to beat up through the centre with the dogs. Twice I drew it unsuccessfully, but the third time the dogs found the lioness lying under a bushy tree, when I rode up and gave her both barrels behind the shoulder, which partially disabled her. My third shot entered close to the eye and blew away the entire half of her brain-pan. Booi and I then skinned the lioness, cut off her head, and returned to camp.

At dawn we heard lions moaning to the west, and, drawing the cover beside which I had found the lions on the previous day, I came upon two young lions, one of which, standing to give us battle, I finished with two shots: his comrade stole away, but after a sharp burst the dogs ran him to bay, when I rode up, and, dismounting, flogged the dogs off, and slew him with a single bullet in the skull.

Our dogs kept up an incessant barking during the night, and we imagined that lions were prowling around the camp. In the morning, however, we discovered that we had been favoured with the presence of far less illustrious yet more presuming visitors; a pack of audacious hyenas had visited our fireside, and, not content with cracking and swallowing the bones they found there, had eaten the table-cloth, the skin of a sable antelope, and carried off the lid of our canteen and two large camp-stools. One of these we had the good fortune to recover, minus the rheimpys; the other will probably be found in after years, and preserved as a Bechuana or Bushman relic.

On the 12th I drew up my wagons on the north bank of the famous Meritsane, and here I had the pleasure to find that, owing to a large tract of the country having been burnt by the Bakalahari some months previously, and favoured by the rainy season, a rich and verdant crop of young grass had sprung up, giving the undulating plains a fresh and vernal appearance. I was delighted on beholding this, for I knew that it would have the effect of attracting the game hither from all the surrounding parts, and I confidently hoped to fall in with elands, as they are generally met with by the foremost hunters in the vicinity of the Meritsane.

The spoor of buffaloes, zebras, blue wildebeests, hartebeests, and sassaybys was extremely abundant, and all of these I fell in with in very considerable herds. I had resolved, however,
not to disturb the country, for fear of starting any elands which might be there, and rode past, leaving them unmolested. After proceeding for many miles, I had the mortification to ascertain that only a very few elands now frequented these parts, and after a fruitless search for these few I turned my face for camp.

The next day I rode forth with one after-rider, and had proceeded but a short distance when I had the satisfaction to behold a magnificent herd of buffaloes quietly pasturing within half a mile of me on the opposite bank of the Meritsane. This was exactly what I stood in need of, considering the present low state of my commissariat in the article of flesh; and, accompanied by Mr. O., with two after-riders and a large detachment of the dogs, we resolved to deal death among the buffaloes. The score in the evening showed that we had not exaggerated our intentions, for I bagged five and Mr. Orpen two, making in all seven.

After breakfast two spans of oxen brought four of the fattest buffaloes to the wagons, and all hands were busy butchering and salting until sundown. In the evening I went out with my rifle in quest of a buffalo-calf, which had been left by the herd in the morning. On observing me, the young savage, to my utter astonishment, charged down upon me in the most determined manner; but my rifle was at my shoulder, and, covering his head until he was within four yards of me, I arrested him in full career with a ball in the forehead.

Three of the buffaloes we had shot having been left in the veld, I deemed it more than probable that a lion might be found on some one of them if sought for at early dawn; accordingly I rode forth with an after-rider and a troop of my dogs; and as I approached the third, the sudden rush of a flight of vultures over my head towards the buffalo told me that some occupant, which had hitherto kept them aloof, had that moment quitted the carcass; and this was the case, for, on galloping forward and clearing an intervening rising ground, I had the satisfaction to behold a huge and shaggy lion within two hundred yards of me, trotting slowly off towards the cover on the banks of the river.

I instantly rode at top speed to get my dogs clear of the carrion, and, if possible, bring the lion to bay before he should
gain any bad cover; we came up with him just as he gained a small belt of reeds, from which he sprang into the river's bed and stood at bay. Riding up within fifteen yards, I disabled him with a shot in the shoulder, and then went up to within twelve yards on foot, when I finished him with my second ball behind the shoulder. This was a fine old lion, with perfect tusks and a very beautiful coat of hair; and I ordered my men to flay him with the utmost care. Next day we reached Lot-lokane.

In the forenoon, anxious to obtain a gemsbok, I saddled up my three fleetest steeds, and rode in a northerly direction, with two after-riders, taking with me a light single-barrelled gun. Having ridden a few miles, I entered upon a magnificent level park, thickly adorned with groves of thorn-trees, on which were grazing large herds of blue wildebeests, zebras, hartebeests, and springboks. Knowing that eland and gemsbok are generally to be found in the vicinity of herds of other game, I resolved to ride in a semicircle to windward of these, and carefully examine the ground for the game I sought. Having made a sweep for this purpose, we were slowly returning, when four superb elands charged up wind right in our faces. To these we instantly gave chase; and Booi, being up first, singled out the heaviest bull, which he broke from the troop, and drove towards camp. Coming up with the remaining three, I selected the best head, and, after a sharp chase, laid him low with a single ball in the shoulder. I then rode to assist Booi, who was about a quarter of a mile to windward on the plain below me; and cannily driving on the noble eland, which we succeeded in bringing right up to the waggons, I bowled him over with two shots in the shoulder. Not yet having a stuffed bull eland's head, and this being a fair specimen, I directed it to be cut off for my collection.

