

sages in the side of a hill, forming a sort of cavern. Into this we penetrated about thirty feet, but without observing any thing remarkable. The water, as it issued from the rock, felt at this time rather warm: in summer it is said to be cold as ice. In all probability it retains the same temperature at all times, from coming a long way underground; the apparent changes being owing, in reality, to the varying sensations of those who examine it at different seasons. It is at least well known that many springs have gained the reputation of changing their temperature from no other cause. I could hear nothing of the great serpent mentioned by Lichtenstein as residing in this cavern, and which, he says, was regarded by the natives with sentiments of veneration. I doubt not, however, the truth of the report he mentions, for some species of the boa certainly exist in the country. This spot was the farthest extent of Lichtenstein's travels to the north,—that gentleman and his party having come by a route across the Bokkeveld and the great Karroo, and returned in the same track.

We followed the course of the river towards

the town. On the banks of this stream I observed a species of antelope, that I had not previously seen. It is called by the Bechuanas *Paala*, and Mr. Burchell has described it under the name of the red buck. It is, I believe, the same animal termed *Riet-bok* by the colonists, from its inhabiting the spots along the rivers overgrown with reeds and sedge.

In the course of our journey to-day we fell in with some of the lowest class of the natives, commonly called "poor Bechuanas," who were employed in making poison for their arrows, by boiling a vegetable substance to a glutinous consistency. I could not, however, learn from them the name of the plant they used, nor whether they mixed the juice, as the Bushmen do, with mineral or animal poisons.

Our friends at Kuruman were surprised at our speedy return, not having expected us back in less than six or seven days. We found the anxiety and alarm of the natives increased by the arrival of messengers from Mahoomapelo, the chief of Nokuning, stating that the Mantatees had sent to him two Barolong women, whom they

had taken prisoners, directing them to say that they were coming to eat up the corn and cattle of all the Bechuanas, and that afterwards they would proceed against the Maccoas (white people) in the south. The inhabitants of Kuruman appeared to be preparing actively for war; making great quantities of poisoned arrows and other arms; and were keeping up the war-dance by moonlight, the whole night long, to a sort of monotonous music.

18.—This day, at noon, arrived farther messengers from Nokuning, stating that the inhabitants had abandoned that town, and that the invaders were now within a short distance of it. The report of the King of the Tamachas being a prisoner in their hands, and forced to act as a guide, was also confirmed.

Great anxiety prevailed in the town. Mateebè had gone with some of the Chiefs, to the neighbouring towns, to raise more forces. The Matchapees, it was evident, were but ill-prepared for resistance. We were not without apprehension, too, that the invaders, or some of their parties, might advance upon us suddenly before the Gri-

quas could come up; and Mr. Moffat began, though with reluctance, to think of preparing for flight.

In the evening, while we were sitting conversing on these matters, some one thundered at the door, and, on its being opened, in rushed Sampin, one of Mateebè's captains, the very picture of terror and dismay. As soon as he could speak, he called out "Mantatees! Mantatees!" to our no small alarm; for, from the extreme agitation of poor Sampin, we at first conceived that they were actually entering the town. However, we at length ascertained that this new alarm proceeded merely from certain intelligence having arrived of their entrance into Nokuning, accompanied by the usual extravagant exaggerations of their force and ferocity. Had Mr. Moffat and I continued our excursion, we should have reached that place this evening, and might have run no small hazard of falling unawares among them. As it was, however, matters now began to look rather serious. This fierce and formidable enemy was now within about eighty miles of us, which, at the rate the Bechuana and Caffer war-

rriors frequently travel in their expeditions, was not three days' march. And as there were no sufficient precautions taken by the Bechuanas to prevent a surprise, by sending out scouts to watch their motions, we might, not improbably, be suddenly overwhelmed by these savages while we sat deliberating.

Sampin had not been long with us, when about twenty other Bechuana Chiefs also rushed into the house, accompanied by the Queen, Mahoota, and her principal female attendants, all under the influence of great fear and perturbation. Mateebè himself was unfortunately absent. The queen, therefore, came to ask the advice of the missionaries in this alarming crisis, and, at their suggestion, sent off messengers immediately to hasten the king's return. On consulting with Mr. Hamilton, we also considered it proper to dispatch messengers towards Griqua Town to expedite the movements of the Griqua auxiliaries. In the meanwhile we endeavoured to encourage the Bechuanas to prepare manfully for their own defence, advising the chiefs to send to all their villages and outposts, to call out the inhabitants

en masse to meet the enemy, and not to allow the cattle to be pastured in the direction from which they were expected. The entire want of any thing like a confederacy among the contiguous tribes of Bechuanas, or of any thing like system or decision in the plans for self-defence in the several communities, strikingly manifests their unwarlike character, and their unfitness to withstand such formidable assailants as those who were now destroying, piecemeal, their separate hordes.

19.—This morning brought us no news to relieve the alarm and anxiety of the preceding day. Mateebè had not returned, and there was no intelligence of the Griquas. The last gleams of hope and courage seemed to forsake the panic-struck Matchapees. The cattle were now collected and kept near the town. The people had begun to bury their most valuable effects, their corn, &c. in large earthen jars. The missionaries were likewise preparing their waggons, to fly at a moment's notice. There was no word of the messengers we had sent out; all was suspense and anxiety. In the town the most vague and

contradictory rumours prevailed,—some persons coming in from the outposts contradicting the account of the Mantatees having entered Nokuning, alleging that they were still at a Barolong town a great distance off; others asserting that they were marching direct upon us. Mr. Moffat had previously assured me that no confidence could be placed in the rumours and stories of the Bechuanas, among whom veracity is a virtue little practised, and many of them are much given to romancing and the propagation of extravagant tales. As an example of their propensity for dealing in the marvellous, he instanced an absurd rumour, then current among them, that the white people in the south had been attacked by an army composed of myriads of pigmies, whose stature did not exceed six inches!

