bold mountain gorge of Sesetabie, encamped on the margin of a periodical river whose precipitous banks and broad channel of deep soft sand caused me considerable apprehensions of difficulties for the morrow.

On the 16th I unlash'd my spades and pickaxe, and worked hard for several hours cutting down the bank of the river and constructing a road for the waggons to pass; after which we inspanned and took the stream. I drove my waggon safely through; but, alas! not so with the baggage-waggon; twice it stuck fast in the treacherous sand while crossing the river's bed, but the sturdy oxen pulled it out, and had dragged it more than half-way up the almost perpendicular bank, when the native who led the long team, unmindful that a waggon was behind them, suddenly turned the leading oxen short towards the river's bank, thus rendering it impossible for the driver to steer his after oxen. The waggon was thus dragged off the fine road which I had made for it, and after quivering for a moment as if loth to meet its fate, it fell heavily over and rolled down the bank with a most terrific crash, smashing the fine capped tent, and sending the ivory and all my highly-valued trophies flying into the bed of the river in a mass of the most dire confusion.

This was enough to vex any man, but I had now become so seasoned to adversity that I only laughed at the capsize; and having unyoked the oxen, we commenced carrying the heavy ivory and other articles up the bank to the level ground beyond; after which we righted the waggon, and a team of oxen dragged it up the bank. I then set to work to repair the tent with green boughs, and before sunset we had again replaced the greater part of the cargo. As the sun went down the Cow died from the distemper.

On the 17th, having finished stowing the waggon, we held on till the evening, when the axletree which I had made burst, and the linchpin giving way the wheel rolled off, leaving me once more a wreck. At an early hour all hands were busy in again unloading the broken waggon, and before night I had finished another axletree and fixed it in its place. The day throughout was dark and gloomy—heavy clouds hung low on the mountain of the eagles, reminding me of the mist I was
wont to see in the distant country of the Gael, and our ears were repeatedly saluted with the subdued voices of a troop of lions which were moaning in concert around its base. In the evening my handsome little bay horse Hutton died, and scarcely had night set in when his doleful coronach was wildly re-echoed by the shrill voices of a score of jackals, which brought the lions to their assistance, and presently we heard them feasting on his remains.

On the morning of the 19th we resumed our march, and at a late hour on the evening of the 20th reached the missionary station at Bakatla, where I was kindly received by Mrs. Livingstone, who had, as well as the Doctor, been anxious concerning me, and entertained great apprehensions for my safety. Her husband was at the time absent on a visit to Sichely, superintending the erection of a dwelling-house and place of public worship at that chief’s kraal, named Chouaney, whither he intended shortly to remove, there being another missionary, Mr. Edwards, already stationed at Bakatla, who was then absent on a visit to the colony. Dr. Livingstone informed me on his return that there was war between the Baquainas, of whom Sichely is chief, and the Bakatlas, and that the latter were in daily expectation of an attack.

On comparing notes with my kind host, I found that I had lost a day during my sojourn in the far interior. The 23rd was Sunday, when I attended Divine service, and had considerable difficulty to maintain my gravity as sundry members of the congregation entered the church clad in the most unique apparel; some of them wore extraordinary old hats ornamented with fragments of women’s clothes and ostrich feathers, and these they were very reluctant to take off—indeed one man sat with his beaver on immediately before the minister until the doorkeeper ordered him to remove it. At dinner we had a variety of excellent vegetables, the garden producing almost every sort in great perfection; the potatoes in particular were very fine. To-day another of my studs, named Yarborough (so called in honour of a gallant major of the 91st from whom I purchased him), died of the distemper, and was immediately consumed by the starving curs of the Bakatlas. Being anxious to visit Sichely and his tribe, Dr. Liv-
ingstone and I started on the 24th for Chouaney. Our road lay through the most perfect country. On clearing the romantic valley of Bakatla we descended into another beautiful valley, through which meandered the crystal waters of the Ngotwani, an interesting stream, which, flowing in a north-easterly direction, falls into the Limpopo about sixty miles below its junction with the Mariqua; the Ngotwani contains several varieties of fish, which are of good flavour, and afford the angler steady average sport both with bait and fly. After following for some distance the finely-wooded banks of this river, and having twice crossed its stream, we entered upon an extensive open tract of country adorned with a carpet of the most luxuriant herbage. This plain was beautifully wooded towards the mountain ranges which bound it on every side, and the Ngotwani twined in a serpentine course along the middle of it, forming in one part an extensive vley or marsh about four miles long and a quarter of a mile in breadth. This vley was now beautified with a dense crop of waving green reeds, averaging about fourteen feet in height, and forming a favourite resort of buffaloes and their invariable attendants the lions. Dr. Livingstone told me that a party of Baquinas were on the ensuing day to visit this vley, for the purpose of cutting a supply of reeds with which to thatch his new church and dwelling-house; and he said he should wish me, if an opportunity presented itself, to shoot some large game on which these men might feed.

Marching quietly along we suddenly beheld a numerous herd of buffaloes grazing on the open plain betwixt us and the vley; their dark imposing squadrons extended over a great space of ground, and we reckoned there might be between six or eight hundred of them. As I drew near they stood gazing at me for a minute, when the whole herd, panic-stricken, started off together, and thundering along in a compressed mass, held for the reeds. Their amazing numbers greatly impeded their progress, so I had no difficulty in keeping alongside of them, and as I galloped along I endeavoured to select the finest head, but among so many it was no easy matter to make a choice, for as soon as I selected one he disappeared among the ranks of his companions. At length I let fly right and left into
them, and next moment they gained the margin of the lofty reeds; here the whole herd suddenly halted and faced about with the regularity and precision of a regiment of cavalry, when, having overhauled me for half a minute, they charged headlong into the soft muddy vley, and in another moment were hidden from my sight. I marked the reeds bowing before them far on my right and left as they splashed and struggled through the marshy vley; presently they gained the other side, and held across the open plain, steering for their strongholds in the woods beyond. As the clouds of dust behind me cleared away, I looked back and beheld a fine old cow fall dead; near her stood a wounded calf, whose mother had remained beside it, being loth to leave her offspring.

I now returned to Dr. Livingstone, when we brought up the waggon for the fallen buffaloes, and just as we had out-spanned, I, under cover of one of the oxen, bowled a blue wildebeest over with my rifle. Early on the following morning the reed-cutters from Chouaney hove in sight, and were not a little gratified to find so bountiful a supply of their favourite "niama," or flesh, awaiting their arrival. It was late when we outspanned at Chouaney, where we were immediately welcomed by a messenger from Sichely, who expressed himself highly gratified at our arrival, and promised to come and breakfast with me next morning.
ARRIVE AT SICHELY'S KRAAL — RAINMAKERS — GUN-MEDICINE — BAKATLA — KURUMAN — CAMPBELLDORP — COLESBERG AND GRAHAMSTOWN.

At an early hour on the 26th of November, Sichely presented himself with a large retinue. The appearance of this chief was prepossessing, and his manner civil and engaging; his stature was about five feet ten inches, and in his person he inclined to corpulency. His dress consisted of a handsome leopard-skin kaross; and on his arms and legs, which were stout and well turned, he wore a profusion of brass and copper ornaments, manufactured by tribes residing a long way to the eastward. In the forenoon I accompanied Sichely to his kraal, situated in the centre of the town; alongside which stood respectively the kraals of his wives, five in number. These were neatly built, and of a circular form, the walls and floors being smoothly plastered with a composition of clay and cow-dung, and secured from the weather by a firm and well-constructed thatch of long dry grass. Each kraal was surrounded by an area enclosed with a strong impenetrable fence, six feet in height. The town was built on a gentle slope on the northern side of a broad extensive strath, throughout the whole extent of which lay wide fields and gardens enclosed with hedges of wait-a-bits.

A short time previous to my arrival a rumour having reached Sichely that he was likely to be attacked by the emigrant Boers, he suddenly resolved to surround his city with a wall of stones. It was now completed, with loopholes at intervals, through which to fire upon the advancing enemy with the muskets which he had resolved to purchase from hunters and traders like myself.

I was duly introduced to the five queens, each of whose wig-wams I visited in succession. These ladies were of goodly stature, and comely in their appearance; they all possessed a
choice assortment of very fine karosses of various descriptions; and their persons were adorned with a profusion of ornaments of beads and brass and copper wire. Sichely professed, and was believed by his tribe, to be a skilful rainmaker, viz., one having the power of creating rain when required for the fields and gardens; the rainmaker's art is a regular profession among the Bechuanas, and the individuals who practise it are much esteemed and highly venerated among their fellow-men. They are supposed to work by supernatural agency; and acting probably on the general principle, that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country, they invariably practise their arts amongst tribes remote from their own particular districts. The birth and original place of residence of these rainmakers are always involved in mystery, and they pretend to have been suddenly created in some lonely cave, or on the summit of a mountain, from which they came in a state of manhood, without understanding the usual ordeal of birth. Some of them attain to much higher reputation than their fellow-necromancers: an illustrious character of this description is much sought after, and is often sent for from an amazing distance by a chief on whose dominions the periodical thunderstorms (which are often very partial) have failed to descend.

The modes in which they propitiate the clouds are various. The one most commonly practised is, by collecting a few leaves of each variety of tree in the forest, which they allow to simmer in large pots over a slow fire, and, while a sheep is killed by pricking it in the heart with a "lemue," or long sewing-needle, the rainmaker is employed in performing a variety of absurd incantations. The steam arising from the simmering leaves is supposed to reach and propitiate the clouds, and the remainder of the day is spent in dances which are joined in by all the tribe, and kept up till midnight, being accompanied with songs having a long-continued chorus; in this all join, the burden of it is the power and praises of the rainmaker. It often, however, happens that the relentless clouds decline attending to the solicitations of the rainmaker, and the fields of young corn become parched and withered. Other schemes are then resorted to. A number of the young men sally forth, and, forming an extensive circle,
enclose the surface of some mountain-side in which the rock-loving klipspringer is likely to be met with, when, by gradually contracting their circle, like our Highlanders of old, they generally manage to catch alive sundry klipspringers, whose voices are supposed to attract rain. The unfortunate little antelopes thus captured are paraded round the kraal, while the rainmaker, by pinching them, induces them to scream; but as it often happens that these and all his other machinations prove unavailing, the rainmaker is at times obliged eventually to make a moonlight fitting, and cut and run for it, when the services of another of the fraternity are engaged.

When these sorcerers fail to fulfil their promises they always ascribe their want of success to the presence of some mysterious agency which has destroyed the effect of their otherwise infallible nostrums; ivory is believed to have great influence in driving away rain, in consequence of which they produce it only as the sun goes down, in the summer season, at which time it is brought for the trader's inspection, carefully wrapped up in a kaross. I remember on one occasion incurring the curse of a whole tribe, who firmly believed me to have frightened the rain from their dominions by exposing a quantity of ivory at noonday; and on another the chief of another commanded a missionary to remove all the rafters from the roof of his house, these having been pointed out by the rainmaker as obstructing the success of his incantations.

