I rode along I saw six crocodiles and a great number of monkeys of two varieties; also several deadly serpents, one of them a cobra, very similar to that of India. Bees were very abundant along the Limpopo, the gigantic hollow trees affording them snug homes; my natives brought me some excellent honey, which they found in an old ant-hill. I observed along the banks of the river enormous trees from three to four feet in diameter, cut down by the Bakalahari, only for the sake of the honey which they contained; the natives fell them with immense trouble and perseverance with little tomahawks of their own make.

The ant-hills on the Limpopo and throughout this part of Africa are truly wonderful; it is common to see them upwards of twenty feet high, and one hundred feet in circumference. They are composed of clay, which hardens in the sun like a brick, and have generally one tall tapering spire in the middle of the fabric, the base being surrounded with similar projections of smaller height. The natives informed me that we were opposite to the tribe Seleka, whom they tried to persuade me to visit, but I resolved to stick to the Limpopo.

On the 22nd we came upon the Macoolwey, a large clear running river, joining the Limpopo from the south-east: here I bagged a princely waterbuck.

On the succeeding day, after experiencing great difficulty in finding a drift, I crossed the Limpopo, but failed to fall in with serolomootlooques; I therefore retraced my steps down the river to a spot where buffaloes had drunk on the preceding evening, and there spent the night.

In the morning I started one old buck serolomootlooque, but did not fire; he went off barking exactly like a roebuck, which they very much resemble in form, gait, voice, and habits. Following this buck, I started two does, one of which I shot. Here I left one of my after-riders, and taking Ruyter with me, rode down the bank of the Limpopo to explore. I found the river wearing quite a different appearance below its junction, being very much broader, indeed, nearly as large as the Orange River. Crocodiles of enormous size were to be seen at every turn, and I shot four huge fellows. We then fell in with a large rock serpent, or “metsapallah,” about eleven feet long.
which I shot through the head, and brought to camp slung round my neck.

Having resolved over-night to rob a colony of bees of their precious stores, I started with a tin-pail for the nest, in an old hollow tree. Here we kindled a large fire in front of the hole, and having smoked them with dry grass, took out the honey, which was excellent; I got, however, about fifty stings on my hands and arms. In the afternoon I inspanned, and crossed the Macoolwey, a few miles above its junction with the Limpopo, reaching that river by moonlight. Hippopotami were heard snorting, and lions roared near us all night long. Next day I had the good luck to shoot two very fine old buck serolomootloques.

On the 27th, whilst riding along the river's bank, some distance beyond the limits of yesterday's gallop, I heard a loud plunge, which was immediately followed by the welcome blowing sound of sea-cows. I instantly divested myself of my leather trousers, and went into the reeds, where I came suddenly upon a crocodile of average size, lying in a shallow back stream, and, on his attempting to gain the main river, shot him dead on the spot; this was the first crocodile I had managed to lay my hands upon, although I had killed many. The sound of my rifle alarmed the sea-cows; some took up and some down the river. Soon after breakfast, the chief Seleka, accompanied by a number of his aristocracy, paid me a visit.

On the 28th, he sent men down the river, before it was clear, to look for sea-cows; and they soon came running after me to say that they had found some; I followed accordingly, and in a long, broad, and deep bend, came upon four hippopotami, two full-grown cows, a small one, and a calf. At the tail of this pool was a strong and rapid stream, which thundered along in Highland fashion over large masses of dark rock, and on coming to the shady bank, I could at first only see one old cow and a calf. When they dived, I ran into the reeds, and as the cow rose shot her in the head; she, however, got away down the river, and I lost her. The other three took up the river, and became very shy, remaining under the water for five minutes at a time, and then popping their heads up only for a few seconds; I accordingly kept behind
the reeds, in hope of their dismissing their alarms. Presently the two smaller ones, apparently no longer frightened, showed their entire heads, remaining above water for a minute; but the third, which was by far the largest, and which I thought must be a bull, continued extremely shy, diving under the water for ten minutes and more, letting us see her face but for a second, and making a blowing like a whale, returning to the bottom. I stood there with rifle at my shoulder, and my eye on the sight, until I was quite tired. I thought I should never get a chance at her, and had just resolved to let fly at one of the smaller ones, when she shoved up half her head and looked about her; I fired, the ball cracked loudly below her ear, and the huge body of the sea-cow came floundering to the top. Though not dead, she had lost her senses, and continued swimming round and round, sometimes beneath and sometimes at the surface of the water, creating a fearful commotion, when I finished her with a shot in the neck, upon which she instantly sank to the bottom, and disappeared in the strong and rapid torrent at the tail of the sea-cow hole. Here she remained for a long time, and I thought that I had lost her, but the natives said she would soon re-appear, and while taking my breakfast there was a loud hue-and-cry that the hippopotamus had floated and was sailing down the river. It was so, and my Hottentots swam in and brought her to the bank; her flesh proved most excellent. In the afternoon I shot a splendid old waterbuck, with a princely head, which I kept.

The next day I killed a very fine buck serolomootlooque, and again rode down the river's bank, with two after-riders, to seek for hippopotami, which the natives reported would be found in a pool in advance, where another river joined the Limpopo. After riding a short distance I found the banks unusually green and shady, and in a broad, deep, and long still bend of the stream the game I sought.

They were lying in their sandy beds among the rank reeds at the river-side, and on hearing me galloping over the gravelly shingle, the deposit of some great flood, they plunged into their native stronghold in dire alarm, and commenced blowing, snorting, and uttering a sound very similar to that
made by the musical instrument called a serpent. It was a
fairish place for an attack, so, divesting myself of my leather
trousers, I ordered my after-riders to remain silent, and then
cropt cautiously forward, determined not to fire a shot until I
had thoroughly examined the herd to see if there was not a
bull, and at all events to secure, if possible, the very finest
head amongst them.

The troop consisted of about fourteen hippopotami; ten of
them being a little farther down the stream than the other
four. Having carefully examined these ten, I made out two
decidedly larger than the others. I then cropt a little distance
up the river behind the reeds, to obtain a view of the four,
and saw that they were two enormous old cows, with two
large calves beside them. The old ones had exactly the
same size of head as the two best cows below. I accord­
ingly chose what I thought the best of these two, and, mak­
ing a fine shot at the side of her head, at once disabled her.
She disappeared for a few seconds, and then came flounder­
ring to the surface, swimming round and round, diving and
reappearing with a loud splash and a blowing noise, and
getting slowly down the river, until I re-attacked and finished
her, about an hour after, a quarter of a mile farther down.
The other sea-cows were now greatly alarmed, showing,
that only occasionally, but a small part of their heads. I
managed, however; to select one of the three remaining ones,
and, making a perfect shot, sent a bullet crashing into her
brain; this caused instantaneous death, and she sank to the
bottom. I then wounded two more sea-cows in the head,
both of which I lost; the others were so alarmed and cunning
that it was impossible to do anything with them.

The one I had first shot was now resting with half her
body above water on a sandbank in the Limpopo, at the mouth
of the river Lepalala, which was broad, clear, and rapid, and
from this position I started her with one bullet in the shoulder
and another in the side of the head, this last shot set her in
motion, when she commenced struggling in the water in the
most extraordinary manner, disappearing for a few seconds
and then coming up like a great whale, setting the whole
river in a vortex. Presently she took away down the stream
but, returning, I killed her with a shot in the middle of the forehead. This proved a most magnificent specimen of the female hippopotamus. She far surpassed the brightest conceptions I had formed of her, being a larger, a more lively, and in every way a more wonderful and interesting animal than certain writers had led me to expect. On securing this fine sea-cow, I immediately cut off her head and placed it high and dry, and this was a work of considerable difficulty for four men. We left the body in the water, being, of course, unable to do anything with it there, and it was well I secured the head when I did, for next morning the crocodiles had dragged away the carcase.

The body of the other huge sea-cow which I had shot in the brain now floated, and became stationary within about twenty yards of the opposite bank of the river. I accordingly held down the river to the tail of the pool, where the stream was broad and rapid, and less likely to hold crocodiles, and, although cold and worn out with fatigue, swam across to secure my game. Two of my Hottentots swam over to my assistance; but just as we were going to lay hold of the animal she became disengaged from the invisible fetters that had held her, a gigantic old tree that some flood had lodged in the bottom of the pool, and floated down the middle of the river; when she neared the tail of the pool we swam in, and, inclining her course to shore, stranded her on a fine gravel bank.

This truly magnificent specimen was about the same size as the first, and apparently older, but her teeth were not quite so thick. Ordering the natives at once to cut off her huge head, and having seen it safely deposited on the bank along with that of her comrade, I held for my waggons, having to cross the Lepalala to reach them. I was very much knocked up, but most highly gratified at my good fortune in first killing, and then securing, two out of the four best sea-cows in a herd of fourteen.

On the 1st of July I marched to the town of the Baseleka, which I reached in about four hours, having crossed the Lepalala on the way. Seleka’s town is built on the top and sides of a steep and precipitous white quartz rock, which rises abruptly, and forms a very remarkable feature in the green
forest scenery that surrounds it. In the evening the chief brought down four fairish bull elephants' teeth, which I purchased for four muskets.

On the morrow I held east with Seleka and about a hundred and fifty of his men, to look for elephants, they having heard from the Bakalahari of a troop of bulls. As the country appeared to me well adapted for the sport, and as I regretted not a little that my men and a good stud of horses should be idle at the waggons while they might be earning me fifty pounds once or twice a week, I armed and mounted John Stofolus and Carey, both of whom vaunted their courage and skill, and, in the event of our finding, instructed them to select a good elephant, and, if not able to kill him, at least to hold him in view until I had finished mine, which I promised to do as quickly as possible, and then to come to their assistance.

We had not proceeded far from the white rock when we entered a forest frequented by elephants, and very soon came upon the fresh spoor of a troop of about ten fine bulls. The spooring was admirably conducted, the old chief taking the greatest care of the wind, keeping his followers well back, and maintaining silence, extending picquets in advance, and to the right and left, and ordering them to ascend to the summits of the tallest trees to obtain a correct view of the surrounding forest. Presently the mighty game was found, and Old Schwartland, and my dogs all in the couples, eight in number, were alongside me, when having obtained a blink of one of the elephants, I dashed forward and gave him a shot as he passed me, and, riding hard under his stern, yelled like a demon to clear him from his comrades and to bring the dogs to my assistance. They came, as I expected, to my elephant, and I killed him from the saddle in a business-like style, loading and firing with great rapidity; he took from fifteen to twenty shots before he fell. All this time I listened in vain for shots from John or Carey, but the former did not even consider himself safe in the same forest, and had slunk away from Carey while in sight of a splendid bull, nor was anything more heard of him that day. Carey did but little better, for he lost his elephant immediately, one charge being sufficient.
The natives were now fighting with an immense old bull, and riding in their direction I came upon the elephant, which, although red with blood, and resembling a porcupine from the number of the assagais, was little the worse for all he had received. I then attacked him, and, with eight or ten shots, ended his career.

