me, and always introduced me to his friends as an Irishwoman. Once one of the friends remarked that the Irish hated the English; upon which I told him that I did not, and that although I thought that in many ways the English Government had behaved badly to the Boers, yet that if ever it came to war I should take

the English side. De Clerc said he understood my feeling; that he believed it was best for the country that the English should govern it; that England was a strong and rich country, and that the land would be more secure and more prosperous under her auspices than it would otherwise be; but that yet in his heart he felt sore about the English dominion. He went on to say that he always dissuaded his friends from any thoughts of fighting; that he meant to bring up his boy as a friend to the English; that he believed that fighting would only end in a complete overthrow of the Boers; but yet—and I could see his dark eyes flash under his shaggy brow—that, if there was fighting, his life and all he had should be thrown into the balance for his own race. “I quite understand that,” I said; “it would be the same with me were I a Boer.”

“But you are English, and of course if war comes you will go with your nation, as I with mine,” he answered.

One evening I walked across to the Boer encampment, crossing the river by a little plank thrown over it. I found De Clerc paying a visit to a very fat and rather old woman, who had just presented her husband, an old man with a white beard, with a first baby. There was an attempt being made to galvanize a sentiment about this unfortunate infant, but as its parents had had husbands, wives, and children before, the attempt was a failure. However, I gave the mother a present of a bottle of brandy and some raisins, and everybody was very much pleased. The invalid was in the waggon where the baby had been born, the happy father was sitting at the back, and De Clerc and I sat on chairs in front of him. It was a beautiful afternoon, and the trees, the river, the green grass near, the waggons and tents peering out

from the foliage, and the blue sky, made a pretty picture, and put me into a very good humour.

"Well," said De Clerc, "we are going to have a lion-hunt this evening or to-morrow. A cow has been killed close here, and we must find the lion and kill it."

"Oh dear," said I, "how I should like to see the hunt!"

"What do you say to my proposal?" said De Clerc. "We will bring you the body of the lion just as it is killed, and you shall give us 5*l.*"

"And the skin?"

"Oh, no! If I give you the skin you must give us 10*l.*"

I laughed at the absurd demand. "No," said I; "it is nothing to me to see a dead lion, for I have seen many live ones in cages, and I don't much care for his skin. But I'll tell you what I will do. Take me with you on the hunt, and I'll give you 10*l.*, and a bottle or two of brandy to have a spree with afterwards."

"Done!" cried De Clerc. "What will you ride?"

"Eclipse."

"But is he accustomed to lion-hunting?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said I. "If you can spare me a horse that is accustomed to it I should prefer it."

"You can have my horse, and let me have Eclipse."

"No, no," I answered; "no one rides my horse but myself, particularly where there may be danger."

"Hear her!" exclaimed De Clerc; "that is how an Irishwoman speaks. But are you sure you won't be frightened?"

"I'm sure I shall be frightened, horribly frightened," said I; "but I'm sure I shall do whatever you tell me

to do, and that I shall not run away, or scream, or do anything of that sort."

Then there was some talk between the men as to how the hunt was to be arranged, and during this I observed that De Clerc was envious of De Plessis, who was the sharpest and boldest hunter among them. Presently two youngsters rode up at a canter.

"We have got the spoor (or track), but we cannot follow it; we can only make it out in one place. Shall we get the horses up, and try again all of us, as it is not too late?"

It was agreed that it was too late, and that they had better wait till morning. As I went back to the waggon I said to De Clerc, who walked a little way with me, "You won't deceive me, will you?"

"Oh, no," he answered. "I think you had better be ready about nine. By-the-way, there is one of those nice hats you have; I want one so much, but I have not the money to buy it. Won't you give me one as a remembrance of my taking you with me on the hunt?"

He had asked me to bring the hats over that he might choose one, but had not fixed upon one, and little Hendrick was still with me, with the hats in his hand. I saw through the old fellow, and was inclined to say that he should have the hat when I returned from the lion hunt; but I still had clinging to me some of the politeness which was instilled into me in my youth, but which it is advisable to discard in Boer-land, unless you mean to be victimized at every turn; so he took his hat and departed.

I waited there for several days afterwards, but no lion-hunt took place.