The Griquas, taking advantage of the superstitions of the Bechuana, often practise on their credulity, and, a short time before I visited Sichely, a party of the former who were hunting in his territory obtained several valuable karosses from him, in barter for a little sulphur, which they represented as a most effectual medicine for guns, and assured Sichely that, by rubbing a small quantity on their hands before proceeding to the field, they would assuredly obtain the animal they wanted.

One day when in conversation with the chief the subject turned on ball-practice, and the king, probably relying on the power of his medicine, offered to stake a couple of valuable karosses against a large measure filled with my gunpowder, but stipulated that his three brothers should assist in the
match. While Sichely was loading his gun I repaired to the fore-chest of the waggon, and observing that I was watched by several of the natives, I proceeded to rub my hands with sulphur; this was instantly reported to the chief, who directly joined me, and, clapping me on the back, entreated that I would give him a little of my medicine for his gun. Our target being set up, we commenced firing; it was a small piece of wood, six inches long by four in breadth, and was placed on the stump of a tree, at the distance of one hundred paces. Sichely fired the first shot, and very naturally missed it, upon which I let fly and split it through the middle; it was then set up again, when Sichely and his brothers continued firing, without once touching it, till night put an end to their proceedings. This, of course, was solely attributed by all present to the power of the medicine I had used.

When Dr. Livingstone was informed of the circumstance he was very much shocked, declaring that in future the natives would fail to believe him when he denounced supernatural agency, having now seen it practised by his own countryman. I obtained several very fine karosses, ivory, ostrich feathers, and sundry interesting curiosities, in barter from Sichely and his tribe; and at noon, on the 27th, we started for Bakatla. In the evening of the following day the "Immense Brute" died of the distemper, and next morning the chestnut pony.

On the afternoon of the 29th we outspanned at Bakatla. A party of Baralongs were then on a visit to Mosieleley on a trading excursion for skins. The head-quarters of these men was situated to the westward of Motito, on the borders of the great Kalahari desert. Night set in with a terrific thunderstorm; the kraal occupied by the six strangers was struck by the electric fluid, one of them being killed on the spot, and the other five were more or less affected by the shock. Dr. Livingstone informed me that this event would entail great alarm and uneasiness upon Mosieleley, since all the tribes would blame him for the accident, and the natives on the following day were engaged in the most absurd idolatrous rites to cleanse the kraal and the survivors from the effects of the electricity. During my stay at Bakatla I traded extensively with the natives, and obtained a number of karosses and various articles of in
terest. It was the heat of summer, and the sun at noon was extremely overpowering; the atmosphere, however, was occasionally refreshed by thunderstorms, accompanied with grateful showers of rain, which circumstance was, of course, attributed to the power of the rainmaker, and the vale rang nightly with loud and joyous songs, re-echoing his praises in a prolonged chorus. Before leaving Bakatla, Sunday died, which reduced my stud from ten to two. And, before dismissing this subject, I may mention that I managed to save these two from the distemper by preventing them from eating grass and keeping them covered at night with blankets.

On the 11th I took leave of my kind host Dr. Livingstone, and, after a march of many days, on the 2nd of January reached Kuruman, where I was entertained by Mr. Moffat with his usual kindness and hospitality. The following day was Sunday, when I attended Divine service in the large church morning and evening, and saw sixteen men and women who had embraced the Christian faith baptised. It was now the fruit-season, and the trees in the gardens of the missionaries were groaning under the most delicious peaches, figs, and apples; the vines bore goodly clusters of grapes, but these had not yet ripened. I left one of the waggons with its contents here; also the whole of my oxen, with the exception of one span, with which, on the evening of the 7th, I set out for Koning, and reached it at an early hour in the following morning.

Leaving Koning on the afternoon of the 8th, I resumed my march for Daniel’s-kuil. Between Koning and Daniel’s-kuil occur two interesting caves, long famous as affording a residence and protection to hordes of marauding Bushmen, and from which not very long since they lifted fat cattle from the sleek herds of their more industrious neighbours the Griquas and Bechuanas. But they had their reward; for on one occasion fire was made use of to smoke out the Bushmen, when those who escaped death by suffocation fell by the battle-axes and assagais of their foes without.

When driven to extremity the Bushmen are extremely plucky, and show fight to the last. In the year 1847, a Bechuana chief, named Assyabona, despatched a strong party of his tribe against a large horde of wild Bushmen, whose rob-
berries had become so daring and extensive that they were the terror of all who dwelt a hundred miles around them; on this occasion a great number were destroyed, having been overtaken in open ground. One determined fellow hastily collected several quivers of the poisoned arrows of his dying comrades, and ensconced himself within three large stones, from which position he for a long time defied the whole hostile array of Bechuanas, shooting two of them dead on the spot, and wounding a number of others. Though gallantly defending himself, he seemed aware that he could not possibly escape; and while peppering the Bechuanas and upbraiding them with cowardice, he was eventually finished with a shot in the forehead by a son of Mahura's, chief of the Batlapis, as he was in the act of discharging one of his diminutive yet deadly shafts.

On the 10th I marched from Daniel's-kuil, and early on the 12th encamped at Campbellsdorp, where I found Mr. Bartlett and Captain Cornelius Kok in great force. Here I overtook my runaway Hottentots, and, commiserating their condition, presented them with the amount of their wages during the time they had remained with me.

At a late hour on the 13th I outspanned on the fragrant banks of the lovely Vaal river by clear moonlight, and on the morrow, the water being fortunately low, crossed it with little difficulty. On the 20th I took the drift of the Great Orange River, but with very faint hopes that my worn-out oxen would succeed in dragging me through its treacherous sands, more especially since two Boers who had crossed an hour previous had deemed it necessary to inspan sixteen well-conditioned beasts to their light waggons. I was right in my conjecture; for with infinite flogging and shouting I got the wagggon only half-way through, when it stuck fast, and nothing could prevail upon the oxen to move it a yard farther. A Griqua offered to lend me on hire a fresh span of able-bodied cattle, and, with the help of these and some of my best, I got safely through, and once more encamped within her Majesty's dominions. Resuming my march for Colesberg, I trekked on till near midnight; the country was parched and arid, without a blade of grass for the weary oxen.

On the 21st I left the Bushman to bring on the wagggon, and
walked ahead under a most terrific sun to the farm where I had formerly purchased Prince and Bonteberg. My costume consisted of a dilapidated wide-awake hat, which had run the gauntlet with many a grove of wait-a-bit, a dusty-looking ragged shirt, and a pair of still more ragged-looking canvas trowsers, or rather breeches, for they had been cut off above the knee, while my face was adorned with a shaggy red beard, the tout ensemble being that of one escaped from Bedlam. The inmates of the house took fright at my wild appearance, and two of the Boers, timidly projecting their heads from the half-closed door, loudly shouted to me to lay down my gun; one of them was the owner of the farm, and the man from whom I had bought the dogs, yet he nevertheless failed to recognise me; and commiserating the transparent texture of my continuations, offered to lend me a pair of leather "crackers." Declining the proffered apparel, I entered the house without ceremony, when the children immediately recognised me as "de carle wha heb vor Bonteberg ha-quoich," viz. the man that bought Bonteberg.

On the 26th I entered the village of Colesberg, where I found that my old friends, the 91st, had been replaced by a detachment of the 45th. My first visit was to the post-office, but much to my disappointment I found no letters. Having off-loaded my waggon, I handed it over to the resident blacksmith, to undergo repairs, of which it stood much in need. My Bechuana followers were extremely struck with the size and appearance of Colesberg, and the movements of the military elicited their unfeigned delight and approbation.

On the 1st of February, having re-engaged Mr. Kleinboy, I left Colesberg, and reached Grahamstown on the 22nd, when I took up my residence with Captain Hogg of the 7th Dragoon Guards. The officers of this regiment had brought out a pack of fox-hounds, which, while they lasted, afforded excellent sport, but unfortunately the climate of Southern Africa, especially near the coast, is so very unfavourable for well-bred English dogs, that, although no trouble nor expense was spared in the management of these hounds, fresh drafts were constantly exported from England, and litters of pups carefully reared in the colony, the pack nevertheless had considerably diminished.
CHAPTER XXI.

SET OUT AGAIN FOR THE FAR INTERIOR — FORT BEAUFORT — HUNT ELEPHANTS — RHINOCEROS AND LION SHOT — LEAVE BAMANGWATO COUNTRY.

I continued in Grahamstown till the 7th of March, when I set out once more for the distant forests of the far interior. Before leaving I engaged a discharged soldier of the 91st, named George Martin, in the capacity of head servant. This man, who hailed from Haddington, bore an excellent character on leaving the regiment; he was accustomed to the charge of horses, in which he took a great interest. My most important purchases in the sporting department consisted of a double-barrelled rifle, with spare shot-barrels, by Westley Richards, and two right good steeds, one a very superior coal-black gelding, which I purchased of Captain Walpole of the Engineers for 20L, a sum considerably below its value. I named this horse Black Jack; in paces and disposition he very much resembled my lamented Colesberg, and was altogether one of the finest animals I ever mounted. The other horse was a grey; and as it is probable that he may in future pages be mentioned under the designation of the ‘Old Grey,’ I trust the reader will not confound him with the original ‘Old Grey.’

On the morning of the 9th I reached Fort Beaufort, and on the 15th resumed my march for the interior, having purchased four excellent horses from the officers of the garrison: one of these was a jet-black steed, named Schwartland. He was one of the finest shooting-horses in Southern Africa, and understood his work so well that he would suddenly halt in full career when I wished to fire, if I merely placed my hand upon his neck. At the farm of Messrs. Nelson and Blane I added two more horses to my stud, which I called Brown Jock and Mazeppa, and also purchased a span of oxen and some milch cows.

At Colesberg, where I remained from the 2nd until the 9th
I engaged two Hottentot servants named Booi and Kleinfeldt (the latter individual being one of those who had forsaken my banner at Bootlonamy), and purchased two more valuable steeds, which increased my stud to ten very superior young horses. I also bought a number of rough long-legged serviceable dogs of a variety of breeds, which, with several other ragged-looking tykes, purchased from Boers along the line of march, increased my kennel to about twenty business-like dogs. We marched out of the village and held on until we reached the Orange River at Boata's Drift, where we out-spanned beneath the shade of a grove of willows. Having forded the river on horseback, it proved too deep to take the waggons over, but I had the consolation to remark that the waters were on the ebb, and by the forenoon of the following day they had so far subsided as to enable me to cross without wetting my cargo.

I now pushed on with all speed for my Fountain of Elephants at Massouey; and on the 15th, just as I had reached the Bastard kraal of Rhama, fell in with my old servant Carolus, who had absconded from me at Bootlonamy; he had met with his old companions Kleinfeldt and Kleinboy, and resolved to turn about and re-enter my service, which I was not sorry for, as I was short of hands for the distant expedition I was about to make. I also fell in with Captain Arkwright and Mr. Christie, who were proceeding up the country on a similar expedition to my own.