We now held on for the Molopo, upon the banks of which I had some fine sport with roan antelope and reitbuck, and on the 29th of May reached Sichely's kraal on the Kouloubeng.

On the 31st we again inspanned and held for the Limpopo, reaching my old drift on that river on the 15th of June.

On the 18th, the moon being full, I crossed the river with Mr. Orpen, Carey, and attendants, and made for the fountain
at Charebe, in the hope of enjoying some night-shooting with elephants; but we had the ill luck to alarm those frequenting this water and drive them out of the district. On the 23rd, as I was returning to camp from Guapa, the cries of elephants were repeated in different directions, and I at once knew that there must be a very large herd. Having ascended a lofty thorn-tree and obtained a view of the grey backs of some of them appearing above the underwood of the forest, I sent Ramachumiie back to bring up the dogs, and, when they came, rode forward for a nearer inspection. It was a troop of upwards of a hundred elephants, but consisting entirely of cows and young bulls. Having endeavoured, for nearly half an hour, to select a good one, I crept in within fifteen yards of a fairish bull, and gave him a shot behind the shoulder: my followers, however, failed to slip the dogs or to bring on my horse, and while I ran back for them the elephant got away in the herd; the dogs attacked another bull, which, after a long chase, I rolled over. The elephant had scarcely fallen, when old Mutchuisho, with a party of Bamangwato men, came up like a flight of vultures in quest of flesh. The next day I shot another elephant.

On the 29th I crossed the Macoolwey, and on the march hunted ahead of the waggons, and shot a waterbuck and doe and started a troop of seven or eight lions, headed by a patriarchal-looking old fellow of unusual size. The next day brought the waggons to the Basileka. Here I shot two pallahs and a cow camelopard We formed the waggons at my old camp, but, observing tsetse on the horses, I at once resolved to leave Seleka's on the morrow.

About midnight a huge lion made a most daring attack on my cattle-kraal, charging through the thick thorn-hedge. He sent the panic-stricken cattle flying in dire confusion, and dashed to the ground a valuable ox, which lay groaning in his powerful grasp. I was awakened by the noise, and, instantly directing a troop of the dogs to be let loose, the brute was put to flight. As to the poor ox, his fore and hind quarters were so fearfully lacerated that I was obliged to shoot him next day.

About nine A.M. I left Seleka's, and at sundown halted on the Limpopo, opposite Guapa. Here I remained for many
days, making successful excursions with Mr. Orpen across the river in search of elephants.

On our return from one of these expeditions we came upon a heart-sickening sight. The Bamalette tribe, through whose district we were now hunting, had been attacked and put to flight by Sicomya a few months before, when a large number of them were massacred, in consequence of which they had ensconced themselves in an elevated ravine in the mountains. We visited their deserted town and the ground over which they had been pursued and slain, and were horrified to behold the bleaching bones and skulls of those who had fallen; the wolf and jackal had feasted on their remains, and laid the long grass flat round each skeleton: hair and torn fragments of karosses lay scattered around, and the blood was still visible upon the stones.

On the 12th I had another hard day in the mountains after elephants, and at night watched a fountain and shot an old lioness. She came and drank within ten yards of me; the ball entered the centre of her breast and rested in the skin in the middle of her back.

On the 13th I held south for Charebe. In the evening the natives were all busy cooking the flesh of the lioness, which was excessively fat, and esteemed by them a particular delicacy. For my own part, although starving and so weak that I could scarcely walk, I could not persuade myself to partake of their repulsive repast. I left my coffee-kettle and other necessaries, for the use of Mr. Orpen, on the far side of the mountain, and had since then been unsuccessful in the chase: after a little rest I mustered strength to saunter to the fountain, where I had the good fortune to shoot a pallah.

On the 25th of July at sunrise we held down the river, leaving three more of my stud behind me, two dead, and the other dying of tsetse. Holding up the river, on the following day, we took up the spoor of three old bull elephants, and, having followed it for five miles, at length got into a country so densely covered with locusts that the spoor was no longer visible; a large herd of elephants had, during several previous nights, been there feasting upon these insects. After a little while we made a cast in advance, again discovered the spoor
of the three bulls, and came up with them about an hour before sundown, in company with a noble troop of about fifteen other bull elephants. The wind being favourable, they were not aware of our approach, and whilst riding slowly round them on the lee side, endeavouring to select the best, a splendid old fellow broke across from my right, whose ivory far surpassed any other in the herd. To him I accordingly adhered, and laid him low after an easy battle, having only given him five shots. The tusks of this huge elephant being unusually perfect, I resolved to preserve the entire skull, and accordingly sent a messenger to camp for a waggon. Three days elapsed before this appeared, for it had to cross the Limpopo at a ford many miles above my camp; in the mean time, I occupied myself in preparing the feet of the elephant, which I preserved.

Returning to camp, I shot an unusually fine old bull giraffe, whose head I also prepared, and for several days hunted elephants in the forests to the east of the Limpopo with great success.

On the 7th we reached the village of Bakalahari, where poor Hendrick had been dragged from the fire and killed by a lion. I found the village deserted, and the spoor and dung of elephants on the spot where last season the natives were wont to hold their parliament.