Before my departure I bought Dandy back again,

giving Violin and some money for him. De Plessis was in want of money to pay off a debt, and I found that Dandy was a great loss in Pretoria. Violin was a capital horse for a gallop, but, with anybody but me, he was inclined to be vicious, and required careful breaking in to become a good horse, whereas when I had but him and Eclipse I could hardly ever ride him, and the boys were spoiling him by riding him badly. Dandy seemed delighted to be once more with me. The last I saw of De Plessis was after I was already on my road, when I heard a "Halloa!" behind me, and turning, beheld him coming along at a gallop on his new acquisition, flourishing a black bottle in his hand. He was delighted with Violin's performance, and said he must buy one more bottle of brandy just to let them all have a spree on my going away. So I stopped the waggon, and, while he was getting his brandy, poor Violin, for the last time, searched my pocket for bread.

I was now approaching the last tent belonging to white men. After passing one of my old acquaintances near to the warm baths, I entered a country prettier than any I had traversed before. I rode along a wooded valley, skirting the hills that bounded it at one side. The scene was a mixture of wildness and resemblance to an English park. There were many very good trees, the bush was thick, and there was a sprinkling of tropical-looking and enormous cacti or cactus-trees. One day I came on a group of Kaffirs on their way to the diamond-fields, sitting under a spreading tree. I knew that I was near water—the horses were very thirsty—but I could not make out where the spring was; the course of the rivulet coming from it, was in parts dry, and in parts spread out into a half-marsh thickly overgrown with reeds. One of

the men volunteered to show me the way. The spring was some distance from the spot, deep and clear, and Eclipse plunged into it eagerly.

"I have brought you to the spring," said the Kaffir, while I sat enjoying the enjoyment of my horse and little Hendrick and Dandy in the cool water. I took out a small piece of money to give him.

"I did not want any money," he said; "I merely said I had showed you the water." And he seemed quite satisfied with thanks. I afterwards gave him and his companions some brandy, and one man came forward after they had all drunk, and said they wished him to thank me very much. These were very raw Kaffirs, and could hardly speak anything but Kaffir, but they were wonderful in the matter of courtesy; for Kaffirs generally are either rude like monkeys, or like Boers—and the latter is a very bad and disagreeable form of rudeness, characterized by much staring, talking of and laughing at anything which may strike them as unusual in a stranger.

My last outspan by a white man's tent, was on a beautiful evening, and the scene struck me very much. I emerged from a thick wood on a delicious greensward, almost like an ornamental lawn, interspersed with a few fine trees. The road wound through this, and it was bounded on one side by the thickly-wooded hills, on the other by the forest. A large herd of cattle were making their way to three white tents pitched on the border of this, and partially concealed by its foliage; and the last rays of the sun, as it sank behind the hills, were tinting all near objects with gold, while in the distance the hills of Makapan looked blue and misty.

The family from these tents soon came to see me. Three of the men had been severely injured by fire. They had been hunting on the hills, and had set fire to the grass to hunt out the animals ; but the wind suddenly rose, and, in rising, changed its direction, so that the fire hunted them out instead.

Early the next morning I passed the last white habitation ; the owner was a woodcutter, and had pitched his tent under a superb tree, not with the intention of cutting it down, however. Close by I saw a very curious animal. It was an enormous lizard, so large that it was like a little crocodile. It was close by the path when I saw it, and I frightened little Hendrick very much by riding up to it. He assured me that it had extraordinary power in its tail, and that if it struck Eclipse it would kill him. The little beast looked at me for a moment, then, slashing his long scaly tail in a most extraordinary manner, ran away with extreme agility, the tail vibrating from side to side all the time. I followed it on Eclipse, but it suddenly disappeared, I suppose down some hole. Our mid-day outspan was by the side of a rivulet, and in such thick bush that, no sooner were the oxen and horses loose, than they were lost to sight. It was said that there were lions close to this place, and thieving Kaffirs also, so I cautioned Pete and little Hendrick to keep the animals in sight, whilst Hendrick prepared the food. When it was prepared, and he went to call them to eat and make a fresh start, they were nowhere to be found, and neither were the animals, and it was some time before they came up. I had eaten, and was impatient to start, so I told them to up-saddle and inspan at once. I rode Dandy and led Eclipse this time, and I did not look

