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XXVII. 1. PHACOCHÆRUS AFRICANUS: THE AFRICAN WILD BOAR.  
2. REDUNCA ELEOTRAGUS: THE REITBOK.

## PLATE XXVII.

### 1. PHACOCHÆRUS AFRICANUS.—THE AFRICAN BOAR.

*Vlacke Vark* of the Cape Colonists. *Ingooloob* of the Matabili.

GENERIC CHARACTER.—Height at the shoulder about two feet six inches. Skin reddish brown or earth colour, scantily beset with bristles. The top of the head, upper part of the neck, shoulders, and back, covered with long rigid bristles, rising in tufts, those on the cranium diverging like the radii of a circle. Long white whiskers under the canine teeth, which are very large, long, and directed upwards. Head extremely large, and muzzle very broad. A large fleshy wen behind each eye, and a prominent warty excrescence on each side of the snout behind the tusks. Ears bordered with strong hair. Eyes small and sinister, placed very high in the head, with black lashes and long brows, and a tuft of bristles behind them. Tail tufted with bristles, twenty inches in length, straight and thin like the lash of a whip. Loose accessory hoofs, and a piece of protuberant thick hard skin on the fore feet.

Gregarious. Inhabits the plains and forests.

### 2. REDUNCA ELEOTRAGUS.—THE REITBOK.

*Reitbok* of the Cape Colonists. *Inghalla* of the Matabili.

GENERIC CHARACTER.—Adult male about two feet ten inches high at the shoulder, and four feet ten inches long. Form slender and elongated. Neck raking. Horns ten or twelve inches in length, placed above the eyes, and advanced beyond the plane of the face; divergent, and moulded by a bold and regular sweep to the segment of a circle, with the points hooked forward; wrinkled at the base, and annulated with obsolete rings in the middle. Ears six inches, tail ten inches long: the latter grey, tipped with white, remarkably bushy, and covered with a profusion of woolly hair. General colour of the coat ashy grey, tinged with ochre, in substance soft and silky, like that of the Kangaroo; beneath white. Hair of the throat white and flowing. Head, neck, and legs, usually tawny. A small muzzle, and imperfect suborbital opening.

Female similar; but smaller, and hornless. Mammæ four. Solitary, or gregarious in small troops. Resides variously, but chiefly amongst long reeds.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE AFRICAN BOAR, AND THE REITBOK.

"Whose eye-balls glare with fire suffused with blood,  
Whose neck shoots up a thickset thorny wood,  
Whose bristled back a trench impaled appears,  
And stands erected like a field of spears.  
Froth fills his chaps, he sends a grunting sound  
And part he churns and part befoams the ground;  
For tusks with Indian elephants he strove  
And Jove's own thunder from his mouth he drove."