On the 8th I held for the fine fountain called Seboono to watch for elephants by moonlight. In the evening a troop of twenty-two giraffes visited the fountain, also koodooos, zebras, and a princely old bull eland. I was surprised to see this eland come in, having always been led to believe that elands never drink. About an hour after nightfall several parties of rhinoceros made their appearance, and presently a low rumbling noise announced the approach of an elephant; on he came, a mighty old bull, carrying only one tusk. I had extremely hard work with him, the forest being dense and consisting chiefly of thorn-trees, and the sky overcast with clouds; at length, however, he fell, having received about twenty-five balls.

Next day I bent my steps for the fountain Pepe, where, in the preceding year, I had enjoyed such excellent night-hunting.
Here I followed the elephants with dogs and horses, as before, and was particularly successful, as also with rhinoceros and camelopard, &c. Some of these elephants were killed on very dark nights, when there was no moon, and the stars themselves were overcast by heavy banks of clouds.

By the 24th of August I had the satisfaction of making up my bag to a hundred and five select elephants killed in South Africa, and finding the district much deserted by these animals, we inspanned, and on the 3rd of September marched down the Limpopo towards the country frequented by hippopotami.

On the 4th I rode up the river, bagged one first-rate bull and wounded others. I saw several crocodiles, some of which must have been sixteen feet in length. Returning to the waggons in the evening, I heard Mr. O. engaged with a huge invincible old hippopotamus, and, finding that he had expended his ammunition, I attacked the bull, which I barely finished with six or eight more shots.

On the 5th we rode down the river and bagged seven very fine old specimens, two of which were bulls: one of these monsters received sixteen bullets in the head before I could finish him. In the heat of the conflict, a huge crocodile, attracted by the blood, suddenly made its appearance, and kept swimming round the hippopotamus in a state of great excitement, which with their united movements so agitated the broad river that considerable waves lashed the shores on either side; I slew the crocodile with a single ball, which crashed through the centre of his skull. On receiving the shot he turned over on his side, and remained motionless in that position for some minutes on the surface of the water, one fore and one hind leg being stretched out quivering in the air like a dying frog; after which he emitted a smell of musk so powerful as to cause the little Bushman to run shrieking from the bank, and then gently sank into his watery grave.

We rode down the river for several mornings hunting hippopotami, a great number of which we killed. As the tusks of some of these were very fine, we chopped them out of the jaw-bones, a work of considerable difficulty. On the 17th I was attacked with acute rheumatic fever, which kept me to my bed, and gave me excruciating pain; whilst I lay in this
helpless state, Mr. Orpen and Present fell in with an immense male leopard, which the latter wounded very badly, and the natives came running to camp and said that the former was killed by the leopard. On inquiry, however, I found that he was not really killed, but fearfully torn and bitten about the arms and head. They had rashly taken up the spoor on foot, the dogs following behind them, instead of going in advance; the consequence of this was, that they came right upon the wounded leopard before they were aware of it, when Orpen fired and missed him. The leopard then sprang on his shoulders, and, dashing him to the ground, lay upon him growling and lacerating his hands, arms, and head most fearfully; in a few minutes, however, the animal's strength failed him from loss of blood, and, rolling over, permitted Orpen to rise and come away. Where were the gallant Present and the natives, that not a man of them moved to assist the unfortunate Orpen? According to an established custom among all colonial servants, the instant the leopard sprang, Present discharged his piece in the air, and then, dashing it to the ground, rushed down the bank and jumped into the river, along which he swam some hundred yards before he would venture on terra firma. The natives, though numerous and armed, had likewise fled in another direction.
CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE LIMPOPO TO THE NGOTWANI AND BACK — SICHELY'S KHAAL — END OF THE FIFTH EXPEDITION — MEN DROWNED — CONCLUSION.

Both Orpen and myself were now reduced to a state of utter helplessness—he from his wounds, which were many and dangerous, and I from fever, though I was slowly recovering. It was of no use therefore to remain any longer in the low-lying district about the Limpopo, so I resolved to hold for Sichely's country. We accordingly marched on the 27th of September, and on the 2nd of October encamped on the
bank of the Limpopo, a little above its junction with the Lepalala. Here Seleka's men requested me to halt a day, as their chief wished to trade with me, which I agreed to do.

Next morning Seleka arrived with a considerable retinue, bringing some good specimens of Bechuana arms to barter for muskets and ammunition. He made me a present of some Bechuana beer, and a sort of fermented porridge; this, he said, he considered as a gift, but he expected that I, in return, would give him some gunpowder. Such is the mode of making _presents_ in Southern Africa.

In the afternoon I exchanged a musket for nine very handsome assagais, a battle-axe, and two shields of buffalo-hide. I also obtained other articles of native manufacture in payment for scarifying the arms of two or three of the nobility, and rubbing medicine into the incisions, to enable them to shoot well. Whilst performing this absurd ceremony, in which the Bechuana have unbounded faith, I looked the initiated most seriously in the face, and said, in his own language, "Slay the game well; let the course of thy bullet be through the hearts of the wild beasts; let thine hand and heart be strong against the lion, against the great elephant, the rhinoceros, and the buffalo," &c.