specially at the latter until I had ridden a little way, then I saw he was sweated, which excited my suspicion. It was late when I reached Moer-drift, the place for outspanning. The valley here begins to narrow, and the hills of Makapan's-poort can be plainly seen; the valley itself is but little wooded, but the hills are covered with trees, and the effect is very pretty. I off-saddled, and it was not till almost dark, that the waggon came up. Pete was running in front of it, and a glance showed me that he was quite drunk. The oxen were hardly outspanned when he fell down under the waggon and went fast asleep. I perceived also that little Hendrick was tipsy. I asked Hendrick how this was, and he told me that Pete had taken little Hendrick to a Kaffir kraal, instead of minding the animals at the last outspan, and had given him some of the beer upon which he himself had got tipsy. I said nothing about Eclipse, but I felt sure now that Pete had either ridden him, or hunted him very hard on Dandy. I called up little Hendrick and told him that I would give him something to make him remember that the after-consequences of drink were disagreeable, and ordered Hendrick to give him some good cuts with a reim; Pete had to be left till morning. In the early dawn I saw him arise, wrap a blanket round him, loose the oxen and take them off to graze. "He is trying to get into favour," thought I. I also heard little Hendrick laugh at him silyly for having been thrown by Eclipse—so I was quite sure about my affair now. The boys thought I was asleep, for I did not move.

I had breakfast, but no Pete appeared. At last I sent Hendrick on horseback to look for the oxen. He found them far off, but Pete was missing. However, I had no

mind to wait for him, so inspanned and got on near to a settlement of Knopnäse Kaffirs, where I outspanned and was trading with them when Mr. Pete slinked up. I was too busy to speak to him then, and presently inspanned to go on to Makapan's-poort.

It was a pretty ride, and when I got to the place itself I thought it a very pretty place. Right in the middle of the pass, a precipitous hill, crowned with Makapan's kraal, forms a sort of natural fortress. A small river (the Nile river, I think) winds round its base; trees of various sorts cluster round, and are scattered over it, and the ruins of a once large mission station, and the pomegranates, syringas, and other shrubs of the garden that used to be, add a charm to the scene. Numbers of women and children stared at me as I crossed the river with the two horses, and waited for the waggon to come up, for I did not know where to outspan. Hendrick could not talk the pure Makatees, spoken by these Kaffirs, sufficiently well to trust entirely to him, so I had taken a Kaffir from the mission station to act as interpreter and guide. This Kaffir's name was Nicholas, commonly called "Clas."

So soon as the waggon arrived, Clas showed me a pretty little dell at the foot of the hill, where we outspanned. I sent him to the kraal, with the present of a bottle of French brandy to Makapan, and a message that I wished to have his permission to trade with his tribe. And in return the chief sent me his thanks, and said that he was glad I had come, and would protect me.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MAKAPAN, or rather Clas Makapan, for the latter is only his surname or family name, is the son of a chief who, after a fearful massacre of the Boers, was at last reduced to submission by them. Clas was taken as hostage, and brought up in a Boer family. When his father died the Kaffirs determined to get the child back, and, fearful that the Boers would not give him willingly, they stole him one night, and having got him, made peace with the Boers by paying for him in cattle. One of the old Kaffirs told me that the little Clas had been very much frightened when he found himself a prisoner amongst the Kaffirs, and had cried and kicked to get away.

I soon found that unless I traded for corn, I should be able to do but little here, for the taxes were just being called for by the Government, and the Kaffirs were very much afraid of not having money to pay them in, as cattle were taken at a ridiculously low value for the amount, if the cash was not there when called for. I determined therefore to trade for mealies and Kaffir corn, as I got them very cheap, and they were likely to fetch a good price in Pretoria. When I made this intention known, the Kaffirs came in swarms, the men walking in front, followed by the women and girls, bearing on their heads baskets filled

with grain. There were hundreds assembled, between those who came to trade and those who came to look on; it was hard to prevent their crowding too close to the waggon, and many a time had Pete to rush at the ever-narrowing circle formed round it, with a big whip to keep the intruders off.