On the 16th of May I halted at Chouaney, and on the 20th fell in with a troop of nine bull elephants, the finest of which I shot. After this we pressed on as rapidly as possible for my favourite fountain Massouey, and reached it on the 29th.

I felt sincere pleasure in revisiting this interesting spot, and found it well frequented by the elephants, two troops of cows and three old bulls having drank there on the preceding night. On the waggons coming up I took a hasty breakfast, and started on the spoor of a troop of cows—in all about ten, but there were only three full grown ones, and each of these unfortunately went off in different directions. I rode within twenty yards of the best, and halting, put two balls close behind her shoulder: calling to Martin to finish her. I then galloped
after the second best, and in three minutes had turned her head towards camp, and presently rolled her over with about six shots. Martin and the Bushman not appearing when two hours had elapsed, I rode to camp, where, to my astonishment, I found my servant had actually lost my elephant through the most inexcusable want of pluck. I was very much annoyed, and regretted having attacked the troop at all.

On the following day Mollyeon and I walked to the fountain, round which was the spoor of elephants, besides an unusual number of rhinoceroses, perhaps twenty. I made a hasty breakfast, and then took up the spoor of the two best bulls, with one after-rider; we followed them about six miles in vain, but soon came upon three other bull elephants, about three parts grown, feeding slowly along, steering north, one of which, after a short and dangerous conflict, I slew with five bullets.

We then took up the spoor of one of our first elephants, and after following it for about five miles through very open country, reached some dense wait-a-bit cover, where we found our friend hiding himself within twenty yards of us. He took away at once through the thickest of the cover, and on my approaching for a shot, made a most terrific charge, sending large thorny trees flying like grass before him. I sent a ball through his ribs after this charge, when he made clean away, and got into better country; here I fought with him for about an hour, and gave him sixteen shots from the saddle; but he turned and regained the dense thorny cover, and in this I lost him.

On the morning of June 1st, accompanied by Kleinfeldt as after-rider on Dreadnought, being myself mounted on Schwartländ, my best shooting-horse, I started on the spoor of a large herd which had been at the fountain the night before. Many a weary mile was galloped over before the glorious squadron hove in sight.

It consisted of ten bull elephants, eight of them about three parts grown, and the other two enormous old elephants, in magnificent condition. We halted and gave the dogs water, and I then rode slowly round the troop to ascertain which was the best. After passing twice along their front, they all, as if by
one accord, turned their faces to me, and advanced leisurely within forty yards, giving me an excellent opportunity of making my choice; at length they saw me, and, sounding the alarm, made off together in great consternation. Galloping alongside to make my final choice, I selected the largest elephant, and had no little difficulty in getting him clear of his comrades, some of which were extremely fierce, and were trumpeting along, with their tails and trunks aloft. All my dogs had gone off to the right and left after other elephants, and Dreadnought came up to me, having thrown my after-rider, who did not succeed in recapturing him.

My elephant now, hearing the barking and trumpeting on every side, halted beside a bushy tree, with his head high, and right to me; but presently turning his broadside, I gave it him sharp right and left behind the shoulder; and the dogs, hearing the shots, came up to my assistance. The conflict now became fast and furious, and I had very pleasant work with this fine old elephant; his fury and attention were chiefly directed towards the dogs, who stuck well to him; but he was by far the toughest elephant to finish that I had ever engaged with. I gave him thirty-five balls, all about and behind his shoulder, and at distances varying from fifteen to thirty-five yards, before he died.

No elephants having drunk at the fount for some days, I resolved, on the 5th, to leave my favourite Massouey, and accordingly marched about one P.M. At Corriebely there was water enough for the horses; and here I met Mutchuisho with a large party of Bechuanas, sent by Sicomy to endeavour to make me come and trade with him. I halted for an hour after sunset, and trekked on till the moon went down, when I halted near my old outspanning-place, having performed a very long and difficult march.

On the 6th we reached Lessausau and its fountain, beside which I shot that night two old black rhinoceroses, bull and cow, with my smooth bore carrying six to the pound. Along with the cow boréle were two other old bulls, who fought together for three hours alongside of me.

On the 7th Sicomy, whom I had seen the previous day, made his appearance early, and towards evening bought
powder and lead with seven elephants' teeth; soon after the bargain was concluded he ordered his men to take away the teeth, and threw me back the powder; but on my kicking it back, and swearing I would shoot the first man who touched the ivory, he relinquished the idea.

On the 8th Sicomy prowled about the waggons all day, and Arkwright and Christie rode up to my waggons. They had lost one ox and two horses in pitfalls on the march; and their "butler," while running to the assistance of the steeds, had been himself engulfed in another hole, which fortunately, however, lacked the usual sharp-pointed stake for impaling the game.

On the 9th Sicomy brought me ivory, and asked me to go to my hunting-ground, saying that he would trade with me there: it was evident he was very anxious to separate the two parties. As soon as possible, therefore, I inspanned, and trekked down the broad strath, steering south, although the natives asserted that I should find no water, and tried to guide me north; after going about eight miles I discovered, much to the annoyance of the Bamangwatos, the residence of the Bakaas, where I halted for the night, having sent a message to Schooey, the old chief, that I would trade with him. Accordingly he, with his wives and nobility, appeared at an early hour next day, and before twelve o'clock I had purchased several tusks of elephants; also two very fine karosses of leopard-skin, &c. I then inspanned, and in two hours got clear of the Bamangwato mountains, after which I held about east, through thick forest, halting for the night beside a small fount, where the horses could not drink. On the march pallah were abundant and very tame.

On the morning of the 12th Sicomy came to trade with me, and in about three hours I had purchased ten bull and ten cow elephants' teeth for ten muskets, and seven other cow elephants' teeth for powder, lead, and flints; I bought also two kobaoba knobkerries. Elephants were reported to have drunk within a mile during the night. This caused an immense bustle; and, accompanied by a hundred and fifty starving natives, we followed the spoor till night. The country was in flames far and wide, but we crossed the fire, and took up
the spoor beyond. A troop of eight fat male elands and a troop of giraffes were seen this day.

The spoor was followed for several miles in an easterly course next day, sometimes through most horrible wait-a-bit thorns. About midday we came up with one mighty old bull, and two bulls three parts grown. I first shot the best of the two small bulls, and then the old one. The natives and all my dogs had kept him in view, and one fellow had pricked him in the stern with an assagai. The Bechuanas, upon the strength of this, came up and claimed him as theirs when he fell; but on my threatening to leave their country, they relinquished the idea.

On the 16th and 17th I bagged two first-rate bull elephants in the level forests to the eastward of Mangmaluky.

On the 18th, after breakfast, I rode to Mangraluky to water my horses. At night a panther came within ten yards of my fire, and killed Cradock and disabled Wolf, my two best elephant-dogs.

On the 21st I held south, down a beautiful wide valley full of trees of various kinds; this was evidently a favourite haunt with the elephants, for every tree bore their marks. The fountain at the southern end of this valley was one of the most interesting I had yet seen; the water came gushing down through the wildest chasms, formed of one succession of huge masses of rock of all shapes and sizes, thrown loosely together in some places, and in others piled high one above another, as if by the hand of a giant. All the ground about the water was covered with a layer of elephants' dung about a foot deep. We had proceeded about half way up the valley when we heard a very fine troop of cows trumpeting ahead of us; and one of them was larger, I think, than any I had ever before seen. On this occasion I was extremely unfortunate. The natives drove them out on the wrong side of the cover without warning me, and, to my extreme vexation, this fine troop got away without my killing one.

On the 29th of June I reached a water called Lotlokane, and hunted in the neighbourhood for several days, bagging some very fine elephants.

On the 13th of July I held west with Mollyeon and about
twenty natives on the spoor of bull elephants two days old; but night setting in, we halted beneath a shady tree, and supped off an eland which I slew.

The spoor next morning led us due west along the borders of the desert without a check until sundown. We had now spoorred these elephants a very great distance, and the horses had been without water since the morning of the preceding day. I felt compassion for the thirsty steeds, and was on the point of turning, when lo! a string of Bakhahari women were seen half a mile before us, each bearing on her head an immense earthen vase and wooden bowl containing water; they had been to a great distance to draw water at a small fountain, and were now returning to their distant desert home. This was to us a perfect godsend. The horses and dogs got as much as they could drink, and all our vessels were replenished.

At sunrise we resumed the spoor, and after following it for about ten miles, finding that the elephants had gone clean away into the desert beyond the reach of man, we gave it up, and made for the fountain where the women had drawn the water on the preceding day. Here the spoor of four bull elephants, being in a soft sandy soil, was beautifully visible; they had fed slowly away from the fountain, and we followed with high hopes of seeing them that day.

At length we got into a more densely wooded country, and presently observed the elephants standing in the forest about one hundred yards off; two of them were only three parts grown, but the other two were very large, and one of them was a great deal taller and stouter than the other. This immense elephant, the largest I had seen, had unfortunately both his tusks broken short off close to the lip; I therefore hunted his comrade, who carried a very beautiful and perfect pair. At the sixth shot he came to a stand and presently fell. I then dismounted and ran up to him, when he rose to his feet, walked a few paces, fell again and died. This elephant carried the finest teeth I had yet obtained; they must have weighed one hundred pounds each. He was an extremely old bull, and had been much wounded with assagais, the blades of two of which were found in his back.

On the 17th I made for camp, and held through a fine open
country lying north-west from Corriebely. In following some ostriches I came upon an extremely old and well-known black rhinoceros lying fast asleep in some low wait-a-bits, the birds having tried in vain to waken him. I fired from the saddle: the first ball hit him in the shoulder; the second near his heart, as he gained his feet. In an instant the dogs were round him, so he set off down hill at a steady canter, and led me a chase of a mile, when, his shoulder failing him, he came to a stand. At this instant I beheld a troop of about twenty fine elands trotting before me on the open slope; I therefore quickly finished the black rhinoceros with two more balls, and gave them chase, eventually bagging the two best in the troop, a bull and cow, the latter about the fattest I have ever seen.

At dawn next day I shot, from the spot I had slept on, a springbok, running, through the heart, at one hundred yards. After cutting off the horns of the black rhinoceros, I held on for Letlochee, and slept at Lebotane, a very strong and perpetual fountain.

On the 19th, at sunrise, I continued my march, and on gaining the ridge of the vast basin in which Letlochee lies, shot a buck koodoo and a bull camelopard, which I bowled over with one shot. On the 24th I left Letlochee, and held for Lotokane.