On the 5th we marched at sunrise, and arrived on the 8th at the drift on the Limpopo where, on a former occasion, I had crossed the river. On the 13th we made the banks of the Ngotwani, but, finding its waters dried up, owing to the protracted droughts, and that it would be impossible to reach Sichely's country by this route, I determined to retrace my steps. We accordingly marched for the Limpopo, and reached it on the 23rd, having killed a noble old lion in my way.

We trekked along the banks of this river for the Mariqua, and a little before sundown fell in with two enormous herds of buffaloes, in all at least three hundred. Having shot one cow, I brought eight or nine fine bulls to bay in lofty reeds at the river's margin, exactly opposite my camp: of these I singled out the two best heads, one of which I killed with five balls, the other, though badly wounded, made off while I was engaged with his comrade.

The next morning, when we crossed the river for some
buffalo beef, a lion was discovered moving majestically from the carcase; and after a most exciting chase, in which I lost three of the dogs, we drove him into some reeds near the river, where for the first time I was enabled to give him a shot. My ball entered his body a little behind the shoulder. On receiving it, he charged growling after the dogs, but not farther than the edge of the reeds, out of which he was extremely reluctant to move. I gave him a second shot, firing for his head; my ball entered at the edge of his eye, and passed through the back of the roof of his mouth.

The lion then sprang up, dashed through the reeds, and plunged into the river, across which he swam, dyeing the waters with his blood; one black dog, named "Schwart," alone pursued him. A huge crocodile, attracted by the blood, followed in their wake, but fortunately did not take my dog, which I much feared he would do. Present fired at the lion as he swam, and missed him; both my barrels were empty. Before, however, the lion could make the opposite bank, I had one loaded without patch, and just as his feet gained the ground, made a fine shot at his neck, and turned him over dead on the spot. We landed him by an old hippopotamus footpath, and, the day being damp and cold, kindled a fire, beside which we skinned him.

This lion proved to be a first-rate one; he was in the prime of life, and had an exquisitely beautiful coat of hair. His mane was not very rank; his awful teeth were quite perfect, a thing which in lions of his age is rather unusual; and he had the finest tuft of hair on the end of his tail that I had ever seen.

On the 27th we reached the junction of the Mariqua with the Limpopo, when we once more bade farewell to the latter, and held up the northern bank of the Mariqua. This fine little river averages here about five or six yards in width, and meanders along in a very serpentine course through a very broad open vley, its banks being in many places destitute of cover, excepting reeds, and in others densely clad with groves of thorn and willow trees, &c. Here I found reitbuck, which does not frequent the Limpopo in those parts which I have visited. The country looked fresh and green, and all the
AN ATTACK UPON FOUR PATRIARCHAL LIONS.
usual varieties of game were abundant. About fifty miles to the south and east, a very bold and extensive rocky mountain-chain towered in grand relief above the intervening level forest. The length of this range seemed to be about a hundred miles, its course north-east, and it gradually became loftier and more rugged towards the north-eastern extremity. I believe the Limpopo rises somewhere to the east of this chain, and I felt a strong desire to follow it to its source, but under existing circumstances this measure was not advisable.

Next day we held about eight miles up the river. On the march I wounded two black rhinoceroses and shot one sassaby and an enormous crocodile, which we discovered fast asleep on the grassy bank of the river. He got two balls, one in the head, the other behind the shoulder, yet nevertheless in the struggles of death he managed to roll into the water, and disappeared. I was extremely surprised to see so enormous a crocodile in so small a stream; his length was considerably greater than its width at the spot where I shot him.

On the 31st, as I was riding along the river's bank, I came upon a similar reptile lying asleep on the opposite side, which I shot dead on the spot, putting the ball through the spine close into the back of the head. Having crossed at a drift about a mile below, I rode up to inspect this hideous monster, which, to my surprise, I found to be the same one at which, on the 28th, I had fired, and as I supposed, killed. He bore the marks of both my bullets, one of which had fractured a part of his skull. This crocodile was a very old fellow, and a fine specimen, being upwards of twelve feet in length. Returning from skinning him to camp, I found the vley before me black with an immense herd of buffaloes.

A few days after this four lions walked across the vley, a few hundred yards below my camp. All hands turned out, and when we came upon them I was much struck with the majestic and truly appalling appearance which these noble animals exhibited. They were all full-grown immense males; and I felt, I must confess, a little nervous, and very uncertain as to what might be the issue of the attack. When the dogs came up, the lions sprang to their feet, and trotted slowly along the bank, eventually disappearing in a peninsula formed.
by the river, well sheltered by high trees and reeds. Into
this retreat the dogs at once boldly followed them, making
a loud barking, which was instantly followed by the terrible
roar of the lions. Next moment, however, I heard them
plunge into the river, when I sprang from my horse, and,
rushing to the bank, saw three of them ascending the oppo­
site side. One of them bounded away across the open plain
at speed, but the other two, finding themselves followed by
the dogs, immediately turned to bay. It was now my turn;
so, taking them coolly right and left with my little rifle, I
made the most glorious double shot that a sportsman's heart
could desire, disabling them both in the shoulder before they
were even aware of my position. Then snatching my other
gun from Carey, who had come to my assistance, I finished
the first lion with a shot near the heart, and brought the second
to a standstill by disabling him in his hind-quarters, when he
quickly crept into a dense, wide, dark green bush, in which
for a long time it was impossible to obtain a glimpse of him.
At length, a clod of earth falling on his hiding-place, he made
a move which disclosed his position, when I finished him with
three more shots, all along the middle of his back. The fourth
lion made off. We then crossed the river a little higher up,
and proceeded to inspect the noble prizes I had won. Both
lions were well up in their years; I kept the skin and skull
of the finest specimen, and only the nails and tail of the
other, one of whose canine teeth was worn down to the socket
with caries, which seemed to have affected his general condi­
tion.