It takes a long time trading for grain, for the grain has all to be measured off into sacks, or sometimes by buckets-full; besides this, one has to examine its quality. The din of all these savages, talking, yelling, laughing, was deafening, and at the end of a day's work, which lasted without intermission from seven o'clock in the morning until the same hour in the evening, I was not only tired in body, but I felt nearly mad. This lasted several days. It was amusing, however, and I had a good opportunity of observing the Kaffir in his natural state. The women were dressed much like those at the Eland river, except that they had two long, thin pieces of leather hanging from their girdles behind like tails. These were ornamented with beads, brass or white buttons, &c., according to the taste or means of the wearer, and the young ladies were in the habit of holding one of these appendages in one hand and switching it about. I may here remark that Makatees young ladies are as fond of flirting as any other young ladies I have had the pleasure of studying. The girls were rather graceful, and had a way of entwining their arms round each other and falling into groups, which was absolutely artistic. I remember one group which seemed to have arranged itself with a consciousness of "The Graces." These three young ladies had rubbed their bodies and their hair or wool with a mixture of fat and red earth which, although it does

not sound nice, was by no means unbecoming. Mother's darlings were also to be distinguished from urchins who were not darlings, by the former being reddish-brown and the latter of a natural black colour. The girls wore a variety of ornaments, some very prettily made—of grass and wire, also of beads. A disease much resembling scabies—called, I believe, Kaffir-pock—was very prevalent at Makapan's-poort, and I observed that the persons of those who rubbed themselves, or were rubbed by their fond mammas, with the unguent I have described, had escaped it.

The men wore all sorts of costumes. Some of the aristocracy of the place wore European dress, others skins curiously sewn together and prepared, others blankets, others girdles fringed with the tails of wild cats, others again a shirt, sometimes tied by its sleeves round the neck, sometimes properly worn; while many had just a rag or a little strip of soft leather round the loins. Many had their wool ornamented with little rosettes made of the tail of the rock rabbit, or by meer-cats' tails, tied on like tassels. I often saw the men going out hunting, armed with assegai and tomahawk, and often with a rifle. They would start off early in the morning, whooping and dancing, with a troop of dogs after them.

One day I noticed a girl who was quite pretty, and also modest-looking, in the crowd that surrounded me, but at a little distance. I took aim at her with a small circular looking-glass, and successfully. She was delighted when she saw herself, but after giving me one beaming smile, she turned shy, and ran away.

From that moment I had no peace. The girls were not so bad as the women, who had no excuse, for they were

all ugly. One old wretch who, although she had been brought up amongst the Boers for years, and had been accustomed to dress, now wore a fringed girdle and a skin over her shoulders, pestered me every day for a glass. At last I said, "You ask me why I gave that young woman one, and won't give you one? That is easily answered. She is pretty, and has some use for a looking-glass; whereas you are old, and if you had one, would have nothing pretty to see if you looked in it: when I was young I often looked in the glass, but I don't now: looking-glasses are for young people."

How that woman laughed, and clapped her hands, and laughed again. Then she called several of her friends, and told them; and they cried out, "True! true!" and laughed until I began to feel that I had perpetrated a wonderful witticism. They were, however, quite as anxious to get a peep into a looking-glass afterwards as before, though no elderly female ever asked me for a glass again as a present.

I had almost forgotten to tell about Pete.

On the evening of our arrival at Makapan's-poort, I went over to the camp-fire where the boys were sitting, although it was very warm, and the moonlight was as bright as day, and said, "Pete, this is your second offence; and you made it worse by attempting to ride my horse without my permission; now remember, I never speak three times; the third offence I punish; and as I object to punishing either a servant or an animal, I never punish either, unless I give them something they are not likely to forget in a hurry." Pete stared hard at me, and said, "Yes, missus;" and I walked off. I may here remark that although I have always found the giving of

a certain grace a good plan with European servants, I have found it a bad plan with African servants. I think personally that they are too much like animals to be treated in this way, and that the best way to manage them is to punish severely the first offence (I mean, of course, an offence whose culpability they understand) just as one does with an animal one has to train. At the time of which I am now writing, however, although I greatly doubted whether a Kaffir ought to be treated otherwise than as an animal, I thought it right to give him the benefit of the doubt.