Next morning, the Bakalahari reported that they had heard elephants during the night, and we soon took up the spoor of one old fellow, which led us into a forest thoroughly ploughed up and broken with elephants. Here this fine fellow joined a glorious squadron of from twenty to thirty mighty bulls, and, shouting to the dogs, I was instantly in the middle of them. Then followed a wonderful scene; the elephants, panic-stricken, charged forward, levelling the forest before them, trumpeting, with trunks and tails aloft.

Looking back over my shoulder I beheld them come crashing on behind and within a few yards of me. I then pressed forward, overtook about ten bulls, rode under their stumps, chose the best, and, yelling at the top of my voice, separated him from his comrades, and brought my dogs to my assistance. In a few minutes he had many mortal wounds, and at last fell, having received twenty-nine balls, twenty-seven of them being in a very correct part. This was an enormous first-rate bull; but his teeth, though large, not being the best in the troop, I felt very much dissatisfied.

On the forenoon of the 5th I traded with Seleka for korasses of pallah's skin and elephants' tusks, and in the evening climbed to the summit of the quartz rock on which the citadel of Seleka is situated. Here I had an excellent view of the surrounding country; chains of mountains of moderate height shot above the level forest in every direction, but mostly to the east and south.

The next day I took the field for elephants, accompanied by the greater part of the Seleka tribe, and following the bank of the river Lepalala, which we eventually crossed. Having proceeded some distance through a tract but little frequented by elephants, we discovered a huge and most daring old lion, with his partner and a troop of very small cubs. I had passed him within about sixty yards, and was a little above him on the hill before I was aware of his presence, of which he gave
us notice by loud growls, advancing boldly with open jaws towards the natives. These fled before him; and the lioness having slunk away with her cubs, and some of our dogs having attacked him, he turned right about and followed slowly after his mate, growling fearfully.

We feared that all this noise might have started the elephants: when, however, we had gained a commanding point on the shoulder of the hill, we could see a troop of very middling cow elephants with a number of calves of all sizes, and at about half a mile to the north another troop of cows. I wished to attack these, but the natives prevailed upon me to close with the nearest troop; and the dogs having separated a fine old cow, with long white tusks, from the herd, I galloped up, and, firing from the saddle, bowled her over with a single ball behind the shoulder.

On the 11th we held north-east, and halted on the Limpopo, and two first-rate bull elephants and one hippopotamus fell to my rifle this day. I fought one of the former in dense wait-a-bit jungle from half-past eleven till the sun was under, when his tough old spirit fled, and he fell pierced with fifty-seven balls. On the 17th I trekked about five miles, and next day rode down the river, and beheld one of the most wondrous and interesting sights that a sportsman could be blessed with.

On the sandy promontory of an island were about thirty sea-cows and calves, whilst in the pool opposite, and a little below them, stood about twenty more sea-cows with their heads and backs above water. About fifty yards farther down were eight or ten immense fellows, which I think were all bulls; and about one hundred yards below these in the middle of the stream stood another herd of about eight or ten cows with calves, and two huge bulls. The sea-cows lay close together like pigs, their favourite position being to rest their heads on their comrades' sterns and sides. These herds were attended by an immense number of rhinoceros birds, which, on observing me, did their best to spread alarm amongst the hippopotami. I was resolved to select, if possible, a first-rate old bull out of this vast concourse of animals, and delayed firing for nearly two hours, during which time I attentively studied their heads behind the thick thorny cover.
Having made my choice, I fired my first shot at a splendid bull, and sent the ball in a little behind the eye. He was at once disabled, and kept plunging and swimming round and round, wearing away down the pool, until I finished him with two more shots. The whole pool was now in a state of intense commotion, the best cows and bulls at once became very shy and cunning, showing only the flat roofs of their heads, and sometimes only their nostrils; the younger cows were not so timid and raised their heads; and if I had wished to make a bag I might have shot an immense number. This however was not my object, and as there was likely to be a difficulty in securing what I did kill, I determined only to fire at the very best; when, therefore, the sun went down I had only bagged five first-rate hippopotami, four cows and one bull; besides these there were three or four more very severely wounded which were spouting blood throughout the pool.

The next day I marched the two spans of oxen down to the edge of the river, and dragged out one of the sea-cows high and dry. During the day I killed two more, but they were very shy and cunning. I saw at least thirty basking in the sun.

On the 20th I again rode down the river to the pool, and bagged two very first-rate old sea-cows. I also discovered a most dangerous trap constructed by the Bakalabari for killing sea-cows. It consisted of a sharp little assagai or spike thoroughly poisoned, and stuck firmly into the end of a heavy block of thorn-wood about four feet long and five inches in diameter. This formidable affair was suspended over the centre of a sea-cow path at a height of about thirty feet from the ground by a bark cord which passed over a high branch of a tree, and thence to a peg on one side of the path beneath, leading across the path to a peg on the other side, where it was fastened. To the suspending cord were two triggers, so constructed that, when the sea-cow struck against the cord which led across the path, the heavy block above was set at liberty, which instantly dropped with immense force with its poisonous dart, inflicting a sure and mortal wound. The bones and old teeth of sea-cows which lay rotting along the bank of the river evinced the success of this dangerous inven-
I remained in the neighbourhood of this pool for several days, during which time I bagged no fewer than fifteen first-rate hippopotami, the greater portion of them being bulls.

At dawn of day on the 28th we marched up the river to the drift; but after incredible exertions, and the loss of some of my traps, did not get my waggon across till the 29th.

I inspanned at dawn of day on the 30th. Seleka and his men and my hired Baquinas remained by me until I crossed the Limpopo, and then all turned home. I was now once more without natives, and held down the north-western bank, but Bakalahari soon joined us, and their numbers increased as we held on. I had the good luck this day to bag five more first-rate hippopotami.

The next day I killed seven; amongst them was a most splendid old cow, which carried tusks far superior to any we had yet seen.

From a continued run of good luck in all my hunting expeditions with my horses and oxen, I had become foolishly careless, and had got into a most dangerous habit of allowing them to feed about the waggon long after the sun was under. I was always boasting of my good luck, and used to say that the lions knew that the cattle belonged to me, and feared to molest them. This night, however, a bitter lesson was in store for me, for the horses were sought for in vain.

The next day the sun had been up two hours, but my horses could nowhere be found. I therefore ordered John Stofolus and Hendrick to take bridles and a supply of meat, and to follow up the spoor; and, being anxious to see which way it went, took a rifle and accompanied them. Observing vultures to the west, and hearing the voices of natives, I proceeded in that direction at top speed, and to my utter horror found the remains of my two most valuable and favourite veteran shooting horses, "Black Jock" and "Schwartland," which had been fearfully mangled and half consumed by a troop of lions; the former was a first-rate young horse, worth 24l., the latter aged, but by far my most valuable steed, and perhaps the best shooting-horse in Southern Africa—he knew no fear, and would approach as near as I chose to elephant or lion, or any description of game. From his back I had shot nearly all my
elephants last year; and so fond and careful was I of this horse, that I never mounted him until we had found elephants, when I used him in the fight, and then immediately off-saddled.

With a sickening heart I returned from this painful scene utterly dejected to camp, and in the afternoon, taking all my dogs, went in search of the lions, but failed to find them. A large party of the natives from the south-west, the Bamalette, reached me late in the day: their object was to obtain flesh, and to endeavour to persuade me to come and trade with them. They had fallen in with three of my steeds; the others were found by my men near the drift where I had last crossed the river. At sundown I constructed a very strong kraal for my cattle, and made all fast. Very soon after a troop of lions came up on the spoor of the horses, and fancying they could repeat the tragedy of last night, fought with my dogs in the most daring manner, off and on, until near daybreak, driving them in to the fireside. The cattle were very restive, and nearly broke away, but the kraal was good and saved them.

In the morning I rode down the river, followed by at least two hundred natives. When the waggons came up, I found myself minus another steed, a fine young mare, which had fallen into a Bakalahari pitfall and been suffocated.

On the 5th I fell in with a large herd of about thirty hippopotami, wounding seven or eight in the head, and killing two, a bull and a cow, both of which we found next day. At night the lions fought with our dogs until the morning, and came boldly in between the fires of the natives who lay around my camp.

The next day I rode ahead to the pool where I had last shot. When the waggons came up, I detected the head Bakalahari of the kraal beside which my mare had been killed talking with my cattle herds, with whom he seemed to be on very intimate terms. The death of my horse was either intentional or most culpably careless, as the pits were left covered, and the cattle driven to pasture in the middle of them; I accordingly deemed it proper that this man should be made an example of; so, calling to my English servant, Carey, to assist me, we each seized an arm of the guilty chief,
and I ordered Hendrick to flog him with a sea-cow jambok; after which I admonished him, and told him that if the holes were not opened in future, I would make a more severe example as I proceeded. The consequence of this salutary admonition was, that all the pitfalls along the river were thrown open in advance of my march, a thing which I had never before seen among the Bechuana tribes. In the afternoon I rode down the river a few pools, and I wounded three or four hippopotami, and killed one; we saw about thirty.
CHAPTER XXV.

TREK DOWN THE LIMPOPO — A LION CARRIES OFF ONE OF MY MEN — "TSETSE" FLY — PAAPA FOUNTAIN — HUNTING LIONS WITH DOGS BY MOONLIGHT — A TROOP OF LIONS.

I resolved now to cease hunting sea-cows for a time, and trek ahead in good earnest. I accordingly moved along the river until sundown, and was struck with astonishment at the number of the hippopotami, which seemed to increase the farther I trekked down the river; every pool had its herd; they were extremely fearless, and allowed me to approach within fifteen yards of them. In the morning I found myself minus my hired natives, who, fearing to receive a chastisement similar to that of the chief of the Bakalahari, thought it best to get out of the way. The chief Matsaca brought me ivory, which I obtained in barter for muskets and ammunition.

On the 8th we trekked at dawn, and after proceeding a few miles came upon the Lotsane, a gravelly-bedded river, with water only in occasional spots, such as are met with in the Bamangwato country. Here was much spoor of elephant; and the natives pressing me to halt and hunt, I outspanned; the next morning started with a party of natives, but returned without finding a single fresh spoor. Here I found my friends from Bamangwato, Mollyeon and Kapain, with a party. I was glad to see these men, as I knew they would assist me in my hunting, and could also converse with me.

On the 10th I rode down the river, and found sea-cows more and more abundant; the margin of the river also on each side was trampled down by elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, &c. Having ridden about six miles, I found the fresh spoor of a troop of bull elephants, but, after following it for some hours, the natives lost it. A little distance ahead of us was a rocky hill and from the summit I discovered an immense herd of
elephants, drinking in a wide open spot on a river which falls into the Limpopo, called by the natives Suking.