THE Indian Hog-hunter, who has dimmed the lustre of his flashing spear blade in the heart's blood of many a venerable boar, cannot fail to be sorely disappointed in both the African varieties of the Genus *Sus*, to the more deserving whereof he is here respectfully introduced. Hideous to a surprising extent, but far inferior in pith to his Asiatic relative; slightly built, and of very insignificant stature, his chaps are armed with lancets which in many instances attain the most astounding dimensions; and four goodly sized fleshy protuberances, which resemble nodes or carbuncles, adorning his bewhiskered muzzle, he apes a Hottentot in physiognomy, and stands confessed a most unsightly swine! The wart-hog is extremely common in the interior, where early in the morning, or at eventide, after the sun had declined, large herds or *sounders* were daily to be seen, rooting in the open plain; and being possessed of a passing inquisitive disposition, the approach of our novel cavalcade often excited it to their own destruction, and to the supply of our larder with most sumptuous pork. Carrying their whip-like tails erect, and led by some unseemly white-tusked patriarch, they were wont to approach within point blank range of our battery, and peer pryingly at our line of march, until the incontinent demise of one of the party by a gun shot wound, first made the survivors acquainted with the fatal effects of fire arms, and somewhat unpleasantly warned them that it was high time to decamp. Returning one drizzly morning from the banks of the Limpopo, with the spoils of three noble water bucks packed upon my horse, I chanced upon a very large drove of the unclean beasts, feeding unconcernedly on the slope of a hill; and the sleet obscuring my rifle sights, I projected no fewer than three bullets at the diabolical looking boar without touching a bristle—the whole party, with a general grunt, scampering off after each discharge to a little distance—then wheeling about to show a menacing front, exalting their whip-lash tails at the same time, and screwing horrible faces at me. But the fourth missive tripped up the hoary general, and although *shooting a pig* may sound somewhat oddly in the sporting ears of my brother Nimrods, I can assure them that whilst we had no horses to spare, "the head of that ilk swine" proved a prize well worth the lead and gunpowder that had been expended on it. It most unfortunately happened, however, that the waggon which carried my hunting trophies was upset the very next day; and on sending back to the scene of the disaster so soon as the absence of this treasure was discovered, the lower jaw had disappeared, and the snout had been so mangled by the strong teeth of a hyena, that the upper tusks only were saved. Gigantic, and protruding like those of an elephant, they were quite sufficiently hooked to admit of the wearer hanging himself up by them to roost, as did his ancestors of yore, if the ancients are to be believed. By all who saw these trophies in the colony they were invariably mistaken for the ivories of a *zeeekoë*, the best that I afterwards realized measuring less than half their length. Of these the finest belonged to a solitary fellow whose sinister red eyes had been fixed upon me at a moment when I fancied myself perfectly alone. Our camp was formed under the lee of the Cashan Mountains, in an extensive mimosa grove, that skirted the banks of a little rivulet over-grown with tangled flags and tassel grass; and a Reitbok, of which species no specimen had previously been obtained, having crossed our path in the morning, I long coaxed the Matabili to accompany me for the purpose of beating up his quarters; but failing to overcome their laziness, I was fain at last to sally forth by myself. The buck being soon found, was slain of course, and his measure having been taken in the usual way, I proceeded to decapitate the victim, and looking suddenly up was startled to perceive the gentleman whose portrait adorns the annexed Plate—his bristles erect like the quills of a porcupine, and evidently just risen from his sty among the dry reeds, diligently scanning my proceedings round the corner of a bush! Dearly did he pay for his curiosity. A shot broke one fore leg at the elbow, but hobbling along upon the three that remained, he contrived to lead me a great foot chase among the covert ere I could secure him. Arriving with his "tusked trophies" late in the afternoon at the waggons, it was with no small gratification that I witnessed the chagrin of the savages, who would have begrudged no labour to obtain a slice of the

bacon. But not a morsel did the wretches taste; for my turn having now fairly arrived, I purposely so misdirected them, that they came back late at night, sulky and empty handed, after a fruitless hunt for the carcase.

The sound of the annexed figures, whereof the name points strongly to its *locale*, is that of the identical Reitbok, slain on the occasion above referred to. This species resides either in pairs or in very small families along the margins of springs and swampy ground abounding in flags and rushes, or among the sedges that choke the channel of desiccated torrents which flow only during the winter season. Specimens occurred throughout our route, chiefly to the eastward of the Colony, and in the tropical streams

"'mongst reeds and willows that o'erhung the flood;"

but owing to the shy and secluded habits of the animal, it was not often seen, nor is it in fact anywhere so common as on the western coast, where the attraction of water—a rare element in those barren regions—sometimes causes it to congregate in the open plain. This fact indeed once came under my own observation on the Chooi desert. Moving with considerable rapidity by lengthened stretches, close to the ground, its galloping action resembles that of the horse—its colour rendering it so imperceptible that 'twould seem to stand on the wilderness like a mirage, or to glide over it like a mist driven before the wind, until lost altogether to the sight. Of this antelope there is said to exist a variety which has been styled the Red Rheebok or Nagor,\*—and is usually met with on open rocky mountains, along the dry channels of upland streams. I killed one specimen in the Cashan range, whose hair, feathering and whirling in various directions, less resembled that of the Kangaroo, than does the fur of the adult Reitbok, whilst its horns were smaller, and not so much approximated in form to a button hook. In every other respect, however, it bore so close a resemblance to the figure here given, that I am disposed to doubt whether the imaginary species may not be made up of younger individuals, driven forth into the world by the old Reitboks, who brook the presence of no adult of their own sex.