The heat even at night was now very great; and the irritation caused by the biting and crawling over one of microscopical ticks was very great. I found it difficult to sleep at night, and I have often got up and walked about in the moonlight, or watched the sleeping horses lying comfortably by the waggon, and sometimes giving little ghostly neighs in their sleep that testified to their dreaming. I never slept in the tent, for I was always afraid of some robbery going on, and once my suspicions were aroused by missing Pete from where he ought to have been sleeping. He turned up shortly after, however, so I thought no more about it, as I noticed nothing else remarkable.

A serious difficulty now began to claim my attention. I had been led to believe that I should be able to get meal from some of the Boer houses in Waterberg (at the other side of the mission station), but I had not been able to procure any, and in consequence of finding very little game and no meat towards and at Makapan's-poort, the meal I had was beginning to run short. I could buy but very little milk; and the coffee was getting low. I

determined to start for Pretoria, but deferred my departure a little in order to be present at a grand feast which Makapan was about to give. He was to "make rain" for his clan, and there was to be a grand dance.

Although brought up amongst the Boers, Makapan has not adopted any substitute for the superstition of his father and his tribe, and he has a pronounced objection to missionaries. He came to pay me a visit the day before this feast. He is a big man, with coarse features. He was dressed in a short coat, riding-breeches, gaiters and boots, and a felt hat. Of course I gave him a "tot;" and gave one also to his head-man, called "Stürman," who was dressed like himself. He said he hoped I would visit him before I left the place; that he had heard that I said that I would not visit Makapan before Makapan visited me, and that now Makapan had come. I said I would go to his kraal the next day. I was greatly surprised to see how unceremoniously his subjects, and even my driver Hendrick, were allowed to treat him, and felt that it was difficult to know how to treat as a chief, a man who allowed my driver to shake hands with him; however, I promised to go, and then Makapan asked for another tot. I have heard that such chiefs as Cetawayo and Sekocooni are approached by their subjects in an abject posture, and are never spoken to by them unless permission has been given. I can only suppose that chiefs like Makapan, who have adopted European costume, are by degrees losing the consideration of their subjects.

The morning of the great feast-day broke splendidly, and, before the sun was up, groups of young warriors, dressed in their best, came past my encampment on their way to the chief's kraal. I was no sooner dressed than I

ordered the horses to be saddled, and taking Clas as my companion, started for the kraal. I had been told that one could ride up, and indeed I had seen that Makapan and his suite had ridden both up and down. After turning a little round the hill we began the stony ascent, through a maze of little Kaffir huts, from which the children came forth yelling, at the sight of me, followed by their mothers, some trying to stop their clamorous vociferations, while others did their utmost to add to the din. At last, after a desperate scramble, which landed me on a shelving piece of rock with boulder after boulder rising above it, I declined to endanger the horses' feet any longer, and dismounting, told Clas he must lead the horses back, and give them in charge to some decent Kaffir until his and my return. At this moment, however, I saw Makapan descending from his eyrie to greet me, with a staff in his hand, which he offered to me to assist me in climbing. Having passed within the low wall that bounds his kraal, I found myself in a labyrinth of huts, each with an enclosed yard attached, and traversed by narrow paths. Makapan led me past a large stockade, and through various enclosures, each with a hut in it (his harem, or whatever it may be called in Kaffir), to his own house, a cottage built of bricks, and with a verandah in front. He took me into his bedroom (the house had only two rooms, I think) and asked me to be seated.

The dark and dirty room was furnished with two or three chairs, a little table, and a common bedstead, on which were thrown a mattress, some gaudy blankets, and a "caross," or large mat made of skins curiously stitched together, and with the hair left on. He asked me if I

would have coffee, and brought me some in a cup ; then, after talking about various things, he said he hoped that I would make him a present of a very handsome rug I had for sale. I did not like to refuse, but I said I thought he ought to make me a present too ; he said he would do so gladly, and sent one of his officers to get me an ostrich feather—a very indifferent specimen. I then asked him if I might attend the feast that he was about to give that day. He seemed much pleased at this proposal, and said that I should be surprised at seeing what swarms of warriors would be there. He also told me that he should kill an ox in the course of the day, and that he would send me some of the meat ; this, for aforesaid reasons, I was very glad to hear. He asked me several times whether I was not surprised to see such a large place as his kraal ; whether I did not think it very strong ; and told me that I should be surprised at the number of his warriors. Before I went away he asked me if I would not have something to eat, but this I declined. As he was escorting me to my horses, we met a singular-looking old Kaffir carrying herbs. Makapan said, laughing, “That is my doctor, and those are his medicines ; he will help me to make medicines for my Kaffirs to-day.” He seemed to think the whole thing rather amusing ; and indeed I doubt whether he was not aware, as I was, of the absurdity of his conjuring away diseases and conjuring up rain.