We then made a turn to leeward, and came in upon this fine herd, the largest I had ever seen; there must have been upwards of one hundred elephants before my eye at once. The troop consisted chiefly of cows and calves; but I detected one fine well-grown bull, carrying very fair tusks—for we were not more than twenty yards from the outside cows; and though no trees intervened between us and them, they took not the slightest notice of us.

At length I gave the bull a shot in the shoulder, and then followed him up. He stumbled, and fell once upon the slippery granite rock, but recovering his feet, went off at a pace which I could scarcely keep on the dangerous ground. By good luck, most of my dogs came to my assistance, and I slew him in a few minutes with eight or ten shots.

On the following day I shot another bull elephant and a white rhinoceros; and on the afternoon of the 12th, returning to camp weary and worn, came unexpectedly upon a bull elephant of unusual size. He took refuge in an extensive jungle of impracticable wait-a-bits, where it was impossible to do anything on horseback; I was therefore obliged to hunt him on foot, and slew him with thirty bullets, after an extremely severe and dangerous combat of about two hours.

On the 14th, night set in warm, calm, and still, with a good moonlight. Elephants, sea-cows, and panthers kept up continued music above and below us along the river.

On the 15th I felt very ill, but in the forenoon went down to the river, where I shot two sea-cows: in the evening, feeling worse, I bled myself, but strong fever was on me all night.

Next morning I marched, halting at sundown on the Mokojay, a periodical river.

On the 18th, having taken leave of Mollyeon and Kapain of Bamangwato, who would not follow me farther, we inspanned, and held down the Limpopo. I regretted to observe that the spoor of elephants did not seem to increase as I had allowed myself to imagine: we were in an extremely remote and uninhabited district, yet the elephants, though frequenting it, were decidedly scarce. I felt extremely weak and nervous
from the fever and the quantity of blood I had lost, insomuch that I started at my own shadow, and several times sprang to one side when the leaves rustled in the bushes. Presently I came upon the fresh dung of bull elephants, and at the same moment my people at the waggons saw two old bull elephants within two hundred yards of them: the wind being favourable, they walked unsuspiciously away, and, mounting my horse, I secured them both. On beholding these elephants, my weakness (brought on by bleeding) and my nervousness immediately left me.

On the 20th, early in the morning, I rode some distance down the river, with one after-rider, to explore, and, following an elephant path in very rocky ground, came suddenly within ten yards of an old bull buffalo, which instantly charged, and, had not my horse been particularly active, I could not have escaped him: so headlong was his charge that he lost his footing in the rocky ground, and fell with amazing violence, getting up and retreating quite crippled with the fall.

My fever still continuing, and the natives having deserted, I determined upon turning my face homewards, and on the 21st ordered my men to inspan and retrace their spoor. A troop of lions which had killed some game near our encampment gave us a parting salute. Their voices sounded to me ominous, perhaps from the nervous state I was in. I thought they said, "Yes, you do well to retrace your rash steps; you have just come far enough." I must acknowledge that I felt a little anxious as to the safety of proceeding farther on several accounts. First, the natives had spoken of Moselekatse, who now resided not very far off, as one who would most unquestionably murder me and seize my property. They also told me that I should lose my cattle by the fly called "Tsetse;" and there was also reason to believe that the country in advance was not very healthy for man.

My followers received my orders to turn homewards with sincere gratification: we trekked till sundown, and slept on the Mokojay, where the Bamangwato men had left me.

On the 29th we arrived at a small village of Bakalahari, who told me that elephants were abundant on the opposite side of the river. I accordingly drew my waggons up on the
river's bank, within thirty yards of the water and about one hundred from the native village; and, having outspanned, we at once set about making a kraal of the worst description of thorn-trees. This I was very careful about doing, since my severe loss by lions on the first of the month, and my cattle were thus secured by a strong kraal, which enclosed my two waggons, the horses being made fast to a trektow stretched between the hind-wheels of the waggons. I had yet, however, a fearful lesson to learn as to the habits of the lion, of which I at one time entertained so little fear; and on this night a horrible tragedy was acted in my little lonely camp of so very awful and appalling a nature as to make the blood curdle in our veins. I worked till near sundown with Hendrick, my first waggon-driver—I cutting down the trees and he dragging them to the kraal: and, when that for the cattle was finished, turned my attention to making a pot of barley-broth, and lighted a fire between the waggons and the water, close to the river's bank, under a dense grove of shady trees, making no sort of kraal around our sitting-place for the evening.

The Hottentots, according to their usual custom, being satisfied with the shelter of a large dense bush, made their fire about fifty yards from mine. The evening passed away cheerfully. Elephants were heard soon after dark breaking the trees in the forest across the river, and once or twice I strode away into the darkness some distance from the fireside to listen to them. I little, at that moment, imagined the imminent peril to which I was exposing my life, or thought that a bloodthirsty man-eater lion was near, and only watching his opportunity to spring into the midst of us, and consign one of our number to a most horrible death. About three hours after sundown I called my men to come and take their coffee; and after supper, three of them—John Stofolus, Hendrick, and Ruyter—returned before their comrades to their own fireside, and lay down. Hendrick and Ruyter lay on one side of the fire under one blanket, and John Stofolus on the other. At this moment I was eating some barley-broth at my fire, which was small, for, owing to our proximity to the village, wood was very scarce. The night was pitch dark and windy.

Suddenly the appalling and savage roar of an angry lio
burst upon my ear within a few yards of us, followed by the shrieking of the Hottentots; again and again the murderous roar of attack was repeated. We heard John and Ruyter shriek; still, for a few moments, we thought the lion was only chasing one of the dogs round the kraal; but, next instant, Stofolus rushed into the midst of us almost speechless with fear and terror, his eyes bursting from their sockets, and shrieked out, "The lion! the lion! He has got Hendrick; he dragged him away from the fire beside me; I struck him with the burning brands upon his head, but he would not let go his hold. Hendrick is dead! Oh, God! Hendrick is dead! Let us take fire and seek him." On hearing this the rest of my people rushed about, shrieking and yelling as if they were mad, which made me angry with them for their folly, and I told them that if they did not keep quiet, the lion would in all probability have another of us, and that very likely there was a troop of them. I then ordered the dogs to be let loose, and the fire increased as far as it could be. I likewise shouted Hendrick's name, but all was still, and, hunting my dogs forward, had everything brought within the cattle-kraal, and closed the entrance as well as we could. To help the dead man was impossible.

My terrified people sat round the fire with guns in their hands all night, fancying every moment that the lion would return and spring again into the midst of us. When the dogs were first let go, the stupid brutes, as dogs often prove when most required, instead of going at the lion, rushed fiercely on one another, and fought desperately for some minutes; after this they got his wind, and, going at him, showed us his position, and here they kept up a continued barking until day dawned, the lion occasionally springing after them and driving them in upon the kraal. The horrible monster had dragged the unfortunate man into a little hollow at the back of the thick bush, beside which the fire was kindled, and here within forty yards of us he devoured him, careless of our proximity.

It appeared that when the wretched Hendrick had risen to drive in an ox, the lion had watched him to his fireside, and he had scarcely lain down when the brute sprang upon him
and Ruyter, and, roaring, grappled him with his fearful claws, biting him on the breast and shoulder, all the while feeling for his neck; having got hold of which, he at once dragged him away backwards round the bush into the dense shade.

As the animal lay upon the unfortunate man, he faintly cried "Help me, help me! Oh, God! men, help me!" after which all was still, except that his comrades heard the bones of his neck cracking between the teeth of the lion. John Stofolus was lying with his back to the fire on the opposite side, and hearing the lion, sprang up, and, seizing a large flaming brand, belaboured him on the head with the burning wood, but the brute did not take any notice of him. The Bushman had a narrow escape, and did not get off altogether scatheless, the lion having inflicted two gashes on him with his claws.

As the day broke, we heard the lion dragging something up the river-side under cover of the bank, and, having driven the cattle out of the kraal, proceeded to inspect the scene of the night's awful tragedy. In the hollow, where the beast had consumed his prey, we found one leg of the unfortunate Hendrick, bitten off below the knee, the shoe still on his foot; the grass and bushes were all stained with blood, and fragments of his pea-coat lay around. Poor Hendrick! I knew that old coat, and had often seen some of its shreds in the dense covers where the elephants had charged after my unfortunate after-rider. Hendrick was by far the best man I had. He was of a most cheerful disposition, a first-rate waggon-driver, fearless in the field, very active, willing, and obliging, and his loss to us all was very serious. I felt sick at heart, and could not remain at the waggons, so I resolved to go after elephants to divert my mind. I had heard them breaking the trees on the opposite side of the river that morning, and, having ordered my people to devote the day to fortifying the kraal, started with Piet and Ruyter as my after-riders. Crossing the river, we at once took up the fresh spoor of a troop of bull elephants, but they unfortunately joined a troop of cows, and when we came up, the dogs attacked the cows, and the bulls were off in a moment, before we could even see them. One remarkably fine old cow charged the dogs and I finished her with two shots from the saddle.
Being anxious to return to my people before night, I did not attempt to follow the troop, and my followers were not a little gratified to see me, for terror had taken hold of their minds, and they expected that, emboldened by the success of the preceding night, the lion would prove still more daring in his attack, but fate had ordained otherwise. It was still two hours to sunset, and feeling refreshed by a little rest, and capable of further work, I ordered the steeds to be saddled, and went in search of the man-eater.

John and Carey, armed, accompanied me as after-riders, and a party of natives followed with the dogs. The lion had dragged the remains of poor Hendrick along a native footpath that led up the river-side; we found fragments of his coat all along the spoor, and at last the mangled coat itself. About six hundred yards from our camp the dry bed of a stream joined the Limpopo, and at this spot there was much shade, cover, and heaps of dry reeds and trees deposited by the river in some great flood. The lion had left the footpath and entered this secluded spot, and, feeling convinced that we were upon him, I ordered the natives to let the dogs go, when they walked suspiciously forward on the spoor, and next minute began to spring about, barking angrily, with all their hair bristling on their backs; a crash upon the dry reeds immediately followed—it was the lion bounding away.

Several of the dogs, extremely afraid of him, kept rushing continually backwards and springing aloft to obtain a view; but I now pressed forward and urged them on, and old Argyll and Bles took up his spoor in gallant style, and led on the others. Then commenced a short but lively and glorious chace, the conclusion of which was the only satisfaction I could obtain for the horrors of the preceding evening. The lion held up the river's bank for a short distance, and took away through some wait-a-bit thorn cover, the best he could find, but nevertheless open; here, in two minutes, the dogs were up with him, and he turned and stood at bay. As I approached, his horrid head was to me, his jaws open, and growling fiercely, and his tail waving from side to side.