For the traveller in Southern Africa, it is in some respects a fortunate circumstance that rivers of any magnitude are of such extremely rare occurrence; since he who may never have essayed their passage with a lumbering ox-waggon, and its long train of cattle, where neither beaten ford nor ferry exists, can form but an imperfect idea of the manifold difficulties connected with such an undertaking. In the European acceptation of the term, perhaps the only stream really entitled to be called a river, is the Gareep; and after a weary pilgrimage over tracts characterized by desolation and sterility, the first glimpse obtained of its beauties, fully justifies the eulogies of Dr. Burchell. The alluring fancies of a fairy fiction, or the fascinating imagery of a romance, being suddenly brought into actual existence, realized those ideas of elegant and classic scenery which occupy the minds of poets. A majestic volume of water, three hundred yards in breadth, flowing on in one unbroken expanse, resembled a smooth translucent lake; and as its gentle waves glided past on their way to join the restless ocean, bearing on their limpid bosom as in a polished mirror, the image of the wood-clothed borders, they seemed to kiss the shore ere bidding it farewell. Babylonian willows, clad in their yellow vest of vernal freshness, leaned over the bank, and dipping their dishevelled tresses into the tide, which glistened under the last rays of the setting sun, seemed fain to follow—whilst at intervals, the wrecks of stately trees, that had been torn from their roots by the violence of the torrent during some vast inundation, whereof the traces on the shore gave ample evidence, reared their dilapidated arms in token of the resistless fury of this smooth and tranquil flood at seasons when,

"The glorious stream

That late between its banks was seen to glide  
Hath wide sent forth its waters, and o'er plain  
And valley, like a giant from his bed  
Rises with outstretch'd arms superbly spread."

Our transit to the opposite side, although attended with no common labour, was highly diverting—the depth of the current obliging us over night to construct within each vehicle, an elevated platform whereon to place the baggage. Awaking early, I had watched the gradual approach of Aurora, from her first announcement by the long heraldic boom of the beetle; and as the eastern sky began to assume the ruddy tints of morning, bright Cynthia, by whom the whole night had been illumined, fading slowly away, 'hid her diminished horns.' A single bird then chirruped from his sylvan perch among the matted foliage of the delicate acacias; and upon the first appearance of faint traces of sunlight, a multitude of others commencing their matin song, charmed the ear with their soft enlivening notes. Our whole camp was immediately in motion, and there presently ensued a most surprising scene of activity and bustle. The double line of party-coloured oxen stoutly stemming the current towards the opposite belt of weeping willows—the frantic gestures of the excited drivers, who whilst they cracked their long whips about the ears of the gallant teams, heaped upon them the most unmeasured and unmerited abuse—together with the grotesque appearance of the half naked followers, now wading, now swimming with the lighter baggage, and by whoop and yell urging on the loose oxen and sheep—forming altogether a subject well worthy the pencil of a Cruikshank. The foreground was occupied by the moveable wigwams of a clan of roving Corannas—men of lazy and pastoral habits, several degrees more civilized than the genuine Bushman, but like that pigmy race, setting up their staff at every unoccupied pool, and finding in this noble river an unfailing refuge during seasons of drought and famine.

\* *Redunca Lalandii*.

It was many months afterwards, on our exit from the game preserves of the Amazooloo tyrant, that we crossed the Likwa, one of the principal arms of the Gareep, a little above the scene annexed. Forming the southern limit of the territory to which he lays claim, it rises in a lofty range nearly opposite to the Bay of Delagoa, and like a great artery, traversing the continent from east to west, discharges its waters, after a course of one thousand miles, into the Atlantic Ocean. Long shall I remember the joy with which the reappearance of this formidable obstacle to advance was hailed by our little band. Deserted by guides, escort, and interpreter, we were shaping our lone course through an unknown wilderness, the recent scene of bloody strife betwixt the king and emigrant boors, looking with hourly increasing anxiety for the friendly stream which should place us beyond the outposts of the contending parties in a position of comparative safety. Our compass was the tortuous Chonapas, a silver thread winding betwixt fringes of sighing bulrushes, and traversing verdant meadows upon which great droves of the Impofo were grazing like tame cattle. In constant expectation of an attack from the plumed and kilted warriors, we pressed on by forced marches, leaving numbers of our toil-worn oxen to perish by the way side—the envious sun setting upon us the second day while one waggon was fast locked in a quagmire, whence, with the assistance of spades and pickaxes, it was at length extricated by double purchase, at the expense of a *trek touw* wrought of