CHAPTER XXVII.

It was still early when I got back to the waggon. The dance was not to begin till noon—a curious time, by-the-way, for a dance, for the heat was very great. In the meantime I had ample opportunities of observing the different costumes of the savages, numbers of whom came over to talk to my boys before taking their way up the hill-side to the kraal. Some of the young men presented a very picturesque appearance. Their loins were girt with leathern girdles, fringed with magnificent cats'-tails, their heads were decorated with rosettes and tassels; a warhorn—beautifully and curiously worked in brass, copper, or tin wire, sometimes all three together—was hung round their necks and thrown behind them; a bright coloured scarf thrown over one shoulder and passed under the opposite arm; their legs were covered with buskins made from the white skin from under the belly of a buck, and each carried an assegai, often ornamented with wire embroidery on the handle, a short club, also ornamented, a tomahawk or a rifle, or sometimes an assortment of these different articles. At a little before twelve I took Clas with me, and began the ascent of the hill. I went by a different way this time, one which led me in and out of rocks and boulders, overhung by trees, a scrambling, delightful way,

giving one pretty glimpses of the valley and of the Kaffir huts clustering at the base of the hill. Every now and then some of Makapan's warriors would rush by me with a leap and a bound, and as they scaled the hill rapidly I could hear their yell and the discharge of their rifles as a salute to the chief's stockade as they entered it. Groups of girls also passed me, their arms intertwined, chattering and laughing until they saw me, when they would stare for a minute and then go on.

About half-way up I discovered that Moustache had followed me. He had kept in the background until he thought he was far enough from the waggon to avoid being sent back; he now came forward with a conscious air, wagged his tail, and gave an awkward sort of hop, as much as to say, "I hope you won't be angry; but I'm here, and you can't send me back now;" and trotted on in front. He distrusted those men with rifle and assegai though; he did not bark at them, and rush furiously after them, showing his white teeth by a vicious curling up of his nose, as was his wont with Kaffirs; he put his head on one side, drooped his tail, cocked his big flap ears, and endeavoured to take in the situation, but unsuccessfully. We at last got near the outer wall of the kraal, and heard a hum as of a mighty bee-hive, broken every now and then by a yell and a discharge of fire-arms. Moustache began to keep very close to me; we were inside in a moment, and at the same moment amid a throng of excited men, women, and children, who filled up the narrow alleys through which we made our way to the stockade; the hum was getting louder and louder; I caught up Moustache, who looked around savagely as he sat up in my arms.

Makapan met me at the entrance of the stockade, and spoke to me, but I could not hear what he said for the din. Lining the stockade was a dense mass of women and children, talking, laughing, singing, yelling, and clapping their hands. Makapan made way for me to the front ranks and got me a chair. Just opposite to me there was a crowd of men, some dressed as I have described, some with bright coloured shirts, some with a waistcoat and a girdle of cats'-tails, some with only a woollen comforter crossed over their breasts, and a rag round their loins as their holiday costume; others again in half-European dress, and others painted, some to represent skeletons, some merely daubed with colour, but all armed. Ever and anon one or more of these would rush into the area of the stockade with a yell, and dancing the war-dance, then enact some scene of warfare, casting himself on the ground, looking around cautiously, taking aim, firing, then perhaps tomahawking or assegaiing his imaginary foe with such savage exultation, that it made my blood curdle, while the women clapped their hands, yelled, and even—sometimes becoming over-excited—rushed into the arena and did a frantic war-dance. Then after each exhibition there would be a race of a group of girls from one side to the other, before the next performer stepped forth, evidently to compare notes with friends as to the relative merits of the dancers. Four men particularly attracted my attention, not by their costumes, but by their good acting. One of these acted alone. His play was that he was defending the stockade from enemies who were creeping up through the mass of rock and tree below. He would look over the stockade, taking cover carefully, peer hither and thither, then swiftly level