On beholding the brute my blood boiled with rage, and, setting my teeth, I dashed my steed forward within thirty
yards of him, and shouting "Your time is up, old fellow," placed my rifle to my shoulder, and waited for a broadside. This the next moment he exposed, when I sent a bullet through his shoulder and dropped him on the spot; he again rose, but I finished him with a second in the breast. The natives now came up in wonder and delight, and ordering John to cut off his head and forepaws and bring them to the wagons, I mounted my horse and galloped home, having been absent about fifteen minutes. When the Bakalahari women heard that the man-eater was dead, they danced for joy, calling me their "father."

On the 6th of September, there being no flesh in camp, I galloped up the river-side to slay a hippopotamus, and presently heard a troop of them chanting behind me, for I had ridden past and not observed them. With these I was unlucky; for, though I wounded six or seven, I did not bag one. At midday I galloped to a favourite sea-cow pool about a mile below my wagons, and I found a herd of at least thirty hippopotami lying upon the rocks in the middle of the river. I shot the best bull and two fine old cows. The bull and the two cows soon floated, and I was occupied most of the next day in reducing the same to biltongue, which we hung in garlands upon ox-rheims stretched between the trees. In the evening a large party of Seleka's Bechuana arrived at my camp.

On the 8th, one of my steeds died of horse-sickness, and on reaching camp I learned that "Lion," my very best dog, had been eaten by a huge crocodile, who frequented the spot where we drew water: to these little pleasing varieties the African hunter must make up his mind, they are every-day occurrences.

I saddled up at an early hour, and went in quest of elephants with Seleka's men. We crossed the Limpopo and then held east through the forest for the strong fountain called Seboono, but here I was unlucky. When under the mountains I met with the famous fly called "tsetse," the bite of which is certain death to oxen and horses. This "hunter's scourge" is like the kleg in Scotland, though a little smaller. The tsetses are very quick and active, and storm a horse like
a swarm of bees, alighting on him in hundreds and drinking his blood. The animal thus bitten pines away and dies at periods varying from a week to three months, according to the extent to which he has suffered.

On the 10th the chief Pocoolway, a short stout man, of a prepossessing expression, arrived with a large retinue.

After three or four days of unsuccessful hunting, I resolved, on the 14th, there being good moonlight, to try what might be done with the elephants by night-shooting at the fountains, and determined to make Carey shoot with me, he using the big rifle of six to the pound, and I my single-barrelled two-grooved of eight to the pound. Crossing the Limpopo, I rode forward alone to explore, and suddenly came upon two magnificent bull elephants, but I had neither dogs nor guns; nevertheless I was determined to keep one in sight, though upon a jaded steed.

It were long to describe all the turns and twists I had with this princely old bull, and the charges he made. I certainly did my duty, and stuck by him like a good old deer-hound by his stag, and did this day that which no two of my men had ever accomplished for me. At length I became so exhausted, and my horse was so completely done up, that I felt that matters were drawing to a close, and that I could not hold him much longer. Help was, however, at hand. Carey and Mutchuisho, with a large party of the natives, were at this moment carefully following up the spoor of my horse, and my hoarse voice fell on Carey's ear, when he instantly called silence among the natives and sat listening in his saddle. A second time my halloo was heard, and "Cooley" and "Affriar," two good dogs, were instantly released from the couples and flew to my assistance—right glad was I when I saw black Cooley come up to help me. In two minutes more Carey handed me his single-barrel smooth-bore twelve to the pound, when I opened my fire on the elephant from the saddle, and put my seventh bullet through his heart: on receiving this, he made a short charge and stood trembling for a few seconds, when he fell forward on his breast and expired. The tusks of this elephant equalled my expectations; one of them, as usual, was more perfect than its fellow;
I had never seen their match but once, and lay down to rest that night the happiest of the happy.

The 15th was an extremely hot day. Late in the night a troop of eight or ten bull elephants walked slowly across the vley. I rushed forward to get before them in the wind, and reached to within thirty yards of the last bull, the best in the troop. Observing me move, he stood with his tusks up and his head towards me in a very suspicious manner for two minutes, when his fears died away, and he turned his left side: I then gave him a deadly shot, which brought blood from his trunk, as I ascertained next day. Returning I met Carey, whose pluck had failed him, and he had dropped behind; on upbraiding him for not standing by me, he swore stoutly that he had stuck in a bog, running for the shot. I thought this was good, and said to myself, "I have got a nickname for you at last." But Carey was a good servant, and very attentive to me throughout my expedition.

The next night I and Mutchuisho watched the fountain, and we had not been long there before three enormous old bull elephants made their appearance. One of them came within six or eight yards of me, when I gave him a shot from the big two-grooved rifle, and he dashed off with his two comrades in immense consternation, holding for the Limpopo.

The next day one of my steeds died of tsettje. He had been bitten under the mountain-range lying to the south of this fountain. The head and body of the poor animal swelled up in a most distressing manner before he died; his eyes were so swollen that he could not see, and blind, he neighed for his comrades who stood feeding beside him.

On the 17th of September I resolved to leave Seboono and proceed with a few Bakalahari to a small yet famous water about six miles to the south-east, called by the natives "Pap-paa." Here I found the numerous footpaths leading to it covered, as I had anticipated, with fresh spoor of elephant and rhinoceros, and I therefore proceeded to study the best spot on which to make our shooting-hole for the night. It would be impossible to prevent some of the game from getting our wind, for the paths led to it from every side, but the prevailing wind was from the east, so I pitched upon the south-
west corner of the fountain, which was not more than twenty yards long and ten yards broad. The west side was bounded by tufous rock which rose abruptly about five feet high; the top of this rock was level with the surrounding vley, and here all the elephants drank, as if suspicious of treading on the muddy margin on the other three sides of the fountain. Our shooting-box was within six or eight yards from it, and constructed, in a circle, of bushes packed together so as to form a hedge about three feet high; on the top were placed heavy dead old branches of trees, as a clear rest for our rifles, all lashed firmly together with strips of thorn bark. The day was particularly favourable for bringing game to the water, the sun being extremely powerful, and a hot dry wind prevailing all the afternoon; I told Carey that we were certain of having a good night's sport, and I was right, for we undoubtedly had about the finest and most wonderful that was ever enjoyed by man.

A stately bull giraffe, two jackals, Guinea-fowl, partridges, two or three sorts of pigeon and turtle-dove, and small birds in countless numbers, were pouring in to drink from every airt, as we walked up to our hiding-place and lay down. In a few minutes the sun was under; but the moon was strong and high (it being within three nights of the full), and the sky was clear, with scarcely a cloud. Very soon a step was heard approaching from the east; it was a presuming black rhinoceros, which came up within ten yards of the hiding-hole, and, observing us with his sharp prying eye, at once came slowly forward for a nearer inspection. I sprang up and waved my large kaross, shouting at the same time; but this only seemed to amuse Bœlé, for he stood within four yards of us, with his horn threatening our destruction, nor would he wheel about until I threw a log of wood at him. Black rhinoceroses are very difficult to scare when they do not get the wind; the best way is to throw a stone at them—that is, in the event of the sportsman not wishing to discharge his gun.

Soon after Bœlé departed, four old bull elephants drew near from the south with a slow and stately step, until within twenty yards of us, when the leading elephant took it into his head to pass to leeward, and got our wind; he was now
within ten yards of the muzzles of our heavy-metalled rifles, and on winding us tossed his trunk aloft, when we instantly fired together. I caught him somewhere about the heart, but my big six-pound rifle burst in Carey's hands, very nearly killing us both, and the elephant wheeled about, and retreated to the forest at top speed.

We again laid down in our hole, and had not watched long before three princely bull elephants appeared exactly where the first came on, and holding exactly the same course, when we fired together and sent our bullets somewhere about the leading elephant's heart. He ran two hundred yards, and uttering the cry of death, fell heavily to the earth. One of his comrades, a grand old bull, almost immediately slowly and warily advanced, and it was interesting to observe him approach the fountain; he seemed to mistrust the very earth on which he stood, and smelt and examined with his trunk every yard of the ground before he trod on it, sometimes standing five minutes on one spot without moving. At length, having gone 'round three sides of the fountain, and being apparently satisfied as to the correctness of everything, he stepped boldly on to the rock on the west, and, walking up within six or seven yards of the muzzles of our rifles, turned his broadside, and, lowering his trunk, drew up a volume of water, which he threw over his back and shoulders to cool his person. This operation was repeated two or three times, after which he commenced drinking, drawing the water into his trunk and then pouring it into his mouth. I determined to break his leg if possible, so, covering the limb about level with the lower line of his body, I fired, Carey firing for his heart. I made a lucky shot; for, as the elephant turned and attempted to make away, his leg broke with a loud crack. Disabled and utterly incapable of escaping, he stood statue-like beside the fountain, and made only an occasional attempt at locomotion.

The patch of my rifle fired at this elephant's comrade ignited a large ball of dry old dung, about eight yards to leeward of our kraal, and, fanned by the breeze, was now burning away very brightly, the sparks flying in the wind. Presently two bull elephants were seen approaching by the
selfsame footpath which the others had held; the first a half-grown bull, the last an out-and-out old fellow with enormous tusks. They came on as the first had done, but seemed inclined to pass to windward of us; the young bull however observing the fire, at once walked up to it, and smelling at it with his trunk seemed extremely amused, and in a gambolling humour threw his trunk about, as if not knowing what to think of it. The larger one now came up, and exposed a fine broadside: we took him behind the shoulder and fired together; he wheeled about and held away with drooping ears, evidently mortally wounded. After this we fired at six more enormous bull elephants, which went away hard hit. One of them on receiving the shots dropped a volume of water from his trunk, and, tossing it aloft, uttered a loud cry, and made off.

When the sun rose I proceeded with the Bakalahari to inspect the spoors of the wounded elephants; and when I thought over our night's sport I was struck with astonishment: nine times had first-rate old bull elephants come up to drink, and we had fired at eight of these at distances of from six to ten yards, with cool steady rests. Two of them lay dead beside the fountain; another had a broken leg, and could not get away, and the only one which we imagined had escaped was the bull with the wide set tusks. The event, however, proved that our expectations were incorrect, for that afternoon we found this princely elephant lying dead very near our kraal; both our shots were very far back, wounding him somewhere about the kidneys. We never saw anything of the four other elephants shot by us. The bull with the broken leg had gone nearly a mile from the fountain when we came up to him; at first he made vain attempts to escape, and then to charge, but finding he could neither escape nor catch any of us, he stood at bay beside a tree, and my after-riders began to assail him. It was curious to watch his movements as the boys, at about twenty yards distance, pelted him with sticks, &c. Each thing after it was thrown he took up and hurled back at them. When, however, dry balls of elephants' dung were pitched at him he contented himself with smelling at them with his trunk. At length I
gave him four shots behind the shoulder, when his gigantic form quivered, and, falling over, he expired. At night we again watched the fountain, but only one elephant appeared; I, however, shot two fine old muchocho, or white rhinoceroses, and wounded two or three burélè.