“the wild bull’s treble hide.”

To replace this essential piece of furniture, a tax was forthwith levied upon a herd of Elands that were espied in the neighbourhood, several having already suffered, although at too great a distance to admit of their spoils being brought in. A few minutes sufficed to reduce two dropsical subjects to submission; and having been made to carry their own skins to the waggons, the victims were there dispatched. Piet had in the mean time slain a sow from his coach box, and we then drew up in a strong position before an old stone enclosure, the rear of which was fortified by an isolated tumulus, when Andries the Bold confidently predicting some coming evil, Cœur de Lion voluntarily perched himself upon the summit of this eminence, and during the whole night maintained a weary vigil.

The third day was fast drawing to a close, after merciless applications of the whipcord and double thong had enabled us with some further loss to achieve twenty-five miles. The blue mountain range now on our left, in which the river was known to rise, had gradually assumed a deeper and deeper tint; and as we advanced over the broad bosom of the trackless plain like ships through the ocean, was fast developing its rugged character. At length, lifting up our eyes, we beheld before us afar off, a long dark streak of *karree* bushes stretching parallel to the horizon, and clearly marking the course of the waters of which we were in search. Shouts of exultation burst from the lips of the Hottentots, as they sprang nimbly from the waggon-boxes whence they had been earnestly gazing, and cracked their long whips with increased energy. The patient oxen broke into a trot—the object upon which all eyes were riveted became better and better defined—our friendly pilot stream increased rapidly in breadth, and as the sun disappeared once again below the horizon, we were standing on the osiered banks of the Likwa. At the spot where we had reached it, the breadth did not exceed one hundred and fifty yards, but the fresh deposition of slime, with the water wrack dangling from the tall trees, showed plainly enough that it had very recently risen at least ten feet above its present level. From the strength and muddiness of the turbid current, on which portions of drift-wood were occasionally whirled past, we were not without apprehensions that it might be again flooded during the night, and perhaps obstruct our passage for many days; but the absence of anything like a practicable ford compelled us to take our chance.

The dimness of evening had already stolen over the distant mountains, and the harsh voice of the roosting pintado arose from the shadowy fringe of Chaldean willows, that bent enamoured over the opposite shore. The river was absolutely teeming with Hippopotami,

“Which here and there, in many a scattered band,  
Stretched their huge limbs, and slept along the strand;”