It now occurred to me, that, instead of longer enduring this state of suspense and anxiety, it would greatly relieve my own feelings, and at the same time, perhaps, materially add to the security of my friends, the missionaries, and of the distracted tribe among whom I was a visitor, if I proceeded myself, as I had formerly intended, to

reconnoitre the host of marauders, and bring back some certain information respecting them. This resolution was no sooner formed than acted upon. Having got my knapsack supplied with some provisions, I set out, attended only by my Bechuana guide, and was out of sight of the town in a few minutes. Taking the same route which I had formerly pursued with Mr. Moffat, we reached the station of the slave Arend, on the Maquareen River, about three hours' after sunset. Arend was still there with his party, but intended to fly next morning. On acquainting him, however, with my design, he, after a little deliberation, agreed to accompany me to Lattakoo, in order to ascertain whether or not the enemy were advancing.

This being arranged, I joined the motley groupe around the fire. I lighted a segar, and the others betook themselves to their pipes, intermingling conversation with the tranquillizing fumes which poured around us. From these wandering men, Arend and his comrade old Cupido Kackerlackie, I learned some interesting particulars respecting the Bechuana tribes, and the country towards

the north-east. Cupido, I found, had also accompanied Mr. Campbell on his last journey, and was the person who shot the remarkable rhinoceros, of whose head Mr. Campbell has given a drawing. The wanderers related many of their wild hunting adventures, especially in pursuit of the rhinoceros, which abounds in these regions, and is a very fierce and formidable animal.*

On again interrogating Arend as to the possibility of proceeding through the Bechuana tribes to Delagoa Bay, he stated, that but for the Mantatees he would willingly now have accompanied

* Two distinct species of the two-horned rhinoceros are found in South Africa. The figure in the vignette at page 195 was drawn from life by Mr. Melvill, and conveys an accurate representation of the species which abounds most in the Bechuana country. The horn of the female is, however, much longer and more slender than that of the male; I have one in my possession, three and a half feet long. Being a strong, ponderous, and elastic substance, it is much prized by the natives for handles to their battle-axes. The secondary horn is, in many instances, and especially in the female, so small as to be scarcely perceptible at a little distance. The general figure of the rhinoceros is that of an enormous hog. His prodigious size and strength, and his destructive horn, point out this animal, in my apprehension, very distinctly, as the real unicorn of Scripture—a conclusion in which I have been anticipated by Burchell and other scientific travellers, and which is now, I believe, generally concurred in.

me thither, being acquainted with most of the native chiefs on the route. Not long ago he had been, he said, within a very short distance of that place. Being in want of clothing for his wife and child, he set out with the intention of going to Delagoa Bay to purchase some, but when within about a day's journey of the Portuguese settlement, he procured the goods he wanted from the natives, and returned without going farther. He gave me a piece of chintz which he procured in this manner, and which is of Indian manufacture. On this excursion, which he computed to be about ten days' easy journey, he travelled through a fine country very thickly inhabited. I requested him to detail, in regular order, the various places he had visited on this excursion, which he accordingly did to the following effect.

Leaving Lattakoo, which belongs to the Matclhapee tribe, and of which Levenkels is now chief, under Mateebè, he proceeded to Nokuning about eighteen miles distant. The chief of this place, Mahoomapelo, has been already mentioned. From Nokuning to the chief town of the Barolongs, he took three days. The chief or king of this

tribe is called Mashow, which name Mr. Campbell has by mistake transferred to the town, calling the king, Kousie, which is not his name, but his title, *kousi* signifying king or principal chief in their language. From the Barolong to the Marootzee tribe he was about five days. From thence one day brought him to Kapan, chief of the Manemagans, a very large tribe. Another day brought him to King Lasak of the Maqueens. From the residence of this chief to Delagoa Bay was two days' easy journey. The mountains in the Maqueen country, as described by him, agree with those mentioned by Captain Owen, as visible from the vicinity of Delagoa Bay.

I endeavoured to ascertain from Arend, whether any thing was known among these tribes of the actual fate of Dr. Cowan's party. It had been stated, on the authority of the Matclhappee chiefs, that this unfortunate band of travellers had been destroyed by Makabba, King of the Wankeets, a chief still living. This account Arend (in the same manner as the Griquas, formerly mentioned,) affirmed to be altogether erroneous, and invented by the other tribes, by whom

Makabba is generally disliked and dreaded, to render that chief obnoxious to the colonists. From a similar spirit, a son of Makabba's, who recently visited Kuruman, had likewise represented his father as the murderer of Cowan, with the view of prejudicing the missionaries against him, and obtaining their influence to aid him in raising an expedition to attack his father, against whom he had rebelled, and whom he was then plotting to supplant. But, in contradiction of these allegations, Arend stated that he had himself visited Makabba, at Melita, his chief town, which is a very large and populous place; that he had been treated in the most hospitable and generous manner, and had received from him considerable presents of ivory and cattle; and that the notorious outlaw Conrad Buys was living in ease and safety in Makabba's dominions, and had received from him, on his arrival, a present of fifty head of cattle. In regard to Cowan's party, he added that it is currently reported among the Wankeets that the strangers had received every civility in passing through their country, but had been murdered by some

people considerably beyond them, whose name he could not ascertain. This information perfectly coincides with what Captain Owen learned upon this subject from the natives on the east coast.