On the march one of my Hottentots reported that he had come upon a buffalo newly killed by a lion, and that the monarch of the forest was lying in the bushes close by, watching his prey. Having saddled up three horses, I rode for the lion, accompanied by Boo and Kleinboy carrying my Moore and Westley Richards, and all my dogs. As we approached the carcass of the buffalo, which lay in a wait-a-bit thorn cover, the dogs dashing away to my left, in an instant gave tongue, and this was immediately followed by the deep and continued growling of the lion, which seemed to be advancing right to where we stood. I turned my head to ask Kleinboy for my shooting-horse; but my trusty after-riders had fled on hearing the first roar. Boo, who was swept out of the saddle by the bough of a tree, fell heavily to the ground with my pet rifle; while Kleinboy, with my other gun, was charging panic-stricken in another direction. After a short gallop I came up
with Kleinboy, who did not lack my blessing; and having changed horses and got my gun from him, I rode forward to meet my grim adversary.

Ye gods! what a savage he looked! The whole of his mane was deeply tinged with the blood of the buffalo, and the rays of the declining sun added to it a lustre which imparted to the exasperated animal a look of surpassing fierceness. He was making for the adjacent mountains, and marched in front of the dogs with his tail stuck straight out, stepping with an air of the most consummate pride and independence. There was not a moment to lose, so I rode within thirty yards of him, and, halting my horse, fired for his heart from the saddle. On receiving the ball he wheeled about, when I gave him the second a little below the first; after which he walked or ran about ten yards forward and fell dead. This was a very large old lion; he had cleaned his buffalo very nicely, dragging up all the offal into a heap at a distance from the carcase, and had watched it all day to keep away the vultures, &c.

On the 26th, feeling in very indifferent health, I remained at home, and stretched the lion's skin.

The next day, after breakfast, I rode up the wild glen, intending to seek for bastard gemsbok on the other side of the mountains, and had gone only half-way, when lo! the long-wished-for lovely sable antelope, a princely old buck, stood about two hundred yards ahead looking at me. Having heard that dogs can easily catch this antelope, and mine being at my heels, I sent them ahead, and fired a shot to encourage them; in half a minute they were at the potaquaine, and turned him down hill. He crossed the glen before me, and dashed up a very rough and rocky pass in the rocks to my right, the dogs following, but considerably thrown out. I listened to hear a bay, but listened in vain; to follow on horseback was impossible: I therefore galloped round to an opposite point, and listened with breathless anxiety, standing in my stirrups to catch one sharp note from my trusty dogs. Nor did I wait long; for in a distant hollow in the rocks I could faintly hear them at bay.

My heart beat high; it must be the sable antelope, and the dogs would never leave him; already I felt that he was mine,
and joyously urged Mazeppa over the most fearful masses of adamantine rock, and at last came to the spot where my dogs were. Some thick bushes concealed the game from my view; I peeped over these, and, to my intense disappointment, instead of the sable antelope, beheld an old bull koodoo fighting gallantly for his life; I bowled him over with a shot in the heart. Returning, I detected another sable antelope, and, having secured the steeds, I stripped to my shirt, and ascended the bold face to stalk him.

I held for a little to leeward of where I had marked him, the Bushman following with Boxer on a string, and at length beheld him through the trees within a hundred yards of me. Creeping about ten yards nearer, I lay till he should move, which he shortly did, and walking obligingly forward, stood broadside in all his glory, with his magnificent scimitar-shaped horns sweeping back over his haunches. I fired. The ball broke his fore-leg in the shoulder, and he dropped on his face, but, recovering himself, he gained his legs, and limped slowly over the ridge. Boxer immediately appeared, and, on seeing him, he turned about, when I sent my second ball through his ribs. He then disappeared, with Boxer at his heels. I followed as fast as I could, and found him half-way down the mountain, sitting on his haunches at bay, where I finished him with a shot in the heart. This was a magnificent sable antelope in the prime of life; he was very fat, and the flesh excellent.

On the 28th I went over a deal of rough ground on foot, and in the evening took some bedding up the glen, and slept there.

I had lain in great pain all night, and in the morning found myself attacked with acute rheumatic fever. I had just strength enough to gain my waggons, when the disease came on in full force, swelling up the joints of my body and giving me the most excruciating torture; I could not move hand or foot. I had no medicine except salts, which I took, and bled myself, and in about eight days the intense pains left me, but I was so weak that I could not stand.

On the morning of the 4th of August I determined to leave the Bamangwato country and to return to Sichely by way of Massouey, which place I reached on the 15th. It was, how
ever, full of natives, and all the game gone; I accordingly
trekked for Lepeby. Here, too, the natives had gathered, so
I proceeded to Soobie, where I found the skull of a very large
lion, which the natives said had been killed by another lion.

At night I lay by the water with Kleinboy; abundance of
game came and drank, but it was too dark to shoot with any
certainty. About midnight a lion and a lioness came within
ten yards of us before we noticed them. I was lying half
asleep, but Kleinboy took the large rifle from my side
and made a lucky shot, for the ball passed through the lion's heart,
when he bounded forward about fifty yards, and, groaning
fearfully, expired; presently we heard the hyenas and jackals
feasting on him, and before morn he was consumed. After some
time the lioness came to seek her mate, and drew nearer and
nearer to us, roaring most fearfully; it was truly enough
to make the stoutest heart quail. Kleinboy's quite failed him; and
presently, hearing other lions approaching on the opposite side
of the fount, I felt that we were in danger, and accordingly
agreed to light a fire, which was soon blazing cheerfully. From
this deadly lair I continued to watch the water both by day
and night till the 1st of September, enjoying extraordinary
sport, and securing uncommonly fine specimens of the heads of
all the varieties of game frequenting the district.

On that day, about twelve o'clock, Mollyee told me that my
cattle-herd had come upon four wildebeests killed by a troop of
lions; I immediately sent for the steeds and rode to the spot,
with Martin and the Bushman as after-riders, and accompanied
by all my dogs. On reaching the ground they immediately took
up the scent, beating up wind; I rode after, hunting them on,
and presently missed Boxer and Alert. Riding hard in that
line, I found Lassie barking at a large bush, in which the lions
had taken shelter, but were gone; here Argyll took up the
scent, and after holding this spoor for a few hundred yards the
dogs led me to the game I sought—it was a noble lioness. As
I approached I beheld her great round face and black-tipped
ears peeping over the low bushes, and on riding up she obsti-
nately kept her full front to me, although the dogs were barking
close around her: at length I got a raking side shot, the ball
smashed her shoulder, and she then charged among the dogs,
without doing any harm. My second shot passed through the middle of her foot from side to side. I then beckoned to Martin for my Moore, and, riding up to within a few yards of the lioness, gave her a third shot, which crippled her in her other shoulder. She then fell powerless on the ground, when I fired my fourth shot for her heart; on receiving which she rolled over on her side and died. I cut off her head and the ten nails of her two fore feet, and rode to camp, where I found that the rascally Hottentots, taking advantage of Martin's absence, had boned all my rich game-broth, replacing it with cold water. Lions roared round the camp all night.
CHAPTER XXII.

A LION SHOT FROM MY WATCHING-HOLE AT MIDNIGHT — MY FIFTIETH ELEPHANT RAGGED — ROCK-SNAKE — FIVE RHINOCEROSSES SHOT — MEET A GRIM LION — COLESBERG — GRAHAMSTOWN.

On the afternoon of the 3rd of September I again watched the fountain, and towards sunset sent a ball through the heart of the best headed pallah. This I ordered to be placed in front of my hole beside the water, to attract the lions, and after supper returned to the water with Kleinboy and Mollyee. It was bright moonlight, and we had scarcely lain down when the terrible voice of a lion was heard a little to the east. The jackals were also heard feasting and snorting over the remains of a white rhinoceros I had shot. Presently a herd of zebras, accompanied by elands, approached the water, but were too timid to come in and drink: a troop of wild dogs followed, and were walking off with the pallah, when I fired into them. This they attempted to do a second time, when I fired again and wounded one of them.

Soon after a heavy clattering of hoofs was heard coming up the vley, and on came an immense herd of blue wildebeest. They were very thirsty, and the leading cow came boldly up and drank in front of me. I sent a ball through her, when she ran sixty yards up the slope behind me and fell dead. Her comrades thundered across the vley and took up a position on the opposite rising ground, leaving the carcass of their companion to the hyenas and jackals: soon after a lion gave a most appalling roar on the bushy height close opposite to us, which was succeeded by a deathlike stillness that lasted for nearly a minute. I had then only one shot in my four barrels, and, hastily loading, kept with breathless attention the strictest watch in front, expecting every moment to see the terrible king of beasts approaching; but he was too cunning. He saw all the other game fight shy of the water, so made a
circuit to leeward to get the wind off the fountain. Soon after he roared I heard a number of jackals bothering him, as it telling him to come across the vley to the wildebeest: he growled from side to side as if in reply, and then all was still.

I had listened with intense anxiety for about fifteen minutes, when I heard the hyænas and jackals give way on either side behind me from the carcase of the wildebeest, and, turning my head round, beheld a huge and majestic lion, with a black mane which nearly swept the ground, standing over the carcase. He seemed aware of my proximity, and, lowering his head, at once seized the wildebeest and dragged it some distance up the hill. He then halted to take breath, but did not expose his broadside, and in a quarter of a minute again laid hold of the wildebeest and dragged it about twelve yards farther, when he once more raised his noble head.

I had not an instant to lose; he stood with his right side exposed to me in a very slanting position, and, taking him rather low, I fired: the ball took effect, and the lion sank to the shot. All was still as death for many seconds, when he uttered a deep growl, and slowly gaining his feet, limped toward the cover, where he halted, roaring mournfully, as if dying. I had now every reason to believe that he was either dead or would die immediately, and if I did not look for him till the morning, I knew very well the hyænas and jackals would feast upon his carcase. I accordingly went up to camp, and, having saddled two horses, went with Martin to seek him, taking all the dogs, led in strings by the natives. On reaching the body of the wildebeest, the dogs were slipped and went off after the hyænas and jackals: we listened in vain for the deep growl of the lion, but I was persuaded he was dead, and rode forward to the spot where I had last heard him roar, when I had the immense satisfaction of beholding the magnificent old lion stretched out before me.

The ball had entered his belly a little in front of his flank, and traversed the length and breadth of the body, crippling him in the opposite shoulder. No description could give a correct idea of the surpassing beauty of this most majestic animal, as he lay still warm before me: I lighted a fire and gazed with delight upon his lovely black mane, his massive arms, his
sharp yellow nails, his hard and terrible head, his immense and powerful teeth, his perfect beauty and symmetry throughout; and I felt that I had won the noblest prize that this wide world could yield to a sportsman. Having sent for rheims and the lechternit, we bore the lion to camp. On my way from the water I shot with a single ball an extremely old black bull rhinoceros.

On the afternoon of the 4th I deepened my hole and bagged three black rhinoceroses, and the best pallah in a troop which came to drink.

By the following evening we had cleared away the greater part of two of the rhinoceroses which lay right in the way of the game approaching the water; I, however, obliged their leaving the third rhinoceros almost opposite to my hiding-place, in the hope of attracting a lion, and soon after the twilight had died away, went down with Kleinboy and two natives, who lay concealed in another hole, with Wolf and Boxer ready to slip, in the event of our wounding a lion.