On the 9th it rained unceasingly throughout the day.
From the 10th to the 16th we followed up the banks of the
river with the usual allowance of sport, killing a fine cow and
bull rhinoceros, the former carrying an unusually long horn—
the bull, judging by his dentition, had roamed during a
hundred summers a peaceful denizen of the forests and open
glades along the fair banks of the secluded Mariqua.

During our march on the 19th we had to cross a range of
very rocky hills. We had now reached the spot where we
were to bid adieu to the Mariqua, and hold a westerly course
across country for Sichely. At sundown we halted under a
lofty mountain, the highest in the district, called "Lynché a Chény," or the Monkey’s Mountain.

Next day at an early hour I rode out with Ruyter to hunt; my camp being entirely without flesh, and having had no other rations than very tough old rhinoceros for several days past. It was a cloudy morning, and soon came on to rain heavily. I, however, held on, by a fine well-wooded range of mountains, and after riding several miles shot a zebra. Having covered the carcase well over with branches to protect it from the vultures, I returned to camp, and, inspanning my waggons, took it up on the march. We continued trekking until sun-down, when we started an immense herd of buffaloes, into which I stalked and shot a huge old bull.

Our march this evening was through the most beautiful country I had ever seen in Africa. We skirted an endless range of well-wooded stony mountains lying on our left, whilst to our right the country at first sloped gently off, and then stretched away into a level verdant forest (occasionally interspersed with open glades), boundless as the ocean. This green forest was, however, relieved in one direction by a chain of excessively bold, detached, well-wooded, rocky, pyramidal mountains, which stood forth in grand relief. In advance the picture was bounded by forest and mountain; one bold acclivity, in shape a dome, standing prominent among its fellows. It was a lovely evening: the sky, o’ercast and gloomy, threw an interesting, wild, mysterious colouring over the landscape. I gazed forth upon the romantic scene before me with intense delight, and felt melancholy and sorrowful at passing so fleetingly through it, and I could not help shouting out as I marched along, “Where is the coward who would not dare to die for such a land?”

In the morning we held for a fountain some miles ahead in a gorge in the mountains, near to which I bowled over one of three lionesses with four shots.

Showers of rain fell every hour throughout the 24th, and my men were employed in making feldtschoens, or in other words African brogues, for me. These shoes were worthy of a sportsman, being light, yet strong, and entirely composed of the skins of game I shot. The soles were made of either
buffalo or camelopard; the front part of koodoo, or hartebeest, or bushbuck; and the back of the shoe of the hide of the lion, hyena, or sable antelope; while the rheimpy, or thread, with which the whole was sewn, consisted of a thin strip of the skin of a steinbok.

On the forenoon of the 26th we held west, skirting the wooded stony mountains. The natives had here many years before waged successful war with elephants, four of whose skulls I found. In the course of the day I came upon a troop of six fine old bull buffaloes, and wounded one princely fellow very severely behind the shoulder; he, however, made off with his comrades, and, the ground being very rough, we failed to overtake him.

Returning from this chase, we had an adventure with another old bull buffalo, which shows the extreme danger of hunting buffaloes without dogs. We started him in a green hollow among the hills, along the base of which we followed him, sometimes in view, sometimes on the spoor, keeping the old fellow at a pace which made him pant. At length, finding himself much distressed, he had recourse to a singular stratagem. Doubling round some thick bushes which concealed him from our view, he found himself close to a small pool of rain-water, just deep enough to cover his body: into this he walked, and, facing about, lay gently down and awaited our on-coming, with nothing but his old grey face and massive horns above the water, and these concealed from view by rank overhanging herbage. Our attention being entirely engrossed with the spoor, we rode boldly on until within a few feet of him, when, springing to his feet, he made a desperate charge at Ruyter, uttering a low stifled roar peculiar to buffaloes (somewhat similar to the growl of a lion), and hurled both steed and rider to the earth with fearful violence. His horn laid the poor horse's haunch open to the bone, making the most fearful rugged wound. In an instant Ruyter regained his feet, and ran for his life: this the buffalo observed, and gave chase, but most fortunately came down with a tremendous somersault in the mud, his feet slipping from under him; and thus the Bushman escaped certain destruction. The buffalo rose much discomfited, and at this moment I managed to send
one of my patent pacificating pills into his shoulder, when he instantly quitted the field of action, and sought shelter in the dense cover on the mountain's side, whither I deemed it prudent to follow him.

On the 28th one of my waggon-drivers chose to turn his waggon too short, in opposition to my orders, whereby it was very nearly upset, for which I administered a dose with the jambok. Two splendid camelopards fell to my rifle this day.