Arend added, that among these tribes, the chief danger to travellers arises from the suspicion of their being spies, of which there is great jealousy. On this account he considers it expedient for travellers to remain about ten days at the principal town of each tribe, in order to acquire the confidence of the chiefs and obtain their free permission to pass through their territories.

During this conversation all our companions had fallen fast asleep round the fire ; and Arend and I, at length wearied out, also wrapped our mantles around us and stretched ourselves beside them.

CHAPTER XI.

Journey to Lattakoo.—Strange Appearance of that Town recently deserted.—Rencounter with the Host of Mantatees.—Return to Kuruman.—Preparations for flight.

JUNE 20.—At break of day awoke under a heavy load of dew ; the morning very chill. Shook the dew from our clothes, and Arend and I, mounting two of my best horses, immediately set off, leaving my Bechuana guide with Arend's party to await our return. We soon entered on a plain, perfectly level, covered with fine grass, and bounded on all sides only by the horizon. As we proceeded, I observed a curious optical deception, similar to the *mirage* so often noticed by travellers in Africa : it seemed to the eye as if we were in a basin, and that the country continually rose before and around us at every step,

while we appeared still at the lowest focus, although in fact the ground was perfectly level, without the slightest wave or rise in any direction. The roads made by the natives are exactly like sheep-paths, and indeed with difficulty to be distinguished from those made by the quaghas and antelopes; for the Bechuanas, like the Caffers, when travelling, always follow each other in a line.

Having saddled and refreshed our horses at a fountain several hours on our road, we pushed on, and, after descending a gentle eminence, reached the spot where the old town of Lattakoo stood, when first visited by Messrs. Somerville and Truter, and afterwards by Mr. Campbell, and then containing a population of about 15,000 souls. On the death of Mallahawan, father of Mateebè, the town was removed, according to the custom of the country, to another site, where the present town of Lattakoo stands, about five miles to the north-east. From this place, Mateebè again removed to the Kuruman, with one division of the nation, some years ago, leaving

another division under a subordinate chief to occupy the deserted capital.

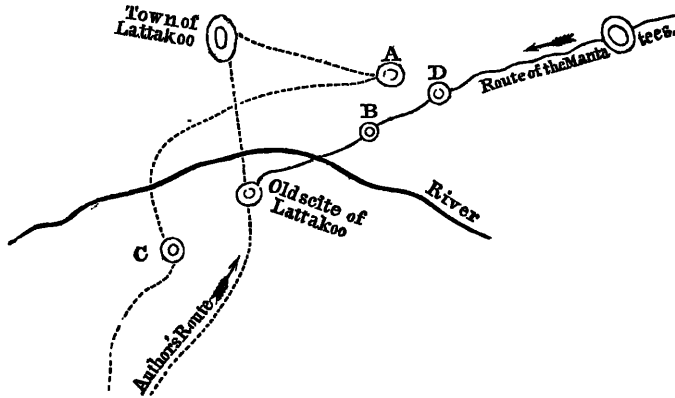
Having crossed the bed of the Lattakoo river, which at present was only a chain of pools, a gentle eminence covered with fine grass, and adorned with beautiful camel-thorn trees, opened to our view the expected town at a little distance. As we approached, I was delighted to see the extensive fields of millet spreading on every side, which indicated that the inhabitants of the old capital were considerably more industrious, or more successful agriculturists, than those who had emigrated with the king. The unusually still and solitary appearance, however, of those fields, and the town itself, which we were now approaching, rather struck me; and I said to my companion, "Let us ride gently, and keep a sharp look out; perhaps the place is already in possession of the enemy." We proceeded accordingly with some caution, and, on entering the town, found it as I had begun to surmise, entirely deserted by the inhabitants. We rode into the heart of it without seeing a human being; and a place which, a

few hours ago, had contained a population of six or eight thousand souls, was now as solitary and silent as the most secluded wilderness. On looking into some of the huts, we perceived that the inhabitants must have fled in great haste, for the implements of cookery were standing with the food in them, half dressed. It was, therefore, pretty evident that the approach of the enemy had taken them somewhat by surprise; and we naturally inferred that the invaders could not be far distant. I said, however, to Arend, that perhaps some old or infirm people might still remain out of such a large population, and that we would try whether the report of a musket would bring them from their lurking places. Taking aim at a large white vulture,* which sat perched like the genius of desolation upon a tall camel-thorn that shaded the residence of some chieftain, I brought him fluttering to the ground. But the report died away in solitary echoes; not a living thing greeted our presence.

* *Vultur percnopterus*, the sacred vulture of the ancient Egyptians.

“And now,” said Arend, “let us retreat. The town has been hurriedly abandoned by the inhabitants; the savages must be at hand; your horses are weak with long travelling, and fatigued with this day’s journey; if we venture farther they will give up, and we shall fall helpless into the hands of those murderous cannibals.” That there was sense and prudence in this advice I could not deny, but to follow it would have but ill served the purpose I came upon: so I told Arend we must proceed until we gained some more certain intelligence of the invaders to carry back to our friends. Desiring him, therefore, to guide me on towards Nokuning, we left old Lattakoo, standing “a desolate city of the desert,” and pushed on, though with circumspection, towards the north-east.