On reaching the fountain I looked towards the carcase of the rhinoceros, and, to my astonishment, beheld the ground near it alive with large animals, which Kleinboy remarked were zebras. I answered, "Yes;" but I knew that zebras would not be capering round the carcase of a rhinoceros, so I quickly arranged my blankets, pillow, and guns in the hole, and then lay down to feast my eyes on the interesting sight before me. It was bright moonlight, as clear as I need wish, and I could see six large lions, about twelve or fifteen hyænas, and from twenty to thirty jackals, feasting on and surrounding the carcase and remains of the two rhinoceroses. The lions feasted peacefully, but the hyænas and jackals fought over every mouthful, chasing one another round and round, growling, laughing, screeching, chattering, and howling without intermission. The hyænas did not seem afraid of the lions, although they always gave way before them; for I observed that they followed them in the most disrespectful manner, and stood laughing, one or two on either side, when any lions came after their comrades to examine pieces of skin or bones which they were dragging away. I lay watching this banquet for about three hours, in the strong hope that, when the lions had eaten
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enough, they would come and drink. During this time two black and two white rhinoceroses made their appearance, but, scared by the smell of blood, retired.

At length the lions, apparently satisfied, walked about with their heads up, and seemed to be thinking of the water, and in two minutes one of them, turning his face towards me, came forward; he was immediately followed by a second lion, and in half a minute by the remaining four. It was a decided and general move, and evident that they were all coming to drink, within fifteen yards of me.

I charged the pale and panting Kleinboy to convert himself into a stone, and knowing, from old spoor, exactly where they would drink, I cocked my left barrel and placed myself and gun in position. The six lions came steadily on along the stony ridge, until within sixty yards of me, when they halted for a minute to reconnoitre; and one of them stretched out his massive arms on the rock and lay down. Again they came forward, walking, as I had anticipated, to the old drinking-place, and three of them put down their heads and were lapping the water loudly, when Kleinboy put up his ugly sconce; I turned mine slowly to rebuke him, and again looking at the lions, found myself discovered.

An old lioness, who seemed to be the leader, had detected me, and, with her head high and her eyes fixed full upon me, was coming slowly round the corner of the little vley to cultivate my acquaintance! This unfortunate proceeding put a stop at once to all further contemplation; I thought, in my haste, it was perhaps most prudent to shoot her, especially as none of the others had noticed me. I accordingly covered her; which she saw me do and halted, exposing a full broadside. I fired; the ball entered one shoulder and passed out behind the other. She bounded forward with repeated growls, and was followed by her five comrades all enveloped in a cloud of dust; nor did they stop until they had reached the cover behind me, except one old gentleman, who looked back for a few seconds. I listened anxiously for some sound to denote the approaching end of the lioness; nor listened in vain. We soon heard her growling and stationary, as if dying. I then slipped Wolf and Boxer, and, following them into the cover,
found her lying dead within twenty yards of where the old lion had fallen two nights before. She was an old lioness, with perfect teeth.

On the night of the 8th, as we watched the water, Kleinboy fired without orders at a black rhinoceros; the ball entered the shoulder with a fine direction, when Borélé charged madly and furiously, through trees and bushes, right towards camp, making the most tremendous blowing noise, and, halting close to the wagons, where he staggered about for a minute or two, and fell. On coming up, I found him a magnificent specimen, carrying three distinct horns.

On the 10th we marched to Bootlonamy, and reached it at sunset. After this we moved on for three days, during which the cattle and horses nearly died of thirst, and reached Moselakose, a retired fountain in a bold glen, or gorge, in the first mountain chain before us. I found the spoor of game at the fountain here abundant, and having outspanned at a considerable distance from it, at once set about making a hole.

On the 16th I rode to the water, and at one period during this day there were standing within shot of me as many as three hundred pallahs, fifty blue wildebeests, about twelve sassaybys, and twenty zebras. I could only make out two very fair heads in all this vast herd of pallahs, and these were not to be compared with my best Soobie heads; I therefore amused myself by watching their movements, and did not fire, having resolved to wait quietly, in the hope that koodoo, sable antelope, or wild boar would appear. At length I observed three shy, strange-looking antelopes approach with large bushy tails and furry-looking reddish-grey hair. They were three rhoode-rheeboeks, a buck and two does; I had never before heard that either of the species frequented these parts, and being anxious to certify that this antelope did so, I shot the buck through the heart.

The next day I again rode to the water, and soon after the horses were gone the herds of game came in and surrounded me, the same as the day before. I fired at a fine old cow wildebeest, and as the dust cleared away the gnoo was to be seen standing alone, and in about ten minutes she staggered, fell, and died. I also shot one of two tearing wild boars, which,
like every other pig, squealed violently when the struggles of
death came over him.

A singular circumstance occurred on the 20th. Having
wounded a sassayby, he immediately commenced choking from
the blood, and his body and even his legs and head swelled in
a most extraordinary manner, the animal still alive, until it
literally resembled a fisherman's float, when it died of suffo-
cation.

The 21st was a bitter cold morning, with a strong wind from
the south-west. I rode to the fountain before the morning star
appeared, and becoming impatient of lying still, rose from my
hole to examine what game had drunk during the night, when
I found to my astonishment the spoor of a mighty bull elephant,
which must have drunk there not many hours before. Re-
turning in hot haste to camp I made all ready for a three-days' trip,
and took up the spoor with two after-riders and six
natives. It led us for five miles in an easterly course
the elephant had fed as he went along, and when we first caught
sight of him was within twenty yards of us, a bushy tree
nearly concealing him from our view. The dogs fought well
with him, and I gave him one deadly shot before he was aware
of our presence; I then hunted him into softer ground, and
finished him with the tenth shot.

This fellow was the fiftieth elephant I had bagged in Africa,
not to mention those I wounded, but lost.

A princely old bull buffalo, which I saw this day, lay with
his very remarkable fine head on the ground, and was crouch-
ing, in the hope that we should ride past without observing
him, just as an old stag or a roe buck does in Scotland.

From the quantity of buffalo's spoor on the north side of
this mountain range, I made up my mind there must be
some strong water on that side of the hills, and only one or
two buffaloes occasionally came to drink at the fountain where
I was encamped; the natives declared that there was none. I,
however, on the 22nd, determined to explore, and accordingly
started with Kleinboy and the Bushman. We held first about
west, and then crossed the mountains by a succession of very
rocky valleys and ravines, beyond which, following an old
game footpath for about two or three miles, I had the satisfac-
tion to discover a beautiful fountain in a deep gorge. Here was fresh spoor of black and white rhinoceros, buffalo, wildebeest, sassayby, koodoo, klipspringer, &c. My after-riders likewise discovered a ravine containing water a little to the east.

Passing the mouth of another bold ravine, we crossed well-beaten paths, which led me to suspect that this ravine also contained a fountain. When about half-way from camp, and after a sharp burst of a mile, I shot a fine old bull eland from the saddle; he carried a fine head, and was, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, in very good condition.

On the 23rd, in the forenoon, I rode to explore the suspected ravine of the day before, and having crossed the mountain chain came upon the fresh spoor of a very large troop of cow elephants leading towards the spot, which we subsequently came up with. There were perhaps from twenty-five to thirty of them, but the instant they got my wind away they went in three divisions into impenetrable cover.

I found, as I expected, a strong fountain in a solid rocky basin in the ravine I was in search of, not more than ten feet wide: it was a most interesting spot, approachable by three different rugged passes, the sides of which were furrowed by broad footpaths established there for ages. The large stones were either kicked to the side or packed into a level like a pavement; even the solid rock was worn hollow by the feet of the mighty game which most probably for many thousand years had passed over it. Here I found fresh spoor of most of the larger quadrupeds, and, resolving to play havoc by the light of the coming moon, left the glen and rode for camp.

On the 25th I started with bedding and provisions to visit the fountains on the other side of the hills. At the first water we established a place of concealment with green boughs on the rock, and then held on to the farther ravine, where my men repaired an old hiding-hole, building it up with fragments of rock. I then sent the steeds to a proper distance, put out my fire, and lay down. As night set in, wild dogs and a pallah approached. Presently an occasional displacement of stones announced the presence of two old bull buffaloes which came and drank, and went away without
coming within shot. Soon after fourteen more arrived, but before these had finished drinking they became alarmed and charged panic-stricken up the rugged mountain side; they had winded two lions, which came to the fountain-head, and drank within eighteen yards of me. Here they lay lapping loudly and occasionally pausing four or five minutes, but, from their light colour and the masses of rock that surrounded them, I could not see to fire. About ten minutes after they had drunk I fancied that they were still lingering, and on throwing a stone I heard their retreating steps.

Soon after this six old bull buffaloes walked up slowly from a glen behind us, standing long to listen. When the leader came within twenty yards of us, Kleinboy and I fired together, when it ran thirty yards and fell; his comrades, after considering the matter for five minutes, came on once more, and we again took the leader, which also dropped. The rest, as before, retreated, but soon returning we wounded a third, which we did not get. It was now very dark, but the buffaloes again coming up we fired, and shot another old bull. In about ten minutes lions were busy on the carcase of the first buffalo, on which they feasted till morning, taking another drink before they went away. Towards daybreak we wounded a white rhinoceros, and soon after two black rhinoceroses fought beside us, but I was too sleepy to move.

On the 26th I rose at earliest dawn to inspect the three enormous old buffaloes; one of them carried a most splendid head; the lions had cleaned out all his entrails, their spoor being immense. Having eaten some buffalo breast and liver for breakfast, and despatched Ruyter to the wagons for the natives to remove the carcases, I and Kleinboy held through the hills to see what game might be in the next glen, which contained water. On our way thither I shot a fine old buck koodoo, putting both barrels into him at one hundred yards. As I was examining the spoor of the game by the fountain I suddenly detected a rock-snake stealing into a crevice beneath a mass of rock beside me. ITe was truly an enormous reptile, and, having never before dealt with this species of game, I did not exactly know how to set about capturing him. Being very anxious to preserve his skin entire, and not wishing to have
recourse to my rifle, I cut a stout and tough stick about eight feet long, and commenced the attack. Seizing him by the tail, I tried to get him out of his place of refuge; but we hauled in vain—he only drew his large folds firmer together; at length I got a rheim round the middle of his body, and Kleinboy and I pulled away in good earnest. The snake now finding the ground too hot for him, relaxed his coils, and suddenly bringing his head to the front, sprang out at us with his immense and hideous mouth opened to its largest dimensions, and before I could get out of his way he was clean out of his hole, and made a second spring, throwing himself forward about eight or ten feet and snapping his horrid fangs within a foot of my naked legs. I was not long in jumping out of his way, and getting hold of the green bough I had cut returned to the charge. The reptile now glided along at top-speed for a mass of broken rocks where he would have been beyond my reach, but before he could gain these, I taught him two or three tremendous whacks on the head. He however held on for a pool of muddy water, which he was rapidly crossing when I again belaboured him, and at length brought him to a stand still. We then hanged him by the neck to a bough of a tree, and in about fifteen minutes he appeared to be dead, but he became very troublesome during the operation of skinning, twisting his body in all manner of ways; this snake measured fourteen feet.