On the 4th of December we marched to the Ngotwani, and crossed the river after an hour of hard work in making a road down the banks. In the afternoon I again marched, and halted at sundown within a few miles of my old spoor near the Poort or Pass of God. Spooring this day for a wounded rhinoceros in a mountain-range to my right, and at length up into a long well-wooded basin in the mountains, I observed that two lions, having detected the blood, were also spooring up the borèle, and had then lain down for the day. I was within twenty yards of them before I was aware of their proximity, when they sprang to their feet, and, growling sulkily, trotted up the mountain-side. I only saw one of them at first, which, having ascended the steep a short distance, halted to take a look, giving me a fine broadside, when I shot him through the heart. On receiving the ball, he bounded forward, and was instantly concealed by the trees. I advanced cautiously, and next moment the other lion rose with a growl, and marched with an air of the most consummate independence up the mountain-side. I imagined that this lion was the one I had fired at, and I sent two more shots at him, upon which he disappeared over the ridge above. On proceeding to inspect the spot where the lion had been lying, I found that there were two beds, consequently that there must have been two lions, and I conjectured that I had killed one of them. In case, however, he should be only wounded, I deemed it prudent to ride down to the waggon, which were then passing below me, to obtain some dogs to pioneer. Having procured these, I and Ruyter returned to the spot, and found the lion lying dead on the mountain-side; we then proceeded to skin him, and returned to the waggon with the spoils. In the afternoon I rode on to Sichely's kraal on the
FURIOUS CHARGE OF A BUFFALO.
Kouloubeng, and, on arriving at the station, found that Mr. Livingstone had left that morning to visit a tribe to the east of the Limpopo. Mrs. Livingstone, however, regaled me with tea and bread and butter, and gave me all the news.

On the 12th I inspanned, and at sundown we halted near the Pass of God.

Next morning I rode through the Pass, and held to within a couple of miles of the Kouloubeng, returning close in under the mountain-chain to the southward of the pass, having bagged a buffalo, a zebra, and a fine old cock ostrich.

On the 14th I went forth on foot, accompanied by Ruyter, stalked a splendid sable antelope, and finished him with five shots. He was a most splendid specimen of this very rare and most lovely animal; his horns were enormous, very long, rough, and perfect. Having cut off the head and gralloched him, we covered him with green boughs, and returned to camp, whence I despatched a party for the venison and the skin.

On the 15th I was occupied during the morning in stuffing the head of the sable antelope, after which I rode forth with two after-riders, and, holding a northerly course, skirted the range of hills beneath which we were encamped. Here I came upon a bastard gemsbok, about two hundred yards distant, and, giving my rifle six inches of elevation, fired, when the bullet caught him in the centre of the hollow behind the shoulder, and rested in the hide on his opposite side. Arching his back and bounding high, the rock-loving old roan antelope started forward, and was instantly concealed from my view by an abrupt rocky ridge. Having loaded, I inspected the spoor. Large blotches of his life-blood stained the rocks, and, on clearing the ridge over which he had disappeared, I had the pleasure to find Qualata stretched to rise no more. This antelope carried the finest head I had ever seen; the horns were very long, fair set, immensely stout, and rough.

On the 18th we inspanned, and in about four hours encamped on the Kouloubeng. Antelope, zebra, and buffaloes fell to my rifle here.

Next day, while exploring a fine mountainous tract of country to the south-west, I suddenly found myself in my old
waggon spoor of '45, within a short distance of the bold gorge in the mountains in which my oxen had been chased by lions. In this fine pass two streams of water meet: it is a first-rate district for game when the country has not been ransacked by Griqua hunters. I immediately found the spoor of a troop of buffaloes; but the wind was foul, and they snuffed the tainted air. Returning from spoor ing them, I soon fell in with another troop, reposing under dense shade in the same glen, crept in within thirty yards of them, and remained for upwards of an hour, endeavouring to select the finest head. The buffalo which I wanted was lying down, his body screened by stout thorn branches. One by one they rose, stretched themselves, rubbed their horns upon the trees, and again lay down. At length something alarmed them, when the buffalo I wanted sprang to his feet, affording me a certain shot, but my cap would not go off. I then had a snap shot through the cover with my left barrel, and sent a bullet through his heart.

On returning to camp I found a party of Baquainas, among whom was a brother of Sichely's. These men informed me that the Boers had been making many inquiries concerning me, and had stated that it was their intention to come in force on horseback and take me prisoner. The Bechuanas, however, said further, that all the horses of the Boers were dead with the distemper. An attack from them being, however, by no means improbable, I deemed it prudent to hold myself in a certain degree prepared, and resolved, in the event of Mr. Edwards, the missionary at Bakatla, thinking the road by the Mamouri unsafe, to hold a more westerly course, and go out by the country of the Bawangketse. Another valuable black shooting-mare died of the fell distemper this day.

My casualties in cattle this year were very considerable. Up to this time fourteen horses and fifteen head of cattle had died; making my losses in the four expeditions into the far interior amount to forty-five horses and seventy head of cattle, the value of these being at least 600l. I also lost about seventy of my dogs.