Our way for a few miles lay among clumps of fine camel-thorn trees, without any path,—the road from Nokuning leading direct to the former site of Lattakoo upon the west side of the river, as will be perceived by the subjoined sketch. When we had got the length of A, still undeter-



mined whether or not to proceed farther on our weary steeds, we stopped for a few moments being very thirsty, to deliberate about venturing down to the river to refresh ourselves, and consider what farther course we should adopt; and we had just come to the resolution of descending to the valley, when Arend suddenly called to me with great agitation—"The Mantatees! the Mantatees!—we are surrounded!" On looking towards the spot B, to which he pointed, I beheld them sure enough marching in an immense black mass in the valley below us, and pushing on towards the river. Arend, with considerable presence of mind, immediately said—"Don't move,

else they will perceive us." Accordingly we remained for some time motionless as the trees around us, and observed, through the avenues of the umbrella-shaped camel-thorns, the motions of the barbarians. We soon saw that they had not perceived us by their continuing their course towards the river, trampling into blackness the grassy meadows over which they passed. Though somewhat relieved from our first alarm by observing their route, we could not help throwing suspicious glances, every now and then, around us, apprehensive lest some other division should intercept our retreat in the opposite direction; and every old stump of wood, seen indistinctly through the copses, seemed to our eyes like straggling Mantatees. At the same time, I was exceedingly gratified at having found such an opportunity of observing them from so favourable a position. Yet I was still anxious to get a nearer view, and therefore suggested to Arend that we should try our horses' mettle, and endeavour to gain a front position on the rising ground above the former site of Lattakoo; whence

we might reconnoitre them more advantageously, and perhaps gain some information from them, without being liable to be surrounded.

This manœuvre was easily executed. Retreating from A, (the farthest limit of my travels in this direction,) we left the town of Lattakoo on our right, and crossing the river, at the same time that the van of the enemy was rushing into the pools a few hundred yards higher up, we spurred on our horses, which made greater exertions than I expected, and gained the position C, which overlooks the former site of the town, as already mentioned. About five or six houses still remained on that site, and we had not gained our position five minutes when we saw the savages rushing into those huts like hungry wolves. At the same moment they discovered us, and presently a large body advanced up the hill towards us. I now hesitated a moment whether to wait their approach and endeavour to enter into a conference, or consult our safety by flight. My companion strongly urged the extreme hazard of allowing them to approach us, alleging that they would instantly surround and probably kill us with their

missiles, without admitting of a parley ; or should our lives be spared, our horses at least would not fail to be instantly devoured by the hungry cannibals, and ourselves probably forced to become their guides to Kuruman, instead of being enabled to warn our friends of their approach. These reflections were just, and my own judgment concurred in them ; so, without longer deliberation, for which indeed the rapid advance of the savages allowed us no leisure, we put spurs to our horses, and galloped to another eminence at a little distance.

Here we again turned to survey the enemy, and lingered a short space to see whether they were pursuing us ; but perceiving nothing of them, we again pushed forward upon the extensive plain over which we had come in the morning. We had scarcely left the last eminence a few minutes and advanced about 500 yards upon the plain, when, looking back, we saw the height we had just left, occupied by a crowd of the enemy. The cunning rascals had come unperceived up a ravine, and if we had not started off at the instant we did, we should have been sur-

rounded before we could have noticed their advance. They did not attempt to pursue us farther, but stood earnestly gazing after us, as far as we could discern them from the plain.

After riding about ten miles farther we reached a fountain, where we stopped to quench our burning thirst, and refresh ourselves and the horses; the poor animals and ourselves being alike exhausted by the long exertion and excessive heat of the weather.

On reviewing our morning's expedition, I could not but reflect on my adventure with the highest satisfaction and gratitude: satisfaction, at having been enabled to obtain such a near view of this savage host, and to carry certain information to Kuruman; and gratitude to Providence for my fortunate escape; for had I been an hour later on my journey, I should have rode right into the town, mistaking them for the Bechuana inhabitants; or had I been but a few minutes sooner at the point A, I should have come in contact with them exactly at point D, while their march was concealed by the windings of the valley. My view of them was, however, too distant and hur-

ried to enable me to gain at that time any accurate information respecting their arms or accoutrements. Of their numbers it would be idle for me to attempt forming any estimate. They appeared to be a very numerous body, and covered a very extensive tract of ground: but if even general officers, accustomed to estimate with a glance the numbers of disciplined troops, are often egregiously mistaken in guessing the amount of disorderly multitudes, how much more is an unpractised eye, like mine, likely to be mistaken in such an attempt. I, therefore, refrain from mentioning any number, since I could not thereby convey any real information.

The sun was now fast approaching the horizon, beyond the boundless plain of Lattakoo, when we again mounted our weary steeds. Though now unable to raise a canter we urged them into a jolting pace, which brought us, about eight o'clock, to Arend's station; the hardy animals having carried us to-day not much less than eighty miles; without any other forage than they could hastily pick up while we rested at the fountains.