At night no game visited the water, being scared by the strong smell of the carrion. Lions however were so numerous that we deemed it safe to shift our position and light a fire, for they trotted past, growling fearfully. For a short time after this they kept quiet, but the fire being low they soon returned and commenced upon the buffalo the natives had left within fifty yards of us, and before morning two of them came up and looked into our bothy, when Boxer giving a sharp bark, and I suddenly awaking and popping up my head, they bounded off.

In the evening of the 28th I shot an old bull koodoo, and at night a large herd of zebras and blue wildebeest came to drink. We killed two white bull rhinoceroses, and one black bull and cow, wounding a white rhinoceros and two black ones. Three
other rhinoceroses came up, but I was too drowsy to watch any longer, and fell asleep.

Two troops of pallahs and a herd of sassaybys were at the fountain next day, when I bowled over the best stag sassayby in the troop. As we were making our beds ready on the following night a superb old bull buffalo appeared to leeward, and, taking a raking shot at eighty yards, I shot him in the heart; he ran forty-six yards and fell dead. But little game appeared during the night, scared by the blood of last night’s carnage. About midnight I put a ball through a hyæna.

These fountains afforded me excellent shooting for about a fortnight longer, during the whole of which time I watched nightly in my different hiding-holes, and bagged buffaloes, black and white rhinoceroses, koodoo, zebras, and other game. One night, while so engaged, a horrid snake, which Kleinboy tried to kill with his loading-rod, flew up at my eye, and spat poison into it. I immediately washed it well out at the fountain, but though I endured great pain all night, the next day the eye was all right.

On the 16th of October we trekked steadfastly on for Sichely under a most terrific sun, and halted at sundown without water: the country was covered with spoor of all the larger varieties of game, including elephants.

On the 17th, having trekked a couple of miles, I found myself once more on the banks of the Ngotwani, which, except at its source, was this year generally dried up; however by digging we obtained sufficient water for all. The natives in charge of the loose cattle, having been supplied too well with flesh, chose to remain behind. Though my remaining stud of six horses and twelve trek-oxen were thus absent all night, I was not anxious about them, trusting to the usual good herding of the natives. When, however, they came up after breakfast, and were minus all the loose oxen, without being able to give any account of them, further than that they imagined they were with us, I despatched two of my men on horseback to take up their spoor.

On the 18th I rode up the banks of the river with my dogs to seek for waterbuck, and arriving where another considerable river’s bed joins the Ngotwani, I came upon one, the
first I had ever seen. He was standing among some young thorn-trees, within sixty yards, and had his eye full upon me. Before I could pull up my horse he was off at a rapid pace, and crossed the river's bed above me; I shouted to the dogs, and fired a shot to encourage them, but in half a minute the buck disappeared over a rocky ridge, with three or four of my best hounds within thirty yards of his stern. I knew that he would make for the nearest water, and accordingly kept my eye down the river, listening with an attentive ear for the baying of the dogs. Presently the noble buck appeared ascending a rocky pyramidal hill down the river side with the agility of a chamois, and only one dog, Boxer, my best, at his heels. I galloped down at top speed to meet him, but was too late; however I fired a long shot to encourage the dog, and next moment, in ascending the opposite bank, my horse fell and rolled down it very nearly on the top of me; on regaining his legs Jock declined being caught, and made off for camp, followed by my after-rider: Alert at this moment came up, having eight or ten inches of the skin of his breast and forearm ripped clean up by the waterbuck. I now fancied that I had lost the deer, but a little after I heard Boxer's voice as he came down the river side with the buck, having once more turned him. I ran up the bank at my best pace to meet them, and found the buck at bay in a deep pool, surrounded by high banks of granite rock; he would not, however, stand, but swam through the deep water and broke bay on the opposite side. Boxer held on, and following him up the river, once more turned him to this pool; I met them coming down the watercourse, and sent a ball into the buck's throat, which made blood flow freely from his mouth; but he held stoutly on and plunged into the deep pool, standing at bay under a granite rock. I then headed him, and from above put a bullet between the shoulder-blades, which dropped him dead on the spot. He died as a waterbuck ought, in the deep water. My success with this noble and very beautiful antelope gave me most sincere pleasure. I had now shot noble specimens of every kind of game in South Africa, excepting the hippopotamus, and a few small bucks common in the colony. Having contemplated the waterbuck for some time, I cut off
his handsome head, which I bore to camp in triumph. On
the following day I succeeded, after a hot chase, in bringing
down another.

On the 19th Kleinboy returned without the lost oxen: the
natives said that they had been found by Bakalahari, and
driven to Sichely. Next day the half of them were sent by the
chief, with a message that no more had been found, but that
spoor had been seen.

On the morning of the 22nd I rode into camp, after follow­
ing unsuccesfully the spoor of a herd of elephants for two
days in a westerly course. Having partaken of some refresh­
ment, I saddled up two horses and rode down the bank of the
Ngotwani with the Bushman, to seek for any game I might
find. After riding about a mile I came suddenly upon an old
male leopard, lying under the shade of a thorn grove, panting
from the great heat, and although I was within sixty yards he
had not heard the horses' tread. I thought he was a lioness,
and, dismounting, took a rest in my saddle on the Old Grey,
and sent a bullet into him. Springing to his feet he ran half
way down the river side and stood to look about him, when I
put a second bullet into his spotted hide, upon which he dis­
appeared over the bank. The ground being very dangerous,
I did not follow, but at once sent Ruyter back to camp for
the dogs, who returned with Wolf and Boxer, very much done
up with the sun, and though I rode forward and encouraged
them with a shot, they would not take up his scent at all.

At length I gave it up as a lost affair, and was riding
away, when I heard Wolf give tongue behind me, and, gal­
loping back, found him at bay with the leopard, immediately
beneath where I had fired at him: he was very severely
wounded, and had slipped down into the river's bed and
doubled back, whereby he had thrown out both the dogs and
myself. As I approached he flew out upon Wolf, knocked
him over, and then running up the bed of the stream, took
shelter in a thick bush: Wolf, however, followed him, and at
this moment my other dogs, having heard the shot, came up
and bayed him fiercely. He sprang out upon them, and as
he crossed the river to take shelter beneath some large tangled
roots on the opposite bank, I put a third bullet into him, firing
from the saddle, and as soon as he came to bay gave him a fourth, which finished him. In this conflict the unfortunate Alert was wounded, as usual, getting his face torn open and his breast laid bare by the first waterbuck. The leopard was a very fine old male.

In the evening I directed my Hottentots to watch a fine pool in the river, but fearing "Tao," they disobeyed me. Coming down the stream I met a very old bull buffalo, with a troop of beautiful water-does. This bull, which I laid low with two shots, had many old wounds by lions.

On reaching the water I was bound for, I found it very promising, and, having fastened my two horses to a tree near the river, the banks of which were clad with groves of shady thorn trees, I prepared a place of concealment close by, and lay down for the night. After I had lain some time, squadrons of buffaloes were heard coming on, until the grove on the east bank of the water immediately above me was alive with them. After some time the leaders ventured down to drink, and this was the signal for a general move into the large pool of water: on they came like a regiment of cavalry at a gallop, making a mighty din, and obscuring the air with dense clouds of dust. At length I sent a ball into one of them, when a tremendous rush followed up the bank, where they all stood still, listening attentively; I knew the buffalo was severely wounded, but did not hear him fall. Some time after I fired at a second; this buffalo was also hurt hit, but did not then fall. A little after I fired at a third on the same spot, which ran forty yards, and dropping, groaned fearfully: this at once induced a number of the others to butt their dying comrade, according to their benevolent custom. I then crept in towards them, and, firing my fourth shot, a second buffalo ran forward a few yards, and falling, groaned as the last; her comrades, coming up, served her in the same manner. A second time I crept in, and, firing a fifth shot, a third buffalo ran forward and fell close to her dying comrades: in a few minutes all the other buffaloes made off, and the sound of teeth tearing at the flesh was immediately heard. Thinking it was the hyænas, I fired a shot to scare them from the flesh, and, being anxious to inspect the heads of the buffaloes, went forward with the native
who accompanied me. We were within about five yards of
the nearest buffalo, when I observed a yellow mass lying
alongside of him, and at the same instant a lion gave a deep
growl. I thought it was all over with me, my companion
shouted "Tao!" and, springing away, instantly commenced
blowing shrilly through a charmed piece of bone which he
wore on his necklace. I also retreated to my hole, and was
soon asleep, the native keeping watch over our destinies.
Some time after midnight more lions were heard coming from
other airts, and the one we had first seen commenced roaring
so loudly that the native thought proper to awake me. He
also wanted to drink, and held right away for the two un-
fortunate horses, roaring terribly. I felt rather alarmed for
their safety; but, trusting that he had had flesh enough for one
night, I lay still, and listened attentively. In a few minutes,
to my utter horror, I heard him spring upon one of the steeds
with an angry growl, and dash him to the earth; the horse
gave a slight groan, and all was still. Soon after this "Tao"
was once more to be heard munching the buffalo, and in a few
minutes he came forward roaring most terribly, and walking
up and down, as if meditating some mischief. I now thought
it high time to make a fire, and, quickly collecting some dry
reeds and sticks, in half a minute we had a cheerful blaze. The
lion had not yet got our wind, and moved forward to find out
what the deuce was up; but, not seeing to his entire satis-
faction from the top of the bank, was proceeding to descend
by a game-path into the river-bed within a few yards of us,
when I happened at the very moment to go to the spot to
fetch more wood, and, being entirely concealed from the lion's
view above by the intervening high reeds, we actually met
face to face!

The first notice I got was his sudden spring to one side.
accompanied by repeated angry growls, whilst I involuntarily
made a convulsive spring backwards, at the same time giving
a fearful shriek, such as I never before remember uttering, for
I fancied as he growled that he was coming upon me. We now
heaped on more wood, and kept up a very strong fire till day
broke, the lions feasting beside us all the time, notwithstanding
the proceedings of the little native, who, with a true Bechuana
spirit, lamenting the loss of so much good flesh, kept continually shouting and pelting them with flaming brands.

When it was day I rose and inspected the buffaloes. The three that had fallen were fine old cows; two of them had been partly consumed by the lions. I then went to look at the steeds, and found the sand around them covered with the lion's spoor. He had sprung upon the Old Grey, but had done him no further injury than scratching his back through the skin; perhaps he had been scared by the rheims, or, on discovering his spare condition, had preferred the buffalo.