On the night of the 19th I and Carey shot one fine bull elephant and four rhinoceroses, wounding two others, which escaped. On the night following we also wounded two elephants, which got away. The next night we did nothing.

I had long entertained an idea that elephants might be hunted in the saddle by moonlight with dogs, as in the day; but I thought it very probable that a man might get his eyes torn out by the wait-a-bits; I had also a notion that the elephants might prove more active, and perhaps more vicious. This night, however, I resolved to put the question to trial, and leading my dogs through the forest to leeward of where a bull who had come to the fountain to drink had gone in, slipped them at him. They dashed forward, and next minute was heard the baying of the dogs and the crash and the trumpet of the elephant, as they held right away for the mountains to the south-west. When, however, the elephant found that his speed did not avail, and that he could not get away from his pursuers, he began to turn and dodge about in the thickest of the cover, occasionally making charges at the dogs. I followed on as best I could, shouting with all my might to encourage my good hounds, and these, hearing their master's voice, stuck well to their game, and fought him better than in the day. I gave him my first two shots from the saddle; after which I rode close up to him, and, running in on foot, gave him some deadly shots at distances of from fifteen to twenty yards, being partly concealed by the red dust which he caught up with his trunk and blew in clouds about him. At length he came down with tremendous violence on his vast stern, pitching his head and trunk aloft to a prodigious height, and, falling heavily over on his side, expired. I bowled over another fine bull elephant the same night with four shots, and also wounded an old black rhinoceros.

The next morning, my ammunition being expended, or very nearly so, I despatched Carey to camp for flesh supplies, and
when he was gone walked through the forest around the fountain to seek for my wounded game. I first came upon the black rhinoceros of last night, and a little farther on observed my dog Frachum sniff up the wind and go ahead, returning with two jackals trotting behind him, so I at once knew that there was some game lying dead in advance. When I had proceeded a little farther the dogs ran forward, and next moment a rush of many feet was heard charging towards where I stood; it was a troop of half-grown lions, with a lioness, which dashed past me followed by the dogs. They had been feasting on a white rhinoceros I had wounded two nights previously, now lying a little ahead. Beside the carcase stood a fine fat calf—the poor thing, no doubt, fancying that its mother slept, had, heedless of lions and the other wild animals that had feasted there, remained beside its dead mother for a day and two nights. Rhinoceros calves always stick to their mothers long after they are dead. The next night I was again successful in a night-hunt, and bagged a very fine bull elephant.

While reviewing my extraordinary good fortune during the last week's hunting, I could not help regretting that I had not thought of pursuing the elephants at night with dogs and horses before: if I had commenced only a week sooner, I might have bagged eight or ten first-rate bulls, which I knew were mortally wounded, but were, nevertheless, not forthcoming. The ivory of these elephants would have brought me in upwards of 200l.; and it was vexing to think that many, if not all of them, were lying rotting in the surrounding forest. My only chance of finding them was by watching the vultures; but these birds, knowing that they cannot break the skin of the larger game, preferred remaining near the Bechuanas, where the butchering was going briskly forward.

While, however, I mourned the loss of these wounded elephants, I reckoned that I had been favoured with immense good fortune in many instances during the past week. Ever intent upon increasing my princely collection of African hunting-trophies, I placed great value upon any specimen I happened to shoot which I thought worthy of adorning it. Thus I neglected my real interest, and, instead of devoting my
attention to rendering my expedition profitable, I allowed this very necessary part of the business to remain quite a secondary consideration. Thus, when I shot an ordinary bull elephant, I was accustomed to say to myself, "Ah! a good bull; tusks at least fifty pounds each; 4s. 6d. a pound; bring me in 221. 10s. Capital day's work; help to pay for the two horses that died last week, or the four that are bitten with tsetse, and must die in a week or two." But if, on the other hand, I shot an elephant with a pair of tusks of unusual size or beauty, I at once devoted them to my collection, and valued them at a tenfold price. This, then, was one thing in which I reckoned I had been extremely fortunate—I had secured the finest tusks in all those herds of patriarchal old bulls which I had so sadly cut up in one short week, and which perhaps the summers of a century had seen roaming through these boundless forests.

The night-shooting being at an end, on the 23rd I retraced my steps to the dead elephants, to assist Carey in superintending the cutting out of the ivory, and in escorting the same along with our supply of fat and flesh to the waggons. Early in the afternoon we had got all ready for a start. The Bechuana captains who had appropriated my elephants and rhinoceroses, and nearly all the fat, with about fifty men, shouldered my impediments, and we marched for camp. Carey went in front, I rode in the middle, and my after-riders brought up the rear. This long line of naked savages threading the mazes of the forest, and bearing home the spoils of a few days' hunting, formed a truly interesting and unusual picture. Every man that was there carried something of mine: some led the dogs, some carried the guns and extra ammunition, some cooking-vessels, axes, sickles, water calabashes, provisions, rhinoceroses' horns, elephants' teeth, and an immense supply of flesh and fat, &c. &c. We made the Limpopo as the sun went down, crossed all right, and brought everything safe to camp. I made other excursions from this encampment in quest of elephants, in which I was very successful; but as they did not differ in their details from the many already described, I shall not run the risk of wearying my reader with an account of them.
On the 30th one of those minor accidents occurred which the hunter in these parts must be prepared continually to encounter. As I awoke that morning I heard a scream which denoted that Prince, a most worthless dog, was consumed by a crocodile. They seemed ever to be on the look-out for prey, and I have not the slightest doubt they would have taken one of us if we had ventured in.

On the 3rd of October I made for the fountain called Setoque, accompanied by Kapain and a party from Bamangwato, and shot an old bull elephant.

On the 5th, as the rainy season was over, I began to think of hunting no more across the Limpopo; and any day I might find myself cut off from camp by a mighty stream, which would probably remain impassable for months. I also wished, if possible, to save one or two of my horses from the "tsetse," for my stud was now reduced to five. I therefore resolved to return at once to camp.

On my way I visited the remains of the carcase of an enormous old bull, which I had shot on the night of the 16th of last month, for I had followed his spoor to within half a mile of the spot. His tusks had not been cut out, but drawn, and stolen as reported; the skull remained perfect, and was finely cleaned by hyænas, vultures, and insects. I suspected that a tribe of Bakalahari who lived not far from the elephant, upon the river, knew all about the tusks, for there were no other natives in that district; so I resolved to ride to the village early next morning, and threaten to shoot the chief if the teeth did not quickly appear.

Accordingly, on the 6th, before it was clear, four steeds were saddled; and having taken coffee, I crossed the Limpopo, accompanied by Carey, John, and Piet, bearing double-barrelled guns, and held down the river-side for the Bakalahari village, which we made in about an hour. As soon as I observed the huts, I dashed across their corn-lands at a racing pace, and was standing in the middle of the natives before they were aware of my approach.

The chief whom I wanted was in the forum with most of his men, so, dismounting from my horse, I walked up to them and sat down on the ground according to native custom, and
taking snuff myself, handed it round. While I was doing this, John and Carey, armed, occupied the two places of exit from the forum. I sat silent for a little, and then said, “My heart is very bitter with the chief of this village. You were hungry, and I killed much flesh and fat for you; I told you that many of my elephants were lying dead, and that I wanted their teeth. You promised me to watch the vultures, and bring me the teeth. I have traced your spoor home from one of these elephants. Why did the tusks not come to my wagons? I do not want to shed your blood, but I require the teeth to be laid immediately before me.”

They all immediately exclaimed, “The teeth are forthcoming, they are forthcoming: wait a little, chief of the white men. We saw the vultures, and hid the teeth for you.” I was delighted to hear this, but I pretended still to be very angry, and answered, “My heart is still very bitter, for you should have brought the teeth at once to me, and not caused me to come with guns to seek my teeth.” The chief at once despatched five or six active men to bring the teeth; Bechuana beer and porridge were then placed before me; and in an hour the natives returned, bearing the tusks of my lost elephant. I was right glad to see them; they were immense teeth, very finely arched, and almost perfect. The Bakalahari had drawn the tusks, and concealed them somewhere close to the carcase of the elephant; here they would most probably have lain concealed until I had left the country, when they would have forwarded them to their chief. In the afternoon we packed the ivory, which had hitherto lain loose in the kraal, in the baggage-wagon. There were fifty-three tusks of bull, and seventeen of cow elephants.
On the morning of the 8th of October we packed the waggons, and left the Bakalahari village, where we had camped for nearly six weeks. The old chief of these people looked extremely downhearted when he saw us preparing to depart, and could hardly refrain from crying. When I came there I had found them starving, but ever since my arrival they had had more good flesh and fat than they could eat; I had also employed the women to tread out my barley and Bechuana corn, and had always liberally rewarded them with beads, with which they adorned their persons. The old chief was distinguished by a snake-skin which he wore round his head; I gave him some presents at parting, and we then trekked, holding up the river, but at a considerable distance from it, the Limpopo having at this part a very considerable bend. In the evening we came again upon the river, and halted at our old kraal. On the march, Argyll, my best dog, and who had weathered my two campaigns in the Bamangwato country, was strangled on the trap of the waggon, where he was coupled with the other dogs. I now resolved to leave the Limpopo, and explore if possible the country in a north-westerly direction; but a large body of Sicomy's men who accompanied me, would not give any information either as to water or elephants, excepting in the course which suited themselves, invariably answering my questions with "There is no water in that direction; there are no elephants there." Thus I was left entirely in the dark how to proceed, and obliged to use my own discretion, the rascally Bechuanae swearing that we should not find water till sundown next day. The country through which we passed was very soft and sandy, the forest often so dense as to compel us to halt
and use our axes, and in the evening we halted at a small valley which I found by following an elephant footpath.

On the 13th we reached a strong succession of fountains, forming a running stream of pure water, and here the country became extremely beautiful; a very wide and finely wooded valley stretching away into the bosom of the mountains, and ending in a bold ravine. This district was the abode of a considerable tribe called Moroking; and their cultivated corn-lands stretched away on every side of the fountain. Here I outspanned, and presently the chief and his people came to me highly pleased that I had visited them; they were dependents of Sicomy, and, for some reason which I could not discover, had been instructed by the Bamangwato natives not to give me any information regarding the elephants or the waters in advance. At night we were visited by a terrible and long-protracted thunderstorm, and much rain fell.

The next morning I shot a large wild goose, a splendid bird, its general colour dark glossy green, with white patches on its sides and beneath its wings, and while seeking for wild fowl along the edge of the stream I almost trod upon the tail of a terrible cobra, which Ruyter and I put an end to with sticks and stones. As the natives still persisted in saying that there were no elephants in advance, and the country, owing to the rain, was now quite unfit for trekking, I resolved to turn back, and we halted for the night at the fountain we had left on the preceding day. On the march I shot an extremely beautiful wood-pigeon; its back and tail were grass-green, its thighs bright orange, its bill and feet bright coral red.