I immediately ordered my other two horses to be saddled, being anxious to reach Kuruman before I slept. Leaving, therefore, the horses we had rode to be brought up the next day, I pushed on with my Bechuana guide; and after a few hours' gallop, lighted by a bright and cloudless moon, arrived at Kuruman a little before midnight, having travelled this day about 100 miles. Mr. Moffat was surprised by my returning so speedily; for the report of the Mantatees having entered a town of the Barolongs, at a great distance, had been so strongly confirmed, that not only the Bechuanas but the Missionaries had been deceived: they were all lulled into security, and had not expected me back for several days. Whether those false reports had been occasioned by any division of the invaders having turned off in another direction, I could not ascertain; but the infatuation of the Bechuanas, in not sending out scouts to bring them certain intelligence of the movements of so formidable an enemy, seemed unaccountable.

The tidings of my return speedily flew through the town, and Mr. Moffat's house was instantly

beset, even at this late hour, by a concourse of the natives. The principal chiefs gathered round, and begged to put one particular question to me through Mr. Moffat, namely, "Whether I, with my own two eyes, actually saw the Mantatees?" placing at the same time a finger opposite to each of my eyes. Mr. Moffat told them that they might depend implicitly upon the correctness of my information; that it had been acquired by ocular observation; and that my report was not the report of a *Bechuana*, but the true statement of a *Maccoa*. The chiefs smiled at this remark, well aware of the failing of their countrymen.

As soon as we got rid of the natives, the Missionaries immediately commenced burying their most valuable property in their gardens. Flight now appeared inevitable, since the Griqua auxiliaries had not come up, whose delay we could not account for.

21.—Notwithstanding my fatiguing ride yesterday, I only lay down to rest for two hours. The Missionaries did not sleep at all, being engaged during the whole night in making pre-

parations for immediate flight. At break of day I strolled into the town, and found it all astir, like an ant's-nest disturbed by the mattock ; and the frightened Matchapees moving to and fro, with none to direct them, for the king was not yet returned. At length the chief, old Teysho, took upon himself to order a general evacuation of the town. At eight o'clock this was rapidly going forward. Hundreds of pack-oxen were continually moving off to the westward, loaded with the most valuable effects of the inhabitants, consisting of utensils of various kinds, wooden and earthen vessels, red paint-stone, powder of the *blink-clip*, corn, carosses, &c. &c. Meanwhile the lowing of the cattle, the wailing of women and children, the feeble and tottering gait of the old and infirm, hurriedly moved from their mats of repose to seek safety in flight, and the sullen despondency of the warriors, formed altogether a scene of distress extremely touching and pitiable.

On my return to Mr. Moffat's house, I found there also every thing prepared for immediate flight. The Missionaries, finding that the Bechuanas had sent out no scouts, had resolved

to leave the town before mid-day, with their waggons and families, unless our friends, the Griquas, appeared for their protection.

About nine o'clock, while we were waiting in a state of apprehension and anxiety, the report of a musket was suddenly heard from the entrance of the town, and this instantly followed by a second. A shout of exultation from the Bechuanas announced two Griqua horsemen. These were *avant-couriers*, sent on before to announce the advance of their countrymen, whom they had left about forty miles behind, tarrying to refresh their horses; and who, they said, would not arrive till the following day, unless there was urgent occasion; in which case, one of the messengers was to return and give them notice. This matter admitted of little debate. One of the horsemen was instantly dispatched to expedite the movements of his party, with urgent entreaties that they would make a forced march and join the Bechuanas before they had wholly fled and deserted the town.

We then endeavoured to persuade the pusillanimous inhabitants to remain quiet and await

the arrival of the Griquas. To this proposition the warriors in general agreed; but the principal part of the women, children, and aged, had already departed with their most precious goods and household stuff. Having then prevailed upon them to send out scouts as far as the Maquareen River to observe the motions of the enemy, and bring instant intelligence should they advance, we felt in some degree relieved from the uneasy and awkward predicament in which the morning had found us.

At noon the king returned. He seemed much disturbed by the posture of affairs, and immediately put to me the same question as the chiefs had formerly put: i. e. whether I had actually seen the Mantatees "with my own eyes?" The natives seeing us resolved to await the arrival of the Griquas, took confidence and remained also.

Nevertheless, as the day advanced, we did not ourselves feel quite so much at ease as we found it politic to profess. There was no intelligence from our scouts; but we were aware, that if the savages pursued their march the day after I saw them, they might reach Kuruman this

evening. We flattered ourselves that such an event was rather improbable, and that the plunder of Lattakoo would detain them at least a day. When the night came on, however, and darkness increased our apprehensions of being surrounded, with no appearance of the Griquas, and with the entire conviction of the incapacity of the Bechuanas to make any stand against the invaders, our feelings, as may be easily imagined, were far from being of a pleasant nature. The warriors in the town were indeed all awake and watchful; but we knew that if the enemy came on before the Griquas, they were ready to fly, without the slightest resistance, to join the women in the mountains. Thus we waited and watched till nine o'clock in the morning, often laying our listening ears to the ground, and endeavouring to catch the distant sound of trampling horses; but all was hushed in deathlike silence, and our imaginations were left to conjure up the picture of the immense cannibal host stealing upon us through the gloom, like hungry hyænas. At length, wearied out with fatigue and watching, the Missionaries and I retired to snatch a little

rest, with our loaded guns at our sides, and all prepared for the earliest notice of danger.