On the 24th we held up the Ngotwani, halting at the fine large pool of water where I had shot the three cow buffaloes two nights before. Buyter and some natives whom I had left to look after the flesh, reported lions to have surrounded them all night, coming boldly up within a few yards, and only retreating when burning brands were sent flying at their heads.

In the forenoon I shot a very beautifully coloured wild goose with my Moore, putting two bullets through him, and made a clever shot at two wild geese, waiting until their heads were in a line, when I pinked them both with one bullet. At night the buffaloes capered about the banks of the Ngotwani, and three or four old lions were roaring close to me. In the course of the night I fired four long shots at the buffaloes, and towards morning, a very large lion and a lioness presenting themselves on the horizon of the bank, about twenty yards above me, I sent a ball into the gentleman, when he bounded off, and presently was heard growling as if dying. I could hear the lioness inviting him to stand up, to which he objected, growling fearfully. In the morning I arose to see what game had died, and found two fine old cow buffaloes with very handsome heads, but, to my great regret, both the lion and his mate had disappeared.

On the 26th I was in the saddle long before the sun rose, and rode down the river to seek waterbuck, accompanied by all my dogs. I had not been out long when I dropped a cow buffalo and two calves, one of which sank to the bottom, but soon after floated. The cow carried a very fine head, but
unfortunately a bullet had splintered the point of one of the horns.

I now held on up the side of the river for a couple of miles—the banks densely wooded—and then turned my face for home, having had a good bathe, and been saluted by a crocodile, who popped up his nose close beside me. Riding at a little distance from the river's bank, I came upon four waterbucks; the dogs at once gave chase, and broke a buck from the herd, which in one minute was standing at bay in the river, when I galloped up, and, dismounting, shot him. I stalked another, in true Highland fashion, and when within seventy yards sent my right ball through his shoulder; following his bloody spoor I heard groans on the bank a little above me, and, going forward, found the noble waterbuck dying; his head was borne in triumph to camp before my after-rider.

The morning of the 27th was extremely hot, but I nevertheless resolved to pack up and start for Chouaney. On the march one of my waggon’s after-wheels came off, but the axletree very fortunately escaped being broken. We reached Sichely’s a little after sundown.

The next day was deliciously cloudy, with some slight showers of rain. In the evening the chief came down to see me, bringing my four lost oxen, which he had at length made up his mind to restore.

I now proceeded slowly by way of Lotlokane, Motito, and Campbellisdorp, reaching the Vaal River on the 11th of November, but owing to the great body of water coming down, I was obliged to wait here for some days.

On the 16th, after several attempts to cross the river, we had to desist, leaving our heaviest waggon in the middle of the stream. I rested but little that night, and I had good reason to be anxious, for, if the river had risen, my waggon would have been carried away, and, as it contained nearly all my worldly property, I should have been utterly ruined.

I had, however, the gratification to find at daydawn that the Vaal had fallen a little during the night; and after incredible exertions and much assistance from parties of Griquas and several spans of fresh oxen, we dragged the heaviest waggon
without a check right out to the shallow water on the border of the river, and outspanned on the top of the high bank.

The next move was to get the other waggons through. The Griquas at first made some demur, saying that it was Sunday, but I very soon got rid of their objection by telling them I would prepare some food and coffee for them, when they set to work with a will, and in two hours the three waggons were brought safely through.

On the 8th we entered the village of Colesberg, and all the forenoon I was busy off-loading two of my vehicles. We spread out the curiosities in the market-place, making no end of a parade: it was truly a very remarkable sight, and struck the beholders with astonishment.

On the 13th I set out on my way to Grahamstown, passing on the 17th the Thebus flats, and on the 25th reached Fort Beaufort, where I dined with some old acquaintances at the mess of the 7th.

On the 29th we marched to the Fish River. Here I found about sixty waggons waiting the falling of the river to get through. Some of us set to work to clear away a bank of mud on the opposite side, after which a good many waggons, lightly laden, crossed the river; but on attempting to bring through my large waggon, it stuck fast, and was only extricated with the help of another span; it was time, for the river increased fast, and in another half-hour was a rapid torrent, at least ten feet deep.

By the 1st of February the river had fallen considerably, and after some work in clearing away the mud on both sides, I got my second waggon through about eleven A.M. I then inspanned and trekked on to Boatasberg; reaching Grahamstown on the 2nd, where my ivory and ostrich-feathers realised somewhere about 1000£.
CHAPTER XXIII.

START ON ANOTHER ELEPHANT-SHOOTING EXPEDITION — CROCODILES — HIPPOPOTAMI — SEROLOMOOTLOOQUE ANTELOPE.

Being undecided as to my future plans, I remained in Grahamstown for some weeks. At last I decided upon making another hunting expedition, and started for the far interior on the 11th of March, having resolved to try a short cut through the territories of the chief Mahura. This I took, and crossed the Vaal river on the 5th of May, far to the eastward of my former track.

On the 7th we entered upon the broad strath through which the Hart flows, and early on the 8th held up it parallel with that river. This day we came upon the largest pack of wild dogs I had ever seen; there were about forty of them, and when my dogs chased them they turned about and showed fight.

On the 12th we marched before breakfast to within three miles of Mahura, and, having breakfasted, called on Mr. Ross, the resident missionary. We walked together to the town and visited Mahura and his brother; the expressions of neither of these men were at all in their favour. Mr. Ross informed me that the former was at present meditating war upon a tribe to the north-east, and also that Mochuarr, the chief at Motito, intended to attack Sichely.

I obtained six karossos from Mahura in barter for ammunition, and presented him with a whipstock and two pounds of powder. About midday I inspanned, holding a spoor of three waggons some months old, which it was said would lead me into my old course at Great Choci; and on the 20th we reached the bank of the Meritsane, two miles below my old spoor. Spoor of the black rhinoceros, pallah, koodoo, and hartebeests were seen this day for the first time.

On the 22nd, having proceeded about four miles, we left
the main road to Bakatla, and held across-country to our right for my old outspanning-place at Lotlokane; I did not find the vast herds of game congregated here as usual, water being everywhere abundant and the grass over the whole country much higher than my oxen.

On the 23rd I made the Molopo, about one mile lower down than the drift. This darling little river is here completely concealed by lofty reeds and long grass, which densely clothe its margin to a distance of at least a hundred yards. On each side reitbuck were very abundant. Riding up the river side I observed two old lions come slowly out from the adjoining cover and slant off toward the reeds. I galloped forward to endeavour to get between them and the river, when the lions, imagining we were some species of game, did not attempt to retreat, but stood looking in wonder until I was within fifty yards of them, and right between the last Tao and the reeds. I was struck with wonder and admiration at the majestic and truly awful appearance which these two noble old animals presented.

They were both very large: the first, a "schwart fore-life," or black-maned lion,—the last, which was the finest and the oldest, a "chiell fore-life," or yellow-maned lion. The black-maned lion, after looking at me for half a minute, walked slowly forward and bounded into the reeds; his dark-brown comrade would fain have done the same, but I was now between him and his retreat. He seemed not at all to like my appearance, or to feel certain what I was, and, fancying that I had not observed him, lay down in the long grass. Having loaded in the saddle, I waited a minute for all my dogs to come up, and then rode slowly forward towards the lion as if to pass within a few yards of him.

This move was fatal to me, for I laid open the ground of retreat between the lion and the reeds; and on coming within twenty or twenty-five yards of him, and in the act of reining in my horse to fire, he took his eye off me, examined the ground between him and the reeds, and, seeing the coast clear, suddenly bounded forward, and, before I could even dismount from my panic-stricken steed, was at the edge of the reeds, which he entered with a lofty spring, making the water fly as
he pitched into them. Several of the dogs followed him, but immediately retreated, barking, and evidently in great fear.

On the 27th we trekked to Chouaney, and remained there next day to trade. I obtained two natives from Sichely to accompany me to the Limpopo, their pay being a musket each.

About midday we marched, and halted near the Ngotwani, along whose banks my course lay. The country through which this river twines is sandy, and in general covered with dense thorny jungle, which greatly impeded our progress, having constantly to cut a passage before the waggons could advance. Several lions commenced roaring soon after the sun went down. On the evening of the next day I shot a magnificent buffalo which carried a splendid head.

On the 8th of June we made the long-wished-for Limpopo, and I was greatly struck with the first view of this most interesting river: the trees along its banks were of prodigious size and great beauty.

The next day I rode ahead of the waggons with Ruyter, and shot a waterbuck; this animal and the pallah were very abundant. I presently gave chase to a herd of the former to try their speed, but as they led me into a labyrinth of marshy vleis, I gave it up. After this I came upon a huge crocodile basking on the sand, which instantly dashed into the stream. Several species of wild duck and a variety of water-fowl were also extremely numerous and very tame; guinea-fowl, three kinds of a large partridge, and two kinds of quail were likewise plentiful. I killed an old pallah and a waterbuck this day, but did not bag the latter.

On the 10th I rode ahead of my waggons at daydawn, and saw, for the first time, the spoor of sea-cows or hippopotami; it was very similar to the spoor of borelê, or black rhinoceros, but larger, and had four toe-marks instead of three.

In the afternoon I again sallied forth with the Bushman and fresh horses, and, directing the waggons to take the straight course, followed the windings of the river. Here I beheld three enormous crocodiles basking on the sand on the opposite side, and was astonished at their size: one of them seemed to be sixteen or eighteen feet in length, with a body as thick as that of an ox. On observing us they plunged into the dead
water, but, the next minute, one of them popping up his terrible head in the middle of the stream, I made a beautiful shot, and sent a ball through his brains; the convulsions of death which followed were truly awful. At first he sank to the shot, but, instantly striking the bottom with his tail, rose to the surface, where he struggled violently, sometimes on his back, sometimes on his belly, with at one time his head and fore feet above the stream, and immediately after his tail and hind legs, the former lashing the water with a force perfectly astounding. Clouds of sand accompanied him in all his movements, the strong stream carrying him along with it, till at length the struggle of death was over, and he sank to rise no more.

After this I detected a small crocodile on the sand, and gave him a shot, when he instantly plunged into the river; a little farther I wounded a third, and eventually a fourth.

We now got into a fine green turn of the river, and came suddenly upon a troop of five or six beautiful leopards. At the next bend of the stream three huge crocodiles were seen on the opposite side. Stalking within easy range, I shot one of them in the head, and again through the ribs. On receiving this he kept running round and round, snapping his horrid jaws fearfully at his own wounded side. Galloping to my waggons, I came suddenly upon a lion and lioness lying in the grass below a gigantic old mimosa, and took a couple of shots at the lion, missing him with my first, but wounding him with the second barrel, when he rose with several angry short growls and bounded off. On reaching camp, my men informed me they had just seen two huge hippopotami in the river beneath. Proceeding to the spot, I shot one, putting three balls into his head, when he sank, but night setting in we lost him.