We continued our march for several days through a country abounding in different kinds of game, affording good sport.
and on the 1st of January, 1849, I rode into Bakatla, where I found Mr. Edwards and his family flourishing. The news was that the Boers had met the Governor and the troops, &c., at a place called Boom Plaats, on the north side of the Orange River, and, after a bloody engagement of three hours, they had been defeated. Mr. Edwards stated that since this engagement the Boers had been flocking in about Mosega in great numbers, and were anxious to get possession of my waggons. He therefore advised me strongly not to proceed by my old line of march, but to get out of the country with all speed, taking the direct road across the mountain at the back of Bakatla. My prospects of doing this, however, were not heightened by an attack of fever the next morning, brought on by over-exertion and anxiety of mind.

On the 3rd we marched at dawn, and, after proceeding for many miles without finding water, had the pleasing prospect before us of not seeing any until the following day, when we might reach the Molopo. The sun's heat was most terrific, and my poor dogs were already on the verge of going mad; a number of my cattle were lame from hoof-sickness, and I myself was laid up with a rattling fever. Presently, to my great relief, we came upon sufficient rain-water for all the cattle. An attack from the Boers being not at all improbable, I ordered all my guns and rifles to be cleaned and loaded, and ammunition to be placed in readiness for action. I had also four good muskets cleaned and loaded, which gave me twenty stand of arms; and a volley from these, if well directed, in the open country, would I calculated keep off a whole host of Boers.

In the afternoon of the 13th I reached the Hart River, where I outspanned within a quarter of a mile of the town or kraal of the Batlapis. The river was greatly swollen and quite impassable, the rain having been very heavy in certain parts of the country.

In the morning, by Mahura's request, I crossed the Hart stream, and encamped on its southern bank. In the course of the day I obtained ten karosses in barter from the tribe, and one very good spotted cat as a present from the chief.

On the 16th I deemed it high time to be getting under way,
Mahura and his retinue not bringing any articles of value for barter, and asking absurdly high prices. Accordingly at an early hour I ordered my men to count my cattle and inspan, and in the afternoon we marched about six or seven miles nearer to the Vaal.

Considerable delay was caused next day along the line of march by young oxen, which could not be persuaded to trek, notwithstanding an unusual application of both whip and jambok. At nightfall we encamped on the bank of the fair Vaal river. It was considerably swollen, heavy rains having lately fallen; but, being upon the ebb, I deemed it well not to take the drift until the morrow; when, having arranged two trektows, we commenced crossing, one waggon at a time, with twenty oxen, and in about two hours my three heavily-laden waggons were brought through in safety. After two or three days' march we came in sight of several Boer encampments on both sides of the Vet River.

On the 24th our morning's march brought us into the district where in the commencement of last winter I had seen such overwhelming swarms of blesboks. Boers were encamped on the opposite side of the river. I outspanned beside some shady thorn-trees; lion's spoor was seen on the line of march.

We had now reached the point in our line of march where we were to take leave of the Vet River. After proceeding about a mile, I found myself out of the country of sweet grass, and entering upon bare and boundless open plains, thinly clad with sour pasturage, the favourite haunt and continual residence of innumerable herds of black wildebeest, blesbok, and springbok. I had been long away from them, far, far in the dense forest regions of the interior, and I now gazed once more upon them with a lively feeling of pleasure and intense interest which no words can describe: thousands upon thousands chequered the landscape far as the eye could strain in every direction.

On the 28th I rode in a north-westerly course, and gave chase to a noble herd of about two hundred black wildebeest; being very wild, I yashed them on the Boer principle, and, taking a double family shot at about three hundred yards, one
fine bull bit the dust; this was very near camp, so I despatched Ruyter for men and a pack-ox to bring the gnu to camp.

In the afternoon I inspanned and marched, there being very little grass, and danger of the oxen taking a horrible and very fatal illness, called by the Boers “snot sickness,” which cattle are very liable to from pasturing on ground frequented by black wildebeests.

Next day the country was very heavy for the bullocks, owing to the rain which had fallen. Streams of blesboks passed our camp. In the afternoon we came upon an ostrich’s nest, seven feet in diameter, which contained thirty-four fine fresh eggs. I left Ruyter in charge of the nest, the eggs being in danger from jackals and vultures, and particularly from the ostrich herself, who would have returned in our absence and broken every one of them. Having reached the camp, I despatched two men with leather sacks to fetch them.

Next morning I had some exciting sport, the wildebeests several times charging madly down upon the very spot where I lay concealed; I bagged four old bulls during the day.

On the 3rd of February we reached Bloem Vonteyn, where I was kindly received by the officers of the 45th and Cape Corps, stationed there. Here we remained a day or two, and then trekked on through a most desolate country, on which, together with vast herds of wildebeest, blesbok, and springbok, we found numbers of skeletons scattered over the plains on all sides. This great mortality had been caused either by famine or by a horrid mangy disease, called by the Dutch “brunt-sickta,” which often sweeps off whole hosts of the plain-frequenting game.