After a broken slumber of about two hours, I was awakened by the loud barking of the dogs, and went out to ascertain the cause. All else was still; but finding some Bechuanas seated round a fire, with my guide among them, I called him, and took him with me to the king; whom I made bold to call up, and urged upon him the necessity of sending out more scouts to watch the approach of the enemy.

CHAPTER XII.

Arrival of the Griquas.—Another Peetsho.—Friendship and Festivity.—Return towards the Colony.—Barolong Refugee.—Passage of the Gariep.—Koranna Kraal.

JUNE 22.—In this state of feverish anxiety we remained till dawn of day ; when the Missionaries, despairing of the Griquas, ordered the oxen to be put to their waggons, in order to retreat with their families without farther delay. The Bechuanas, on seeing this, abandoned all hope of succour, and, having no confidence in themselves, prepared also for instant flight.

At this moment a cloud of dust was observed to the southward. It rapidly approached, and, to our unspeakable joy, a troop of horsemen,—our long looked-for allies, the Griquas,—emerged

from it, and entered the town at full gallop. Though neither disciplined nor accoutred like regular troops, and dressed in a garb both motley and ragged, yet, with their glittering muskets and bold bearing, they had a very martial appearance; and were hailed with demonstrations of pleasure and admiration, such as the finest troops in the world have rarely met with. The air was rent with shouts of acclamation: never before had such horses, such muskets, such military array, been seen in the land of the Matlhapees. They came as defenders in the hour of need, and they were hailed by the paralysed natives as champions and heroes. All crowded round them; and with kindred sympathy I also shook their swarthy chiefs heartily by the hand, and felt relieved, by their arrival, from almost intolerable anxiety. By means of my horses, I might, indeed, have made my own escape from the savages without much difficulty; but I could not think of thus abandoning the Missionaries, or even the poor Matlhapees, in such critical circumstances.

The Griquas were under the command of the chiefs Adam and Cornelius Kok, Berend, and

Waterboer. Though not exceeding eighty in number, yet they appeared a very formidable force, contrasted with the ill-armed and unwarlike Bechuanas.

The cause of their tardy movements was the fear of exhausting their horses before they came in contact with the enemy ; as it was probable, from the immense disproportion of numbers, that they must maintain a flying fight, to prevent their little troop from being surrounded. On meeting with our last messenger, they had, however, pressed on with all speed till they reached, about midnight, a spot within two miles of Kuruman. Here they held a consultation ; and from the report of the messengers, fearing that the enemy were already in possession of the town, and that we had fled, they considered it expedient to postpone their advance until daylight, when they could clearly distinguish friends from foes, and avoid falling into any ambush. They had now advanced with the design of attacking the Manta-tees, if they had been in possession of the place, but were not a little gratified to find that they were in good time to defend rather than avenge us.

King Mateebè expressed his gratitude to the Griqua chiefs in a short speech, not devoid of grace and eloquence, and immediately ordered six oxen to be slain for their refreshment. A scene of savage feasting instantly commenced; and even before the blood was out of the slaughtered animals, their legs were cut off, and the marrow sucked out of the bones by the hungry Griquas, without any preparation.

The news of their arrival was soon carried to the fugitives who had left the town on the preceding day, and before noon numbers of them were seen flocking home from the westward. All was now animation and activity. The two Missionaries were busied repairing muskets, several of those of our allies being out of order; many of the Griquas were employed in casting bullets; and the Matchapee warriors, with renovated confidence, were burnishing their assagais and whetting their battle-axes.

After mid-day, the king convened another Peetsho, at which the Griquas were requested to attend. The war-dance and song were again displayed by the Bechuanas, assembling in wild

array as on the former occasion. The Griquas also marched to the place of assembly in regular order, under their different leaders, with their arms shouldered, to the great admiration of the multitude. Adam Kok borrowed my double-barrelled gun to cut a dash with. A place of distinction was allotted for the allies, who seated themselves on the ground, like the native warriors, holding their arms erect.

The king opened the meeting by a speech in praise of the Maccoas and the Griquas. He mentioned with high encomiums the exertions made by the Missionaries and myself for the public benefit, and hailed with many grateful compliments the arrival in the hour of need of the Griqua allies. Several of the other chiefs followed in the same strain; but when old Teysho stood up, he turned to his countrymen with a bitter and upbraiding look, taunted many of the warriors with their weak-hearted conduct the preceding day, and told them that they had disgraced themselves and the name of their nation in the sight of the bold Maccoas; and that, unless they now redeemed their character by standing

firm in the day of battle, they would be considered by other nations as women and children.

During Teysho's speech, a woman of heroic mien rushed from the midst of her companions, contrary to the custom of her country, and addressed the Griquas with much energy :—

“Ye Griquas! should any of my countrymen turn their backs in the day of battle, shoot them, destroy them without mercy; such cowards deserve not to live.” These words she repeated with violent and indignant gestures.

Adam Kok, the Griqua chief, next addressed the meeting, in the Bechuana language, which he spoke with fluency. He declared that it gave him and his companions the highest satisfaction to know it was in their power to aid, with their muskets, their worthy friends, the Matlhapees, at the same time that they were guarding their own wives and children from the advance of the savage enemy.