At dawn on the 12th, a noise was heard for about twenty minutes up the river, like the sound of the sea, accompanied by the lowing of buffaloes; it was a herd crossing the river. I rode in the direction of the sounds to look at them. It was in a sequestered bend of the river, where the banks for several acres were densely clad with lofty reeds and grass which towered above my head as I sat on my horse's back. Beyond the reeds and grass were trees of all sizes, forming a
dense shade; this is the general character of the banks of the Limpopo, as far as I had yet seen. I was slowly returning to camp, when, behold, an antelope of the most exquisite beauty, utterly unknown to sportsmen or naturalists, stood broadside in my path, looking me full in the face. It was a princely old buck of the serolomootloque of the Bakalahari, or bush-buck of the Limpopo, and carried a very fine wide-set pair of horns. On beholding him, I was struck with wonder and delight; my heart beat with excitement; I sprang from my saddle, but before I could fire a shot this gem of beauty bounded into the reeds, and was lost to my sight. At that moment I would have given half what I possessed in the world for a shot at that lovely antelope, and at once resolved not to proceed farther on my expedition until I had captured him, although it should cost me the labour of a month.

I immediately gave my horse to my after-ridcr, and with my rifle on full-cock and at the ready proceeded to stalk with extreme caution the length and breadth of the cover, but I stalked in vain; the antelope had vanished, and was nowhere to be found. I then returned slowly up the river's bank towards my camp, and had ridden to within a few hundred yards of the waggon's, meditating how I should best circumvent the serolomootloque. when once more this lovely antelope crossed my path; I had been unwittingly driving him before me along the bank of the river. He trotted like a roebuck into the thick cover, and then stood broadside among the thorn bushes, when I fired and missed him; but he gave me a second chance; and before my rifle was down from my shoulder the serolomootloque lay prostrate in the dust. The ball had cut the skin open along his ribs, and, entering his body, passed along his neck and lodged in his brains, where we found it on preparing the head for stuffing. I was not a little gratified at my good fortune in securing this new and valuable trophy; he was one of the most perfect antelopes I had ever beheld, both in symmetry and colour. I had him immediately conveyed to camp, where I took his measurement, and wrote a correct description of him for the benefit of naturalists, christening him the "Antelopus Roualeynei," or "bush-buck of the Limpopo."
The next day I shot an old buck pallah, and having ridden a few miles farther came upon two fine old waterbucks fighting, when I stalked in within a hundred yards, and shot them both right and left; the heads were fair specimens, but, having many better, I reluctantly left them to perish in the field. Hereabouts I found fresh spoor of hippopotami of the preceding night. I followed this spoor to a considerable distance along the margin of the river, and at last came upon the troop. They were lying in a secluded bend of the river, beneath some gigantic shady trees; the water in heavy floods had thrown up large banks of sand at this spot, in which they had hollowed out their beds. Dense underwood and reeds surrounded the place, and it was close to a very deep and broad stream, into which their footpaths led in every direction.

I was first apprised of my proximity to them by a loud cry from one old bull, who took alarm at the sudden flight of a species of heron: his cry was not unlike that of an elephant. He stood in water that reached half-way up his side, shaking his short ears in the sun, and every half-minute disappeared beneath the stream, when, again showing half his body, he uttered a loud snorting noise. On observing him I dismounted, and every time he disappeared ran in, until I stood behind the tall reeds, within twenty yards of him. Here I might have dropped him with a single ball, but I unfortunately made up my mind not to molest them until the next day, when I should have men to assist me in getting them out. Presently observing me, he dived, and swam round a shady promontory into the deep stream, where he and his comrades kept up a continual loud blowing. I returned to camp, and, having ordered my men to inspan, tried a drift on horseback, and crossed the Limpopo, but, the water coming over my saddle, I did not attempt to bring my waggons through. We accordingly held our course on the north-western bank of the river, and outspanned about a mile above the place where I had found the hippopotami.

At sundown the sea-cows commenced their march up the river, passing opposite our camp, and making the most extraordinary sounds—blowing, snorting, and roaring, sometimes crashing through the reeds, sometimes swimming gently, and splashing and sporting through the water. There being a little
moonlight, I went down with my man Carey, and sat some time by the river-side, contemplating these wonderful monsters; it was a truly grand and very extraordinary scene; and the opposite bank of the stream being clad with trees of gigantic size and great beauty, they added greatly to the interest of the picture.

On the 14th I proceeded with three after-riders, two double-barrelled rifles, and about a hundred rounds of ammunition, to the spot where I had yesterday found the hippopotami; but they had taken alarm, and were all gone. The spoor leading up the river, I rode along the banks, examining every pool, until my steed was quite knocked up, but found not a single sea-cow; they had made short cuts at every bend, sometimes taking the direct line on my side, and sometimes on the other. Finding that I must sleep in the field if I followed on, I despatched Ruyter to camp for my blankets, coffee-kettle, biscuit, &c., and fresh horses, and having penetrated every corner of the dense jungle that overhung the river, began to be very hungry, when I had the good fortune to kill a young doe of the "Antelopus Roualeynai," which in a few minutes was roasting on the fire.

My yellow steed "Flux," about my very best, died this day of horse-sickness. After luncheon I continued my search for hippopotami, and just as the sun went down started an old fellow from beneath some tall reeds, which hung over a deep broad pool. On hearing me approach he dived with a loud splash, and immediately re-appeared with a blowing noise a little farther up, and within twenty yards of the bank; having looked about him, he again dived, and continued his course up the river, which could be traced from the wave above. I ran in front of him, and when he came up the third time, sent the bullet into his brain, when he floundered for one moment at the surface, and sank to the bottom. There he most probably remained for only half an hour, but in a few minutes night set in, and I had thus the extreme mortification to lose my hippopotamus, the second one I had shot. We slept beneath a tree that night. In the course of the following day I shot three large crocodiles; one of them lay upon an island, and did not regain the water.
CHAPTER XXIV.

CROSS THE LIMPOPO — RASH ENCOUNTER WITH A HIPPOPOTAMUS —
TWO SERLOMOOTLOOQUES SHOT — SELEKAS TOWN — TRADING —
HIPPOPOTAMI — AUDACITY OF THE LION.

On the 17th of June, having found a good drift, I crossed the Limpopo with my waggons, and drew them up in a green and shady spot.

On the 18th a dense mist hung over the river, which as we advanced became more promising for sea-cow; at every turn there occurred deep, still pools, and occasional sandy islands, densely clad with lofty reeds. Above and beyond these reeds stood trees of immense age and gigantic size, beneath which grew a long and very rank description of grass, on which the sea-cow delights to pasture.

I soon found fresh spoor, and after holding on for several miles came, just as the sun was going down, upon the fresh lairs of four hippopotami. They had been lying asleep on the margin of the river, and, hearing me come crackling through the reeds, plunged into the deep water. I at once saw that they were newly started, for the froth and bubbles were still on the spot where they had dashed in; and next moment I heard them blowing a little way down the river. I then headed them, but with considerable difficulty, owing to the cover and the reeds, and at length came down right above where they were standing. It was a broad part of the stream, with a sandy bottom, and the water came half-way up their sides; there were three cows and an old bull, and, though alarmed, they did not appear aware of the extent of the impending danger.

I took the sea-cow next me, and with my first ball gave her a mortal wound, knocking loose the great plate on the top of her skull, when she commenced plunging round and round, and then occasionally remained still, sitting for a few minutes on the same spot. On hearing the report of my rifle two of the
others took up stream, and the fourth dashed down the river, trotting along at a smart pace, like oxen, as long as the water was shallow. I was now in a state of very great anxiety about my wounded sea-cow, for I feared that she would get into deep water, and be lost like the two last. To settle the matter, therefore, I fired a second shot from the bank, which, entering the roof of her skull, passed out through her eye; after which she kept constantly splashing round and round in a circle in the middle of the river. I had great fears of the crocodiles, and did not know whether the sea-cow might not attack me; my anxiety to secure her, however, overcame all hesitation, so, divesting myself of my leathers, and armed with a sharp knife, I dashed into the water, which at first took me up to my arm-pits, but the middle was shallower.

As I approached Behemoth I halted for a moment, ready to dive under the water if she attacked me; but though her eye looked very wicked, she was stunned, and did not know what she was doing; so, running in upon her, and seizing her short tail, I attempted to incline her course to land. It was extraordinary what enormous strength she still had in the water; I could not guide her in the slightest degree; and she continued to splash, plunge, and blow, and make her circular course, carrying me along with her, as if I was a fly on her tail. Finding this gave me but a poor hold, I took out my knife, and, as the only means of securing her, cut two deep parallel incisions through the skin on her stern, and lifting this skin from the flesh, so that I could get in my two hands, I made use of it as a handle; and after some desperate hard work, sometimes pushing and sometimes pulling, the sea-cow continuing her circular course all the time, and I holding on like grim Death, eventually succeeded in bringing this gigantic and most powerful animal to the bank. My Bushman now brought me a stout buffalo-rhein from my horse's neck, which I passed through the opening in the thick skin, and moored Behemoth to a tree; I then sent a ball through the centre of her head, and she was numbered with the dead.

At this moment my wagons fortunately came up, when we took down a span of our best oxen and a pair of rheim-chains, and succeeded in dragging the sea-cow high and dry.
A WALTZ WITH A HIPPOPOTAMUS.
were all astonished at her enormous size, she appeared to be about five feet broad across the belly; and I could see much beauty in this animal, so admirably formed for the amphibious life to which it was destined by Nature.

We were occupied all the morning of the 19th cutting up and salting the select parts of the sea-cow; she was extremely fat, more resembling a pig than a cow or a horse; of the skull I took particular charge. In the evening I shot a brace of waterbucks, after which I rode to the summit of an adjacent hill, from which I obtained a fine view of the surrounding country. Many bold blue mountain ranges stood to the north and north-west; to the east and south-east were also mountain-ranges; whilst to the south a very remarkable, light-coloured rock, in the form of a dome, shot high above the level of the surrounding forest.

The next day I shot a lovely serolomootlooque, and unluckily cut his beautiful horn off at the base. His head, before I destroyed it, was perhaps the finest along the banks of the Limpopo; the horns were of extraordinary length, and had a most perfect set and turn. Later in the day another fell to my rifle.

After depositing the buck in my larder, I proceeded many miles along the borders of the river, and on emerging into an open space running parallel with the stream came upon large troops of pallahs, blue wildebeests, zebras, and, to my utter astonishment, a herd of about ten bull elands; for I was not aware that they would be met with in these parts. Delighted with the rencontre, I selected the best bull eland, a ponderous grey old fellow, and after a sharp ride of a few miles brought him back close on the river, when I shot him in the shoulder, holding out my rifle with one hand, like a pistol. Having kindled a fire, and roasted a portion of him, I skinned the side which lay uppermost, that I might have some covering, for I had neither coat nor waistcoat, and the night was coming on; when, however, the sun went down, signal shots disclosed to me the position of the waggons.

On the 21st I went some distance down the river with Ruyter in quest of sea-cow and serolomootloques; we found fresh spoor of the former, and I shot one doe of the latter. As