On the 15th we inspanned, and held for the mountain of Guapa, where I had seen sable antelope on the 16th of July.

Next day we held for a valley close under the blue mountain in advance, and fell in with ostriches, springboks, zebras, blue geese, giraffes, wild boar; and, soon after, to my surprise, an old bull kookama or oryx, carrying a superb pair of horns: to the latter I gave chase, but lost him.

The valley to which I had been trusting proved dry. We outspanned here for an hour, however, and then held round the western extremity of this fine mountain-range; halting as
the sun went down at a strong fountain. On the march I wounded a black rhinoceros, but did not bag him, and stalked a second black rhinoceros, which on receiving two deadly shots charged madly forward and subsided in the dust.

On the 17th held north-east, close in under the mountain-range, to look for elephants, and fell in with immense numbers of zebras and buffaloes numbering between three and five hundred in each herd, and towards evening with a large troop of elephants, when I killed one of the finest after an easy chace.

Here I also met with the beautiful sable antelope, and, after several unsuccessful attempts, at length obtained the success my perseverance deserved. Returning in the afternoon of the 20th homewards, I suddenly observed a herd of about ten of them in open cover on the mountain's ridge, two of which, after a severe and difficult stalk, I laid low, over a mass of sharp adamantine fragments of rock. I was highly gratified with my success, and now considered my collection of African trophies as almost perfect. I still wanted heads of the bluebuck, or klein bok, Vaal rheebok, ourebi, and reithok; but these were abundant in the colony, and were not difficult to get.

The 23rd was a very cool and cloudy morning, and looked likely for light rain. At an early hour I left my waggon with some provisions, and ascended the mountain side to seek for sable antelope. Soon after gaining the upper heights, I had the satisfaction to detect a fine herd of them feeding among the trees on the table summit of a ridge which stretched away to the east, and after a determined stalk in true Highland fashion, approaching the herd upon my belly, I fired at a big black buck as he dashed past me at top speed; the ball told loudly, and the buck bent up his back to the shot; but after a long and arduous chace with the dogs, I to my great disgust lost him.

On the 26th I resolved to make an expedition on foot across the mountain, and hunt in its northern limits for a few days. I accordingly started with Ruyter and four Bechuanaas, bearing my bedding, pots, water, and other impediments, and when the sun went down halted beneath a green tree, where I slept.
I made my coffee by moonlight, and when the day dawned stalked along the upper ridges of the mountain, killing a koodoo out of a small troop for food. Immediately below the spot was a lonely kraal, and, when the Bakalahari heard the report of my rifle echoing through their valley, they left their pots upon their fires, and fled to a man. My Bechuanas, however, eventually induced them to come back again, and cut up my koodoo, after which they carried the flesh to a shady tree on the summit of this tabular range. These men had chosen for their place of residence a most romantic ravine which parted the mountain for a distance of about a mile, forming a deep and almost impassable gulf; at the upper end of it was a most delicious fountain, forming a strong running stream, which wound along the shady depths of this wild and most secluded spot.

I selected it to be my forest home for a short time; and here I spent some merry days, feasting like a prince on fat venison, marrow-bones, Bechuana corn, and beer, tea, coffee, and biscuit, &c. I was also provided with a rich dessert, consisting of a delicious African fruit called moopooroo, which was now ripe and extremely abundant throughout this range. The tree has a very dark green leaf; the fruit is about the size and shape of a large olive, and when ripe of a bright orange colour.

At earliest dawn next day I held down wind with Ruyter, and found the fresh spoor of a herd of sable antelope, and presently saw them among the trees within three hundred yards of us, some lying and some standing. One of the old does soon observed us as we sat in the grass; however, I crept away back, and made a very fine stalk upon the herd in very difficult ground, having been obliged to do a hundred and fifty yards of it on my breast. A wary old doe kept sentry, and prevented my approaching within a hundred yards. I therefore shot her with a bullet in the shoulder, and at once despatched the head to camp to be stuffed.

In the evening I fell in again with this same troop of potaquaines on the northern range of the mountain; but they heard me coming on before I was aware of them, and held up wind over very rocky ground and through thick cover.
followed on in their wake like an old staghound, keeping close to them, and always halting when they halted; thus they did not observe me, and at last I got close in upon them. I could then have had a fine shot at several of the does, but I wanted the old black buck; this, however, I was not to have, for an unlucky branch intervening, and altering the line of my ball, lost this most noble animal; there was consequently nothing to be done but to return to my forest home beneath the greenwood, and meditate upon my want of success.

On the morning of the 31st I held a south-westerly course with Ruyter and a Bechuana boy, and was richly repaid for all my toil and exertions in following the sable antelope throughout these stony and rugged mountains. Having proceeded about a mile down wind, and looking over a height which commanded a fine view of well-wooded undulating table-land below me, I had the real pleasure to behold a beautiful herd of sable antelopes feeding quietly up wind within a quarter of a mile of me. It consisted of seven does and one coal-black magnificent old buck, and even at the distance at which they then were I could plainly see that he was a most superb specimen; his horns seemed almost too large for him, and swept back over his shoulders with a determined and perfect curve.

I sat some time to watch their movements, and gazed upon them with intense delight. The ground on which they were feeding being very level, I thought the best way to stalk them would be to cut in before them to windward, taking care of course to keep out of their way sufficiently far to ensure their not getting my wind. The does came freshly on, and inclined their course to the spot where I lay flat on my belly awaiting their forward movement until one of them was within range of my rifle. When, however, they had come thus far, they seemed all at once to change their minds, and after feeding about for a few minutes they took another tack and altered their course from east to north. Seeing that it was impossible to do anything with them until I should get them into more uneven ground, I beat a retreat, and returned to the ridge where I had at first made them out. Here I again sat, and with a longing heart watched the movements of these loveliest
of Africa's lovely antelopes. I was struck with admiration at the magnificence of the noble old black buck, and vowed in my heart to slay him, although I should follow him for a twelvemonth. The old fellow seemed very fidgety in his movements, and while the does fed steadily on he lagged far behind, occasionally taking a mouthful of grass, and then standing for a few minutes under the trees, rubbing his huge, knotted, scimitar-shaped horns upon their branches. At length the does had fed away a hundred and fifty yards from him, and he still lagged behind. This was the golden moment to make a rapid stalk in upon him, while his ever-watchful sentinels were absent. I saw my chance, and, stealing rapidly down the rocky hill-side, gained the level on which the herd were pasturing; he was now obscured from my view by the bushy dwarfish trees which adorned the ground, and the next move was to get my eye upon him before he should observe me. Advancing stealthily, I saw that he was still feeding very slowly on after the does, apparently quite unsuspicious. I then cast off my shoes and shooting-belt, and, watching the lowering of his noble horns, my eye fixed tiger-like upon him, stalked rapidly in; my heart beat and throbbed with anxiety as I advanced, and now stood almost within shot of him. Twenty yards nearer and I could fire; again he lowered his head to crop the young grass, I seized the moment, and the twenty yards were won. Here was a young tree with a fork, affording me an excellent rest. The potaquaine stood with his round stern right to me; I took a deadly aim and fired; the ball entered very near his tail, and passing through the length of his vitals rested in his breast. He staggered about for a second, and then, bounding forward about sixty yards, halted and looked back to see from whence the deadly shaft had sped that had thus so unceremoniously disturbed his morning meal. The sights of my rifle were still fixed upon him, and just as he pulled up and exposed his full broadside, a second bullet left the ringing steel, and crashed through the very centre of the old fellow's shoulder.

On receiving this second shot the buck wheeled about and held after the does, but I knew from his movements that, though his pace was good, he had got the ball in his shoulder
and could not go very far. I then walked leisurely back for
my shoes and shooting-belt, and, having found them, was
loading my rifle, when the Bushman, who had been watching
my stalk from the height above, joined me and said that the
buck had run but a short distance, and lain down under a
tree. I immediately stole carefully forward and saw him
lying, his noble head not laid on the ground, but in an up-
right posture; fancying him still alive, and having too often
been tricked with wounded antelopes, I then gave him a third
bullet, but the dark form of this lovely inhabitant of the
mountain quailed not to the shot, for the spirit of the sable
antelope had fled. I was transported with delight when I
came up and saw the surpassing beauty and magnificence of
the invaluable trophy I had won; his horns were enormous,
fair set, perfect, and exquisitely beautiful. I cut off his head,
and, leaving men to convey the flesh to camp, held thither in
advance, escorting my hard-won prize. On my way down
the footpath from the fountain I found the untameable Ma-
zeppa stretched to rise no more, and half consumed by hyænas
and vultures; he had died of horse-sickness. My losses by
the fell hand of death during this week were, alas! not con-
fined to Mazeppa only; the pony I bought of my cousin
Colonel Campbell died of tsetse, a valuable fore-ox died of
some severe sickness, Fox, a very good dog, died of the
African distemper, and three of my very best dogs had also
mysteriously disappeared the day they chased the potaquaine.

On the 15th of November we left the mountains of Linguapa.
Kapain and his Bechuanas held for Bamangwato; Soloka's
Bechuanas for their chief; and we took a south-westerly
course for the Limpopo, which we reached in less than three
hours.

Next day I shot a waterbuck close to the river. In the
evening I walked a short distance down the river's bank,
and shot a lovely fawn of the serolomootlooque, and a buck
pallah with a very handsome head.

On the 17th I wounded a white rhinoceros, but did not
follow it, and in returning to camp started an ostrich off her
nest; it contained twenty eggs, which I directed the Bechu-
anas to bring to camp.
As we held up the side of the river I killed a very fine old black rhinoceros standing among some wait-a-bit thorn, and, cutting off Borel's horn, rode home, my dismounted after-rider following me, for my stud of fifteen horses was now reduced to one.

In the course of the day I saw the fresh spoor of about twenty varieties of large game, and most of the animals themselves, viz. elephant, black, white, and long-horned rhinoceros, hippopotamus, camelopard, buffalo, blue wildebeest, zebra, waterbuck, sassayby, koodoo, pallah, springbok, serslootlooque, wild boar, duiker, steinbok, lion, and leopard. This part of Africa contains a larger variety of game than any other in the whole of this vast tract of the globe, and perhaps more than any district throughout the world; for besides the game which I have just noted, the following are not uncommon, viz. keilton, or two-horned black rhinoceros, eland, oryx, roan antelope, sable antelope, hartebeest, klip springer, and grys steinbuck: the reitbuck is also to be found but not abundantly.