After some farther speeches, chiefly of compliment and ceremony, Mateebè concluded the Peetsho with an appropriate speech. The assembly was then dissolved in the same mode as the

preceding one, and a general feasting commenced throughout the town, at which all classes, both of Bechuanas and Griquas, gave themselves up to indulgence, without regard to the imminent danger which still threatened them. The Missionaries opened their chapel, and invited the people to unite with them in imploring the divine protection, but only a few of the more sober Griquas attended. Soon after, some of the scouts, who had been sent out, returned with intelligence that the Mantatees were still at Lattakoo, regaling themselves on the provisions which the inhabitants had left in their hurried flight. This intelligence was also corroborated by some fugitive Bushmen who had met with the Mantatees. They had been hunting, and had just slain a quagha, when they were set upon by a party of the marauders, and deprived of their prey. One of them had received a severe wound in the thigh, from some large cutting weapon, different from any of the arms of the Bechuana tribes.

Relieved from any immediate apprehension by this intelligence, the warriors of both nations devoted themselves, without control, to feasting and

merriment. More cattle were slain, and the roasting and riot went on around the fires without intermission, as if they expected to eat no more for a month to come. The greatest good-humour, however, prevailed. There was no strong drink—no quarrelling. Many of the Bechuanas selected *maats* or comrades, after their manner, from among their allies, presenting, in a formal manner, an ox to the individual pitched upon. The Griqua thus selected becomes the favoured guest and friend of the donor; the obligation is considered reciprocal, and when he who is now the host visits his *maat* in his own country, he expects a similar present, and equal hospitality to what he has bestowed.

This evening, wearied out with three days and nights of fatigue and watching, I retired early to bed, and to deep and undisturbed repose, leaving the natives to their boisterous mirth and barbarous indulgence. .

23.—This morning, finding that the Griqua chiefs did not intend moving forward against the invaders for two or three days at soonest, because they were desirous both to refresh their horses

and to await the arrival of a reinforcement of their countrymen; and conceiving that their slow movements would not bring them into contact with the Mantatees for probably a week to come, I determined to forego the temptation of accompanying the expedition, and to return without farther delay to Cape Town, where I had business of importance awaiting me. I therefore ordered my guide to prepare our horses, and having taken a kind farewell of the Missionaries, and bid adieu to Mateebè and the Griqua chiefs, I once more turned my face southward, leaving now my Kuruman friends under far more favourable circumstances than I could have done a day or two before. I also considered it my duty (however sanguine my own hopes of the favourable result of the approaching conflict with the savages) to give speedy information of the actual state of affair to the provincial functionaries near the northern borders of the Colony, and to the Governor himself at Cape Town; for should the Griquas be defeated, there could scarcely be a doubt that this horde of devastators would burst into the Colony, and might possibly create infinite

alarm, and do much mischief before they were driven back, unless some precautionary measures were adopted. What rendered the result of the conflict more doubtful, was the very scanty supply of ammunition in the possession of the Griquas, amounting altogether to only about fifty pounds of gunpowder. This important deficiency was, indeed, a much more alarming circumstance than either the reputed valour or the immense numbers of the invaders.

About eight or ten miles from Kuruman, I met Mr. Melvill with another party of Griqua horsemen proceeding to join their comrades. Mr. Melvill gave me charge of his dispatches to Cape Town, and begged me to represent the critical situation of affairs to the Colonial Government.

About thirty miles farther on I found another party of the Griqua auxiliaries resting at a fountain, consisting of twenty horsemen, and about fifty men with waggons and pack-oxen, all proceeding on this warlike expedition,—the greatest, certainly, they ever were engaged in since they became a community. Having urged this band to hasten on without delay to the support of

their comrades, I proceeded on my way, having still about twenty miles to ride before I reached the little Griqua kraal where Mr. Moffat and I had slept on our way northward. The hardy little horse I rode, being the same on which I had reconnoitred the Mantatees, began to lag about sunset, and I had some apprehension of having another *bivouac* in the wilderness; but the bright silver moon, which so often cheers the wanderer in South Africa, arose to guide me, and my mettlesome steed, knowing he was near home (for he belonged to one of the Griquas whose kraal I was approaching), put forth his utmost strength, and brought me safely to his master's hut about nine o'clock.

The two Griquas, masters of the kraal, had gone on the expedition, but their wives afforded me every accommodation their rude and scanty means could supply; and having brought with me a little tea, presented to me by the Missionaries, I soon made myself comfortable. In the service of these Griquas were a number of Koranna Hottentots and "tamed Bushmen," who all sat round the same fire with me, and were all, like

myself, engaged, in smoking. My slight apparatus, which consisted merely of a little bruised tobacco wrapped in a slip of paper, after the Portuguese fashion, seemed to excite the surprise and contempt of these knowing smokers. Their own method was more social and luxurious than mine. Taking the hollow shankbone of a sheep, from which they had previously sucked the marrow, they stuffed it full of tobacco, and lighting one end at the fire, immediately applied the other to the mouth—inhaling the smoke with all their might until it escaped by both mouth and nostrils. The pipe was then handed to another, and in this manner continued to circulate round the happy group. ¶

24.—This day I reached Griqua Town, after a very fatiguing ride, in which my other two borrowed horses were quite knocked up. I was obliged to leave my attendant upon the road, but having sent men and horses from the town to meet him, he was brought in the same evening.