On the 17th we halted the wagons at Mr. Fossey’s farm, within two miles of the Great Orange River. Mr. Fossey informed me that the river was full, and that he did not expect it would be fordable for several months. Norval’s Punt had been smashed when the troops crossed over to fight the Boers at Boom Plaats some months before, and the new one constructed in the colony had not yet arrived. I was detained on the banks of this stream, much against my will, for several weeks; but at length, on the 8th of March, hearing that the Boers had constructed a float above Alleman’s Drift, I in-
spanned and proceeded down the river to view it. The float was rather a dangerous affair, and calculated to ferry over light waggons only; heavily-laden ones required to be off-loaded. At sundown I had taken over one waggon and a span of twelve oxen, which I ferried across in two trips, taking six at a time. The stream was rapid and deep.

Next morning when I looked at the river I found that it had grown greatly during the night, and was still increasing. Having off-loaded the greater part of the cargo of old Adonis’s waggon, I managed to ferry it across the river, having narrowly escaped losing the whole in the middle of the stream. By this time the flood had increased so much that we deemed it dangerous to attempt to ferry over anything else, and we prudently resolved to await the ebbing of the river, which continued to grow rapidly the whole of the day and until the next afternoon, when it seemed to have reached its maximum, and about sundown it was evidently on the ebb. During the whole of to-day and yesterday the river presented an appearance of extreme grandeur; large blocks of wood and trunks of forest-trees were constantly sweeping past us, tossed on the troubled waters on their seaward course. In the course of the afternoon the stout new cable by which the float was worked burst asunder, being unequal to resist the force of the swollen river. On the 14th, with much difficulty, we got over the cable, and the Boers, by way of experiment, loaded her up with a party of Bechuana Caffres, and endeavoured to cross the river. When they had got about half-way across, the water rose partially over the Hoat, when a panic came over both the Boers and Bechuanas, and a rush was made into the little boat attached to the Hoat. A capsize was the consequence; and at the same moment the rope which attached the boat to the float parted. The unfortunate men were then swept away down the rapid current; and of twenty-seven men who were on board the punt four only escaped. After this accident I directed my men on the opposite side of the river to inspan and remove down to Norval’s boat, below Alleman’s Drift, where I met them with the cap-tent waggon; and at sundown next day we had safely ferried over the other two waggons, and encamped once more on British territory.
The ferrying was a very laborious proceeding, each waggon having to be off-loaded, and then taken to pieces, and so brought over, bit by bit; the oxen and horses, &c., swam the river. My waggons were now reloaded, and at sundown on the 18th we entered Colesberg, and drew up opposite to the old barracks, having been absent exactly twelve months.

As my waggons advanced into the town the news of our arrival spread like wildfire, and multitudes both of men and good-looking young women rushed to see the old elephant-hunter, who had been mourned as dead. We were soon surrounded by nearly one-half the population, who mobbed us until night setting in dispersed them to their homes.

My friend Mr. Orpen, being blessed by nature with an excellent constitution, had considerably recovered from the dreadful wounds which he received from the leopard on the banks of the Limpopo, but was still, I regret to say, obliged to carry his arms in slings.

During my stay in Colesberg I had much pleasure in meeting my friend Mr. Oswell, of the Honourable East India Company's Service. He was then en route for the far interior, intending to penetrate the Kalihari in a north-westerly direction, and visit the lake of boats. This was an expedition which I myself had often thought of making, but a limited finance, and my fancy for collecting objects of natural history, led me to incline my course to the more verdant forests of the east, where I could more certainly first collect, and then export, the precious spoils of the elephant. Mr. Oswell being in want of draught oxen, I permitted him to select as many as he required from my extensive stock, with which he shortly set out, in company with Mr. Murray, on his interesting journey of discovery. I was occupied in Colesberg till the 12th of April, when I marched to Cuil Vonteyn, a farm belonging to Mrs. Van Blerk, which I reached in about three hours. Here I found nine waggons drawn up, which I had hired and laden up to transport my collection of hunting trophies to the sea. When I entered Colesberg I had almost made up my mind to make another shooting expedition into the interior, but a combination of circumstances induced me to re-visit my native land. I felt much sorrow and reluctance in coming to
this resolution; for although I had now spent the greater part of five seasons in hunting in the far interior the various game of Southern Africa, I nevertheless did not feel in the slightest degree satiated with the sport which it afforded. On the contrary, the wild, free, healthy, roaming life of a hunter had grown upon me, and I loved it more and more; I could not help confessing to myself, however, that in the most laborious yet noble pursuit of elephant-hunting I was overtaxing my frame and too rapidly wearing down my constitution. Moreover, the time required to reach those extremely distant lands frequented by this animal was so great that it consumed nearly one-half of the season in going and returning, and I ever found that my dogs and horses had lost much of their spirit by the time they reached those very remote districts. My nerves also and strength were considerably shaken by the scorching African sun, and I considered a voyage to England would greatly recruit my powers, and that on returning I should renew my pursuits with increased zest.

Having thus resolved to leave the colony, I directed my march towards Port Elizabeth, by way of Graff Reinett, crossing the bold mountain-range of Snewberg. On the 10th of May I reached the shores of the ocean, which Ruyter and others of my followers, now beholding for the first time, gazed upon with wonder and with awe. On the 19th I took my passage for old England in the barque Augusta. My valuable collection of trophies and my Cape waggon, weighing altogether upwards of thirty tons, were then carefully shipped, and on the 7th of June I set sail (my little Bushman accompanying me) for my native land, after a sojourn of nearly five years in the wild hunting-grounds of Southern Africa.

THE END.