We inspanned on the 18th before it was day, and trekked up the Limpopo for about three hours. In the forenoon Matsaca brought me a very fine leopard's skin kaross and an elephant's tooth, in return for which I was to score him to make him shoot well. This I did in the following manner: opening a large book of natural history, containing prints of all the chief quadrupeds, I placed his forefinger successively on several of the prints of the commonest of the South African quadrupeds, and, as I did so, repeated some absurd sentence and anointed him with turpentine. When this was accomplished, I made four cuts on his arm with a lancet, and then, anointing the bleeding wounds with gunpowder and turpentine, told him that his gun had power over each of the animals which his finger had touched, provided he held it straight. The chief and his retinue seemed highly gratified, and presently took their departure.

On the succeeding day we held up the river, and found the game extremely abundant; I counted no less than twenty-two rhinoceroses, nine of which were in one herd, feeding on the open plain. Late in the afternoon I got within shot of
four, and, resting my six-pound rifle on the trunk of a tree which an elephant had overthrown, took one of them on the shoulder and smashed his forearm.

On the 21st much rain fell throughout the day, rendering the country unfit for trekking. In the afternoon a loud rushing noise was heard coming on like a hurricane. This was a large troop of pallah pursued by a pack of about twenty wild dogs; they passed our camp in fine style within a hundred yards of us, and in a few minutes the dogs had fastened upon two of the pallahs, which my Bechuanas ran up and secured. One of these animals cleared a distance of fifty feet in two successive bounds, and this on unfavourable ground, it being very soft and slippery.

I left the sable antelopes' mountain mainly in consequence of a general falling off amongst my cattle, but did not then know to what cause to attribute this sad and to me all-important change in their condition. Alas! it was now too evident that nearly all of them were dying, having been bitten by the fly tsetse. The rains of the last three days had made this melancholy truth more apparent: the cattle presented a most woeful appearance: listless and powerless, they cared not to feed, though the country was covered with the richest and most luxuriant pasturage; their whole bodies became daily more emaciated, and the eyes of many of them were closed and swollen. The next morning being fair, I inspanned, although the country was very unfit for trekking, and my poor oxen, as I expected, knocked up before they had proceeded three miles, many of them lying down and refusing to proceed farther, or even to stand up. I was obliged in consequence to outspan one waggon and leave it behind, and to bring on the other waggon with the able oxen, and then send them back to assist their dying comrades in bringing up the second. Soon after we had outspanned the second waggon heavy rain set in, which continued at intervals throughout the night.

Light rains continued to fall throughout the 24th. I, however, performed a short march, and brought my waggons a few miles farther up the soft rich soil that lies along the Limpopo.
Heavy rains fell at intervals throughout the next day. Ronoberg, a Natal ox, died during the night, and it was evident that many more would succumb in a few days; even now the half of them were utterly unfit to work. The heavy and continued rains made me feel my great misfortune with increased severity, for the country was hardly to be travelled with such loads as mine, even with oxen in good working condition. In this state of things I deemed it necessary to send a letter to Mr. Livingstone, the resident missionary at Sichely's, requesting the loan of two spans of oxen, and, having sealed up my epistle in a bottle, sent it off with two natives, instructing them to use all possible speed. One of these men was a native in my service, named Ramachumey, the other a subject of Sichely's, Seleka; they expected to reach Sichely in seven days.

For many succeeding days the rain still poured down, rendering it impossible to travel, and my oxen died daily of the tsetse-bite. In this condition my progress was slow and painful in the extreme, and I awaited anxiously the expected succour. At length I came fairly to a stand, not having sufficient oxen left to draw one waggon. I therefore formed a camp in a shady bend of the river, fortified it with a high hedge of thorny trees, and in a few days more all my cattle had died with the exception of two young oxen, which I inclined to think would survive the bite of the fatal tsetse.

On the 7th of December I resolved to have some fishing, and, routing out some old salmon-fishing tackle, sallied forth with one of the waggon whipsticks for a rod, and some string for a line. My bait was a bit of blue wildebeest, and, casting it in at a quiet bend of the river, I anxiously watched the cork, which very soon began to bob. I was not fated to live long upon conjecture as to what kind of fish I should catch, for the next moment I threw over my head a fine grey fish about a pound weight, in appearance like a haddock, with a broad mouth and eight or ten feelers. My Bushman said the Boers about the Orange River knew this fish, and loved to catch and eat it. After this I landed a second, and subsequently hooked a very heavy fish, which I lost. I doubt not but most excellent sport might be obtained in the Limpopo
In the evening Carey and I cut down a thorn-tree to inspect the nest of a secretary. The summit of the tree was very wide, dense, and level, and from the terrible nature of the thorns utterly inaccessible without the aid of the hatchet. When the tree fell, out rolled a young secretary from its nest, and immediately disgorged its last meal, which consisted of four lizards of different sorts (of which one was a cameleon), one locust, one quail, and a mouse.

It was now twenty days since I despatched the natives to Mr. Livingstone to inform him of my distress, and solicit his assistance, and as they might ere now have reached me, if all was well, the delay caused me many painful doubts and apprehensions. Day after day was passing away, and my situation became more and more irksome and tedious; moreover, my supplies were fast coming to an end. At length, however, that aid which I so earnestly and fearfully prayed for was at hand.

On the morning of the 16th I suddenly beheld a civilised-looking native approach our camp; he wore a shirt, a pair of leather trousers, and a sailor's red nightcap, and carried a gun and shooting-belt. The instant I beheld him I said aloud, "Natives from Sichely." It was even so. Mr. Livingstone had at once in the noblest manner despatched men with his whole stock of trek-oxen to my assistance, and these I had now the inexpressible satisfaction to see reach me in safety. We inspanned at once, and continued to make good way for several days, reaching Kolubeng, the new residence of Sichely, on the 26th. In the morning that chief brought me two young oxen, which I all but purchased for an old saddle and two pounds of powder; but we split upon the cup of powder being level and not piled.

On arriving at Sichely's I despatched natives to Bakatla, to fetch two spans of oxen which I had left on my way into the interior in charge of Mr. Edwards, and with these on the 3rd of the new year we again inspanned. Our course for Bakatla was south-westerly, but owing to the position of the mountains we were obliged to make a very zigzag and circuitous march. The country here is the most pleasing I have seen in Africa,—beautifully wooded, undulating plains, valleys,
straths, and conical and tabular mountains of most fascinating appearance, invariably wooded to their summits, stretching away on every side.

We reached Bakatla on the 7th, which was looking extremely beautiful, being surrounded by very green fields of Bechuana corn. Here we remained a few days whilst I obtained fresh oxen, and then pushing on gained the river Molopo early on the 14th. Here I sallied forth to seek for reitbuck along its reedy banks, and while stalking upon two, suddenly observed two huge yellow lionesses, about a hundred and fifty yards to my left, walking along the edge of the reeds, holding a course parallel to my own. I then very rashly commenced making a rapid stalk in upon them, and fired at the nearest, having only one shot in my rifle; the ball told loudly, and the lioness at which I had fired wheeled right round, and came on lashing her tail, showing her teeth, and making the horrid murderous deep growl which, when angry, that brute generally utters. Her comrade, who seemed better to know that she was in the presence of man, made a hasty retreat into the reeds. The instant the lioness came on I stood up to my full height, holding my rifle, and my arms extended, and high above my head. This checked her in her course, but on looking round, and observing Ruyter slowly advancing, she made another forward movement, growling terribly. I felt that this was a moment of great danger, and that my only chance of safety was extreme steadiness, so, standing motionless as a rock, with my eyes firmly fixed upon her, I called out in a clear commanding voice, "Holloa! old girl, what's the hurry? take it easy; holloa! holloa!" She instantly halted, and seemed perplexed, looking round for her comrade; I then thought it prudent to beat a retreat, which I did very slowly, talking to the lioness all the time. She seemed undecided as to her future movements, and was gazing after me and snuffing the ground when I last beheld her. A reitbuck which I afterwards shot I bore to camp.

In the violent tempest, I may say hurricane, that visited us this day, my oxen strayed, and it was noon before any tidings of them were obtained. About midday some of the Bakatla
Bechuanas brought me one ox; it was Youngman, the last of the Mohicans. On beholding him a pang of sorrow shot through my heart; his appearance was worn and emaciated, and it was evident that soon the vulture and hyæna would leave his whitening bones to bleach upon the glowing plain.

Who then was Youngman, that he could call up such melancholy feelings? Youngman was the only dying survivor of thirty selected trek-oxen which I had chosen to accompany me into the far-interior, all of which I had seen pine away and die, and fail me in the hour of need. About two hours afterwards I had the satisfaction to behold all the missing truants recovered; they had been seduced away by some young oxen I had obtained at Bakatla, which seemed to have resolved to return to their former masters, perhaps not relishing old Adonis's treatment of them in the yoke.

We now held on to the Meritsane (rendered famous among sportsmen by Harris's glowing description of its charms), and found it full of water. Before reaching this point, however, I left the old-established Kuruman waggon-road about three miles from the drift, my line of march being to visit Mahura, chief of the Batlapis, residing about the sources of the Hart River; this route is by many days shorter than by the old road, and has also the advantage of being through a firm grassy country.

We held on for several days through a country abounding in game, and reached Mahura's town on the 25th.

On the following morning his highness made his appearance with about a dozen fine young oxen, which he said were to purchase powder, and after coffee I offered him six pounds for one of them, which he with much nonchalance declined. Being very anxious to obtain some good specimens of the large-horned oxen of the Kalihi, and Mahura being by report in possession of some, which he had lifted from the Bawangketse, I told him that if he would bring them up I would give him a good price for them. He said that he had cattle with large horns, and would send to one of his outposts for two oxen which would frighten me to look at.

In the evening these animals came; they were two immensely tall, gaunt, hollow-sided, remarkable-looking beasts,
and carried truly enormous horns. The head of one of them was very handsome; the horns were wide and fair set, going out quite horizontally for some distance on leaving the head: their width, from point to point, might have been about eight feet. This ox was roan-coloured on his face and along the top of his back; the other was red, his horns were thicker than those of his comrade, and were of good length, with very good points, but their sweep was not graceful. They were neither of them so thick as the horns of my red Wangkeise ox, Rob Roy, which I left with Fossey, nor by any means so handsome; nevertheless, they were both very remarkable heads, but I would not deal with him, his drift being to get one of my best rifles.

On the 27th we marched for the Vaal River, distant a day and a half, and held on until sundown. We resumed our march at daybreak on the 28th, and held on through boundless open plains. The country was thickly covered with immense herds of game, consisting of zebra, wildebeest, blesbok, and springbok; there could not have been less than five or six thousand head of game in sight of me as I sat at breakfast. Presently the whole began to take alarm; herd joined herd, and took away up the wind; and in a few minutes other vast herds came pouring on up-wind, covering the whole breadth of the plain with a living mass of noble game.