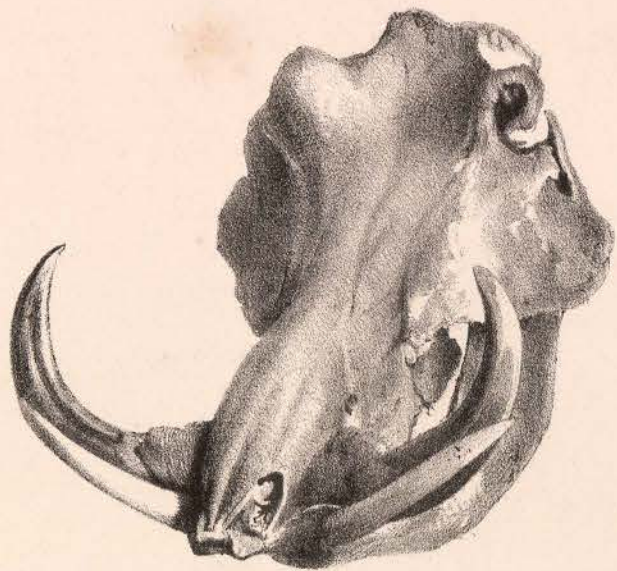
nor, until we had set the example in person, could our perverse followers be induced to suspend hostilities against them, in order to construct a thorn fence for the better security of the cattle. Numerous lions had been disturbed by our arrival, and together with their wild music we were serenaded during the drenching and dismal night that followed, by the bellowing of crocodiles, accompanied by a loud noise produced by the slamming together of several huge pair of jaws—broad sheets of lightning, followed by “darkness that could be felt,” and peals of deafening thunder, completing the gloomy terrors by which we were surrounded. No sooner had the morning broke, than Andries started on horseback in quest of a ford, the rest of the Hottentots sallying forth with unusual alacrity to seek the oxen, which had burst out of the pound; and all but one having by the most unlooked for good fortune been recovered, we moved down the river, the waters of which had risen upwards of a foot since the preceding evening. Crossing many perilous ravines, we became at length alarmed at the protracted non-appearance of our scout, and had just determined to send back in search of him, when he rejoined us, triumphantly bearing the teeth of a sea-cow, whilst extracting which for his own private advantage, he had unfortunately suffered us, his honoured employers, to overshoot by several miles what he was pleased to term an admirable ‘drift.’ Upon retracing our steps with some difficulty

“along the wild and willowed shore,”

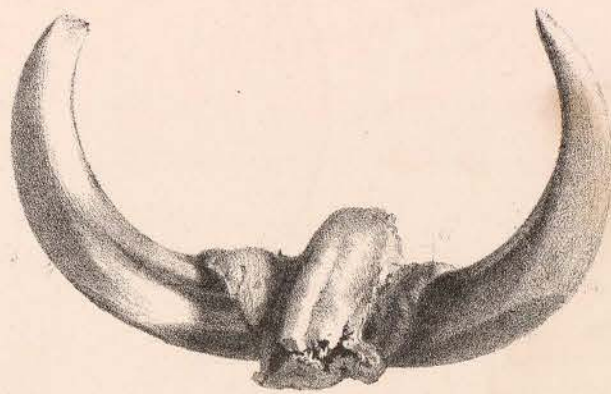
to this ford of promise, we had the gratification of finding the current more than waist deep, the banks acclivitous, and the bed

strewn with large blocks of granite; but having first taken the precaution of sending a horseman repeatedly across, to ascertain the soundings, it was finally resolved to attempt the passage.

After much violent bumping, the leading waggon by a miracle reached the opposite side without any material damage, not so its consort. Owing to some mismanagement on the part of the driver, the luckless "omnibus" deviating from the track when about half way over, became so firmly jammed between two masses of rock, that although every one stripped to the skin, and "applied his shoulder to the wheel," three hours were provokingly passed in abortive attempts to extricate it. Whips, shin-bones, and new *trek-touws*, were alike fruitlessly broken, and fresh oxen repeatedly yoked, without the smallest advantage; and the river rising rapidly every instant, we had almost despaired of saving our property, when cracks and yells followed by the simultaneous struggling of twenty-four of our sturdiest beasts, were responded by the grating of a wheel. An interval of intense anxiety succeeded. One after another the fore and hind nave on the same side rose slowly above the surface of the water, and the fall of the slanting vehicle appeared inevitable. To our joy, a sudden jerk restored it tottering to the perpendicular—pair after pair of the long string of oxen obtained their footing on the bank, once again the whips resounded cheerily in the hollow, and the dripping van emerged in safety from the flood. Another hour then passed away before the wayward flock of sheep could be reclaimed. These stubborn animals having in the first instance been only forced into the stream by dint of much pelting and persecution, had been carried down a considerable distance by the current, and whilst all hands were engaged in extricating the waggon, had strayed as a matter of course into the thick grove. At length however every thing was ready; and the Hottentots, little dreaming of the distance that still divided them from their beloved gin shop, huzzaed and fired a salute as they turned their backs upon the waters of the "yellow river," and upon the execrated dominions of his beer-drinking Majesty.



*Skull of Boar.*



*Tusks of Boar.*

*as preserved by Capt. Harris.*