I found here a man of the Barolong tribe, who had been that day found in the neighbourhood nearly exhausted with hunger and thirst. Through

the medium of some Bechuanás residing at Griqua Town, I learned from him that he had been driven from his country (which lies about 100 miles north-east from Lattakoo) by the invaders, whom he called *Batcloqueenè*. These savages, he said, had committed terrible devastation throughout that country, and the fear of them had fallen upon the whole of the Bechuana tribes, so that none were found to stand up against them. Their perfidy, according to his account, was equal to their ferocity. On approaching the town he resided in, they sent messengers before them with a present of three oxen to the chief, soliciting the friendship of the tribe. The weak Barolongs, thus deceived by the show of friendship, or fearing to oppose them, admitted them into their town; but they had no sooner got among them, than they began an indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants and plunder of the place. In this manner, he said, many tribes had been treacherously overpowered and destroyed by them.

They were directed, he said, by two chiefs: the name of the one was Malahange; that of the other he did not recollect. Their dress he de-

scribed as different from that of the Bechuanas, but said that part of them spoke the Bechuana language, another part a foreign dialect; part he also described as having beards, long hair, and strange weapons.

This account seemed to corroborate the surmise which had already suggested itself to me, that these marauders were a mixture of different nations, and had with them some bastard Portuguese, or the descendants of Europeans formerly wrecked on the eastern coast of Africa.

The poor Barolong appeared to have suffered much hardship during his flight from his own country; and several of his companions, it seems, who had fled with him, had died of thirst, only about two miles from Griqua Town, before he was fallen in with and saved from perishing.

25.—Finding the four horses, which I had left here to recruit, in pretty good plight, I started at an early hour, with my knapsack replenished by Mrs. Melvill's kindness, and my faithful man Frederick behind me. After a ride of five hours, we reached the banks of the Gariep, at Read's-Drift. The country through which we passed, and the

environs of the river, were too similar to the scenes I have already noticed to require farther description; only the river was here broader than at any of the fords I had formerly crossed, the collected waters of the two great branches being here united. The task of crossing it on horseback seemed so formidable that my courage almost recoiled from the attempt; but, as there was no alternative, in we plunged, and we found the water indeed quite as deep as might be crossed with safety. Our horses, however, were fresh and tractable, and by keeping their heads to the stream, we got through, though not without some difficulty and apprehension,—having our steeds for a considerable way swimming under us, with the water over the saddle flaps. The breadth I calculated to be about 500 yards: when Burchell crossed at the same drift, it was 450. The banks on either side were covered with the wrecks of last year's inundation, showing what a mighty torrent of water it must pour down at certain periods.

Soon after crossing the river, we fell in with a Griqua hut, where I procured some milk; and

having let the horses roll a little while, I again saddled up to proceed. The Griqua then came forward and inquired where we intended to sleep that night. I replied, "In the wilds." At this he shook his head, and said that the lions would devour us before morning,—these animals being very numerous and ferocious in this neighbourhood. I inquired if there was any human dwelling on our route which might be reached before dark. He said there was a Koranna kraal, but somewhat distant and difficult to find without a guide acquainted with its situation. With little persuasion, he agreed to accompany me so far, and in a few minutes saddled up a pony and cantered on along with us.

Our nearest route would have been from Read's-Drift, right across the country to Burder's Plains or Lake ; but, owing to the want of water at this time, we were obliged to skirt the banks of the Gariep, and afterwards the Cradock, as far as the ford, where I had first crossed the latter. The country through which we passed was much encumbered with the accursed *Haak-doorn* or *Wagt een beetje*, (*Acacia detinens*,) from which I

had formerly suffered so severely; and was strewed with crystals and small agates, of which, however, very few are of any value.

About three hours after sunset we reached the Koranna kraal, to the astonishment of the inhabitants, who flocked around me with suspicious curiosity. After a brief explanation from my Griqua guide, however, they gave us a hospitable welcome; and their own huts being all fully occupied, they instantly set about erecting a temporary shelter for my accommodation. This was soon accomplished. Having driven four or five stakes into the ground, in a semi-circular position, they took a rush mat about eight feet long and three broad, and binding it to the stakes with one edge close to the ground, a screen was thus formed sufficient to protect me from the night-wind, which blew sharp and cold. In front of this crescent they made a fire, and an old matron brought me some milk in a wooden bowl; and thus my comforts were complete,—with a good fire, and shelter from the wind, and from the wild beasts of the desert. I spread under me a warm Bechuana mantle of jackal-skins, with which Mrs. Melvill

had kindly provided me; and, taking out my papers, began to note down my daily memoranda. This excited, more than any thing else about me, the curiosity of the simple Korannas. Old and young flocked near to gaze upon me; and when I looked up, more than thirty faces were peering around, indicating every gradation of savage wonder, such as a Wilkie would rejoice to delineate. This speedily devolved into good-humoured merriment, when they saw me commence smoking my paper segar. I made a few and presented to them, which they instantly began to smoke in imitation of me, passing them from one to another with much laughter.

The novelty of my visit seemed to have awakened general hilarity, and I carried on a conversation as well as I could through two interpreters; my Griqua guide translating it into his own dialect to Frederick, who again conveyed it to me in Dutch. At length all began to get drowsy. My visitors stole off one by one to their cabins; and I, wrapping myself in my fur mantle, resigned myself to sleep. During the night my rest was much disturbed, partly by the cattle which came snuffing

round me, as if sensible I was a stranger, and partly by a violent squall of wind, accompanied by a slight rain, which about midnight had nearly carried off my frail shelter. Nevertheless, I felt on the whole somewhat more comfortable than when exposed to the lions in the lonely deserts.