Bakalahari now hove in sight, running at intervals across the plain, bearing parasols of black ostrich-feathers, which they brandished on high to press on the panic-stricken animals. These fellows must have had good wind, for they held on at a steady trot, exactly like wild dogs (only that the wild dogs gallop and do not trot), and did not allow the game to get very far in advance. It was evident that they were driving it to a range of pitfalls in advance; but being without horses, and in extreme pain from a swelled ankle, I was unable to follow them up and ascertain their success. My ankle became daily worse. I had applied leeches to it at Mahura's, which helped me a little, but the number was too small to be of great benefit. I was now entirely unable to set my foot to the ground.
On the 29th we again set out, and in about three hours reached the fair, long-wished-for, yet much-dreaded Vaal River. I say much-dreaded, because, from the constant rains which had been falling, I had made up my mind that it was not improbable I might have to lie for many months upon the banks of this often impassable river. On this occasion, however, to my great satisfaction, and quite contrary to my expectations, I found the river low, and the drift, which I had never seen before, very good, and free from rocks or very large stones; the descent from our side was easy, but the ascent on the opposite was steep and muddy, and some smart showers of rain which had been falling during the last two hours had rendered it so slippery that I deemed it best to outspan, and defer taking the drift until the ground should dry a little in the afternoon, when I got my waggons through in safety, taking one at a time with twenty steady oxen.

We now made the Vet River, which flows into the Vaal a little above the drift, and followed its course towards Colesberg. Our march led us through vast herds of game, which I have before spoken of as frequenting the northern boundaries of the colony. On the 20th of February I crossed the Great Orange River at Alleman's Drift, and entered Colesberg next day; most of my old friends were still here, and also my redoubtable friend old Murphy, as wild and as jolly as ever.

I hired the old barracks during my stay in Colesberg, and immediately set about sewing up my trophies in canvas, and stowing them away in cases. This was accomplished in about fourteen days. A fortnight more was spent in preparing for another hunting expedition; I purchased a new wagon from a Mr. Emslie for a hundred pounds, a fresh stud of sixteen horses, a mule, a pack of twenty dogs, and a span of oxen from various parties in the town, and subsequently increased my stud to twenty. I also engaged as after-rider a Bushman named Booi.
CHAPTER XXVII.

FIFTH AND LAST EXPEDITION COMMENCED—MASSACRE OF MY DOGS—BUFFALO SHOOTING—CROCODILE SHOT—AFFRAY WITH A LEOPARD.

On the 19th of March, 1848, I left Colesberg with three waggons "well manned and stored," for my fifth and last cruise in the far interior. I was joined by a Mr. Orpen, a mighty Nimrod, who, notwithstanding my representing to him the dangers and hardships of an elephant-hunting expedition in their blackest colours, kindly agreed to favour me with his help and company on my lonely trip. We got clear of the town at about nine A.M., and commenced our march over a country which my reader must now be fully acquainted with.

The game became plentiful in about ten days after we left Colesberg, but when we came to the Vet River, I beheld with astonishment and delight decidedly one of the most wonderful displays which I had witnessed during my varied sporting career in Southern Africa. On my right and left the plain exhibited one purple mass of graceful blesboks, which extended without a break as far as my eyes could strain: the depth of their vast legions covered a breadth of about six hundred yards. In half a minute I was loaded, and, after galloping a few hundred yards, let drive into them, but was unsuccessful. Excited and annoyed at my want of luck, I resolved to follow them up and blaze away while a shot remained in the locker, which I did; until, after riding about eight or nine miles, I found my ammunition expended and not a single blesbok bagged, although at least a dozen must have been wounded.

It was now time to retrace my steps, and I took a lucky course for the waggons, for I came right upon them after they had outspanned on the bank of the Vet River. I could willingly have devoted a month to blesbok-shooting in this hunter's elysium; but having heard from a party of Bastards that the Vaal River was low, I inspanned, and continued my
march by moonlight. Lions were heard roaring for the first
time during this night.

On the 22nd of April, after some trouble, we crossed the
Vaal River, and on the 25th reached Mahura's. He was
astonished to see me return so soon, and expressed much
satisfaction thereat.

For many days back our oxen had been looking very spare,
and fallen off in condition, and we now had the intense morti-
fication to discover that nearly the whole of them were attacked
with either tongue or hoof sickness. This discovery cast a sad
gloom over our prospects. I was unacquainted with the nature
of either of these maladies, and the Hottentots declared that an
ox required months to recover from either of them and that
they often proved fatal. In this state of things I deemed it
prudent to begin to purchase young oxen from Mahura and
his tribe, and I gave him to understand that I was willing to
do so. The chief replied that his people would be unwilling
to bring their oxen, because when I had last passed through
his country they had brought oxen for barter, and I had pur-
chased none of them; he, however, promised to acquaint them
with my wishes.

Next day the chief, instead of coming to trade as he had
given me to understand he would, held a hunting party with a
number of his people on the old Scottish principle of the ring,
a common and successful mode of hunting among the South
African tribes. on this occasion, however, the ring was mis-
managed, and the game broke through. Our oxen now pre-
sented a most woful appearance, the greater part of them being
very lame, and nearly all more or less ailing. This was a most
startling fact, and, as the Bechuanas did not seem disposed to
bring oxen for barter, it threatened to oppose an insurmountable
barrier to our progress either backwards or forwards.

Two hours elapsed after breakfast the following morning,
and the chief not having made his appearance according to
promise, Mr. O. and I went up to the palace to ask him what
were his intentions in respect to the trading; he replied
that he could not force his people to bring me oxen, but that
he had intimated my wishes to them.

Early next day Mahura again made his appearance, accom
panied by his interpreter and several of his people, bringing stout young cattle to barter for guns and ammunition. Having taken coffee, the chief called me aside, and, pointing out to me two good-looking young oxen, said they were his, and that if I would fill the measure he had brought with powder I could have the two oxen. When I beheld the wooden measure, I thought the chief was going to drive a hard bargain with me; but, on filling it with powder, I found that it held about eighteen pounds, and, as this was not an exorbitant price for two good oxen, I was very glad to get them. He and all his people seemed to think they had got a bargain, and, the example now being set, the trading went on rapidly; by sundown I had purchased twenty-two oxen, twenty of which were quite fit for work. In the forenoon Mr. O. and I went to look at the cattle (which we allowed to remain night and day in the veld), and had the satisfaction to find a decided improvement in them. We remained several days longer purchasing oxen, which, together with our horses, now amounted to one hundred and eleven, not counting our lame oxen, which we determined to leave with Mahura.

On the 3rd of May we again resumed our march for the far interior, steering our course across the boundless open plains which lie to the northward of the Hart River. On the 5th, having performed a considerable march, we halted about eleven a.m. beside a small fountain in a slightly elevated part of the country, where the grass was various, rank, and abundant, and, observing several vultures soaring over a cover within a quarter of a mile of the waggons, and thinking it very probable that they were attracted by some lion devouring his prey, I ordered a couple of horses to be saddled, and rode towards the place with one after-rider and about a dozen of my dogs. I was right in my conjecture; for, as I cantered along, I had the satisfaction to behold a majestic old black-maned lion walking parallel to me, and within a hundred yards: he looked so dark, that at the first glance I mistook him in the long grass for a blue wildebeest; next moment, however, he turned his large, full, imposing face to me, and I knew that it was he. Shouting to the dogs with all my might, I at once dashed towards him. The lion, as I expected, took
to his heels, bounding through the long grass at top speed. The dogs went at him in gallant style, I following not far behind them, and yelling to encourage my pack. The lion, finding we had the speed of him, reduced his pace to a sulky trot, the dogs barking within a few yards on each side of him; in half a minute more I had passed ahead and halted my horse for a shot, but looking round for my after-rider, who carried my rifle, beheld him slowly approaching, with pallid countenance, at least a hundred yards behind. The lion now faced about, and, springing on Shepherd, one of my favourite dogs, lay for several seconds upon him, and having bitten him so that he could not rise, continued his course. A few moments after he knocked Vixen over, and, having gained the edge of a small cover, came to bay in a thick bush; facing round, lie lay down to await our attack. I then rode up to within twelve yards of him, and, halting my horse, ended the grim lion's career with a single ball behind the shoulder, cutting the main arteries close to the heart. On receiving the ball his head dropped to the ground, and, gasping for a moment, the noble beast expired. I dismounted, and, plucking a lock of hair from his mane, placed it in my bosom and returned to camp, having been absent barely ten minutes.

We marched again at sunrise, and at about ten A.M. I drew up my waggons beside the large pan where I had been storm-stayed for a week last season. On the march I shot a springbok, and next minute Booi came up to me, and said that on my firing, he had observed a lion stick his head up in the long grass in the vley opposite to me. I felt inclined to doubt the veracity of his optics, but sent him back, with instructions to bring eight dogs. Booi, however, thought the whole pack would be better, and returned with thirty.

I then rode direct for the spot where the lion was supposed to be, and, on drawing near, two savage lionesses sat up in the grass and growled fiercely at us. An unlucky belt of reeds, about sixty yards long and twenty broad, intervened between me and them, for they, perceiving their danger, at once dashed into this cover: then followed the most woful cutting up and destruction amongst my best and most valuable dogs. In vain I rode round and round the small cover, endeavouring
to obtain a peep at their adversaries, which would have enabled me to put a speedy conclusion to the murderous work within; the reeds were so tall and dense that, although the lionesses were often at bay within eight or ten yards of me, it was impossible to see them. At length one came from the cover on the opposite side, when I fired a shot from the saddle; and, though my horse was unsteady, I wounded her, when, with angry growls, she re-entered the reeds.

A number of the dogs, which had gone off after a herd of blue wildebeests, now returned, and, coming through the long grass, started a third lioness, which came growling into the cover and joined her comrades. This was the signal for my united pack to make a bold sally, when they were savagely met by the three lionesses, who knocked the dogs about with as much facility as three cats would have disposed of the same number of mice. For several minutes nothing was heard but the crashing of the reeds, the growling of the lions, and the barking and shrieking of the mangled hounds. Night now setting in put an end to this horrid work, and, with feelings of remorse and deep regret at my folly in not having at once called off my poor dogs, I wended my way to camp. On numbering the slain, three of the best were found to have forfeited their lives in the unequal contest, and seven or eight more were very badly wounded, exposing the most fearful gashes, from which several of them never recovered.

Before the day broke next morning, lions were heard roaring to the west; and, following the fresh spoor, we soon observed a yellow form on a barish spot two hundred yards ahead, which we knew must be the lion, and thither we rode at top speed. On seeing us, he raised his noble head, but quickly crouched down again, in the hope that we should pass him by unnoticed. Within twenty yards of him was a noble lioness with two half-grown young lions, and on nearing them they bounded up and charged for the cover to our right, the old lion displaying more cowardice than either his royal spouse or the young ones, and taking the lead at the best pace he could.

The game having thus retreated, I placed Booi at one end of the cover to keep watch, while I rode to the other